

**Joseph Cerrell Oral History Interview—6/13/1969**  
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**Biographical Note**

Cerrell, executive director of the California Democratic Party (1959-1966), discusses California politics, John F. Kennedy's 1960 presidential campaign in California, and Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 presidential campaign in California, among other issues.

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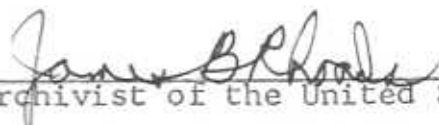
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Joseph Cerrell

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Oral History Interview

with

Joseph Cerrell

June 13, 1969  
Los Angeles, California

By Dennis O'Brien

For the John F. Kennedy Library

O'BRIEN: I guess, you know, the logical place to begin is what we were on here just a moment ago: When did you first come in contact with JFK [John F. Kennedy] or the Kennedy Family?

CERRELL: Well, actually I first came in contact with the late President as a student at the University of Southern California. The national committeeman at that time, Paul Ziffren, called and said that one of the junior senators, this particular one from Massachusetts, was going to be in Los Angeles, this being the spring of 1956. Let's see, trying to make sure my dates are accurate here. That's close enough: Spring of '56. Could I put together a little meeting for him down at USC? But the day was a Friday, and it was a wet Friday. It was the late spring and people were both out beer drinking in the afternoon and having a good time and getting ready to study for finals, so I would say there was a modest crowd of a hundred, hundred and a half for him. That was our first encounter. He was very nervous. He took his glasses in and out of his pocket, I'd say, on a number of occasions, but never put them on.

Then I saw him later at the Convention in Chicago and I was very flattered to be remembered and that sort of thing. I was the executive director of the Democratic Party in California in 1959. California was a real plum being, I guess, at that time, the third largest

delegation, but really more, I'll say, an uncommitted delegation because of New York and Pennsylvania being pretty well tied

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up by strong political leaders. And so everybody who even had the remotest possibility that they might like to be president, vice president, or the cabinet would come out to California and campaign. That included Senators Kennedy and Symington [Stuart Symington II] and Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] and Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] and Governors Williams [G. Mennen Williams] and Ribicoff [Abraham Ribicoff] and Meyner [Robert B. Meyner] and so forth.

So in the early spring in this capacity that everybody would clear through the party and deal with the party, I started making arrangements for his tours and trips in California; something which I handled, I guess, exclusively through his last trip, which was June of 1963, or the last time I saw him alive. So that's how we established this operation. It's an interesting contrast, too, from the first time I can remember, you know, sharing the same suite of rooms and the small planes and, you know, traveling with just a couple of cars. Of course, the last trip being one of several that I handled as president with all that goes on with a presidential journey, it was an interesting contrast.

O'BRIEN: You came into this through Paul Ziffren?

CERRELL: I came in this through Ziffren introducing me back, I guess, as I said, in '56 and then as the executive director in '59 of the party with Assemblyman Bill Munnell [William A. Munnell], who was the state chairman; and Jesse Unruh [Jesse M. Unruh], who was his closest advisor; and Pat Brown [Edmund G. Brown] was governor, but the Governor was very.... Some of the people around the Governor were not excited about a Kennedy candidacy at that time. More specifically in this frank discussion, I think people like Fred Dutton [Frederick G. Dutton] had harbored ambitions that the Governor might be able to get himself maybe the second spot on the ticket; and obviously if John F. Kennedy was the top spot, Catholic Pat Brown could not be in the second spot. I think they played it up a little bit to Symington and everyone.

I even remember incidents. One particular incident where.... It was a very interesting story, if I may? It was the 1959 trip. It came about, quite frankly, when the party was thinking of ways to raise money. We had a nice discussion about this and I said, "Look, why don't we get John F. Kennedy out here?" I have to admit that we were basically impartial, but as a young person, you know, you felt—the word now is charisma; we didn't know that word then—an attachment to John Kennedy and some of the people around him. Being a younger man, and also remembering my brief encounter at USC a number of years before then, I related to him. But we were trying to think how we would raise money and we said, "Gee, why don't we get him out here for our Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner?" They said, "Gee, how do you know he'll do it?" So, we decided, "A different

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twist.” I contacted Larry O’Brien [Lawrence F. O’Brien] up in Springfield and I said that I thought I might be able to pull off a great coup for the Kennedys, that if he’d come out, that if he’d agree, I could probably get him as the Jefferson-Jackson Day speaker, which was really a fantastic honor. Well, in reality I don’t think they’d had a Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner here for several years. So they appreciated that and he came out, and then we built a whole trip around it.

I can remember he started at a luncheon in Oakland and it did not go very successfully. It was set up for too many; thirty-five showed up and it was a bad start. Then he went to Mills College which was very good. He flew into Fresno and it was somewhere along the line they decided, “Look, why stay in Fresno and fly into Bakersfield the next day? Why don’t we just go on down to Bakersfield tonight?” I flew up and was up in Bakersfield and Pierre Salinger [Pierre E.G. Salinger] came in early on an advance plane—and an advance plane, of course, nowadays is a big production; then it was probably a single twin-engined plane that he had chartered or borrowed—and he was very unhappy; as a matter of fact, Pierre was in tears at the airport because he’d been given a pretty rough time by some of the party regulars in northern California who were a lot closer to the Brown-Dutton wing of the party. What particularly bothered him was that an old friend like Don Bradley [Don L. Bradley] he thought was in cahoots to sort of not make the trip as successful as it should have been. He was really upset by it.

Well, the Senator came in and we went to the Hacienda in Bakersfield. And then I—this was not my stop; this was still in northern California—met with O’Brien and with Kenny O’Donnell [Kenneth P. O’Donnell] I said, “Gentlemen, we’ve got a bit of a problem. I just found this out from the local people that having planned to come the next day, the board of supervisors were going to be at the airport and the glee club and the choir and the whole routine.” They said, “Well, we’re not going to tell him;” and I said, “Well, I’m certainly not going to tell him.” So I know they agreed Dave Powers [David F. Powers] the next morning would go in and wake him up very early in the morning. And what they did was they had to go back on out to the airport and put him on the plane and park the plane at the end of the runway so the poor people in Bakersfield or Kern County wouldn’t be disappointed that he wasn’t there when they came out to the airport.

Well, what I’m getting at is they had a fantastic breakfast. It was overflow; I’m sure it was the biggest thing that ever happened in Bakersfield. They used up all the rooms in the Hacienda. But all around—sort of, you might say, lurking around—was Dick Tuck [Richard G. Tuck]. (Tuck was an aide to Fred Dutton and Governor Pat Brown.) This was starting to bother the Kennedys. It, was bothering Jack

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Kennedy pretty well, and at one point as these people were going through the receiving line, he pulled Tuck over and he really gave him a tongue-lashing about this sort of spying or snooping and it was bothering him.

If I can continue the story—‘cause it was pretty good—he shook so many hands in Bakersfield that we really ran much later than anticipated and it was a pretty good program. But this was just incredible, never anticipated anything.

Well, I'm a New Yorker and had only been executive director of the party for several months and didn't really know the state that well. In the course of planning events I'd talked to the county chairman up in Santa Barbara and said, you know, "Could we do anything with Senator Kennedy up there?" "Oh," she said, "why don't you go to Lompoc?" And I said, "Well, where's Lompoc?" She said, "Well, it's just outside of Santa Maria." I said, "Where's Santa Maria?" She said, "That's just north of Santa Barbara, the city of Santa Barbara." So anyhow, we flew over there and, to my amazement, this really was sort of in the boondocks. I can remember driving along this long, winding road and the Senator was sort of eyeing me like, you know, "What are we doing here?" I turned to the county chairman and I said, "Helen, when was the last time the Governor's been here?" She said, "Oh, Governor Brown has never been to Lompoc." So I figured I'd quickly come back with another one. I said, "Oh, well, when was Clair Engle, the Senator, here?" "Oh," she said, "Clair Engle's never been here, but Bert Betts [Bert A. Betts], the state treasurer has been." Well, of course, at this point this was one of the great put-downs because here I was with Kennedy. As he boarded the plane after this trip, at the very end of it, he thanked me for everything and he said, "Make sure you take Stuart Symington to Lompoc."

Actually, Lompoc was a very good visit, but it was one of those things. Well, the point I'm making is that Kennedy was being dogged by the Brown aides. The following evening at a cocktail party at Bart Lytton's home prior to the big hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner—this was a little private reception—the Senator grabbed Governor Brown and he said to him, "What are all these people you've got following me and spying on me and trying to cause trouble!?" I think the Governor was, I think at the time, very sincere when he said, "I don't know what you're talking about, Senator." He called over Fred Dutton and he said, "The Senator tells me we're doing this, that, and the other thing." And Dutton, kind of eyes open, said, "What do you mean, Senator?" He said, "Now, I know you've had Tuck following me and hounding me and so forth." Of course, at that time, Tuck was the political travel and appointment secretary for the Governor—and Dutton expressed total amazement. Well, somewhere there was a serious breakdown.

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So the point I was making is there was definite coolness out here in California to the Kennedy operation, but we were not part of it. That's basically what I was going to say about why so many people were coming out here. It really was basically a very impartial treatment of presidential candidates, although some of us had little personal prejudices.

O'BRIEN: How about people like Ziffren? Was Ziffren with the Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson] people?

CERRELL: Well, he wound up voting for John Kennedy. He had been ousted as the national committeeman by Stanley Mosk on a three-to-one vote. I had had original and old loyalties to Paul. Really the two people I guess I started with in politics were Paul Ziffren and Jesse Unruh. I think philosophically Ziffren might have been a Stevenson man, but he was a practical politician. He was very close to Paul Butler [Paul M. Butler] and I think when the time came for the actual vote, he voted for John



Kennedy. He was not, what you'd say, an early enthusiastic backer. As a matter of fact, prior to his vote, he really did nothing on behalf of the Kennedys; although I'm sure he could make the argument that he was national committeeman and he shouldn't get involved in some of the internal politics.

O'BRIEN: How about Jesse Unruh? Was Unruh pretty strong?

CERRELL: Jesse had been my mentor and, as a matter of fact, I had introduced him to the Kennedys and the Senator for the first time. I pre-date him in terms of enthusiasm for John Kennedy, but not by very much; they caught on pretty well. The problem was Jesse was up in Sacramento. He was a Pat Brown lieutenant; he wasn't about to cross him. Jesse really goes back, I would say, certainly into the early '60s as a John Kennedy backer, if not in late '59. He then, of course, subsequently played a major role; he was the campaign manager in the 1960 campaign in southern California. Again, as an aside in this frank discussion, after the Convention [Democratic National Convention] it was generally assumed that Jesse would be the campaign manager. He'd also been Pat Brown's campaign manager in '58, but the liberals, his new CDC [California Democratic Council] friends did their damndest to sabotage that Teddy [Edward M. Kennedy] was assigned—my recollection has it, not really until after the Convention—as the west coast man and they really implored and begged and beseeched Teddy not to make this appointment. As a matter of fact, there really was quite a time difference between the Convention and the actual appointment of Unruh to the southern California manager. Teddy was playing all of them. I think he was having serious second thoughts about the possibility of interceding; maybe Unruh shouldn't take that role. I know Jesse was quite disturbed by it.

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O'BRIEN: Well, how about Lytton and some of these other people? Were they really pro-Kennedy '58, '59?

CERRELL: Well, it was Bart Lytton at the Convention voted for Chester Bowles [Chester B. Bowles] as I recall. But, of course, that's Bart. The delegation, well, let me tell you a little about the delegation; that brings up that question. Fourteen people formed the delegation up in Carmel, which is up in Monterey County. A ten-man committee met, plus two professionals from the north, Don Bradley and Van Dempsey, and two professionals from the south, myself and Jesse Unruh, and spent, I'd estimate, a good day and a half solid work putting together this delegation. And the night, I guess after they were done, I can remember being delegated to go stand on the highway and meet a car which had just met a plane from Los Angeles carrying Larry O'Brien and Dan Martin [Clarence D. Martin, Jr.].

These two individuals representing the Senator met with the so-called delegation leadership strictly in secret—it was Congressman Shelley [John F. Shelley], and Bill Munnell, Jesse Unruh and people like that—and met to pledge to the Senator that if he would not enter the California primary the following June, he would have the overwhelming support of the California delegation. I think they were all at that time very sincere and thought they

could produce on it. Some people didn't even do anything to try to produce for it, but that was the reason that Kennedy stayed out of the California primary, which I'm sure he would undoubtedly have won. Pat Brown did his darnedest to try to produce that. Pat Brown envisioned himself as the last of the great nonpartisan political leaders of California in the image of Hiram Johnson [Hiram Warren Johnson] or Earl Warren, maybe even Goody Knight [Goodwin Jess Knight] and he was never a strong political leader. Therefore, when he announced his support for Kennedy, I guess in reality the plurality went to Stevenson just by a vote or two. Not only couldn't Brown deliver a majority to Kennedy, he couldn't even get a plurality for Kennedy. It was an embarrassment to the Governor, and it was unfortunate because he didn't deserve quite the criticism that came to him. The truth of the matter is it just proved how democratically put together that delegation had been.

O'BRIEN: Well, getting to some of the Democratic officeholders at this point, both on the congressional and on the state level: Did they fear that a strong presidential primary in the state would bring in major candidates in 1960, that this would in some way divide the party?

CERRELL: Well, what they really felt was, an awful lot of them, they didn't want Kennedy to have the California vote. The argument, therefore, that was used was, "We'll go with Pat Brown as our favorite son and we'll keep everybody else out."

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I think, since the Convention nominated Kennedy anyhow, it's no great crisis. I think it, in some respect, could have been a tactical mistake for the Kennedys because they would have carried California. They would have carried California if everybody else had been in there, but I think it was typical of their feelings for the party, and thinking beyond June to November—even though we lost California in November—that the smart thing would be to try to achieve unity. They did stay out. The delegation had a lot of Symington people and Johnson people and Humphrey people. Kennedy could have won in June, but it was in the interest of party unity that they did stay out. And as I said, it's only a mistake because it could have been a critical mistake, but in reality everything worked out okay except for the fact that Brown didn't look too good as a result of it. Kennedy really wasn't too happy that, he didn't do better with the California delegation at the Convention.

O'BRIEN: Well, how about CDC on the eve of the '60 election? Let's say '58, '59, '60. Who speaks for CDC, or speaks to CDC; or is there anyone that, in a sense, is the person who can speak for CDC?

CERRELL: Then or now?

O'BRIEN: Then.

CERRELL: Well, then CDC was, of course, a lot stronger. They claim that they've had

membership of as high as seventy thousand. I don't believe it's ever been much more than fifty thousand which is, by the way, very significant. I'm not putting them down. People like Joe Wyatt [ Joseph L. Wyatt, Jr.] and Alan Cranston [Alan M. Cranston] were pretty strong leaders within the CDC. I had on occasion taken Adlai Stevenson to CDC conventions; I had taken John Kennedy, I'm pretty sure, on at least two occasions—one very vivid in my mind—to CDC conventions; Hubert Humphrey to several CDC conventions. They were the moving force in California. They really had the bodies. People were very concerned about them, and I think they came around a lot better. You know, they had their battles, but I think they came together in support of the nominees; at least in those days they did. And, as far as I know, I think they rallied very well behind John Kennedy in 1960. I have never been, never was a fan of the CDC, but I think they did their part in 1960.

You know, the way they do that is after the official organization was formed—and these were the people, by the way, who were screaming to keep Jesse Unruh out and Teddy had been listening to them—what really happened was that they formed a separate group, a Citizens-for-Kennedy operation. They were given statewide titles

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without any direct responsibility over Unruh or under Unruh, and I think really the party, for the most part—except for your extremists of either end—supported Kennedy. I say extremists of either end; I can never really believe that a Democrat for Nixon [Richard M. Nixon] was a Democrat. I mean, I had lived in California politics and I had seen Democrats for this Republican and that Republican, but I used to say, “Jesus, you know, it's just impossible to be a Democrat for Nixon,” which is probably an indirect way of now rapping Sam Yorty [Samuel W. Yorty], because that was the year that he came out for Nixon with his famous paper on the subject. But, by and large—maybe on the other side some real left-wingers—the Democratic party in California did unite behind John Kennedy.

O'BRIEN: Well, how about Jesse and CDC? Now, they've had a kind of a shifting relationship from time to time.

CERRELL: Well, Jesse, I would say, in the founding days of CDC participated with them. When they went off too much to the left or if they didn't agree with his Candidates, they started getting cooler and cooler and going their separate ways until Unruh, actually in the early sixties, formed a counter-organization called the Democratic Volunteers Committee, the DVC. They were really at each other's throats for a long time. And then Unruh, as his ambitions for governor started coming more on the scene, decided to get a little closer to them. That was helped out by the fact that Unruh denounced the Vietnam situation. I must say that, to the best of my knowledge, I never noticed Jesse Unruh make a pronouncement—and I don't know anybody else who's ever countered this argument—about Vietnam until the day that Bobby Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] announced for the presidency of the United States. Of course, when he [Unruh] took on the war, took on Lyndon Johnson, took on Hubert Humphrey, why, all of a sudden the CDC and

the Young Democrats said, “Gee, maybe he’s not such a bad guy after all.” And, of course, these were very calculated moves.

I can remember the first time Unruh went back to a CDC meeting. He said it’d been eight years since he’d been at one and it’d been much too long and he hoped they agreed with him that it had been much too long. It was such garbage in terms of their feelings toward each other. They really hadn’t changed, except the CDC said, you know, “Maybe we’d like to have a winner.” Unruh said, “I think I could use some more supporters.” And so, what started as a friendly relationship and then became a fiery antagonism, started warming up; and I say that it appears today that Jesse’s the fair-haired boy of CDC, but I don’t know that either side has ever changed any philosophical ideas.

O’BRIEN: Well, is it style or issues that, in a sense, turned CDC

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off to Jesse Unruh?

CERRELL: Oh, I think it was style originally and I think he came back with issues. They didn’t care for the heavy-handed tactics and the bossism and what he was doing up in Sacramento; they thought he was much too practical a politician. Really, Jesse Unruh, I don’t believe, has changed that much except for his pronouncement on the war, but again which is practical as style. Unruh didn’t change that much; the CDC is just changing their attitude toward him. I think if anybody’s changed, it’s been the CDC, not Jesse.

O’BRIEN: In many ways in the question of Jesse Unruh’s style, how did the Kennedys react to this? Well, let’s put it this way. I guess the question should be phrased this way: What impressions did you receive of the Kennedys’ view of California politics? Now, you’re from New York and you have a background in the eastern way of Democratic politics, and then we have California Democratic politics.

CERRELL: Well, of course, New York politics which I observed, California politics which I participated in, is just as different as the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. I mean, they’re both bodies of water, but that’s about all they have in common. And the Kennedys were—not only the Kennedys, but everybody always is—amazed by California politics and that’s the reason, I guess, so many books are written about it. Although, I must say, I sit back and I can observe New York politics, as I’m doing right now with their current mayoralty, and that’s an amazing situation, too. Unruh came closer to being—I guess up in Massachusetts they’d call him a pol, which is a term that never caught on in California. He was somebody that they could talk to, relate to, who talked their language really is what I’m trying to say. And maybe that’s why we all had such a good rapport with him.

Having been baptized in New York politics, I understand a little bit more; although I keep on, saying, “Had I still been in New York, you know, I’d be maybe an assistant precinct captain somewhere;” and being in my early twenties here in California I was the executive

director of the state organization. Again, it was not a testimony to my ability, but rather to the vacuum that existed. And, therefore, if the Kennedys would come out here—and right now appreciating the fact that a vacuum exists on the professional, political scene—that’s why they could be taken so closely to someone like Jesse Unruh. And I think that’s why they developed this close rapport.

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I’ll tell you this statement: As John F. Kennedy entered the NBC [National Broadcasting Company] studios in 1960 to talk to the California delegation, he pulled me aside and—deleting the four letter words—advised me that the fellow that I was working for at the time—the state chairman, Bill Munnell—was the only man in the United States who had double-crossed him. Munnell was part of that operation which had pledged that the California delegation would go overwhelmingly for Kennedy if he’d stay out. I believe that Munnell was gotten to by the Johnson people, but then the pressure became so great; I mean, how could a fellow out in the eastern part of Los Angeles, a liberal, vote for Lyndon Johnson? So what he did is, after the Johnsons got to him, he wound up voting for Stevenson; so he went the full gamut. I guess the only one he wasn’t in there for was Symington. But I don’t think it was a great shock to John Kennedy that he’d been double-crossed from California, recognizing California politics, but he did want me to know. I stood there, one of the few times in my life, without being able to say anything because I was sort of hoping that what I considered my friend was not holding it against me what the fellow I worked for did. We were all very embarrassed by the situation. I think—in fact I’m absolutely confident—that it cost Munnell a position in John F. Kennedy’s cabinet by doing this, because not only did he defect himself, but he took a number of legislators with him. So, California politics was fascinating to the Kennedys then and I know it continued to be. I’m sure right to the present time it’s just in a league all by itself; it’s unlike any other state.

O’BRIEN: Just dropping back a bit and picking up some of the loose ends here, there were a series of meetings or receptions, garden parties. I believe Lytton had one in ‘59 and the Lawfords [Patricia Kennedy Lawford; Peter Lawford] had one and I think Jesse Unruh had one, didn’t he, somewhere, ‘59 or ‘60, prior to the...

CERRELL: Well, the only one I remember and I believe, (a) my memory of these events is pretty good and, (b) I was involved with them all. The most significant one, though, was one I got involved with in the middle of June 1959 at the Lawfords’. I helped arrange the guest list: it was Governor Ribicoff, Kenny O’Donnell, Larry O’Brien; really romancing the delegates. The only problem was it was so early and the party organization was so changed that what they did is they invited the 1956 delegates on the assumption many of them would be repeats, which they weren’t. They invited some party people, and it was a real bash; it was very successful. As a matter of fact, John Bailey [John Moran Bailey] was also here. At that time Peter Lawford and Sinatra [Frank Sinatra] owned a restaurant in Beverly Hills. I guess a dozen of us—the Lawfords, Sinatra, Ribicoff, O’Brien, Bailey—went out for dinner to discuss what had transpired. Now, Lytton’s party was

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upon reflection I think it's quite possible that it was the night before the big dinner, sort of like a supper for the people who contributed well the next night for the big dinner, which was on November the first. Jesse never had until recently, really, a facility large enough. Any Unruh affair would have been more under the guise of the party or so forth. But there were these two big events.

John Kennedy moved very well. I mean, as I said, I arranged all those trips, the first one being in March. He came out to Los Angeles. I met him, we flew up to Sacramento, he spoke to a joint session of the legislature, to a Democratic luncheon, back down to Los Angeles; he moved around very well into all the places that we would take him. Did very well down in San Diego. I mean, every trip has a little anecdote and little stories we could tell in terms of what we did, but it's amazing, it was not the professionalism... [Interruption] I guess we really finished the thought then anyhow.

O'BRIEN: Yeah. Did you meet up with Hy Raskin [Hyman B. Raskin] in the period before the...

CERRELL: Yes. I had met Hy Raskin as a student leader for Stevenson and a driver for Stevenson. My days with Hy Raskin were back in 1956. I don't think Hy did much in California during, essentially we've been talking about '59 and '60. I don't think he had much of a role out here in California. As I said, I think I would have known, not only, I guess, because of my role, but because knowing Raskin. I mean, it wasn't somebody I didn't know so I didn't know what he was doing. Hy didn't spend much time here, but they had him talking to some of the Stevenson liberals.

O'BRIEN: That was his major role in...

CERRELL: Yeah. I'm sure, you know, he had a major role, but not in California.

O'BRIEN: How about O'Brien and O'Donnell?

CERRELL: These are the people I dealt with principally. Really Larry O'Brien; he spent a lot of time out here. He was the main contact. As I said, I'm talking now back in March of '59 rather than... I'm not really sure that I knew these fellows from my earlier days. As a matter of fact, I didn't. The only exposure that I had to Kennedy post-'56 convention was because I had known him. He came and he spoke at a county central committee dinner in the spring of 1958. Matter of fact, one of the things I remember is that Richard Richards was running for United States Senate in 1958 and he spent about an hour introducing Kennedy and expounding. Kennedy got up and spoke for fourteen minutes.

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It was also, by the way, one of the few times that Jacqueline Kennedy [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] came to California. I don't know, I never knew all the various reasons,

but, you know, he used to say being three thousand miles away and children and so forth. But she was not a regular visitor to the California scene. I mean, as a matter of fact, I would imagine of any political wife I know in high office, I probably came across her less than anyone. I only met her for the first time at the Chicago convention in '56 when the Senator introduced us. She was out here, as I said, I believe at this particular county committee dinner in early '58 of late '57. And I'm not really sure that I ever saw her in California again.

But, anyhow, he spoke fourteen minutes that night and pulled out. And I remember Mrs. Kennedy causing a great stir there because it was one of the few times I think Californians had seen somebody with a hemline above the knee. His fourteen-minute abbreviated speech was obviously.... He was annoyed. I think that was the last direct relationship we had until we got going again in '59, so I had no occasion to meet with O'Brien or O'Donnell or any of these people. But my relations were almost exclusively with Larry O'Brien, a little bit O'Donnell, not really even Dave Powers, and not really Pierre. I think Pierre sort of spent more time with the people in northern California.

O'BRIEN: Okay. How, at this point, did Democratic politics line up? Are there identifiable factions in southern Democratic politics, southern California Democratic politics?

CERRELL: Today, or are we talking about '60?

O'BRIEN: '59, '60.

CERRELL: Oh, there was definitely more of a split between the north and the south than there certainly is now. It's almost everybody else versus Los Angeles, to some degree. I remember my first exposure in San Diego was going in there with a sign over the county chairman's desk, "We don't give a damn how they do it in Los Angeles." The people in San Diego, which is a hundred miles south of Los Angeles, have always felt much closer attuned to the people in San Francisco, over four hundred miles to the north of them. Los Angeles was sort of unto itself. There was a north-south split, but it didn't really have much to do with the California primary of 1960 or the general election. I mean, there were Kennedys in the north and Kennedys in the south. That didn't enter into it.

O'BRIEN: Well, how about Los Angeles politics at this time, '59 and '60?

CERRELL: Los Angeles politics was a bad split. Paul Ziffren really

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was the titular leader of the liberals. That's the reason I said he never really got into the Kennedy operation; he was the leader of a bloc which also included the CDC, the Young Democrats and the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee, which was under the chairmanship of Don Rose [Donald W. Rose]. And so between the national committeeman and the county committee and the CDC, you might say it was a pretty good working group. I would say, again, with the exception of Paul

individually that almost all those people developed into the Stevenson draft movement in California.

O'BRIEN: Personality-wise, some of the people we've been talking here.... We haven't talked about Rees [Thomas M. Rees]. Would Rees be...

CERRELL: Tom Rees is the man I was going to mention; Tom Rees was an early, early Kennedy man. Matter of fact, he was one of the principals at that Lawford-Ribicoff June '59 party.

O'BRIEN: Would he be with the liberals?

CERRELL: Well, see, Tom always tried to balance between the two of them. He definitely was a Kennedy man and an outspoken Kennedy man, as opposed to Paul who simply voted for Kennedy, but he's been able to walk the middle. On the other side it was the so-called legislative leaders, the elected officials, and the state organization. Of course, the state organization is really based on elected leaders and so.... Those were basically the two splits in Los Angeles County. Of course, the elected group being led by Unruh and Munnell.

O'BRIEN: How about the Wymans? How would they figure?

CERRELL: Well, the Wymans really weren't into it. Ros [Rosalind Wiener Wyman] was an early John F. Kennedy supporter. She liked him, she knew him, and so forth. Gene [Eugene L. Wyman] really wasn't even on the political scene then. Gene, I believe, was a member of the Finance committee [Democratic State Finance committee], which meant that he came up with about a thousand dollars out of his own pocket. And I would say that was the extent of his.... I'm sure he was on the speakers bureau of the finance committee, but Gene Wyman was, quite frankly, at that time, Mr. Rosalind Wyman.

O'BRIEN: How about in '59 and '60 in terms of finances here and financing—well, local financing for the Kennedy campaign. Who are the people here that are...

CERRELL: With the Kennedy campaign?

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O'BRIEN: Right.

CERRELL: See, there was no Kennedy operation in '59, pre-convention, so to speak. When they'd come out here, we'd line up everything through the official party and they picked up the bills, and I'm sure, you know, getting some private contributions. The party itself had come from zero when I took over the party in January of that year; I inherited a part-time secretary. But remember I told you about this Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner? Well, that netted seventy-five thousand dollars, and the party was



strong. I mean, here we had a governor, we had a Democratic legislature, and we had one United States senator. You see, the people in Washington later developed the President's Club by coming out and finding out how we worked the finance committee. Our finance committee started in the spring of 1959 doing the same thing. We got a thousand dollars a year from a guy. And we romanced him, we took him up to Sacramento, and he got all sorts of private receptions, again with John F. Kennedy. Then there was a group called Democratic Associates, which was sort of like a junior President's Club, a junior finance committee. People contributed anywhere from twenty-five to five hundred dollars, so the money was coming in pretty good.

We had another great gimmick in late spring of 1960. Even though the delegation had been formed and, you know, we knew Pat Brown was leading, we had a Pat Brown testimonial dinner. I don't think—matter of fact, he had definitely not announced his candidacy. Again I take a lot of credit for it, it was a great gimmick. We said, "Look," to the politicians of the United States, "we're going to honor Pat Brown. In effect, you know, he's not running for office." And I got a hold of, again, all the candidates except.... Matter of fact, Humphrey had accepted and later withdrew. Got a hold of them all, and said, "Gee, this is sort of a command performance." And they said, "Who's going to be there?" and I'd mention everybody else's name. We, you know, played the whole thing up. Well, you know, they all showed up, including Lyndon Johnson who made his first and only pre-convention appearance in California. The next night the people in northern California did the same thing, but Johnson said, "One speech in California is enough." He arrived in Los Angeles, went to his suite, changed his clothes, went to the dinner, and pulled out. I don't even think he went back to the suite, just went back out on his plane and that was it. He really disliked California, which is another story.

That dinner netted well over seventy-five thousand dollars and, again, back in those days that was pretty good.

That was the start of the souvenir journals which were subse-

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quently outlawed; we take credit for having started those, but you know, the great ability is that they were good high-priced advertising journals. There was no need for the Kennedys to have operations. Now, they did come along and say, you know, "We need somebody out there," and there was Dan Martin who later became under secretary of Commerce [U.S. Department of Commerce]. His father [Clarence D. Martin] had been a governor up in the state of Washington, very well-to-do man, successful automobile dealer, properties, and so forth. And we noted he liked the Kennedys and so forth and he became their man, but he really was working with us. I mean it wasn't....

I have to say, interject here, that this doesn't mean that, you know, the whole organization was that way, because we really were working very closely with Jim Allen [James Allen], vice president of Northrop [Northrop Corp.], who was Stuart Symington's man. We worked very closely with Neil Curry [Neil J. Curry] who everybody conceded was Lyndon Johnson's man out here. I personally would not travel with these people. I remember traveling with Hubert Humphrey and working closely with Don Shanedling, who was his principal money fellow out here—subsequently, he had a heart attack and died. We worked

with all of them; that's why we really got to meet these people. I could tell you the times with G. Mennen Williams or Bob Meyner. A lot of people came out in this direction and we worked with them all, but obviously, Kennedy would come more often and with a bigger operation and we, personally, you know, went along with this way. It was very easy to maybe get a little more excited or enthusiastic about the Kennedy trips.

O'BRIEN: Let's talk about conventions for a little bit. Did you make the '56 convention?

CERRELL: I made the '56, '60, '64 and '68 conventions.

O'BRIEN: Oh. Well, let's go back to the '56 convention, well, the California delegation and the rather impromptu candidacy of Kennedy. What do you recall, or what are some of the more important things that you recall out of that convention?

CERRELL: Well, I was a student at the time and because of my friendship with Paul Ziffren had been made one of the sergeants-at-arms. My actual residence was New York at that time, although I'd been in California since 1951, so I flew from New York and worked and met with the delegation, met them at the airport and so forth. California had gone Stevenson by a two-to-one vote in the primary over Kefauver [Estes Kefauver]—very strongly—although Kefauver four years before had beaten a favorite son delegation led by Pat Brown overwhelmingly. But the California delegation

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was, in the typical fashion, split all over the place after Stevenson threw it open. There was Kennedy support; there was Kefauver support, and there had to be because they brought some of the Kefauver people on the delegation; there was a lot of Hubert Humphrey support. I can't even tell you, again either because it's thirteen years ago or because of the lowly position I held at that convention, too much what California had done. I thought that convention was going to go for John F. Kennedy. I'm sure to this day most people would concede probably the best thing that ever happened to him was that he didn't get the second spot. But who knows? I mean, you know, would he have gone the route of Kefauver or, in effect, was he able to bounce back pretty well? But I don't really know that much more about the '56 convention.

O'BRIEN: Were you on the floor there when that... There was some problem there in the delegation, wasn't there, in the casting of ballots?

CERRELL: Yes. I was there; I mean, I had access and so forth, but it was.... I don't really recall that much about it.

O'BRIEN: Well, let's pass back then over to '60.

CERRELL: I think I can remember more, again, the side notes; you know, the side activities of the Convention—California, as usual, being put in a lousy hotel

and all their difficulties—but I don't really remember many of the specifics as they would pertain to Senator Kennedy.

O'BRIEN: Well, you played an important role in the Monterey meeting.

CERRELL: Well, at the Monterey meeting I was one of the two staffers from southern California, Jesse being there not in his position as an assemblyman—he was not the speaker then—but as the two staff people from southern California working with Munnell. It was, as I indicated before, a ten-man committee. Fred Dutton represented the Governor. There were two congressmen. Matter of fact, I guess the third congressman showed up and he even was in the meeting with national committee members, the party officers; the CDC was represented.

I mean, it was a really democratically put together operation. Every district was gone over, name by name. Our role had been in '60, as it was in '64—even more in '64—to compile the lists of the southerners. They did give it broad consideration. If somebody

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didn't make it, they can't say they weren't considered. They might have been turned down by the ten-man committee, but I think almost every name of any party activist was on the rolls for consideration by congressional district. And, of course, in California the law requires that you divide the total number of congressional districts into the total number of delegates and that number becomes the minimum number that you can have in any one congressional district. That made it very difficult. At that time almost all of the “west side fat cats” were all lumped into one district—Beverly Hills and Holmby Hills and Bel Air at that time were all in the same congressional district—and it made it darn tough to try to give them the same representation as maybe some small outlying county. You're able to make some exceptions on that because you do, obviously, wind up with a number of people at large.

O'BRIEN: Well, what was the formula that you applied in apportioning delegates? Was there any set formula or...

CERRELL: You mean in terms of how a person got selected? No, not really. I mean, first of all, we had sounded out all elected Democrats: the congressmen, the state senators, the assemblymen. We'd talked to the state committee cochairmen within the congressional district. And the same thing for the county committee. The CDC submitted names and the Young Democrats submitted names and everybody who was on the finance committee. Then we went to the people who represented Symington, and Johnson and Humphrey and Kennedy and asked did they have any names of people. As a matter of fact, their people were given a very good priority. It was almost an automatic on some of them.

We went to organized labor and we got from them names. We made sure that the minority groups were well represented, or on the rolls. And then you'd go through there. Quite frankly, you'd have a letter from a very senior congressman, you know, not saying, “These are the people I want from my district,” but saying, “You've got to take care of so-

and-so.” You could count on the fact that Congressman Harry R. Sheppard, who was the dean of the California delegation at the time, Congressman George Miller [George P. Miller], who was the senior member from northern California, would see to it, you know, that that congressman’s request was honored. The same thing on a lesser degree, if I remember, the legislature said, “You’ve got to take care of so-and-so.”

All congressmen were automatically put on the delegation. All state elected officials were automatic members of the delegation, not all members of the legislature, but a lot of them who wanted to go. Of course, we chose the alternates at the same time. You’ve got one advantage, which is, you know, asking somebody to travel three thousand

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miles in 1964 would weed people out. We had a hell of a disadvantage when, you know, Los Angeles was where the Convention was. There was no transportation costs, certainly, if you were from southern California. You could always bunk in with some friend of yours, even if you were from northern California, when you got to LA. It was a tough decision. It’s a bitter situation, but I would say that by and large, as evidenced by the end result, it was not a delegation owned or controlled by any one man. Maybe it should have been.

O’BRIEN: Well, the Kennedys were rather disappointed that it wasn’t.

CERRELL: Very disappointed. And they should have been disappointed; they’d been given a commitment that they’d have, really, the lion’s share of that delegation. I mean, without going into some of the real specifics, they’d been told, you know, “Don’t worry about it; you’ll do almost as well with this delegation as you would do with your own delegation.” That’s why they should have been disappointed.

O’BRIEN: Well, as long as we’re, you know, chronologically along here about this point, how about the whole Ziffren-Mosk affair? What really brought on Ziffren’s removal?

CERRELL: Well, Paul ran into a problem that a number of party officials, professionals, ran into. It’s something that in having been a professional now for just about ten—I guess closer to a dozen—years, you’ve always got to recognize: that the people who are out front are the elected officials. And Paul was getting a lot of notoriety for himself and articles written about himself—always in the first person. I don’t think he ever quite accepted the fact that Pat Brown was the leader of the party, and this is a basic, elementary item. I’m not sure for the Governor, but I know that as a civics teacher I’ve taught that the President of the United States wears three hats: he’s the chief executive of the country; he’s the commander-in-chief of the armed forces; he’s the leader of his political party. There’s no reason that shouldn’t carry down to the state, but Paul never quite appreciated that fact and, I guess, never really ingratiated himself with Pat Brown, while at the same time taking a pretty big bow for the Pat Brown victory of 1958. I think that Paul stayed close to the liberal element which was giving the Governor a bit of a hard time. Paul

saw nothing wrong with attacking elected officials, by the way, including Jesse Unruh. Interesting how times change.

The Governor decided he wanted his own man in there as national committeeman, and this man he chose was Attorney General Mosk, Stanley Mosk. By the way, the vote was overwhelming; it was about a three-to-one vote. I don't know what could have prevented it.

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You know, no California battles until recently have been serious on a philosophical basis—California, I mean, with a, you know, very conservative Democrat fighting an ultraliberal Democrat. That really hasn't developed until, I guess, 1967 on. I can never remember one like that. It was really matters of personality. Again, Jesse Unruh had been very close to Paul Ziffren in the early and mid-fifties and just had their parting of the ways: Unruh with the establishment, the elected officials, maybe the moderates; Ziffren with the liberals, the volunteer element. I would say that Jesse Unruh probably had as much to do with toppling Paul Ziffren as anybody; more than Pat Brown, because I think he was the one who pushed Pat Brown to get rid of Paul Ziffren. So, subsequently, Stanley was chosen and I think did a very good job. Paul operated as national committeeman, as some have chosen to do, just out of his own legal office with his secretary and nothing special. An argument was made that the national committee members should really do a lot more, and.... Excuse me.

[Interruption; BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1]

O'BRIEN: Just one thing that might lead into something else here, why Mosk?

CERRELL: I don't really know. If I recall, I think it was that Brown and Unruh were getting a little cool at the time and Stanley was a good mutual friend. Brown couldn't afford a defeat, you know, in one of his few moves within the internal political scene of California. I'm sure if you talked to Pat Brown, I think he would admit to you now that one of his great weaknesses was not being a stronger party leader. I think he chose Stanley because, well, Stanley was ambitious. Stanley, you know, in 1958 had gotten a larger vote than Pat Brown. Brown won by a million fifty thousand; Stanley won by a million one hundred and fifty thousand. You know, there couldn't have been any behind-the-scenes saying, "Well, they're dumping Paul because he's Jewish," because Stanley was Jewish. Stanley was definitely a liberal; he was the product, in effect, of the CDC endorsement of '58, because he was the underdog going into that primary election. He beat state senator McCarthy, Bob McCarthy [Robert McCarthy], and so they couldn't say that it was an anti-liberal move either. They couldn't say that it was an anti-Los Angeles-Beverly Hills move; Stanley lived in Beverly Hills, as did Paul—a lot of the same friends. I think that it was just a good calculated decision, obviously by the three-to-one vote.

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I was sort of unofficial campaign manager for that particular operation and I guess my reward was I was Mosk's administrative assistant for four years in his role as national

committeeman for his four-year term. I think he was a good national committeeman; of course, he wasn't as flamboyant or didn't get as much publicity or press or articles written about him as national committeeman as Paul did, who thought this showed a definite weakness. I disagree; I think that Stanley was the first national committeeman to establish an actual organization, which Gene Wyman continued. I think he did a lot for the party, particularly in the '62 election. I think he was just very, very helpful, and he was very helpful in the 1960 presidential campaign. Stanley is the undisputed Jewish political leader of California, and you know, many people considered him really one of the top Jewish figures in the nation. And he was just very helpful to the Democratic cause in this capacity.

O'BRIEN: Let's get into some of the interest groups and some of the power groups in the sense of California politics at this time. What are some of the more important interest groups that have to be taken into consideration?

CERRELL: Well, the money group. I don't know if we'd call that an interest group; it's certainly representative of the business and industrial community. By virtue of the fact that Pat Brown was governor, this was very helpful to the Kennedy campaigns and the Kennedy coffers. The minority groups had not caught on yet as to, you know, the Kennedy charm or charisma or whatever we want to call it. They had no strong attachment. As a matter of fact, I can remember the late Loren Miller, judge and then at that time publisher of the *California Eagle*, being very unhappy with John F. Kennedy because of supposed stands that he had made in the South post-'56 convention. As a matter of fact, I can remember talking about it to the Senator in the men's room at this county committee dinner that I've discussed. "When you go outside, I want you to.... This Loren Miller's over there. We better go over and say hello to him, because he's very unhappy and has been writing some pretty tough articles that you say one thing when you're in the South; you say another thing when you're in the North."

The black community was less organized than it is today, but still it was very important and I think he did very well with these people. He did, obviously, very well, even better than Democrats have done since, with the Mexican-Americans. That, of course, is the closer religious tie, Mexican-Americans being more Catholic than, say, the blacks, although Mexican-Americans have a lower loyalty to the Democratic party than the blacks. He worked very well and did some very good things in East Los Angeles. When I say "things" I'm talking in a political nature.

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As a matter of fact, his final appearance prior to being elected president, prior to election day in November, was at East Los Angeles Junior College stadium, which I was in charge of. Of course, I was in charge of all those trips; I can stop saying that. Well, we were nervous. We sat and debated, "Should we go to the Los Angeles Coliseum?" It was centrally located to the freeways and so forth, but it was.... I very much opposed it. I just thought, "I can remember when Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] was here." I don't even recall the exact year, but I can remember a picture of Eisenhower. Oh, the coliseum was loaded, but there was like a section which had been left empty because it was behind him, and the

impression you got was, you know, that the coliseum was half empty. They talked more about, you know, how many seats were empty. Well, I didn't want to go back to the coliseum even though he'd, you know, a few months earlier than that just been at the Convention. Even that had a lot of empty seats, so we chose East Los Angeles Junior College stadium, again still being nervous. You're always nervous, you know; I don't care what kind of public event you're holding, if you're the guy in charge you're pretty nervous. Well, I'll say they locked the gates an hour before we got there. They had to; the people were literally climbing over the walls to get into this operation. It was magnificent; it was great. He did very well in East Los Angeles, and I've taken other people to East Los Angeles who have not done nearly as well.

O'BRIEN: Who was your contact man with the Mexican-American community then? Did you have one?

CERRELL: It was principally through Congressman—I don't recall now if he was a congressman—Ed Roybal [Edward R. Roybal]—city councilman, maybe, then—who was recognized then and still today as the leader of the Mexican-Americans. So that would be another major group. The students were definitely not as concerned or turned on then as they are now. I mean, nothing similar. Sure, there were students for Kennedy, but nothing like a Kennedy action corps. I would say that, you know, basically that would be about it. You didn't really worry about farmers or educators or something. It was minority groups and your money people, business and industrial leaders who you were concerned about. And the party was very united, so that posed no great problem.

O'BRIEN: How about the aerospace industry at this point?

CERRELL: Well, the aerospace industry was very good, recognizing that California, of course, was even getting a greater percentage of the contracts than they do today, and even today they've still got more than anybody else. Oh, they were saying that it would be better to go with Nixon because he was a Californian and he would take better care of Douglas [Douglas Aircraft Co., Inc.] and

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Lockheed [Lockheed Aircraft Co.] and Northrop and Hughes [Hughes Aircraft Co.] than the fellow from Massachusetts would, so that caused us a little bit of problems just like the religious issue caused us a little bit of problems. But they were, you know, taking insurance. I'm sure they weren't giving us as much as they were giving Nixon, but they were contributing nicely.

O'BRIEN: How about Dan Kimball [Dan Able Kimball]?

CERRELL: Dan Kimball played a very active role in that campaign. I always think that Dan Kimball is given a more active role in campaigns than he can handle or

than he deserves. I'm not sure that was the case at the time. Dan, of course, being at that time.... You see, as his role diminishes at Aerojet-General my feeling that I've just said increases. Now, then, of course, he was chairman of the board of some type and it was good to have a man, a major industrial leader as well as a former cabinet official, you know, being involved in your campaign. Dan played a very good role in that campaign.

O'BRIEN: Was he influential or effective in getting money?

CERRELL: He was. He was either finance chairman or chairman of the executive committee, or.... I know he used to host events. As a matter of fact, one of them was a great embarrassment. The one I point out is one of the events he hosted at one of his clubs. It wouldn't have made any difference to me if I'd known it or not, but I automatically invited people who should be there, including the Reverend Maurice Dawkins who is black as the ace of spades. You know, they made him go through the service entrance and all this sort of routine! And then when there was going to be sort of a general steering committee meeting—Kimball was going to have it down there again, maybe on the assumption that blacks didn't have enough money. My good friend Leslie Shaw [Leslie N. Shaw] was a vice president of one of the large savings and loans, a Negro savings and loan. I advised Kimball right then and there that not only was Leslie Shaw, who was subsequently appointed by President Kennedy postmaster of Los Angeles, going to be invited, but there wasn't going to be any of this, you know, side-door routine. And the meeting was moved to the Beverly Hilton.

O'BRIEN: Well, let's get on to the Convention of '60. There's a lot been written and a lot been said, particularly on the California delegation. I don't really know how to work into this except to say, what stands out in your...

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CERRELL: Well, let me tell you the thing that stands out most, and that's John Kennedy pulling me aside regarding Bill Munnell. I'm a very sensitive person, even though I've been in politics for a long time, and it kind of bothered me. Let me tell you, I mean, it didn't.... It bothered me, although I thought at the time and I still hope today that he wasn't.... I'm sure he wasn't holding it against me. He just wanted to let me know there was no doubt in anybody's mind what was happening. We were not closely involved with the Kennedy operation. They had their own operation. We simply worked within the California delegation. My role was sort of an executive officer, administrator for the delegation, worrying about everything from their rooms up in Hollywood to getting them down to the arena, and how you conduct the roll calls and the seating and all this sort of thing. We never got really involved in any of the behind-the-scenes activity of swaying voters and things like that.

We had what really wasn't very historic meeting up at the old NBC studios in Hollywood, at which Kennedy did come and speak, but I can't tell you much more. There were, you know, like comments on when Stevenson entered the hall. There are many people who today will still attribute to Paul Ziffren the packing of the place for Stevenson, the



passing out of the extra tickets or the forged tickets or whatever it was. I guess it's an argument used by Paul's detractors who say, you know, "Sure he voted for Kennedy, but in his heart he was a Stevenson man, He gave all his friends at the CDC and the Young Democrats and the other liberal groups, all those balcony tickets so they could create the atmosphere for Stevenson that they did, trying to make it reminiscent, duplicating the Wendell Wilkie scene of 1940," which was unsuccessful of course.

O'BRIEN: Was that the way that it really was? Did he do that?

CERRELL: I really don't know. There are many times, I guess, so far in this interview that I've admitted to something I just don't know, but I don't know it there. I'm not really prepared to take a stand on that one way or the other.

O'BRIEN: I guess Pat Brown's role in the Convention and his motives and what he was thinking is a rather important thing as well. Did Brown, in holding the delegates as long as he did, really have a definite motive that you could sense?

CERRELL: Well, he was trying to keep the delegation united and so he didn't make his pronouncement, although he had been committed. I mean, he never was wavering on his own personal commitment. He was just trying to keep them and he thought this would be the best way to do it. It's got to go down in the

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Governor's history as one of the low moments of his political career, one of the great embarrassments. I guess he and Robert Meyner; the only difference is that Meyner was out there for personal aggrandizement, but the Governor was very sincere and genuine in wanting to deliver that delegation for Kennedy. It's unfortunate that so many of his people.... This wasn't the first time they'd double-crossed him; people have been double-crossing Pat Brown politically for a long time. I mean some of them double-crossed him on the national committee vote that year and some double-crossed him at the Convention and some, you know, have done it subsequently.

He's always.... I mean, the point is he's not that strong. He's not really vindictive and he's not bitter. That's the proof, because if he was, these things wouldn't be happening; he'd have that delegation the way Dick Daley [Richard J. Daley] has the Illinois delegations; they'd be afraid to cross him. He was very democratic, and he endeavored to do his best on behalf of John Kennedy. He subsequently, you know, again, kept on trying to redeem himself and he worked pretty hard. As a matter of fact, he worked darn hard in the 1960 campaign. I feel very strongly about it, and I speak strongly about it because he was much maligned as a result of that, really picked on, and he just shouldn't have been criticized for his weak leadership. But that was no difference; Pat Brown had never been a strong leader. I don't know why people should have all of a sudden expected him to become a strong one. They done him in, so to speak, his so-called friends.

O'BRIEN: Did you see Robert Kennedy much during...

CERRELL: No. Again, I believe, because people have asked me about this—you know, “Did the family really have the big role and so forth before the presidential election?”—and I cite two things. I cite that I don’t recall—and I would have; I mean, it’s neither that my memory is slipping nor that maybe I wasn’t really around. I don’t really recall any involvement with Teddy until after the Convention when he was assigned out here. Now, I’m not sure that I had ever met in California—I’d met him in Washington—Robert Kennedy prior to his coming out here and having a big meeting to try to get registration going in the last remaining days. I guess the Convention was held in July. I guess maybe he showed up in August and wanted a big crash program for registration. He was really great on that. As a matter of fact, when Gene Wyman became the Democratic state chairman in November of 1961, one of the first things he did was when he summoned Wyman and myself back to Washington—he was then Attorney General—just flatly demanded that if we were going to do well in subsequent campaigns that he wanted to have a strong registration drive in California. He was very helpful, and he’s right, by the way. I couldn’t agree with him more; I don’t know if there’s anything more important than registration. But that was the only encounter that I believe I had with him in California prior to the election, coming out here post-convention for a big registration push.

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O’BRIEN: Who were the main contacts with the Kennedy people in the delegation at that time?

CERRELL: I think it stayed.... Dan Martin was locally. Within the organization was O’Donnell and O’Brien, and a little bit of Steve Smith [Stephen E. Smith] started. Steve started surfacing, from our point of view, then.

O’BRIEN: Well, passing on to the campaign that year, just a few questions. You were with Kennedy on some of the campaign swings through...

CERRELL: I was with him on all the southern swings at that stage, because then the only reason I ventured into the north was the lack of party organization, lack of Kennedy organization, pre-convention. I did go up with the Senator after that Pat Brown testimonial that I mentioned in late May of ‘60. I was with him on all his southern swings, which there were only, as I recall, two. As a matter of fact, on the last one I remember him commenting to Jesse Unruh and myself, “Gee, I think we might have shorted California by a half a day or a day. I hope this doesn’t come back to haunt me.” Who knows, based on that, very, very, you know narrow margin of defeat in California, if that would have made the difference? I do remember saying there was something about, “Gee, you sure spent an awful lot of time in Ohio and Michigan.” And I think he meant it. He came here right around Labor Day, early September, and I don’t recall his return. I may be wrong; maybe he went into northern California is why I don’t recall. I don’t recall him—I’m sure I’m accurate on this—coming to southern California again until the first weekend in November. It was the first couple of days in November, I think, which was a good five days before election day. I

think it was too bad. Nixon, of course, wound up here, and it would have been better. There were two southern swings, early September and early, early November—I mean, end of October, early November.

O'BRIEN: What were the important factors as far as the Nixon victory?

CERRELL: Well, Nixon was a Californian. And they played this up pretty good, made a big thing of, you know, "He's been our senator and vice president. He's kept good ties here, spent a lot of time here." That was a fact that California was and still is a bigoted state, most recently proven in our mayoralty election, and I think the Catholic issue was a definite, definite factor. If I had to single out why did we have a narrow defeat, I would point to religion and the "native son" bit, and the other stuff. You know, they handbilled the aerospace and defense plants the weekend before elections saying, "If you want to keep your job, vote for Nixon; he's a Californian. The other guy's going to take the stuff back East." I can't look to that as being a major factor.

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Then, of course, it was a very narrow defeat. You know, that's the unfortunate thing. When you lose by as many votes as Pat Brown lost by, say, in 1966 to Ronald Reagan [Ronald W. Reagan]—almost a million votes—you wake up the next morning, you're hurt, unhappy, disappointed, but that's it. But you go to bed being ahead, and the absentees show you lose; it's really a bitter disappointment. The only thing that you've got differently say between 1960—where Kennedy lost California narrowly, but won the election—and 1968 is that Hubert Humphrey lost California narrowly and then went on to lose the election as a result of losing California. Then, you even feel worse. You know, you'd like to have gone back to the inaugural as we all did in '61, proudly boasting that your state had been in that column; so you don't go as proud as you would have been, but you're pretty happy anyhow.

O'BRIEN: Well, that connects with another thing I think we ought to get into, and that's patronage questions. Did that loss affect patronage?

CERRELL: I don't know. I can't see how it could have, because California fared so well by John F. Kennedy that I can't imagine they could have done any better. I previously indicated that I think my old boss, Bill Munnell, would have been the postmaster general or some similar important role. I was at a meeting with Speaker Unruh and—in about December, maybe November—an organization called Democratic Associates, which had been formed in late '58 after the Pat Brown victory; much more moderate, conservative group of businessmen contributing. Another one of my roles, I was their executive director.

A phone call came through and it was from Larry O'Brien discussing with Jesse the possibility that then-state senator and now Superior Court Judge Hugo Fisher [Hugo M. Fisher] was going to be named postmaster general. I think Unruh, for internal party matters, was very disappointed, expressed displeasure. And O'Brien said, "Well, damn it, we've got to do something. You know, we'll have to put a Californian in. Who do you recommend?"

And it's one of these, you know, having just left his side, he said, "Well, why don't you go with J. Edward Day? He's Stevenson's former law partner; he heads the organization called Democratic Associates; he's been with you people even though it was tough. I mean, he should have been with Stevenson, but he stayed with you. He's a Western [Western Operations] vice president; one of the largest insurance companies in the world, Prudential [Prudential Insurance Co.] And that's how he got the appointment. I think that's, just as plain and as simple as that, how he got that appointment, on Jesse's recommendation. Of course, Jesse was himself not in a position to go back and take a job.

I had met with Larry O'Brien in December of '60 and he asked—

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I will never say that he offered me a job—would I like to stay in Washington? I was actually traveling through for a wedding down in Miami. Would I like a job in the administration? I felt that California was the place to be. I don't regret that decision, but a lot of people just couldn't go back there. The Treasurer of the United States was a Californian. Pierre was the press secretary, Pierre Salinger. I'm sure I could go right on down the line and tell you—science advisor to McNamara [Robert S. McNamara], Brown [Harold Brown] who later went on the President's cabinet. I could give you a whole list of Californians who were well taken care of in patronage in Washington. I mean, had we won, I just can't imagine it could have been much better because they did take good care of the operation. Fred Dutton, who'd been Pat Brown's executive secretary, went on to become cabinet secretary. And I repeat, I'm sure I could give you the whole list of them if we had time. They did very well.

O'BRIEN: Was Jesse Unruh consulted on most of these?

CERRELL: I'd say that, well, obviously, Jesse was consulted on the postmaster general.

O'BRIEN: He was on Harold Brown as well, wasn't he?

CERRELL: I think Harold Brown was, you know, simply a matter of getting the best qualified man. I don't know that Jesse was consulted on all of the Washington appointments; I would think that Larry O'Brien probably had consulted with him or chatted with him about them. I would say that he was probably fairly well consulted on the appointments that were made within the state, but I think there's a difference; I'm not sure he had the veto power—I'm not sure really anybody had the veto power—but he had a lot to say.

O'BRIEN: Well, getting back to that meeting with RFK here, with Robert Kennedy, on that, on the matter of registration. Did Robert Kennedy at that time or any time to California political leaders suggest anything in the way of matters concerning desegregation or other matters like more state politics?

CERRELL: No, my recollection of Bobby's role was strictly nuts and bolts, technical—talking about in the campaign matters—that we've got to get the people

registered before the registration closes because if they're not registered they can't vote on election day. It's just as simple as that. Now, what you do to get them out to the polls, what difference does it make, if there are not enough of them registered? I don't recall any philosophical discussions. That doesn't mean they weren't held and that doesn't mean that some ultraliberal wasn't grabbing him and saying,

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“Well, I'm not so sure I'm for your brother because he hasn't.... He's not strong enough on this issue or that issue or so forth.” I'm not saying those weren't happening. But that wasn't his principal reason for being here.

O'BRIEN: How about the '62 election of Brown and Nixon? Do you recall people from the administration around the Kennedys getting involved?

CERRELL: Very much so. I guess that was what I did more in '62 than anything else—follow through—and I did it very heavily in '60. Matter of fact, can't remember which of those years—both of them now that I think about it—I think I actually lived at the Beverly Hilton. We had so many senators, governors, cabinet people coming through—obviously, not the cabinet types in '60, but in those two years. That's really important. You know, the state now has got—I don't even recall what it has—twenty million people; how do you get to them all? How do you hit them all? Well, of course, you do it through the electronic media, but, you know, there's just so much of that that you can do and so these people would come through.

But we had in '62 tremendous help from the administration and even to the point the President himself was expected out here in October. It was while we were out doing the advancing, I mean, making the rounds with the police and the secret service—he was due in the next day—that the President got the “cold” and returned from Chicago to Washington for the development of the Cuban Missile Crisis, which I think probably helped Pat Brown in the long run. I think it was good for the Democratic administration.

So, John F. Kennedy personally, as I recall, did not campaign for Pat Brown against Dick Nixon, but his people did and he'd in November of '61 made a quick, three-and-a-half-week-notice trip to California for a big fundraiser. It took care of California past bills; it put money in the California coffers for the future; and it raised money for the national committee in Washington. And so that was, of course, a big help. There was a lot of help against Nixon. I don't think it was directed against Nixon personally, I mean, any vendetta left over from the '60 campaign. Pat Brown, even though he hadn't delivered, tried to deliver in '60 and he was a friend. I think maybe even more importantly, they were looking to 1964 that time. I mean, they weren't about to have a Republican governor sitting out here in California when John F. Kennedy was going to go for reelection; they certainly weren't about to let Nixon get back on top again.

O'BRIEN: Did you see O'Brien or O'Donnell or any of these people...

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CERRELL: No, I would say—well, John Bailey, of course, was the national chairman—I would say O'Brien, O'Donnell, the only times I ever really saw these fellows was with the President. That doesn't mean that they wouldn't help us in Washington. I saw them any time when I was in Washington. You know, really, my man was more O'Brien, O'Donnell being very close, so close to the President, you'd only see O'Donnell on the way to see the President. But, you wouldn't see them out here any more than you'd expect them or could even necessarily use them out here.

O'BRIEN: How about money? Was there money channeled in from...

CERRELL: Well, that's the big difference. You now touched on an entirely other story. I can remember in 1962 they funneled in one hundred thousand dollars for registration. When we talked to the Democratic National Committee, Lyndon Johnson's national committee, and I don't mean to be taking on the President because the President never was—any more than I think John Kennedy was—a strong believer in the national committee. Lyndon Johnson had reasons to hate the national committee; the national committee to him was Paul Butler and Paul Butler was like one of those people over there who used to hurl stones at him. The problem is, nobody ever told Lyndon Johnson now that he was president that it was his national committee.

Well, we remember talking to people in 1964 and 1966 trying to convince them what the national committee should be doing here in California. I can remember the '66 pitch, you know, when Pat Brown was seeking reelection for governor; Marvin Watson [William Marvin Watson] sitting at the White House telling Gene Wyman, "Well, when I was state chairman down in Texas, we never looked to the national committee for any help," you know. How do you argue with this point? You know, you'd make the thing and say, "Well, look fellows, in 1962 the President recognized the importance of California, the importance of registration, the importance of winning so that when he comes on the ballot in two years, it'll be helpful. They came out and they gave us a hundred thousand dollars which went exclusively into registration." You know, so you'd just drop the argument. We got zero. I was finance director of Pat Brown's campaign in '66; we got zero from the people in Washington.

In 1962 we not only got the people coming out raising the funds, we got the actual funds. We got every bit of support we needed, because they were looking very intelligently beyond '62 to '64 and maybe '66 and '68. I really feel very strongly about it, because I think they really messed up in later years by comparison to what I would say is the far-sighted thinking of the Kennedys, who, again, themselves were not that strong believers in the national committee. I mean, they ran around the national committee or else they took it over. They were

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really very helpful. They were as important as any other factor for Pat Brown being reelected in 1962. Then, again, that was another important thing; '62 was the first new elections after reapportionment and the results were great. When I went back to the swearing in of 1963,

January, with Senator Engle, California at that time had the largest Democratic delegation in the House of Representatives, larger than Texas, larger certainly than New York because they had a lot more Republicans. This was good thinking on their part, and I think so we were very appreciative to '62.

I can tell you, when I mentioned how Bobby was so strong on registration, telling us specifically, "Now, you fellows go out there and get people in the Negro areas. Get people in the Mexican-American areas." We hired for the first time people to go down and work in these areas. Matter of fact, one of the fellows that I hired to run the black operation is now a member of the legislature, Assemblyman Leon Ralph [Leon Douglas Ralph] who many of us knew.... I'm very proud that so many people who got their first jobs in politics got them through me and have gone on pretty well. I say that because we always believed in young people. I can now look to people, really at all levels of government, but we always recognized the importance of involving young people. And I think this was again the Kennedy influence, I think really an influence that will be one of the legacies that will remain was a greater involvement. Oh, sure, they were involved, but I mean the difference between, you know, being a Young Democrat and being involved in politics, working at it. This will go down as one of the legacies left from the Kennedys in the American political scene.

O'BRIEN: Well, passing on to much later things, that well, will lead to the candidacy of Robert Kennedy in '68: Did you have much contact with his staff from, well, let's say, '63 to '68, in that five-year period before the...

CERRELL: With the Bob Kennedy staff I would say not except in terms of some of our few dealings with Washington. I know Gene Wyman who became state chairman in '61, became national committeeman in '64, kept close contact. I kept in close rapport with Pierre Salinger, which also gave me a rapport with Bob Kennedy. Matter of fact, Bob did a fundraiser for Pierre in 1967; Salinger still had this deficit left over from '64. The Senator really was a senator from New York, didn't have that much occasion to travel here. Pat Lawford spends an awful lot of her time back East, so the purpose of coming out here to see her had diminished. I don't think in the mid-sixties he was really thinking about challenging Lyndon Johnson in '68. And I would say there wasn't that close a rapport with the guys who were actually on his staff.

O'BRIEN: Did you have much in the way of conversation with Jesse Unruh about the Kennedy candidacy before he announced?

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CERRELL: No, Unruh and I sort of parted ways in 1964. I should say, Unruh parted ways. He got into, you know, an internal political battle in California. I've always been a strong believer—now, of course, the moment of truth is approaching—that Jesse Unruh should play the role of the heir apparent as opposed to the pretender to the throne. And I just don't think he handled himself well in 1964 at all. I think after he achieved the victory of Salinger over Cranston, which was very important to him, I think his demands upon Salinger, that Salinger agree to support Unruh for governor two years hence, I think

was totally unreasonable. I think that Unruh got sort of roped into an internal situation for national committeewoman in California and so, while we've always been friendly and on speaking terms, I ceased being a confidant in 1964. Our conversations about that have been limited.

I did have many conversations with Pierre Salinger, whom I worked for. Pierre was the head of what is an organization known as the Golden Bear Club, and I was their top staff man from its inception in January of '65, following the Johnson inaugural. I guess for all intents and purposes, it ended in 1968. He headed that. And we did talk much in late '67 and early '68—really early '68 much more—about a possible Bobby Kennedy candidacy. As a matter of fact, I did some research for him on the different election laws pertaining to the presidential primary and the deadlines and the dates that they'd be needing to do things in California. When it came down to it, Pierre had little to say about Kennedy and what happened in the California presidential primary. Jesse Unruh really was the major-domo.

O'BRIEN: What were you recommending to Pierre at this point?

CERRELL: Well, I'm not so sure I was recommending; I think I was simply advising at that stage of the game how they would do it. I was an administration man. At this stage of the game, in January of '67 I had ceased being a party functionary and was now a private businessman. I was inclined to stay with the administration, I didn't have strong feelings. I'd always worked—and enjoyed—well with the Kennedys. I never really talked to Pierre about any possibility of working for Bobby Kennedy in '68. I was simply giving him gratuitous advice as to what Bobby would have to do and need to be in the California presidential primary if he decided to get in. This was, most of it, around the time when Gene McCarthy [Eugene J. McCarthy] was making the noises.

O'BRIEN: Did you get involved in the campaign, primary campaign, at all in '68?

CERRELL: In 1968? I worked for Lyndon Johnson for eleven days in March. I was contracted for him March the twenty-first

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and contract nullified, null and void, on the thirty-first of March, unknown to everybody. I don't say that with any annoyance because there was a provision in there which saw to it that I didn't have any serious problems as a result of it financially. I also was retained of the United States, Hubert Humphrey, in late August—late April.

O'BRIEN: Who contracted you for Johnson?

CERRELL: That would be a good point as to who actually contracted me for Johnson. There was no signed contract; there was a letter of agreement that I had with White House aides. White House aides, the President's Club people, people in California and the, what was then the Attorney General Tom Lynch [Thomas C. Lynch]



delegation. Then we went to work for Hubert Humphrey and we did not get involved in the primary at all, any more than some people accuse us of really working for Tom Lynch in order to try to stop Kennedy. That's just not true. In effect, when we were working for Lyndon Johnson, we were working for the Lynch delegation, but we ceased working for the Lynch delegation on the thirty-first of March.

O'BRIEN: We were talking about factions earlier here in California politics, Democratic politics. How are things lining up at this point, in the spring of '68? The north-south split is no longer...

CERRELL: Johnson had most of the organization, most of the elected officials, and virtually little if any of the volunteers. And I think that the Lynch delegation versus.... Even knowing that the Lynch delegation was the Johnson delegation, I'm afraid the Lynch delegation would have lost, except you don't know in terms of, would Kennedy and McCarthy have split so evenly that Lynch could have won? I mean, you know, what you would have? You would have wound up with a situation like thirty-five, thirty-two, thirty-two. That would have been the only way. The Lynch delegation, which was the Johnson delegation, never would have achieved a majority; they could have eked out a small plurality. Humphrey, had he gone with the Lynch delegation, I mean, would have been massacred. Consequently he had nothing.... You know, he totally divorced himself from the Lynch delegation, but that was just a matter of personalities.

McCarthy had been in there early, grabbed off a lot of liberals. Lot of people got locked in, just like a lot of people got locked in; I mean, like you take a fellow like Congressman Tunney [John V. Tunney]. You know, he didn't know that his old friend, Bobby, was going. John had been Teddy's roommate, and he didn't know that they were going to make that presidential thing. He was on the Johnson delegation and stayed with it.

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O'BRIEN: Did Humphrey ever consider.... Well, actually, when Humphrey came in, it was too late to get in the California primary, wasn't it?

CERRELL: Well, let's set the record straight. No, it wasn't too late, but we were able to say that it was too late. It could have been done. I mean, let's put it this way, you know, a person with a genuine grassroots operation could have gotten in it. There are other places in the country where that could have happened, but that would have defeated the whole posture of the campaign. The important thing was that Humphrey should not get himself involved in primaries: (a) It wouldn't have been smart; but, (b) If he couldn't be in them all, you know, why? A couple of them just wouldn't have worked out well for him.

O'BRIEN: What were your impressions of the Humphrey operation once it got started?

CERRELL: The Humphrey operation once it got started was about as bad as once it ended. California was fine. That's another self-serving statement; we were part of it.

After the convention, the Humphreys were under tremendous pressure from the party establishment—which at this time had now become a Kennedy and McCarthy coalition—to dump the people who'd been with him—ourselves namely—from April, which is fine, except they went on and did nothing. That's the reason, you know, when you see Hubert Humphrey narrowly losing California, you saw California losing the nation, you should see there was some problems because they really didn't care about Hubert Humphrey; and there's no reason they should have cared about Hubert Humphrey. It was foolish for Humphrey to turn over his operation to the people whom he had totally defeated in the Convention. I don't mean that they shouldn't have been brought in; as a matter of fact, there should have been a massive coalition as we had recommended, but he simply, for the most part, had ruled out his old people and brought in new people. I think this was catastrophic, not only here, but in other parts of the country. I genuinely believe today that Hubert Humphrey could have and certainly should have been president of the United States.

O'BRIEN: Registration fell off in California, didn't it?

CERRELL: Registration not only fell off in California, but registration today is at the lowest level it's been since 1936. Republicans outgain us on a seven-to-one ratio. Now, if that isn't an indication that there's something wrong—and I don't want to go into what's wrong; we'd spend another hour talking about that. This is posing a serious problem. It's particularly serious today because we have.... You know, the census will be taken in 1970, next year—we will have reapportionment, and California's going to pick up

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five new congressional seats. They're going to go Republican; the legislature's going to go strongly Republican. We're going to lose many incumbents on all levels because.... Unlike the Stevenson rise in '52, which involved hundreds of thousands really of people in politics for the first time, who then later went on and formed the CDC and got in formed clubs all over—God, you had clubs within small neighborhoods—the Kennedy-McCarthy involvement in '68 really hasn't produced this. I think the Democratic Party today—we're talking 1969—is weaker than at any time I can recall it, and this is really unfortunate because we're the largest state in the union and everything is coming up. I don't know what it's going to take to change it or turn it around, but they've got some very serious problems. Maybe Teddy's going to be the answer. Obviously, Hubert Humphrey was not the answer. Maybe Ted Kennedy will be the answer.

O'BRIEN: How do you see McCarthy's role in all this?

CERRELL: Past, present or future?

O'BRIEN: Well, past.

CERRELL: Well, I think McCarthy was one of the great contributing factors to Hubert

Humphrey's defeat. I see recently where Hubert Humphrey said that Bobby would have been in his corner had Bobby lost in California. I'm totally convinced that Bobby Kennedy would have been. I'm not really prepared to predict who would have won the Convention; I do believe that Hubert Humphrey still would have won the Convention. You know, that could be debated for days and weeks and months. That's not easy and it's something we'll never know, but it would have been close under any circumstances.

I can tell you that Bobby Kennedy would have been standing up there right next to Hubert Humphrey the night that Hubert Humphrey accepted the nomination. I'm not saying that Gene McCarthy should have stood there; I think that would have looked pretty bad, but, you know, for it to take him a month and a half or two months, whatever the case was, to come up with his weak endorsement, I think was devastating and catastrophic to Humphrey. I don't think McGovern [George S. McGovern] was much better. I think Teddy Kennedy was fine. I think many of these people turned it over to Richard Nixon. And I even enjoy now having noticed—again I know this is a long-range interview—that the stock market yesterday fell to its lowest level since sometime in 1968. I think of all those Republicans who were looking forward to how well things were going to be under Nixon; I'd like to remind them that in 1961 the stock market did great under the first year of John F. Kennedy. And contrary to what so many of them had said—the depression and the crashes and all—the eight years of Kennedy and Johnson were very strong for the American business community.

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O'BRIEN: Well, there are just a couple things here on the campaign of '68. Did you get any insight into the way Jesse handled the Kennedy campaign?

CERRELL: Of '68?

O'BRIEN: '68.

CERRELL: You know, you never know when you're really knotted inside as to where it's truth and where it's myth, as to what his role was, whether he was being pushed out and so forth. It is definite that he started off as the top man. He was then surrounded or submerged by many easterners. I think this was definite; it was calculated; it's true, and it's factual, and it's accurate. I think that he had his press man, Dick Klein leak a story to this effect to the *Los Angeles Times* that all this eastern influence had taken control, and as a result of it I think Unruh then moved up a notch or two in terms of.... They figured they better call these people off because it wasn't making for good publicity. It wasn't making for good news items and I think Unruh totally reestablished himself in firm control. He'd never been really on the outs, but occasionally there were people saying, you know, "Do we have to have Jesse around us all the time?" And, "Do we have to have him standing next to us? Maybe this won't help Bobby," and so forth. Some of these people were starting to win out, and I think as a result of the story they had to prove that there was no truth to the fact that Jesse was being phased out of the campaign, so they brought him back in just as strong as he'd ever been.

O'BRIEN: Did you ever have any contact with any of the Kennedy people like Bruno [Gerald J. Bruno] and Tolan [James E. Tolan]?

CERRELL: Well, of course, Jerry Bruno and I had worked many campaigns prior to that, back into the John F. Kennedy days. I had no contact with Jerry Bruno during the Robert Kennedy trip at all. Jerry Bruno did show up on the scene as a consultant for advance men during the Humphrey campaign that fall of '68, but no real role himself. I think they used him for window-dressing like they used certain other people who have been associated with the Kennedys.

O'BRIEN: How about—you know, particularly since you're in the business of electing people and elections—in the way of campaign techniques and things like this in the primary of '68? Did you see anything new and different in the style of politics or in the content of politics?

CERRELL: No, I can't say that, really, I saw anything that different. All people, and correctly so and rightfully so, are spending a lot more time trying to get on television and radio, and I

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think it's essential. It's mandatory in a state this large; it's the only way you reach the people. You could, you know, spend a year walking precincts and not hit as many as a good, oh, half-dozen good television shows. I think you know, everything that's done in a campaign is geared to make an impression on the news media, you know, the writing fellows. I didn't notice anything that would be considered....

The only difference that I continue to be amazed at is the tremendous professional organization that now surrounds a candidate. It would be a great contrast to my first days of campaigning in a presidential primary with John F. Kennedy as opposed to, say, the last days of Robert F. Kennedy. I mean, with John F. Kennedy there was no such thing as security: private planes were few and far between. You know, maybe you'd have an advance man, one press aide, you know, one or two cars. I mean, you contrast that to—and I'm not even talking about in the heat of the actual campaign; I'm talking about working in a primary—you contrast that today, you know, without going into it, all of the tremendous operations—it's the best way to describe it—which they are. They're the multimillion dollar operation, what they come down to, all the professionalism. I'm just wondering if they are overdoing it, if there's an overkill. I'm not saying there is, but sometimes I wonder if all the tremendous expense that goes into some of this stuff is necessary. When you recognize it, all they do in the campaign is to impress the media, I guess it's understandable.

O'BRIEN: What were your impressions of the campaign staff for McCarthy and Kennedy and their use of the media during the California primary?

CERRELL: I think it seemed they were night and day; McCarthy in the older fashion. I

think McCarthy was doing things that they did in the fifties and the Kennedys were doing the things they were doing in the sixties. McCarthy I don't think gave enough consideration to the electronic media; I don't think he gave enough serious consideration to a good staff. The Kennedys, politically speaking, have never been cheap, penurious in terms of when it comes to spending money to make sure you've got a good operation. I think they had a good operation. I'm surprised that their vote wasn't stronger because of the operation, but Bobby did not even get a majority of the vote in the California primary, but it was a good victory, and it was a well deserved victory. I think a lot had to do with the people around them.

O'BRIEN: Well, you have a few inches of tape left. Is there anything that we've left out or anything that you think we should add?

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CERRELL: It's also reaching the time when I'm going—I don't want to get sentimental or any of these things, the little stories. I think that, without a testimonial, my feelings about John F. Kennedy were impossible really to put on tape right now. I'm not trying to sound like a politician. It was one of the world's great tragedies and, as anybody you know, I really looked up to.... I was on my honeymoon at the time of the assassination. I was supposed to go back through Washington, go to the White House to see the President. We had a lot of private little moments together, none of which are of any great significance, but the kind that you enjoy sitting—you know, you got a couple of drinks at night—relating them to people. I do a lot of this at schools and universities, even in the younger schools. Here was a real human being. I would say, by contrast, much more warm than his brother, Bob Kennedy. Really concerned about people, wouldn't mind spending time and generally interested in people; he liked people.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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TO JOHN F. KENNEDY ON HIS INAUGURATION DAY

by

Walter Karabian  
January 20, 1961

We are a new generation  
Containing a mixture of old and new,  
But all in sincere celebration  
As on this day we prayed for you.

Yes, our generation is new,  
Yet our tale has often been told  
Of war, sacrifice, and the return of a few  
With longings for peace which make our wish seem old.

The hardships and burdens,  
The hardships and worry,  
Are not new nor sudden,  
But familiar lines of our life's story.

Our generation is new  
Even though our tale has often been told,  
But our hope of the America with you  
Makes the past seem very old.

Embarking as we are  
So colorful and bold,  
Together doing our share  
We'll build America a mightier new mold.

We shall struggle and demand liberty,  
No, not more for you and me,  
But for those who cannot say they are free  
Over there, and some in our country.

You are the hope of things anew  
And as you took the oath on this Inaugural Day  
The hearts of Americans praying for you  
Were joined with millions of other peace lovers, here and away.

We have confidence in the wisdom of your decisions  
And hold your strength to be admired,  
For we know, "Of those to whom much is given,  
Much is required."