

William L. Dunfey Oral History Interview – RFK #1, 12/15/1971

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Biographical Note

Dunfey, New Hampshire political figure; Kennedy campaign coordinator in New England and New York (1960); chairman, Democratic State Committee (1965-1967); New England coordinator, Robert F. Kennedy's Presidential campaign (1968), discusses his work on the Democratic National Committee, John F. Kennedy's 1960 New Hampshire presidential primary campaign, and his relationship with Robert F. Kennedy, among other issues.

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William L. Dunfey—RFK #1

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First of Two Oral History Interviews

with

William L. Dunfey

December 15, 1971
Hampton, New Hampshire

By Larry J. Hackman

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

HACKMAN: You were going to explain how you came to work, I guess.

DUNFEY: Right. You mentioned Drexel Sprecher [Drexel A. Sprecher]. He was deputy director under Butler [Paul M. Butler]. Well, as this thing developed, I was brought down for an interview to Washington and didn't realize that in the background there was a hell of a fight going on. Paul Dever [Paul. A. Dever], strangely enough, was scheduled for this position. I had no knowledge of this. Within the week after Paul Dever died.... Although it had been six months previous they had interviewed me, I never heard a word. Within a week after he died, Dick Murphy [Richard J. Murphy] called me from the Committee [Democratic National Committee] and said, "Hey, I think things are going to shake loose. He said, "The block here was.... Anything we tried to get clearance an appointment for this region, the only name we could get out of Massachusetts was Paul Dever." So he says, "I think we can move on it now."

So I went down again, had another session. It was a Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner at the Manchester [New Hampshire National Guard State Armory] and Senator John F. Kennedy was there and, of course, I had known him quite well. He spotted me and he said, "I've got to see you before I leave." So as it ended up, things got, you know, hustled and hustled, and just before he was getting into the car—I had made no effort to get at him—he spotted me and he said, "Hey, I've got to talk to you." So we went back inside the Armory.

And Frank Morrissey [Francis X. Morrissey] was with him, so Frank said to is people "I'm not going to talk." And

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that's all he said. And of course this was kind of curious, and I said, "Well, really, you know, what is the setup?" And he said, "Well, he wants you and I've approved it, so you should be hearing when the deck is cleared." So that's how the appointment happened.

Being from New Hampshire, it really kind of puzzled me because I didn't recognize what had been going on in the background. And the thing that was all so funny about this, the first time I ever met Kenny O'Donnell [Kenneth P. O'Donnell] when he and Larry [Lawrence O'Brien] came up for a 1960 presidential primary, Kenny introduced Larry to me as, "This is the guy who took your job," because evidently Larry's name went in and Butler said no, you know, that's too close to Kennedy and too obvious. So that's how the appointment happened and it was Senator Kennedy who relayed it to me that this was going to go on.

From that point of view, I had to get around and meet DeSapio [Carmine G. DeSapio] in New York, and Prendergast, [Michael H. Prendergast] and Bailey [John Moran Bailey] and Ribicoff [Abraham A. Ribicoff] was governor—and Dempsey [John Noel Dempsey]: and then into Massachusetts which was really was ticklish, and went in and got the full treatment from Furcolo [Foster Furcolo] as governor, you know, picture and all of this stuff. And I couldn't have been out of Furcolo's office forty-eight hours and he sent a blistering letter off to Butler. Did that show up?

HACKMAN: No. I didn't see that.

DUNFEY: I got a copy of that. In fact, I just saw it the other day. And this, again, highly critical in identifying this; I don't think he clearly states that, you know, "Kennedy was consulted but I wasn't," and "I'm not going to cooperate with the Committee if this is the way you're going to run it." So that was kind of my baptism into it.

So that from that point on I was very conscious of getting labeled as a Kennedy guy at the Democratic National Committee being in the region where he had to lock up the New England delegation for '60. And although I traveled with him and with Ted Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen] at times when our schedules coincided, I was, you know, very discreet about doing a job for the National Committee in the way of organization, running leadership development programs, that kind of thing, as compared with doing specific work for Senator Kennedy.

HACKMAN: You said you had known him before. Now the only thing I had heard that you knew Cleo O'Donnell [Cleo O'Donnell] in the Marines or something like this?

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DUNFEY: Yes. I never bumped into Cleo again until well after I'd met Senator Kennedy. I had run as a Truman [Harry S. Truman] delegate in 1952, switched over to Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson]—I was still at the University—and when I came back to New Hampshire in '53, I started organizing the Young Democrats. There was no party in the state; there was just Bridges [H. Styles Bridges] had the state lined up on both sides, both parties. So that one of the first things I did, right after Senator Kennedy got married—I hope my dates are right. He got married in...

HACKMAN: '55. I think it was '55.

DUNFEY: No. No. He got elected in '52, got married in '53.

HACKMAN: Did he?

DUNFEY: Yeah.

HACKMAN: I've been away from John; I've been doing Robert Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] for so long that I've forgotten my John Kennedy dates, but that's probably right.

DUNFEY: Within two months after he was married, I put a call into him and said, you know, "I'm trying to get things rolling here in New Hampshire"—he had just beat Lodge [Henry Cabot Lodge]. I said, "Will you come up?" He said yes. So I brought him up—oh, it was definitely, it was September of '53, because I went to McIntyre [Thomas J. McIntyre] then, and I got McIntyre to announce to Congress at the time that Senator Kennedy made his first appearance—I've got those dates right, because I was campaign manager for Tom.

HACKMAN: Okay.

DUNFEY: So he came up that night and, you know, we sat down and had a little talk. Again, there was no design to it, I don't think, other than the fact of whether he had it in his mind based on what had gone on with Kefauver [Estes Kefauver] knocking off Truman. But I certainly had no idea of it, other than he was an amazing senator and kind of the brightest thing in New England about then. But just through that we struck up a pretty good relationship and talked on the phone occasionally. Sometime probably it would go six or eight months. But from that point on, I don't think there was any time that I'd call or make a request or invited him into New Hampshire that he didn't come up. But of course, I didn't abuse it. I didn't call too often.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Do you remember in just that first talk in '53, any discussion of issues or anything about Massachusetts politics that you just recall from the

conversation?

DUNFEY: The main thing was, he had come forward in his campaign and was talking about New England as a region, and the senators from New England had to act as other senators did in other areas. And one thing that, you know, comes through very good for those of us in New Hampshire where we didn't have a Democrat in the Senate in the Congress, he talked more like a New England senator, you know, that could relate to in terms of the problems of New England. And so it built just a good contact in terms of how he related to people in New Hampshire, and it came off very well.

HACKMAN: Did he talk at all about anything he'd tried to do with Bridges on anything in New Hampshire—or who was the second New Hampshire senator?

DUNFEY: At that time, Senator Cotton [Norris Cotton] let's see. Tobey [Charles William Tobey] died, '53 special election in '54, and Cotton went in. So Tobey was there then. And Tobey was a renegade, and on the Kefauver thing he had kind of got Kefauver moving on the crime investigation in television and had a fairly good relationship there. And Tobey by that time was extremely liberal, so that, no discussion there. We had discussions later on as I got into a real fight with Senator Dodd [Thomas J. Dodd] in 1960 over Bridges, because he kind of kicked off his campaign with it.

HACKMAN: Right.

DUNFEY: And I had a head-to-head, you know, thing with Senator Dodd down in Boston over this. I was still with the committee at this time. And I know I had a discussion with Senator Kennedy on that, but more informational, you know, just saying what a lock Bridges has on our party.

HACKMAN: Maybe you went to the '56 convention, but you weren't a delegate to go.

DUNFEY: That's right. I was chairman for Stevenson... [Interruption] I was a Truman delegate and I guess I was an alternate in '52. I went because no Kefauver guy ran against me. But in '56 I was chairman for the Stevenson thing and so I didn't run as a delegate; I didn't even put my name on. I just headed the thing up and helped arrange the Stevenson delegation.

HACKMAN: Can you remember anything else before '56, let's say, before we move on to '56?

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DUNFEY: I don't think anything significant.

HACKMAN: Anything else on the Young Democrats side? Do you remember any suggestions he might have had?

DUNFEY: No. He was just very, very encouraging to me which, you know, was really great for me at the time because I didn't really know what the hell I was doing other than I didn't like the New Hampshire setup. So he probably stimulated me as much as anyone did. We went to the hotel together and he had to go up and take a shower. The way he took the shower was, he asked me to come over near the john, so while he was taking the shower we could keep talking. He was having his back problem and he was just kind of getting hot water on himself and we talked all the time through it. As I say, he was asking a lot of questions about New Hampshire and how I looked at it and then, not as much by obvious or direct things but you know, just very encouraging to keep going on what I was doing.

HACKMAN: When after '56 then do you first start talking with him? When do you talk about whether he is going to run in '60?

DUNFEY: I lose track of it a little. I know we met several times, but just at events. Oh, wait a minute. Then I started working with Bernie Boutin [Bernie Louis Boutin] to run for governor. So in the process of doing that that would be.... He started that in '57 and in the process of doing that—I believe when Bernie was nominated—we had him up either once or twice. From '56 on the guy I talked with most of the time was Frank Morrissey. Frank seemed to have this as his special domain in terms of things that went on, and he used to call me up and talk to me quite a bit on the campaign. I can't say that I had a lot of direct conversation with Kennedy on it.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Was there anyone else other than yourself in the state that he had developed any kind of relationship with, let's say before '56 and then from '56 to '58?

DUNFEY: I can't specifically identify anyone. No, I can't.... Mainly, I think the next one was Bernie. See, everybody was Kefauver up here. You know, I had got my head knocked off over the Truman thing and the Stevenson thing, so that all the people I was working with were the newer young Democrats. All the old party leaders—McIntyre, Hugh Bownes [Hugh Henry Bownes]—all the mayors, they were all Kefauver, so that.... I shouldn't say that. No. McIntyre and his group were Kefauver, the mayors and

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organization were Truman and Stevenson. That was a mistake. And I would guess through Frank Morrissey, Frank maintained telephone contact with a lot of people and probably mailing contact, probably with several mayors, just as a guess, I would think so.

HACKMAN: Yes. Yes. But neither O'Donnell or O'Brien are in the picture at this point at all in terms of New Hampshire?

DUNFEY: No. In fact, when they come into the picture is after the Boutin campaign. And in the Boutin campaign, the Senator through I think directly with Bernie and then maybe a little through me, was helpful, both in terms of speakers we wanted: you know, where we didn't have any contact with the National Committee and had nothing much here, we kind of used them if there were somebody we were going after for a speaker, and even gave some financial assistance. So that I'd say that was Bernie's beginning of association with Senator Kennedy.

HACKMAN: You mean Senator Kennedy gave some financial assistance to Boutin's early efforts?

DUNFEY: Yeah. Yeah. This was after he was nominated because we had a hell of a primary fight.

HACKMAN: Right. When do you remember first talking with Boutin about looking forward to 1960? Is there anything before Boutin is defeated in '58?

DUNFEY: Well, from the '56 convention on, with the vice president run and Kefauver defeating him, I think everybody, you know, just kind of had it in the back of their mind but didn't really have any kind of a game plan. It was just one of those things, wouldn't it be nice if... There was no clear planning or time table or feeling that anyone was putting that together in the state.

HACKMAN: Yeah, yeah. Now when you say, in everyone's mind, do you mean specifically the part of the New Hampshire Democratic party that you and Boutin at that point were involved in, or do you mean Democrats across the board in New Hampshire?

DUNFEY: I'd say across the board, because it's almost like in Massachusetts, while you have, you know, the McCormack [John William McCormack] factions and this one and that this kind of subsumed it. For some reason or another even those who didn't really like him, they didn't fight us too damn hard because of what they'd run into among their friends and other political supporters. So that I'd say there

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was just that broad general feeling, wouldn't it be nice, but no real plan going on.

HACKMAN: How would you describe what happened in the '58 campaign, as in defeat Boutin was able, at least the way I understand it, to get Murray Devine [J. Murray Devine] as the state chairman and a new group of people basically coming into the state committee and everything? What does that mean in terms of New Hampshire politics?

DUNFEY: Well, two good things were going on. Paul Butler, who I think nobody gives

enough credit to in terms of the design that he saw of the need for a national political party—there's clear evidence today there's no national political party; there wasn't then. His design was such that for the first time in '58, and after the defeat in '58, I was still traveling around with guys like Bernie Boutin defeated Frank Branion [E. Frank Branion] in Vermont defeated working with Ken Curtis [Kenneth M. Curtis] who then was with Jim Oliver [James C. Oliver] as an A.A. [Administrative Assistant] organized the meeting up at Bethel [Vermont]. So that basically you took a guy, Bernie Boutin and four or five people from Vermont, and you mixed them in with people who were successful in other states, Vermont or Connecticut. So that if the continuity did happen, it was very good, and you did plan and you didn't just wait until the next election. Bernie, you know was a very efficient, effective executive and he only lost by seven thousand votes, which was a hell of a run. And he kind of lost it in Manchester with the French cutting him. So that he had his juices running even in defeat.

HACKMAN: Yeah. In either or geographical terms within New Hampshire, how would you describe what was going on. I mean, you sort of talked about it philosophically.

DUNFEY: Well, what was happening was the time lag of what already occurred in Maine. What Muskie [Edmund S. Muskie] busted through and did in '54, we came within three hundred voted of doing with McIntyre in '54. We lost in a recount. And Vermont was within a hair breath. The whole tier of Northern New England states was ready to revolt against the Republican Party if offered anything. They felt in the backlash of the nation, you know, Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire. With the rest of the nation growing and developing, you know, people in those states were ready for anything new. And Muskie did it in Maine in '54, we almost did it, Vermont almost did it. Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] wiped us out in '56. So '58 was just a rebounding again, almost again in Vermont and New Hampshire, with Maine winning again. We were just on the edge of it. So that what you were able to do then is, you could at least convince people there was a potential where previously you

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couldn't get anybody to do anybody to do anything. So that was the glue more than anything.

HACKMAN: Now you talked about going to work as the regional representative for the D.N.C [Democratic National Committee]. What kind of contacts did you keep with either Senator Kennedy or anyone on his staff as you traveled around in '58, '59?

DUNFEY: Well, it was kind of a two-way thing. I used to pick at them to try to get information or their people, like I'd meet with Bailey down in Connecticut. John, as you know, is very loquacious, and if you were willing to listen, I could pick up information on Delaware and New Jersey and New York and Rhode Island and Connecticut in terms of things that I was trying to achieve in contacts that I knew, whether it

was with labor union or educators or town leaders, things of that nature. So that I was friendly enough with the Kennedy people in Massachusetts to do that and with Bailey in Connecticut. And then, in the other way, we were entitled to just pass on to them—although I always did it verbally—people that I'd run onto who were all excited about President Kennedy. Like Garrett Lyons [Garrett E. Lyons] state chairman down in Delaware, was just, you know, as far as he was concerned he would do anything to get him. So that I think in that situation.... Well, it was so obvious and apparent. Then I'd just pass it on to them.

HACKMAN: Was that news to them at that point, do you remember?

DUNFEY: Not really, no. I don't think they quite knew how total his commitment was. He was a real pile driving Irishman. You couldn't get in Garrett's way or he'd run over you like a steamroller.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Other people that come to mind just off the top of your head in the states?

DUNFEY: Well, I was doing these programs in Orange, Suffolk, Nassau, Westchester counties so that, you know, I ran onto Bill Luddy [William F. Luddy], Jack English [John F. English]. And again there, I couldn't read what DeSapio and Prendergast were doing. But out at the county level where I was working, DeSapio always had a guard with me. I couldn't travel in New York unless attorney Bill Calise [William J. Calise] from Tammany Hall was with me. DeSapio made that very clear to me. And basically, for the kind of program that Butler had us running, the people who were receptive to it were the reform elements and the people were looking to change in political organization. So that while there was no design to make it happen to make it happen for

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Kennedy it was just happening very naturally. The programs were very successful, and the people who I think got involved in them, once they got a taste of it, for those who were available for the '60 election, I mean, just more and more went in the direction of Senator Kennedy.

HACKMAN: Did you ever talk to Senator Kennedy about what you were doing and get any response from him just in the kind of thing you were doing, whether he thought this was effective or whether he thought it was a waste of time?

DUNFEY: I think, you know, the whole Kennedy crew, my relations with them weren't that good because my own approach to political organization and what I thought the party needed at the time was different than theirs. They had the personality and they were running with him and doing a hell of a job and getting organization that way. My job was different and I think in a lot of ways they pooh-pooh it. I shouldn't say I think. Guys like Dick Donahue [Richard K. Donahue] and—I'm trying to think of a few other... Like I don't think Bob Kennedy thought anything of it; I didn't get on at all well with

him. I always thought, when I was first getting into the Kennedy thing that they looked at me a little crossed eyed, and if I wasn't from New Hampshire that, you know, they probably wouldn't put up with me, but being from New Hampshire that had to set me aside as a special case. I was kind of a political scientist anyway, and I still am in terms of organizational structure and what I think you have to do, on any campaign that I get involved in. And this did run a lot at cross-purpose in terms of their design.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Did you ever get any complaints back to Butler or back to other people about what you were doing out in the field? Because people felt that you showed your pro-Kennedy bias in some cases. Any complaints coming from the Hill [Capitol Hill] or from D.N.C. people, or anywhere really?

DUNFEY: I think the other regional representative all had me labeled as a Kennedy guy, just because they figured I must have had to have been approved by Kennedy to be there. I'm trying to think. If there were, they sure as hell aren't of any great significance, I don't think.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Looking at the other regional representatives from your point of view, do you recall any of them being very pro any of the other potential candidates in '60?

DUNFEY: Oh, yeah. I think you couldn't survive functioning down in the South and then in that Southwest unless

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you were, you know, for the most immoderate appearing of any that were around or on the horizon. Of course, Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] was kind of late starting and so it.... But they certainly couldn't be pro-Kennedy you know, for the governors and national committee, state chairman....

HACKMAN: You know, a lot of people have speculated about Butler's role in '59 and '60. What's your own observation of his neutrality or his pro-Kennedy actions? Could you see him operating in any way that really.

DUNFEY: No. He's pretty clean-cut, clear-cut guy, very opinionated about what his plan was and, you know, almost like a Vince Lombardi [Vincent T. Lombardi] in terms of being unmovable. And I think if I had to assess anything in his plan on what you needed for a National Democratic Party, the guys on the Hill—the Earle Clements [Earle C. Clements] and the Rayburn [Sam Rayburn] and the Johnson—would thoroughly ruin the Democratic National.... I happen to agree with this. I agree with it on the state level. The most horrible thing you can do on a state level is have state legislators tied up into your party. I don't believe in having a U.S. senator as a national chairman. I mean that's a whole philosophical discussion. Butler was very strong on this, fought the Hill. And we never went to a national committee meeting that we weren't all

about to be fired. Every national committee meeting we had was a test of Barley Lawrence [David Leo Lawrence], DeSapio, you know, to dump the whole thing. But I think, again, the design of what he was doing nationally benefited Kennedy. It could have benefited Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] if Humphrey were doing anything. In fact, based on the people involved—the Neil Staeblers, the U.A.W. [United Automotive, Aircraft, and Agriculture Implements Workers of America] if Humphrey had been moving, he would have been a much more natural beneficiary because a lot of what was being done was more Midwestern and Michigan than anything. It was really the Michigan plan, and a damn good one at that time.

HACKMAN: Yeah. How would you account for Butler's ability to survive? Just disunity among the opponents, or what?

DUNFEY: Well, among the Eleanor Roosevelts [Eleanor R. Roosevelt] and the Lehmans [Herbert H. Lehman], and Harry Truman, and Harriman [William Averell Harriman] and kind of this invisible and informal network of tough Democrats, plus those Michigan people.... The Michigan people were a hell of a lot stronger than most people give them credit for. [Interruption]

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HACKMAN: We were talking about Butler ability to survive as chairman.

DUNFEY: He seemed to pull together just enough of that informal organization and just display the futility of what people thought was the National Democratic Party, because of conflicting things. And maybe Barley Lawrence, DeSapio just trying to get on the phone and convince the state chairman from Rhode Island on why he should do this as compared to what a U.A.W. or an Eleanor Roosevelt or somebody else could do with the fellow; that the apparatus worked better that way. Then again, by paying attention—like in my area, Murray Devine is the state chairman; over in Vermont Fred Fayette [Frederick J. Fayette] is the state chairman: You know, we 'd never have to worry about these guys. Anytime there was a change in the state chairmen based on the work we were doing, they were kind of in the new style.

HACKMAN: Yeah. What do you recall about other people at the Democratic National Committee? Where does Drexel Sprecher fit in on this philosophical approach, and also pro-Kennedy versus pro someone else?

DUNFEY: Probably maintaining a leaning over backwards neutrality towards Kennedy, but didn't like Kennedy's style particularly. Because in the Michigan setup and U.A.W. approach to organization, you didn't kind of do it this way.

That was a factor that was great to have in on it but you know, image alone wasn't enough. I think, you know, most of the times they'd question the reliability of what was developing and the stability of it. That's what I would get from any of the organizational planning meetings or workshops or discussions that would be going on. And I'd have to say, you know in many

respects that not having quite the sense of all of the ingredients that were coming together in the Kennedy thing in terms of what certain business elements, what Joe Kennedy [Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.] could do and so forth.... A lot of that, you know, you read about it in retrospect, and I don't mean to overweight it, but I think there are a lot of other ingredients working that you never quite had a handle on.

HACKMAN: Yeah. How did that develop in your own mind? You took the position at the D.N.C. with Senator Kennedy's approval, but was there ever any doubt in your own mind that you were going to be for him in '60?

DUNFEY: Well, this is funny. We used to meet and we'd talk and we'd travel together, and he was very open with me and I was very open with him, and it was one of those things that from the time he recommended me and from the time I was doing it, he just clearly accepted what I was

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doing. I felt in many respects, even though that wasn't my design, there was no way but what I was doing was going to be helping him. And there was nothing that was two-faced about it. It was just the two things, although they were quite separate, where they did mesh in they were beneficial to him. And he was real good with me whereas some of the other people that were involved in the Kennedy thing, they just thought the National Committee was wasting a hell of a lot of money because they had to listen to Bailey and Lawrence and other who felt that way about it and these people were strong votes—Lawrence wasn't strong for Kennedy that early—but Bailey in particular.

HACKMAN: Right.

DUNFEY: Where he and Ribicoff were such a big part of the New England thing I always just accepted that and just figured, the hell, I'm not going to give him any folderol with John Bailey. I don't know who wanted that.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Who do you mean when you say that though? Are you talking about Frank Morrissey or are you talking about O'Donnell and O'Brien or someone else?

DUNFEY: Boy, you've got to give me a couple of other names now.

HACKMAN: Well, there's Sorensen, Dungan [Ralph A. Dungan], Bob Wallace [Robert Ash Wallace].

DUNFEY: I'm trying to think. See, the guy I used to bump into was Ted Sorensen, traveling with Senator Kennedy. And so the three of us would talk or I'd be talking with Ted. See, that all went very easy you know. Yeah. Most of the criticism came close to Los Angeles—Yeah, now as I think of it—because up to then in

general were nice to everybody, you know. But as soon as Los Angeles, and we had our first meeting with Bob Kennedy—we had a couple of meeting during the week, and then we all went to Washington for a meeting—then, you know, I could sense and really feel that among the Kennedy people, they really thought that this was kind of, you know like a bunch of monsignors running around without a hell of a lot to do.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Is that the first time you have contact with Robert Kennedy, or had there been during the primary period or before any experience with this guy?

DUNFEY: I got a call directly—wait a minute now. Yeah, that's the first time. Wait a minute. No, in the presidential primary in New Hampshire—let's see if

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I've got this right; yeah, that would be March of '60—didn't see him but we talked a lot on the phone, and I phoned down the results to Hyannis [Massachusetts] from Portsmouth [New Hampshire] where we got them off the machine, and talked on the phone then and the following day, and he called me a couple of times to get an analysis based on the primaries they were going into. And then a couple of people that come out of the New Hampshire thing, I think either he or Chuck Roche [Charles D. Roche] called me to Fred Forbes and others who—Fred in particular, I guess.

HACKMAN: This is right after the New Hampshire primary, deciding who would get involved in the company or work in further primaries, right?

DUNFEY: Yes. Then the first time it would have been in, saw him at the Convention in Los Angeles and then went to that first organizational meeting in Los Angeles, flew back on the plane from Los Angeles and then got called to a meeting down at the National Committee wherein he set the state coordinator system. And they put me with Ted Reardon [Timothy J. Reardon, Jr.] and the way they were saying it to me was, "You take New England but Ted will pretty well handle Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Ted doesn't know much about northern New England but he'll travel with you when you go up there."

HACKMAN: Yeah. Now that's a name that I had forgotten to mention earlier and maybe Dick Maguire [Richard Maguire]. I don't know what he was doing that early, but.... No, Dick I didn't run into right at this stage, but Ted I had run into earlier and Lemoyne Billings [Kirk Lemoyne Billings]. He had traveled with Senator Kennedy on a couple of the hops from Hyannis up to here.

Had a funny incident in the Florida primary. Bernie's running for governor and I had Bob Kennedy coming to speak. I got a call from Senator Kennedy the day of the affair, or the day previous, and he said that Bob had to cancel and go to the Florida talk that Senator... Who's the Democrat that is the personal friend?

HACKMAN: Smathers [George A. Smathers].

DUNFEY: ... Smathers. Said he had to be there. So Senator Kennedy, John Kennedy, replaced Bob Kennedy and flew to this affair was, you know, kind of an odd twist.

HACKMAN: Yeah. How did he, if you remember Billings being on any of these trips, what kind of conversations would the two of them have? Would he talk politics seriously with Billings or would it just be casual conversation? Does anything stand out on that?

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DUNFEY: I can't say anything stands out other than, you know, if there were others there, the Senator would carry on a conversation with them and, you know, Billings would be just traveling with him.

HACKMAN: Where did you see Reardon fitting into the whole picture, let's say in general, but particular in the campaign when you worked for him? What I'm really trying to get at is relationships among the whole group of Kennedy people that you dealt with. Ever any frictions on how to handle New Hampshire or what to do in the '60 campaign, various things?

DUNFEY: Not from Ted's point of view. No, Ted was just too easygoing and, you know, I found Ted easy to get along with and in terms of.... He and I had to go up and meet with Senator Muskie at China Lake and plan the Labor Day trip. The first trip that Senator Kennedy took after Los Angeles I planned for Manchester, Presque Isle, Bangor, Portland, and I had to arrange the Maine end of it with Muskie. So Ted Reardon and I went up, met with Frank Coffin [Frank M. Coffin], Muskie and planned that. Very easy, no problem at all in terms of any work I did with Ted. I really don't know how Ted. First in on the thing. But I think it was Ken O'Donnell who made that arrangement and said "We will be using you in New England but we're going to be using Ted, too." And he was afraid it was going to be awkward, but I said, "Don't, worry about it. I'm not looking for a title or anything."

The day before the election—Sunday, Monday of the election in '60—I had to advance the Lewiston, Maine trip where he was coming out of New Jersey, then down to Providence. We didn't get in there until about two-thirty in the morning. We were running almost five and a half hours late then. Then I had to leave, and while they went to Hartford, I went to Burlington [Vermont] because I had Burlington, Manchester, and then back to Faneuil Hall [in Boston, Massachusetts]. And the only incident that I remember, when I arrived up in Burlington, I had a call and it was Bob Kennedy and he said we were going to do a national television broadcast out of Manchester and he wanted me to call down, and people I was using in Manchester, to get it set up with Channel 9. So I proceeded to do this. While I was still working in Burlington I got a call back from Manchester. They had checked with the telephone company and there was no way that it could be done. Was this settled....

HACKMAN: Not that I know of, no. I heard it wasn't.

DUNFEY: So, I called back: down to Bob Kennedy and he was not in, and I just left the message, "The telephone company said it can't be set up and so we're not

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doing it." By then, Senator Kennedy and the whole crew arrived from Hartford, Connecticut in Burlington, you know, so I was all caught up in things, and they were chasing me that Bob Kennedy was calling. They couldn't get me so they got Ted Sorenson. Ted got on the line and I guess Bob Kennedy was really chewing him out. You know, "We're going to do that national broadcast. Start writing something. Nixon's [Richard M. Nixon] on, he's really hurting us" and so forth. "You get Dunfey back here and get him on the phone." So Ted was really, really furious, really furious about it, and he calls me back and he says, "He wants to talk to you." He really let loose on Bobby in front of me in term of getting into this, you know, at the last minute.

But he performed a near miracle. He got me on the phone; he said, "Call your people back in Manchester. Get everything set up. We're going to do the broadcast." He called—I can't even think of the name—the president of American Tel and Tel [American Telephone and Telegraph Co.,], went to the guy in charge of New England. We put the broadcast on at 6:30 and he just bulldozed the thing. He had to push and shove everybody. And that was quite an event by the time we arrived in Manchester, between the incident on Senator Kennedy and then hustling up to do the Channel 9 thing. My early impressions on Bob were not good at all.

I had travelled with him just two weeks prior to that. He called me and I had to set up a trip. He wanted to go to Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Portland, Maine; Burlington, Vermont. I could not get Senator Muskie to agree to let him come into Maine. It was pretty rough, and Bobby chewed me out. But there was no way I could clear it. Senator Muskie just said, "No. I don't want him," and Bobby's saying "I'm going to go," and I stood in the middle. And he didn't know until he landed up there at Pease Air [Force] Base and we were into Portsmouth that we weren't going to Portland. So our trip across from Portsmouth to Burlington, Vermont in a twin engine plane—Chuck Roche, Bob Kennedy, myself, and a pilot—was a very unpleasant one, you know, because he was furious about it.

HACKMAN: Yeah. What were Muskie's reasons for that?

DUNFEY: Well, the way he looked at Bob Kennedy then, you know, he had no real stature as a speaker. All he was, was a brother to the guy who was running. And Frank Coffin, they knew they were in desperate trouble, trying to elect Frank as governor in a state where Catholic thing was really cutting heavily against him, and so I think that his judgment was right. But that didn't sell with Bobby at all. He was really furious about it.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Maybe we could skip back and just talk about New Hampshire

primary a little bit. Oh, one other

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thing. Did you ever talk with Senator John Kennedy about Massachusetts politics? Because so much criticism of him has come from people who said he never took the trouble to do the kind of thing in Massachusetts certainly that the Michigan people were doing—any kind of reform in Massachusetts?

DUNFEY: Well, it was a crazy thing. Pat Lynch [John M. Lynch] was state chairman most of the time I was there. Howard Fitzpatrick [Howard W. Fitzpatrick] was the fundraiser or he used to run the dinners. So that I got involved, I ran the Truman dinner down there that... Let's see, we had Lyndon Johnson up as a speaker. So I was involved in running that. So that I worked with all of them, but it was just a matter, I was from the national committee and we were getting a cut from the dinner, and I would come in and help them out. So I just worked with the apparatus as it existed—the women on wheels—you know, it just had all those crazy little clusters, and you just dealt with them as they existed, from Furcolo to this one. Through Chip Mahoney [George C. Mahoney] I'd keep in touch with Furcolo so I didn't get in a jam with them. I got along very well with Pat Lindstrom on the state committee thing, I didn't get any beefs. Never really did have any philosophical discussions with her. I just operated with it as it was.

HACKMAN: Yeah. What kinds of things can you remember getting involved in here in New Hampshire that has some impact on the '60 primary here? Now at one point there is a new system put through in terms of delegate selection, is there not, so that that state split into two congressional districts with an equal number of delegates from each district or something like that?

DUNFEY: Right. That was Bernie, myself, and Murray Devine taking a look at the threat of, if he ran statewide like if he did it in Boston, the whole delegation would come right the hell out of Manchester. And with Loeb's [William Loeb] influence, you know, that could really wreck you, not only in terms of—they'd all be Kennedy maybe, but how they would perform at a convention might be a different story. So we redesigned that into the two congressional districts and.... But mechanically, I think that introduced a much better delegation and also guaranteed the people that run the second district that he could run and get elected. I think the real hard-nosed decisions on it, though, I'd have to say Ken O'Donnell and Larry O'Brien made. Bernie Boutin, Kenny, Larry and myself sat in a room at the Parthenon—we didn't own that hotel at that time.

And just in reviewing everything, Paul Fisher [Paul C. Fisher] ballpoint pen manufacturer running with Loeb's

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backing. They just made hardnosed decision that we can't lose any body on the first ballot; we can't let anybody run favorable; we are going to irritate some people; we've got to have a

pledge slate; we've got to pick it and organize it and do it because we don't have opposition here. If we take anything away from New Hampshire, it has to be a high vote from Kennedy plus a group of delegates that are pledged because we're going to need everyone we get on the first ballot. And they were very strong on that. Bernie and I were finding it a little hard to swallow because we knew we were going to have to do the chopping in terms of the numbers who wanted to run. But it was a good decision. It caused us quite a few headaches within the state because Henry Sullivan [Henry P. Sullivan] and crew then ran favorable. And Bernie and I and Murray Devine, we had to take the onus of not being able to say this was what the Kennedy organization wanted because we would have to put them in the soup, and so Loeb and Sullivan and the whole crew just kind of labeled us as guys who were trying to handpick things, you know, for our own benefit. But they made the decision on it, and it was a good one because they did need what they got.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Can you remember, well, a couple of things. One thing that got in the press, was at the time that the New Hampshire state committee met and voted on, made a recommendation on selection of a site for the convention and selected and recommended Los Angeles, there was some speculation at the press that that was surprising that Boutin would go along with that because Los Angeles at that time was seen as favorable to Stevenson and Humphrey as opposed to Kennedy.

DUNFEY: Bernie was national committeeman then.

HACKMAN: Right.

DUNFEY: That would be, I was working for the National Committee. Bernie was very close to Butler, really liked him, got on famously with him, so that whatever decision would be going there, Bernie, as much as he was for Kennedy, he'd listen to Butler. And Butler was a pretty persuasive guy in terms of what his own plan was and his own design. And I would guess that maybe the state chairman in Vermont went along, did he? I mean the National Committeeman.

HACKMAN: I don't remember.

DUNFEY: See, I would have been out working on that in terms of what they were doing, and if the National Committee and Butler were backing that, you know, you'd tell them on the reasons for it.

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HACKMAN: There was just one short memo that I saw in your files and Sprecher's things that said that you had talked with Senator Kennedy—I don't know whether I've got the date on that—and you didn't detect any strongly negative feeling about selecting Los Angeles from him.

DUNFEY: I think it happened a little because Bernie was quizzical, and I'm not sure of

this memo because I know I can't specifically remember talking to him on it.

HACKMAN: February 18, '59.

DUNFEY: February 18, '59. Sounds like it would have been in Boston. No, I don't remember that one.

HACKMAN: Okay. One other thing. Can you remember what your attitude was, what the Kennedys' attitude was, on slates of delegates for other candidates in '59 and '60—Symington [Stuart Symington, II], Humphrey...

DUNFEY: In New Hampshire?

HACKMAN: Right. And whether it seemed reasonable to not stop or to encourage sort of under the board other people to file other...

DUNFEY: Well, the only thing that I can recall that was going is, Loeb was excited about Symington because he was a great defense and wrote a few editorials.

HACKMAN: Right. There's a guy named Nick Hart...

DUNFEY: Oh yeah.

HACKMAN: ... who made a couple of statements at least to the press about, "The state's not solid for Kennedy. I'm going to try to build some support for Symington."

DUNFEY: Yeah. That would be strictly a plant through Loeb. Nick Hart—was I can't identify him with some figure you could relate to—but, you know, the kind of a guy that Loeb could go to and give something, and because he was on a ward committee and state representative he would make the statements Nick changed over, Republican, not very long after that. He fought us like hell. He was strictly anti-organization; Loeb was pasting us. So that when Loeb was touting Symington it was a natural direction. But the only... John L. Sullivan who I didn't know very well, former Secretary of the Navy, John got at me a couple of times about, you know, "You're a young guy and you shouldn't be

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jumping for Jack. In the national political scene, you should keep an eye on what Symington's doing." See, that's out to the old defense establishments "Lyndon Johnson will have a heavy hand in this; you have no idea of national politics." So there was a little of that. But unless I've missed something, there was really never anything of any substance that got going.

And of course part of this I think was.... I had a theory—I started to write it but I never really have completed it—that, you know, political leaders don't understand the presidential primary process. The first guy that really read it and understood it was Kefauver and he went two directions, women and young people, and the television culture. What he did with limited amounts of money, Kennedy took and scientifically applied a hell of a lot more to it in terms of the whole advance man routine to generate the crowds, and the enormous appetite that people had to see somebody who was on television. You know, it's hard to relate to that today, but I saw that with the Kefauver thing in 1952; I couldn't believe it. And I think I'd have to say that Senator Kennedy, I think he had—this was a little more of his own, just being so close to New Hampshire and Washington—a better sense of that than, oh, certainly than the Humphreys, the Symingtons, the Johnsons. They couldn't relate to that at all.

HACKMAN: From what you've told me, there's really no problem in New Hampshire, no major effort that you had to make to get Democratic figures around the state to support Kennedy. It was a matter of just chopping people off more or less to choose the slate. You don't remember going out and doing some spade work with people in '58, '59 to bring them around on Kennedy?

DUNFEY: Yeah, Bernie was doing it more. See, I was traveling nine states, and Bernie and Murray were definitely doing it. It's hard for other people to understand this, but Styles Bridges was still alive; Loeb was enormously powerful where all the Democratic votes come out of, and Frank Morrissey had been badgering me, "You've got to stop fighting with Loeb. Joe Kennedy gets along with him; they're great friends." And I had some real fights over this saying "You're crazy. There's no way this guy's going to cut Jack Kennedy every time he can get at him." But for a period there of almost a year and a half, of fighting with that. Morrissey's saying to us, you know, "Joe Kennedy knows Bill Loeb and he's going to be for him, even though..." [Laughter] That was always a threat because between the numerous Loeb editorials , and what he would say and how he could say it to an Irish, French, Catholic audience that you know, he always nurtured to an Irish, French, Catholic audience that even without opposition, was a threat—as he

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proved with Fisher. You know he got a fairly respectable vote for a guy on a write-in. The guys name wasn't even on the ball at.

HACKMAN: I'm out of tape on this side.

[END OF SIDE I, TAPE I]

[TAPE I SIDE II]

HACKMAN: Do you remember any discussions of how much money the Kennedys would put into New Hampshire, how much would be coming in from out of the

state, and how it would be handled, and were there any problems on that during the primary?

DUNFEY: Most of it was handled with Bernie, some with Murray. Because I was still with the Democratic National Committee, I tried to hang loose and stay away from it because I thought if I got involved in it.... And my attitude is—and I think they pretty well understood this in Washington—whatever money'd come in and everything that was happening for the Kennedy thing possibly ensured Boutin getting elected, and ensured our organization growing and developing. And where he was unopposed, even though maybe I could have been criticized if other people got wind of it, anything that came in, anything that happened was just a plus for the Democrats. On dough, I think the biggest things that happened were—gee, one guy gave twelve hundred signs that read "Kennedy-Boutin" which was a hell of a big thing. We just plastered the countryside with those. So that that was a big contribution. DeMantiro [Sound Equipment Co.] helped a lot with all the sound systems that we needed out of Massachusetts. And Howard Fitzpatrick I think I would have to say the money came from Joe Kennedy and Howard Fitzpatrick, through Bernie and Murray.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Other than more signs and more sound, can you recall new things that were done in New Hampshire in the 1960 primary that were Kennedy style or Kennedy ideas? I've heard someone mention that some new things were done in New Hampshire in 1960, but I've never seen anyone put a finger on really what kinds of things.

DUNFEY: Well, you know, not trying to be too much of a political scientist, my theory always has been that he enlarged and he improved on what Kefauver did and learned. Well, to reemphasize it. When we got beat by Kefauver the second time in '56 I went out to Libertyville [Illinois] for a weekend with Adlai Stevenson, Jim Finnegan [James A. Finnegan] the whole thing on, what the hell were they going to do in California and I just went through a

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recital of things I just said to you about what I thought presidential primaries were all about and that this is what Stevenson would have to do in California. And this is what they did and it worked, and they won in California. You know, he had to get out on the street, the thing he disliked the most. And whether Kennedy people watched that in California when Stevenson did it in '56, or what they witnessed on Kefauver doing twice in primaries, to me what they really enlarged on.... The biggest technique they introduced, I'd say was the advance man; and the consorts that you used in terms of how to get the high school band. These things weren't done by Kefauver, you know, they really weren't. So I'd say they just made a lot more scientific the happenings and things that occurred with it, so that the television coverage, the feature writer response, that whole thing just blossomed here.

HACKMAN: Other then the problem you had with Robert Kennedy on the Manchester

thing, how did they react to your advance work on setting up these various trips? Did they have new things that they tried to impress on you that they had developed elsewhere, or ...

DUNFEY: You're talking about the Kennedy people with me on doing some advance?

HACKMAN: Yeah.

DUNFEY: No, I'd say the main thing they had was, when we went to the National Committee, they gave us a checklist of what an advance man was to do, which was an improvement over what anyone was doing. People used to do it out of their heads; they had it in a loose-leaf folder and, you know, you operated from that.

Let me think. Oh, yes, a couple of things that they were very good. They believed in the tabloid, used that heavily, and I don't think anyone had gone that strong on it, and they believed in that door-to-door delivery of the tabloid which again all organizations fake and don't do. They really tried to pin down that it was being done and how it was being done and the whole process whereas in most political campaigns prior to that, that was a bluffing operation, you know, that stuff was being delivered. They were hardnosed. Jack McNally [John J. McNally] was up by Kenny, I think. They would really just drive you crazy checking on, how were the phone calls being made, and what evidence do you have that they were being made, and how was stuff being distributed? Again, they were just a lot more businesslike about it to see that it was done, which was new in politics. That's a new addition, believe me, with the way labor unions claim they do it, you know it doesn't happen.

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HACKMAN: Yeah. I know in this period, you were trying to improve relations with labor leaders in New Hampshire, Tom Pitarys [Thomas J. Pitarys] and those guys. Did the Kennedys make any effort at your suggestion during the primary period to get labor...

DUNFEY: Yeah. We probably had this brief honeymoon and it worked and then that was the end of it, just for the presidential primary. I set up an affair at the Rockingham Hotel. Who came up? No, that was later, Chuck Beasely came up. 1960, I got John F. Kennedy, Ted Reardon came along on that, had a luncheon with navy yard union leaders, buildings trades leaders at the Rockingham and got Joe Moriarity [Joseph Moriarity] who was really the power behind the scene, not Tom Pitarys. He liked some things that Kennedy had to say, both with reference to the navy yard and some other aspect of the building trade union, and I got help out of Moriarity for the presidential primary. But that was about it. I think by the time the election rolled around, he was right back in with Bridges. See, but Bridges had the whole union.... And so that as long as there was a presidential primary—what the hell—he had to be for somebody; he wasn't running against anybody, you know, so it wasn't much. And I went through all of the routines with Al Barkin [Alexander E. Barkin] in and with all the regional guys; they'd come in, got promises out of

Fitz Harris, all of which, you know.... They didn't fulfill them, got money but we never saw where it went.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Okay, so during the '60 campaign they, you're basically working for Reardon, particularly on northern New England...

DUNFEY: Yes.

HACKMAN: On New England stuff in general.

DUNFEY: Right.

HACKMAN: Anything special that you get involved in other than that during the '60 campaign? Any special project kinds of things or....

DUNFEY: Not of any great significance, no.

HACKMAN: Okay. What about after the election then and before the inauguration, anything in the transition period?

DUNFEY: Let's see. Oh, in the meantime I had been elected Democratic National Committeeman, so beginning from election day on we don't have any Democratic office holders so I had to handle all the appointments, U.S.

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marshal, U.S. attorney. So that I started to get set up then with Dick Maguire, Ken O'Donnell. Larry O'Brien in terms of that whole process; where in other states the governors would be making the recommendation, or a senator, I handled the process for New Hampshire.

The main thing I did then was really get on Kenny O'Donnell's tail on Bernie Boutin. I can recall calling Kenny at the Carlyle [Hotel] in New York, calling him in Boston, calling him. You know "I want an appointment for Bernie, number one. This guy is right at the end of his rope. He's run twice and really went all out on that campaign, you know, and ten kids and a competent guy on top of it." Murray Devine and I made two trips down, met with O'Brien, O'Donnell and, you know they wanted to talk about US attorney districts and we didn't want to talk about anything until you give us... Bernie's not an attorney, so he can't be U.S. marshal, then he wants.... But you know. And he called me, we thought we were getting top job for him until Congressmen Green [Edith S. Green] moved in on us and made Bernie number two.

HACKMAN: Right.

DUNFEY: So that in that process then I started to meet with Bob Kennedy on the U.S. attorney appointments Byron White [Bryon R. White], John Reilly [John R.

Reilly] and....

HACKMAN: Talk to Dolan [Joseph F. Dolan] at all on any of these?

DUNFEY: Oh yeah. Dolan and I got very friendly from that point on. In fact, I just heard from Joe the other day. And John Seigenthaler. So that because we didn't have any Democratic office holders, I did then develop whole relationship with different agencies and then those involved in appointments.

HACKMAN: Did you actually go down to the Democratic National Committee and spend time there during the Administration, particularly looking toward '64 campaign planning?

DUNFEY: Yes. What had happened, I think this was.... I never took it too serious. Bernie called me and said Kenny O'Donnell wanted me at the White House for an appointment, and I went down and they offered me deputy postmaster general for real estate or something like this. And I always thought that they knew I wasn't looking for anything but they thought they ought to offer me something. And in the process of going through that routine, Kenny and I got talking a little more. And then I met with, let's see, Ken O'Donnell and Larry O'Brien and no, Dick Maguire and Ken O'Donnell at—what's the restaurant in New York? I can't think

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of it—Toots Shor's in October of 1963. And we started having discussion about—and it went two ways. Kenny was talking about maybe working with Dick out of the White House or the executive offices on the '64 campaign full time. But Steve Smith [Stephen E. Smith] was coming over. Shriver [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.] too? No. Steve was going to come over. And of course by that time I was a little upset. I was saying that I thought some of the things that they should have been doing organizationally they had neglected and you know, if they really meant to do it, yeah, I'd go and do it; but I didn't want to get into something that really wasn't going to tackle the thing. So I agreed then that I'd be available by January for that campaign.

HACKMAN: Did you ever talk to Steve Smith about it?

DUNFEY: No.

HACKMAN: Did you spend enough time around the National Committee to get any feel for during the Kennedy Administration, how Bailey and the people at the D.N.C. were getting along with, well, Maguire, O'Donnell, but other people, too, at that point?

DUNFEY: Yeah. And again, what bothered me was having gone the Butler routine, to watch Bailey and that operation and then it became increasingly apparent

but that Maguire's style wasn't Ken O'Donnell's. Bailey and the Committee, you had to have it there, and it took care of a lot of their functions. But when it came to planning what the organization would be and everything, it wasn't going to happen out of there: or it was going to happen out of there when they put Steve over there and he started to do it.

So this was discouraging to me because I had gone through the process of trying to upgrade, get new guys as county chairmen, state chairmen. You know, anytime there was a vacancy, if you had a plan, you were moving people up and all of that, I felt, was slipping backwards. And you know, once you're in power all the guys would start to serve us who had an angle on something, these things, you know.

HACKMAN: Right. How much contact did you have with Robert Kennedy during the Kennedy Administration, or with Paul Corbin at the Democratic national Committee?

DUNFEY: Corbin, none, because I had a run-in with him early and you know he just kind of stayed clear of me, based on.... No, wait a minute. Corbin, I didn't have anything to do with until a run-in '64; '64 we had a run-in. So I didn't even know the hell Corbin was. My dealings were with Byron White, John Reilly, and Bob Kennedy himself, strictly as it was related to U.S.

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attorneys, marshals, those appointments. Nothing at all besides that.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Why don't you talk a little bit about the '64 run-in then, because there are all sorts of rumors floating around about what happened in New Hampshire in '64 or what was supposed to be happening.

DUNFEY: Well, informally based on conversations I had had with Bob Kennedy, what we were doing here in New Hampshire on the write-in campaign for vice president, Bernie and I were doing it and we kind of had agreements on how it was being done. Separately, Corbin through a guy by the name of Bob Shaine [Robert Shaine] started another operation that basically just led into problems because though it was supposed to be reasonably spontaneous, I'd have to say was pretty spontaneous, now started to take on the apparatus of, you know, here's Corbin, Bob Kennedy's man up here, and this isn't as spontaneous as everybody says. So that Shaine was a heavy-handed guy and Corbin was a heavy handed guy, and after some back and forth with Justice O'Donnell and Cleo O'Donnell they cleared Corbin out of here. So that's the only thing.... I bumped into him a couple of times—again, I forget where and how, but not anything of any significance.

HACKMAN: Yeah. When had the first conversation with Robert Kennedy about a write-in up here taken place? How soon after President Kennedy was assassinated, do you remember?

DUNFEY: Well, Let me see now. Was it March '64? Let's see. I resigned as national committeeman.... I'm trying to think of what the heck I was doing. Well, Bernie was in Washington—at that time, GSA [General Services Administration]—and he tells me he was holding conversations with Bob Kennedy and calling me, just saying, you know, what's the situation in New Hampshire?" and could Bob Kennedy get write in votes?" I said, "Oh, he'll get them without organization. Even if nothing happens, he's going to get them." And you know "Well will he get them with a little organization?" And I said, you know, you almost had the feeling he'd get more than President Johnson would. So it kind of took that form and style.

Once it got moving a little, Bob Kennedy called me once or twice. Just, you know, how did I look at this thing, and was it going to be something that he would get seriously embarrassed on? I said to him, "Well that isn't going to happen, and I think regardless of what you're thinking about it, there isn't a great deal you can do about it now that it's moving. People are just looking for some outlet, and this is going to be as good a one as they can get or can have, and

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it's just going to happen." And that's about.... I don't think the conversation I had with him went any further than that. Bernie intimates to me that, you know, his conversations with him were a lot heavier and deeper than that.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Did Robert Kennedy ever mention Paul Corbin's efforts up here and what he thought of them?

DUNFEY: Not to my recollection, no. I think I had said it emphatically enough to Ken O'Donnell that if they were looking to be embarrassed, they were going about it right. If somebody sent Corbin up—you know I didn't know whether he was up here on his own. I presumed he wasn't.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Did you ever get any response from Robert Kennedy after the primary on either the number of primary votes that he received or anything else?

DUNFEY: I think we talked on the phone once. No. I think if anything, not anything big that I can recollect now, other than I just had a sense that we had a phone conversation. See, I didn't know him, you know, real well at this time. For what little I've had to do with him, improved a little while he was attorney general; so that I just didn't have an easy-going relationship with him, and so I think if anything I might have had a perfunctory phone call saying, I appreciate the votes we got up there or something like that.

HACKMAN: Yeah. How much did you do organizationally to get any write-ins other than just letting the thing go?

DUNFEY: It was one of those things, you know, where you could look good without doing anything. All that was happening was everybody was.... I was still national committeeman; I hadn't resigned. So you know, even though McIntyre was in, somehow or other I was still in a role that a lot of stuff was still funneling through me., Jim Keefe [James T. Keefe] who was my first cousin, was McIntyre's A.A. So that where I had been... I've lost track of when I was national committeeman, but in any event stuff was still coming here. So that anybody that had an interest in this, they were just calling me, and you know it was just very easy to just say, "Well listen, if that many people want to do it, you know, just get it going and do it." So that there wasn't any intensive workout or great effort or that kind of thing. People kind of ran ads on their own and that kind of thing. I'd have to say it was more spontaneous than most people would probably say today, and there wasn't a hell

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of a lot of organization. Joe Myers, Democratic city chairman of Manchester, Bob Shaine, Some of them in Manchester really tried to take a hell of a lot of credit for it, but it was happening and would have happened whether I was doing anything or they were doing anything.

HACKMAN: Any further conversations with Robert Kennedy in '64 that you recall, either at the Convention or...

DUNFEY: Yes. At the Convention, following that scene where he gave that long speech, I was on the platform. I had been called by Walter Jenkins [Walter W. Jenkins] then to go to work as a Johnson coordinator for New England. I said no. Kenny O'Donnell then called me and said, "You know, Bob is going to run in New York." If you take the New England thing, or take New York and England, you could spend quite a bit of time in New York and help on that, particularly all of President Johnson's visits." So then Cliff Carter [Clifton C. Carter] called me and even after this I said, "No, I'm not going to do it." I just wasn't that interested. So finally Cliff Carter said, "Would you just come to Atlantic City and handle New York and New England just for the convention?" You know like it was going to be... So I agreed to do that.

So in the process of doing that they were treating me very good, the Johnson people. I stayed in the Pageant [Motor Inn] hotel with all the White House staff, and they had me on the platform and everything. So when Bob Kennedy came on, you know, he recognized me, and then as he was leaving, Bernie and I left with him. And we went on out and sat on the fire escape outside the convention hall because he was really all broken up, and we just sat out there with him for about ten or fifteen minutes; then picked up a little after that and chatted, and I mentioned that I was going to go onto the New England- New York coordinator thing, so that I'd do what I could with New York. So from then on, I handled the President Johnson trips to New York, along with Warren O'Donnell [Warren F. O'Donnell]. I got to know Bob Kennedy—that is kind of where I can started to get to know him a little better, whereas previously I didn't know him. You know, I got friendly with Joe Dolan more than I did with Kennedy earlier.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Do you remember problems with Ed Weisl [Edwin L. Weisl, Jr.] on some of those trips in New York at that point?

DUNFEY: Crazy. I just bumped into Ed Weisl. He's handling Texas for Muskie. That's what he tells me anyway. He was up in Kennebunkport [Maine] about three months ago. Oh yeah, that was really weird because both Warren and I were labeled as, you know, kind of the Kennedy spies handling the Johnson trip. Whatever schedules we would be arranging there was always was this being done for the President's advantage or for Bob's advantage? It was more,

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you know, Gilbert-Sullivan comic opera rather than anything really serious—at least that's the way I looked at it. Because I was handling New England for Johnson and gave in reports that he was just going to sweep New England, you know; that it was really futile, the money that was being spent or things that were happening. Even Dick Maguire at the time, I don't think they quite believed what was happening. And there was always this element. Were you soft-soaping them or.... And you know my rationale in New York was that Johnson was just in so handily, it didn't matter what the hell you did if you could get....

There was a lady congressman running and we were trying to rig part of the trip to help her as well as rig the whole trip to help Bob Kennedy. With Ed Weisl because of the way he talked to his dad [Edwin L. Weisl, Sr.] and the way he talked to a few others, we'd have to, you know, put a little different covering on it because I don't think he felt, or others felt, that Johnson was going to sweep. There's a lot of real comical, crazy struggling things that were going on, you know: how you handle the thing, the Lady Bird Johnson [Claudia Alta "Lady Bird" Johnson] at the Madison Square Garden thing; you had Gregory Peck and all the... Mayor Wagner [Robert Ferdinand Wagner, Jr.] and, you know all kinds of crazy infighting about who sat where, all of the different....

But serious things, no, other than Weisl, I guess, calls complains; tells me again that he talked directly to Johnson at two-thirty in the morning and cancelled the thing that we laid out. And I can't believe, I never believed him that it happened, but he repeated it, that "You and O'Donnell were trying to screw me" he said "and I talked to LBJ at two thirty in the morning." Whether he did or not, I don't know.

An incident that I thought was a little significant: The day of the Al Smith [Alfred E. Smith] dinner, I was handling the arrangements with Warren, and LBJ was going to have his first visit with Jackie Kennedy [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] over at the Carlyle. I can't think who was over in the Carlyle that I was working with. But late afternoon George Reedy [George E. Reedy] came in and then out, then Marvin Watson [William Marvin Watson] came in and said, "Call the Carlyle and cancel the visit." And I said "What are you talking about?" He said, "Something's happened. Call." About ten minutes late, young Ed Weisl comes running in and he said, "The Republicans framed up Walter Jenkins, caught him in a men's room scene in Washington." Well, the incident that I want to report out of that is that we then rescheduled the visit with Jackie, and I can remember that the President sat out in the

car alone with Bob Kennedy for some time and they must have been reviewing this—that's what I was told after it.

But the next morning when we were preparing to leave for the Syracuse-Buffalo trip we had to get Senator Kennedy and Ethel [Ethel Skakel Kennedy] and the President and everyone up in our suite, up in the Waldorf [Waldorf-Astoria] and Ed Weisl Junior moved right in on Bob Kennedy again—this is seven-

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thirty in the morning—and started in on him, “You were attorney general. Now what: would you do? What do you think we should be doing on this Walter Jenkins thing?” Just really.... And Ethel was standing there; nobody was really talking; you were just trying to get your wits about you. Bob was annoyed by it. He said, “Well anything big that's happened, I wish you wouldn't be talking to me about it, and nobody should do anything for twenty-four hours anyway till you can digest what's happened.” Well, this was odd because within four to five hours after this, the news hit the paper that Khrushchev [Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev] was out. And from that moment on the Jenkins thing was not in the papers. But I think Weisl, he probably thought that, boy, that Bob Kennedy, what a brilliant guy you know, as though he had an advance man to do this in Russia.

HACKMAN: Yeah. How does your relationship with Robert Kennedy then develop, '65, '66? Is there anything before late '67?

DUNFEY: Through Joe Dolan then we start talking a lot, and then he'd put Bob on the phone. I knew Ted well, and Ted and I used to talk a lot.

HACKMAN: Ted Sorensen?

DUNFEY: No. Ted Kennedy [Edward M. Kennedy]. And so Ted—I had had Ted up on a couple of campaigns. And one night when we finished... When did Ted run, '62?

HACKMAN: '62, right.

DUNFEY: Well, we had struck up a pretty good relationship from '60 to '62. And on McIntyre's campaign, when he finished, he said, “Come on out, I've got the *Caroline* and we'll sit down and have a drink.” This was about twelve-thirty. So we went out and I got abroad the *Caroline*. We sat there for about an hour and a half and he started telling me what he was going to do. “I'm going to go for senator down here.” So that we had developed a pretty good relationship. So I used to be in touch with him, and he'd invited me to see him when I'd come into Washington. And then he'd let Bob know I was there, and he'd say, “Bob wants to see you,” And I'd go over to his office, because I didn't know Bob well enough to just show up in Washington and come in. So as it ended up, Ted, anytime I came to Washington, he'd call Bob, And, you know, Bob would say “Can you

come on over?" And I'd go over and I got friendly with Joe and Mankiewicz [Frank F. Mankiewicz] and those people, and developed then a very easy relationship with them.

HACKMAN: You say you talked a lot to Dolan. What kind of

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things do you talk to Dolan about and how early do you talk to him about them?

DUNFEY: Well, I should go back into my files to get times and dates, but let's....

HACKMAN: Well, let me just ask you. What kinds of files do you have? Do you keep notes on each visit that you go down, on something like that as to what discussion took place?

DUNFEY: No. But I've got a calendar and a diary, plus I have files on about most of my visits. I've looked at some, but I've got them stashed away in ways that aren't too easy to get at. Well, for example, let's see, 67. So Robert Kennedy was elected in '64. I'm trying to think—he went in in '65, and I'm trying to think. In '65.

HACKMAN: In '66 there were the congressional elections and he was out for some people then. I know he made a swing up through Vermont and New Hampshire.

DUNFEY: Right. Well, I think I set those up with Joe Dolman. The way it used to work in Ted Kennedy and Bob Kennedy's office, whatever they did up this way, they used to call me on it and just say, "We're going here, and what do you think of this or that?" or "Who should we see" And I'd go through that with them. Was it '66—Ted called me and said, "A close personal friend. Bob and I want you to meet with him. We could fly you on down." I didn't even know who the hell I was going to meet. So I got down and there was a dinner at Ted's house and Bob was there, and who comes in but Tom Watson [Thomas J. Watson, Jr.] (I don't know whether this we should include in or include out.)

HACKMAN: Well, you can do it either way you want. My preference of course is that you put it in, and if you decide you want to close it for a lot longer than the rest of the stuff that's in there, we separate that out and put it in a separate file.

DUNFEY: Okay. And as we got there, Andy Vitali [Andrew Vitali] had prepared a sheet on New England. Tom at this time was thinking of getting out in the public life and running for U.S. senator or governor or something. And so Ted and Bob Kennedy had said, [Interruption] "Well, if you're going to do anything up in New England, we'll have Bill come down and we'll go over the whole thing." So I went through a rationale of where and how to do it. We had it pretty well lined up, he was going to

do it up in Vermont, to go for a governor, and then US senator. And out of this I developed, you know, a close relationship with Tom Watson.

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At that time, Bob Kennedy pulled me aside and talked to me on New Hampshire and said how he felt he really understood the presidential primaries and how he'd really love to do it but just knew he couldn't. And I was agreeing with him.

HACKMAN: But speaking specifically of '68?

DUNFEY: Oh yeah, yeah. But I think that dinner.... Because we were together, oh, for a good three hours, just the four of us, and then I was getting ready to leave and Watson had his jet over in Baltimore, so he offered to fly me back, and I flew back with him. So that out of this I got to know Bob a lot better and got to be friendly with Watson. In fact, I was at Watson's house in Vermont the day Bob Kennedy announced, and he phoned Watson up there and we talked together up there, and he asked me if I'd go after Governor Hoff [Philip H. Hoff] and Governor Curtis and line them up. We went to work on that right away and got both of them. I shouldn't say we got them. Their mood was such that they were ready to do it anyway.

But, boy, I'm trying to think of when you say how early in '66, I'd have to say the first things that I can recollect is, on my own without a lot of influence—more influenced by some things that Fulbright [J. William Fulbright] was saying I had gone sick on the War, and went down to resign in '67 because Marvin Watson and Bernie were after me then to run the '68 thing. So I went down and had some bad meeting at the National Committee, some bad meeting at the White House, some bad meetings with Jim Jones [James Robert Jones]; and then just decided, well, I wasn't getting anywhere, you know, on what I was saying about the war and how I felt about it, so I couldn't run his campaign, I'd get the hell out. So then I resigned April 10, I guess.

Well, by coincidence, Bob Kennedy was addressing the... No, John Burns [John J. Burns] invited all state chairman for a breakfast that the New York delegation ran. President Johnson had what was supposedly a private dinner with us and our wives the night before and went through an unbelievable tirade on the Vietnam War. In fact, at one point he stopped, after talking at least thirty-five minutes, and I could see Lady Bird [Lady Bird Johnson] looking at me, and he said, "But I'm going to continue this." And he just went on another twenty-five minutes. And I was at a table right next to him, with Jim Jones sitting there. And when it was all over, you know, I just told Jones that I couldn't disagree with him more. I was really....

So that the next morning I met Bob Kennedy and I said, "Boy, did you hear what went on? He talked about those men in the Senate referring to Kennedy and Fulbright. "Almost like those who destroyed the League of Nations?" You know, even made the same reference. Total bomb for Kennedy. He just couldn't believe it. He was aghast. So he said to me, "Well

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what do you think I ought to do going into this breakfast meeting?" All the state chairmen and all the press were there. And I said, "You know there's going to be a small revolution right now." He said, "Do you think I ought to say that I'll be supporting Johnson?" I said, "Yes." And he did. We battled back and forth. I said, "With the kind of loyalty test that he's throwing around right now, it's so long away, you almost have to just indicate that you are supporting him." And so that morning in a very structured way after he said many other things, somehow he just slipped "And I will be supporting President Johnson and Vice President Humphrey." [Interruption]

We were talking then through Dolan, and then Joe would put him on the line at times, so our relationship was a lot easier. And I said to him, I said, "Hey just so you know, I haven't told Senator McIntyre or Governor King [John W. King] or Bernie, but you know, I'm getting out. They want me to run the presidential primary thing and I said I just couldn't do it, so I'm going to resign now." So then he said, "Could you come over to the house at noontime today? I'd like to talk to you a little more." Then I said, "Well you now, I think it, I'd be best that I don't, because when do I resign I'm doing this because of my own personal reasons and I'd hate like hell to have this identified with you." So I said, "I think I'll grab a plane and just get out of here," because I was really upset with this thing that had gone the night before.

From then on we talked quite a bit, and I think Joe Dolan talked to me regularly from then on. He then, Bob Kennedy, called me and asked me to go down and meet with Ted and Dick Goodwin [Richard N. Goodwin]—this was later on—in terms of, what should they be thinking, what should they be doing. And I didn't say anything very profound other than, "There's no cute to fool around with presidential primaries. If you're going to do it, you go all out." You know, because at that time it struck me funny that McCarthy's [Eugene J. McCarthy] thing came up then, and I couldn't believe it.

HACKMAN: Well before McCarthy announced?

DUNFEY: Oh yeah. Not well before, but before I had heard it. You know, I'd read the newspapers and everything. That's always struck me funny. Yes, I got to ask Goodwin about it because I talked with Dick. But Ted was the guy who said it to me, you know. Ted, Dick Goodwin, and I sat in Ted's apartment from seven till I don't know, ten thirty or eleven o'clock, and I was just reciting to them.... Everybody had a scheme on how to do it in New Hampshire, and they were getting different input, I know, from Bernie Boutin than I was giving them, and you know you should do this and so on and so on. And I said, There is no cute way to do it in a presidential primary, and you'll get burned if you try too. You've either got to make the decision you're all

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in it, or stay way the hell away from it."

HACKMAN: Yeah. Well, what were they saying about McCarthy? That's very curious.

DUNFEY: No. It was just, you know, increasingly it was building up. Al Lowenstein [Allard K. Lowenstein] had the pressure on and all the disenchantment with Johnson was really setting in, and I think what they were trying to do was find a way to register that this was beyond just a personality thing and a refusal to accept Johnson, but it was out into the public. They were trying to devise a way to display this in that New Hampshire primary without having a head-on confrontation. Now that's my reading but you know their design might have been different.

HACKMAN: They didn't say that they had talked to McCarthy about it at this point, did they, or was that implied?

DUNFEY: I would have to think that it was implied, or at least Ted was just sizing it up from how piqued McCarthy was about some events, that he was mad enough that if somebody prodded him, he probably would do something. Or maybe he had heard from Al Lowenstein, you know.

HACKMAN: On the Tom Watson thing, had you or Watson or Robert Kennedy or anyone else talked to Vermont people at all about this particularly. Hoff? Had any of this been discussed?

DUNFEY: Yeah. I did this with Phil.

HACKMAN: And there was no problem on that or anything?

DUNFEY: Oh, no, because I had been very close with Phil back from when I worked in Vermont and Phil was a state rep before he ran for governor, and did a lot of work with me and Jack Spencer when he did run for governor. Phil thought it was just great. In fact, Phil would have been moving off to run for senator and Tom for governor. We never really... But I also talked, I believe, with Dan O'Brien [Daniel John O'Brien] who was state chairman, Tom Kenney [Thomas J. Kenney] who had been Hoff's administrative assistant. I think conditions at IBM [International Business Machines Corp] were such then that Tom was thinking of doing it; then some things changed and....We visited a couple of times after that, and I could see that he still really had the yen, but for what was going on in IBM

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he couldn't disengage as rapidly as he thought he would. And Arthur [Arthur Kittredge Watson] ended up moving off as ambassador to France.

HACKMAN: I think I have a pretty good idea of what I need to do, what I need to ask you, on through the winter in '68 and then on during the campaign.

[END OF SIDE II, TAPE I]

[END OF INTERVIEW #1]

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