

Andrew T. Hatcher Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 05/23/1972
Administrative Information

Creator: Andrew T. Hatcher
Interviewer: Larry J. Hackman
Date of Interview: May 23, 1972
Length: 15 pages

Biographical Note

Hatcher was a speechwriter for Adlai E. Stevenson's presidential campaigns, 1952 and 1956; California Assistant Secretary of Labor, 1959; speechwriter and member of the press staff on John F. Kennedy's [JFK] 1960 presidential campaign; the first African-American appointed Associate Press Secretary to the President under JFK from 1960 through 1963; and one of the founders of 100 Black Men of America in 1963. In this interview Hatcher discusses working for Adlai E. Stevenson at the 1956 Democratic National Convention; his personal and working relationship with Pierre E.G. Salinger; working for Governor Edmund G. Brown, 1959–1960; how he came to work on JFK's 1960 presidential campaign; various personalities both in the Democratic National Committee and on JFK's 1960 campaign staff; press work, demonstrations, and delegations at the 1960 Democratic National Convention; and the discussion of the 1960 Democratic vice-presidential choice, among other issues.

Access

Open.

Usage Restrictions

Copyright of these materials have passed to the United States Government upon the death of the interviewee. Users of these materials are advised to determine the copyright status of any document from which they wish to publish.

Copyright

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excesses of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law. The copyright law extends its protection to unpublished works from the moment of creation in a tangible form. Direct your questions concerning copyright to the reference staff.

Transcript of Oral History Interview

These electronic documents were created from transcripts available in the research room of the John F. Kennedy Library. The transcripts were scanned using optical character recognition and the resulting text files were proofread against the original transcripts. Some formatting changes were made. Page numbers are noted where they would have occurred at the bottoms of the pages of the original transcripts. If researchers have any concerns about accuracy, they are encouraged to visit the Library and consult the transcripts and the interview recordings.

Suggested Citation

Andrew T. Hatcher, recorded interview by Larry J. Hackman, May 23, 1972, (page number), John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

Oral History Interview

Of

Andrew T. Hatcher

Although a legal agreement was not signed during the lifetime of Andrew T. Hatcher, upon his death, ownership of the recording and transcript of his interview for the Oral History Program passed to the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library.

The following terms and conditions apply:

1. The transcript is available for use by researchers.
2. The tape recording shall be made available to those researchers who have access to the transcript.
3. Copyright to the interview transcript and tape is assigned to the United States Government.
4. Copies of the transcript and the tape recording may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request for a fee.
5. Copies of the transcript and tape recording may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the John F. Kennedy Library.

Andrew T. Hatcher – JFK #1
Table of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Hatcher's first reaction to John F. Kennedy [JFK], 1946
2	Working for Adlai E. Stevenson at the 1956 Democratic National Convention
3	Continued relationship with Pierre E.G. Salinger
4	Working for Governor Edmund G. Brown, 1959–1960
4	Hatcher contemplates working on JFK's 1960 presidential campaign
5	Doubts about Brown's chances for the 1960 Democratic presidential nomination
6	Richard G. Tuck and Frederick G. Dutton
7	Paul Ziffren, Paul M. Butler, and the Democratic National Committee
8	Press work at the 1960 Democratic National Convention
10	Hatcher's long list of political contacts
11	Salinger's need for "backup" and "loyalty" in 1960
11	William L. Dawson and JFK, 1960
12	The demonstration for Stevenson at the 1960 Democratic National Convention
13	Other workers on the JFK campaign, 1960
13	The California delegation at the 1960 Democratic National Convention
14	The Democratic vice-presidential choice, 1960
14	Working with the Kennedys

Oral History Interview

With

ANDREW T. HATCHER

May 23, 1972

By Larry J. Hackman

For the John F. Kennedy Library

HACKMAN: The place to start is just for you to explain how you really came to the Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] operation in '60—what the previous relationship with Salinger [Pierre E. G. Salinger] had been and that sort of thing, if that's the only route really.

HATCHER: Well, I first heard about John F. Kennedy with his spectacular victory in the House of Representatives, and my first reaction was rather negative. It seems to me, I've forgotten his opponent, but somewhere in there I sort of felt that somebody else who was contesting the seat, it must have been the Democrat in the primary...

HACKMAN: Back in '46.

HATCHER: Yes.

HACKMAN: A guy names Mike Neville [Michael J. Neville] and a couple of other people.

HATCHER: ...should have had the edge there if it hadn't been for money. I just got a negative feeling.

HACKMAN: Where were you at that point?

HATCHER: I was in California at that point—or I was

[-1-]

actually back in Springfield, Massachusetts at that point. Then I returned to California in 1947; I'd been there in the Army. I never really followed his career. I'd see stories, and of course I was taken up just like every other newspaper and magazine reader by the romance and marriage and all the speculations about him being a live catch and that type of thing. And then, in '56 I was on the staff of Adlai Stevenson [Adlai E. Stevenson] at the Convention [Democratic National Convention]. In fact, I shared an office with Arthur Schlesinger [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.]. And I was in charge of the spontaneous demonstration, along with Ambassador Rivkin [William R. Rivkin], who is now deceased. And among the things that I was partially responsible for was one requesting that the counting board be taken down for the vice presidency.

It was just a question really of, as I recall.... Of course, I was not privy to all of the inner workings of that Convention, but I was working very closely with Jim Finnegan [James A. Finnegan]—and there was no malice towards it. I know that Governor Stevenson liked John F. Kennedy for Vice President very much. And it was my understanding that the political powers just felt that to unite the Party it would have been better to have Kefauver [Estes Kefauver]. And of course there were misgivings about a Catholic being on a ticket. But they were not Stevenson's misgivings, and it's hard to say that they were Finnegan's misgivings.

HACKMAN: On the order to take down the count board, when did that happen? Are you saying that it was taken down for a political reason?

HATCHER: No, I'm not really sure about that.

HACKMAN: But it's a possibility.

HATCHER: They felt that it wouldn't be necessary, that there would be no contest; it's just a part of the general dismantling of a Convention.

HACKMAN: Oh, I see what you mean.

HATCHER: I guess you have some people clean-up happy. I knew about the Kennedy operation in the trailer by the amphitheater, but I did not see him there, nor did I attempt to. I was too busy with my other things.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Do you remember any of Schlesinger's feelings at that point about Kennedy? Were there ties that were clear to you at that point?

HATCHER: He, I think, may have influenced Stevenson's concern in Kennedy. But I

don't recall any specific statements. There were some

[-2-]

conversations which I could not help but hear, but there was no real subterfuge. I just thought he felt that he was coming and we ought to give him a little recognition.

HACKMAN: Do you recall any comments by any of the Stevenson people at all about that controversial recognition of the key delegations by Rayburn [Samuel T. Rayburn], with McCormack [John W. McCormack] next to him up on the podium? There was a point when a bunch of delegations switched to Kefauver.

HATCHER: No. No, I don't. Because my task at that time, as soon as Stevenson was nominated—re-nominated—was to get in Chairman Dawson [William L. Dawson] and to get back to Washington, and you know what I mean.

I'm thinking in terms of winning the campaign, and not trying to recapitulate what had happened. Obviously I missed some excellent opportunities there because we were all, as I said, sharing offices and confidences and so forth. It was at this period that—well, after the election, where I felt up until September that we had a chance at beating Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower]. But after the election, I decided to unwind. And as part of unwinding I was going to have a reunion with Salinger who was then with *Collier's* [*Collier's* magazine].

So I came to New York where, of course being from Princeton, New Jersey, I had many friends here and so forth. But I had dinner with Salinger and lunch with him and so forth. And we had both planned to return to California together. He was going to visit his family for Thanksgiving and I was going to be home in time for Thanksgiving, and we were going to take the same plane. He was working on this Teamster story and so forth and *Collier's* folded.

He did not go back to California but went to Washington and subsequently called me after I had returned to California to say that he had taken a spot as an investigator with the McClellan [John L. McClellan] Committee [Select Committee on Improper Activities in Labor-Management Relations]. Then I would see Salinger from time to time at the Conventions and so forth, whenever he returned to San Francisco—Don Bradley [Don L. Bradley] and I, and Salinger, and Libby [Elizabeth R. Smith Gatov], and a secretary, sort of administrative assistant type, called Cyr Copertini—we used to get together and talk about things. And he [Salinger] was pushing Kennedy from the very, very start. In 1958 he came to the CDC [California Democratic Council] Convention. The CDC was an organization that we had been the cofounders of. CDC was conceived on a tablecloth in a restaurant called John's Grill in San Francisco by Bradley, Salinger, Hatcher, a fellow by the name of John Abbott, and—I can't remember, another fellow who was a Republican, a public relations type, a pretty

[-3-]

good man. And then, of course, it expanded and gradually was organized.

But, at any rate, he returned in '58 for this Convention. And there again, I was in charge of the demonstration. And we put together the ticket of Brown [Edmund "Pat" G. Brown] and Engle [Clair Engle] and all that kind of business. And then we went on to win. In the meantime, Salinger keeps trying to tell us all that Kennedy is going to be nominated.

HACKMAN: Do you remember anything about that CDC appearance? Was he effective or ineffective, or do you have a feel for that?

HATCHER: I didn't think he was very effective and told Pierre so.

HACKMAN: Were there other people that early, let's say by '58, who either through Salinger or who otherwise were enthusiastic for Kennedy?

HATCHER: Not that I remember. Well, in '59 I was appointed Assistant Labor Commissioner by Governor Brown, and I was working very closely with Fred Dutton [Frederick G. Dutton] who was the governor's executive secretary. And one of the things that I had to do was to go through all the jobs and find the jobs that the Republicans had hid under civil service. And so I found about twenty-three jobs and I took them into Dutton, and one of them was Assistant Labor Commissioner which was held by a woman who was a Democrat. And I wanted that job because it had offices in Sacramento, San Francisco, and L.A., and then it had branch offices in sixteen other cities. This gave me a chance to have listening posts in all these places. And many of the deputy labor commissioners, even though they were state civil service, were Democrats or they had labor backgrounds and so forth and so on.

In the course of that assignment, I visited Trinidad. And en route to Trinidad, I stopped in to see Salinger, where he asked me to join—this was in April of '60—the campaign. So I gave it some consideration. But prior to that, sometime in early '60, I had gone to the airport to meet Senator and Mrs. Kennedy [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis]; they were coming for some function, I'm not sure what it was. But here again, he didn't impress me. I thought he was too thin, too awkward looking. Even though I had been to school in New England, I had some difficulty following him. We didn't really have any close conversations with him or anything.

HACKMAN: Had you talked with anyone else around him, with Sorensen [Theodore C. Sorensen], someone you knew

[-4-]

at that point, or anyone else?

HATCHER: Only Salinger. And, of course, I had known Salinger since 1947; we had been friends as well as political colleagues all through that period. Now I said to Pierre when he asked me, I said, "I don't really know. I still think Stevenson is going to be the candidate, and even though he says he's not going to be the candidate, I ought to find out."

So I put in a call to Bill Blair [William M. Blair, Jr.] and I got Bill Blair, and I asked him if the governor intended to run and was given an unequivocal no. And then while I was in Trinidad, I mulled over this Salinger offer, and told him I would talk with Jack Henning [John F. Henning], who was the head of industrial relations and who had also been a friend of ours for many years, about getting a leave of absence. I did, and he said, "Well, I think it would be better if you resigned. We'll talk to the governor [Brown] and find out what his plans are." Because that's another condition I put on Salinger because I never gave Pat Brown much chance for getting that nomination.

HACKMAN: The presidential nomination.

HATCHER: That's right. I just felt that he had to prove himself as governor. And he was well on the way to doing that, but I didn't think he had enough time to gain the momentum. And even though Warren [Earl Warren] had sort of come up from nowhere in California, news and political fortune was still traveling east to west rather than west to east at the time. So I resigned. The governor was aware of it and so forth. And it's always a mystery to me that no reporters ever picked that up. Because here was the first clear indication that Pat Brown was really not going to run; and this was in early May. I went directly to Los Angeles after giving notice—I guess about the third week in May or something like that—and started on the press situation.

HACKMAN: Let me ask you a couple things before we go into that. Had you talked with Bradley or Dutton about Brown's plans, let's say, through late '59 or early '60?

HATCHER: Yeah. Bradley always discounted the fact that Pat was going to get anyplace. I think in the latter stages, late '59 and early '60, I don't think Dutton had any hope of hope of Brown moving into the situation, even though he still thought of it as a possibility. I just don't feel that he should make it. As I recall—and I helped arrange this—Brown made a political

[-5-]

sortie to the East which for some reason fell very flat. But for instance, as late as '59, for instance when I came back to New York for the '59 NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] convention, I had a hospitality suite for Brown which was approved by the state committee and so forth. Now I would have had this anyway, but everybody knew exactly what I was doing, and I was pitching Brown throughout that entire NAACP convention. And I got a good reaction to him. But Bradley, I'm positive, never felt that we could emerge with Brown as the candidate. Now of course to every Californian, being governor of California means a lot more than being Vice President.

HACKMAN: Do you remember, did you have any knowledge then or did you ever hear discussions of later, any attempts by Dutton or Tuck [Richard G. Tuck] or

whoever to slow down John Kennedy's efforts in California, let's say, in trips in '59 or whatever?

HATCHER: Yes.

HACKMAN: And how was that done, what do you remember?

HATCHER: Yes. Well, you know, you just put the word out to the political groups who want speakers and so forth that our man hasn't made his decision; we don't know, we may be a contender, so why throw out any extra hospitality to visitors? We did the same thing to Lyndon Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson]. There were other reasons too. But this I think is a normal technique. The governor wants to be boss of his state or he wants—maybe they were disturbed because Kennedy was working through Pierre who, of course, had all the contacts rather than coming to the governor or calling the governor and saying, "Pat, I'd like to, may I make a trip," and so forth and so on, "am I welcome?" Well, the governor's going to say yes, you can do it. But you get people who want to be king-makers or put certain things in a pattern; that this protocol becomes part of their life and part of their game plan. And I would say that as far as Tuck was concerned—even though, let's face it, I've known Dick Tuck since the day he put on his sneakers—we never really considered him a political strategist, even though I think he did a good job in the Brown campaign. But he was not making any decisions. So I think if you assume that Dick Tuck was making a political decision for Pat Brown then you are in error. There's no question that he was very friendly with Fred Dutton, and of course a lot of times big problems are resolved over a drink on the patio as well as in the office of the executive secretary. But for some reason Dick was never acceptable to the in guys when we got in the White House. I don't know what he did to cause that. I never would have considered him that important. Somewhere else we'll probably get to it and you

[-6-]

may want to make a note of it, but this was the reason why O'Donnell [Kenneth P. O'Donnell] and Dutton never got along—Dutton's loyalty to Tuck, and his insistence, his insistence that Tuck be given some really meaningful job in Washington or California.

HACKMAN: Yeah. Can you remember getting into discussions on what to do about the California primary in '60, whether Brown should run or how to keep John Kennedy from coming in at that point, and then in the selection of the delegation? Is that anything you were in touch with Salinger about?

HATCHER: No, I didn't have too much to do with that.

HACKMAN: One other thing, just a sort of a sidelight: did you get involved at all in the effort to oust Ziffren [Paul Ziffren] as the DNC [Democratic National Committee] man?

HATCHER: Yes, I was, simply because my faction was. My own personal contact with Ziffren had been good. But I think that he had outlived his usefulness from the standpoint of the Paul Butler [Paul M. Butler] situation. I'm rather irregular when it comes to politics and I just don't think it's the duty of a chairman to divide a Party. He leads as much as is possible to lead, but from then on, then I think he has to resolve the differences. And then, even though Butler goes down in history as a liberal and fighting for the cause of the Negro and so forth, I always felt that he was insincere in this effort. Because I thought that he was causing the Negro to lose ground in the Party by repeatedly forcing the Negro issue as a means for dumping some of the old guard. And I think they needed to be dumped. But I didn't agree with his tactics on that.

Ziffren of course was a big supporter of Butler, and of course in California we didn't particularly like Butler for other political reasons. So I was a part of that even though I was a friend of Paul, his wife, and his daughter.

HACKMAN: Yeah. What was Brown's thinking on that? Basically along the lines that your thinking was, do you remember?

HATCHER: Yes, but Brown really didn't like to make these tough decisions. But he also wanted to be a power in that delegation, so he had to go along with it.

HACKMAN: Okay. There's always been discussion that Butler was doing things in '50 and '60 that would be favorable to Kennedy at the '60 convention. Did

[-7-]

you have any kind of feeling like that or did the Brown people have any feeling like that?

HATCHER: No, I don't think we really had any feeling like that. I think that was just normal newspaper speculation that for the first time a Catholic has an opportunity to be President and a Catholic chairman is going to help him. Then too, you know, after working with the Kennedys you just find that they always had ways of keeping their cause on a front burner. And I would just say that they were a little better organized—a little more singleness of purpose. And these things, when you present things that way it's very difficult for a chairman not to grant some of the requests and accept some of the ideas.

HACKMAN: Okay then, getting into the convention when you went to work. At the time you went to work did you talk with anyone other than Salinger, or was it completely through Salinger at that point?

HATCHER: Completely through Salinger.

HACKMAN: How did he describe what needed to be done?

HATCHER: Well, he didn't really have to do that because I knew what needed to be done. You see, I had always been on the fringes of the press operation. In fact, what I did, I did the interim.... See, I was an employee of the U.S. District Court. My judge was a former state chairman of the Party, Albert J. Carter, who had been the chairman of the Truman [Harry S. Truman] victory, and that was part of his reward for directing that victory. So when we went in, the state committee just had no means to do anything, and I was a volunteer along with the other young Turks there. Eventually Bradley became a paid member and Cyr Copertini became a paid secretary, but the rest of us were all volunteers. So I would put out a newsletter and press releases whenever you had a dinner and so forth and so on. But when we got involved in the campaigns then we had to get a real newspaperman, and Salinger was always the—Jack Abbott and Salinger—to handle that.

So I knew that game. I used to write releases for them. I'd done all of the Negro campaign publicity from '50 on. So there was no problem in that. I had all of the national newspaper contacts; when they came in to cover California campaigns I generally saw them and handled them. When VIPS came—Governor Meyner [Robert B. Meyner], Senator Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey], and so forth, Mrs. Roosevelt [Eleanor Roosevelt]—I was always involved in making their itineraries, sometimes squiring them around, that type of thing.

[-8 -]

HACKMAN: Why don't you talk then just about the organization of the whole press and press-related operation at the '60 Convention—well, right before the Convention when you went to work. How did that all work out with Ron Linton [Ronald M. Linton] and Fred Forbes and Weber [Stanley E. Weber] and all these guys who were involved? How did it fit together?

HATCHER: Well, it's kind of hard to say how it really fell in place. My first contact was after nosing around—and incidentally I was involved in a little plot right up until that time because I always thought that Clair Engle should have been, well, I thought he was vice presidential caliber, and of course there was no mention at the time of Johnson. But I felt that he [Engle] was clearly as qualified as Symington [Stuart Symington, II] and so forth and so on, and then just love of California. It was obvious there couldn't be two Catholics on a ticket. Pat would be out, so let's get it for Clair Engle.

So when I went down I took a lot of his material that I'd saved for two years, put it in my sister-in-law's house, or I parked my station wagon there. And we were all ready to go Jim Keene [James P. Keene] and I, with a little Engle boomletting. So I went in and a couple of days there was nothing to do, and I was waiting for Bob Troutman [Robert Troutman, Jr.], and I didn't know who the hell Bob Troutman was. So I'm waiting for Bob Troutman in his office, or outside or somewhere, and I hear this Southern voice. And Jesus, I said, "Christ Almighty, what have I gotten myself into?"

HACKMAN: Yeah.

HATCHER: Bob Troutman turned out to be one of the finest men that I've ever met, and we became very close friends afterwards, including some stormy days that we had with Johnson running for Vice President. But at any rate, Bob was sort of in charge of requisitioning everything, everything you needed and so forth. And so of course the first thing—in all my experience one thing I didn't mention now—in all of the California council or clubs convention, I had been the lone advance man for the committee. I went in, got all the hotel suites, paid all the operators, got candy for everybody, you know, all of this stuff. And in those days an advance man—I went in incognito the first time I ever went in, and nobody ever got my real name until two days before the convention. So I knew all that stuff—blueprints of the hotel and all that kind of business—I had all of that information. We looked at the rooms; of course everything is basically equal there. They try to be fair. But we had some edge simply because we were there first. And

[-9-]

as far as the press was concerned, Pierre had given me a checklist which I improved upon. I guess I was the number five man or something. Maybe I wasn't even that; I was just Pierre's aide. Yeah, I was just Pierre's aide.

HACKMAN: The list is of California press or national press?

HATCHER: Oh, national press. And, you know, I was also taking care of California because I knew all those guys and had been up in Sacramento. But they all had their own sources. We didn't need to do too much.

Now when Pierre finally got there, which was two days before, he then said that he would handle the President, that Don Wilson [Donald M. Wilson] would handle Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] and Ethel [Ethel Skakel Kennedy], and that I would handle Ted [Edward M. Kennedy] and his wife [Joan Bennett Kennedy]. You know, I had read really nothing about Ted; I didn't know that much about—I knew about Bobby and so forth. So Ted tells me when they were there to go get Joan. I didn't even know who the hell he was talking about, you know? But at any rate, all of his press interviews and things, had to do that. And then I handled publicity for the blacks and all that kind of business.

But now don't forget, well, maybe you wouldn't know, but this now becomes my third campaign. There was no non-office holder in the country that knew as many politicians and that had traveled to as many cities for candidates. Don't forget I traveled in '52 for Dawson; I handled all of the advertising in '56, all of the black papers, first time they ever were paid cash, first time they ever received ads without commissions taken off by the agencies; all of this kind of business, developed all of those ads. So, I mean, my contacts are legion, I had no problem. I'd say I knew 70 percent of the delegates who were there and had seen them some other time. I was working very closely with Jack Tanner [Jack Edward Tanner] from Tacoma, and Terry Francois [Terry A. Francois] from San Francisco and so forth. So I'm handling both some press and also trying to keep an eye on this whole Stevenson operation which I always felt was a little more serious. I didn't think he could win but I could see where it was going to do a lot of damage.

Now I did not meet—well, I had a session with Bobby, I guess the first day of the convention, along with the other press guys. I did not actually meet Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] until the day of the nomination, and there were about twelve, fourteen other people there at the same time. Now I had been working rather closely with Sorensen. At that time I didn't know who Steve Smith [Stephen E. Smith] was. As I recall, I did several interviews including my own—I mean several press releases. I was made an Assistant Press Secretary a couple of days before the

[-10-]

Convention. I was getting to know Sorensen quite well because I was moving up handling some of the speeches; I had a big role in that, a big role from the standpoint of technical handling of the speeches and production and reproduction, on the acceptance speech and all that kind of business. And I may still have—no, I guess I gave up that original copy. But I kept the original copy of the acceptance speech for a long time; I didn't really give that up until after we were in the White House.

HACKMAN: Okay, let me follow up on a couple of things. One, you mentioned Dawson. What can you remember about your conversations with Dawson about Kennedy up to '60 or...

HATCHER: Okay, let's get back to that, but let me tell you something else. I had told Pierre that I would give consideration to this job prior to going to Trinidad. Well, while I was in Trinidad I was interviewed by the *Trinidad Guardian*—that's a big paper there—and I was still saying at the time that I thought that Stevenson was the most logical candidate. And I echoed all of the criticisms that blacks were saying about Kennedy—you know, too rich, absenteeism, just didn't know enough about the minority. (That is available and I'll try to locate that for you.) So, you know, even at the time that I had accepted this I wasn't that convinced. But when Stevenson said he wasn't going to go, and Pierre asked me on a personal basis to assist him—that's one thing he needed. Obviously with Fred there and Ron there—and Don came in with us I think too, I don't know—but Pierre was not too secure in his job and he needed not only backup but he needed loyalty and he needed gut political sense, and he thought I provided these things. Plus, let's face it, it didn't hurt to be black at the time, because they had interviewed at least one other fellow for the position—Louis Martin [Louis E. Martin, Jr.], they interviewed. It's quite odd that Louis, a newspaperman, would get into the Democratic National Committee, and I, the politician, would get into the news.

HACKMAN: Yeah, you went the other way. That's funny. I hadn't thought of that.

HATCHER: But, getting back to Dawson. Dawson thought highly of Kennedy, and I can only say that it must have been from his limited contact with him as a congressman. I think he was for Kennedy in the inside circle of the Daly [Charles U. Daly] operation, you know, long before, maybe even before Daly, I don't know. Of course, there were a couple of historic meetings there at that Convention, one which I had

a lot to do with organizing. That was the breakfast that they had for the black delegates where Michigan people were saying they were not going to accept

[-11-]

Johnson and all that kind of business and so forth. And so I was given a lot of credit for that even though this was Dawson, and he would have had a breakfast under any circumstances. This is something we did traditionally. I'd get to go up and line up the people that I knew, and I was largely responsible for isolating the opposition. The main opposition was Bill Oliver [William H. Oliver] of UAW [United Automobile, Aircraft, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, also known as United Automobile Workers], the Reuther [Walter P. Reuther] type of thing. Johnson came in and did a masterful job there, and really gave people the idea that they finally had a winner.

HACKMAN: Also, what about the Stevenson thing. You said you kept an eye. How did you keep an eye on the development of the Stevenson thing?

HATCHER: Well, some people that I knew were involved in the Stevenson thing: some Californians, and Bill Haddad [William F. Haddad] whom I had known when he was with Kefauver and so forth: and I found out what they were doing. And there were a couple of other Californians I just don't recall now who were also involved in the Stevenson thing. But I had pretty good contacts on there. Of course, I was trying to put it out by just saying, "The votes are here, they're counted, it's all over, it's too late" and so forth. Of course nobody would believe it, including the press, that he was going to win so overwhelmingly on the first. But it was just superior organization in every facet of that operation that did it.

HACKMAN: You know, people have speculated about how those people got that big Stevenson demonstration going. Do you have any insight in that from talking to Stevenson people?

HATCHER: Well, you know, this is the beginning of television. And so they got it going really because here is, for the first time, you're having newspapermen who are trying to build up a story. And I think they just attracted a lot of people who would never have been there, other than the fact that they were on television. And it was blown all out of proportion because what happened is that the television people gave Stevenson a chance, whereas in fact I knew he didn't have a chance, and I knew he just couldn't come off with anything. Of course, I blame the late governor for it all, because he was the one who tried to get back in.

HACKMAN: Yeah. You mentioned Henning. Did you do any work at the Convention or just before on bringing around any labor people in California through Henning?

[-12-]

HATCHER: No.

HACKMAN: Do you remember having any early impression of the people that the Kennedys had gathered around them, Salinger, but more second level people like Ron Linton and Fred Forbes, and then Roger Tubby [Roger W. Tubby], Charles Roche [Charles D. Roche], all those.

HATCHER: Well, I knew Tubby before, because I was almost—I think Tubby wanted to name me Assistant Press Secretary to Stevenson. And Stevenson waited about a week, and by that time Dawson had said, “Listen, you got to get back here and take over my operation.” So, I liked them all but I didn’t know too much. I thought Linton was a good guy. Fred I couldn’t even remember until we got on the campaign. From my standpoint, one, I had to back up Salinger—give him all of the aid, handle the confidential matters for him. Then I had my single operation. Jim Keene and I were trying to get Engle to become active. You know, I said, “All we need for any kind of demonstration, I have all the signs; you get us five hundred bucks and we can get you some notice here.” And he just wasn’t interested and I never unloaded the station wagon really. Then, of course, the black thing. So that kept me pretty busy, and we were working twenty hours a day on it. Of course, I was young in those days. I could do it.

HACKMAN: Yeah. How about the California delegation itself, you know, in terms of the timing of Brown’s announcement and releasing the delegates?

HATCHER: Well, I was aware of all of this. And as I go down here [a list of delegates], you know, for instance almost all of the legislators here, I had played a part in their election. This is how the Democrats gained control, you know, of California, by winning single elections—what do you call them—off-year. One year, about six Republican senators died. And Pierre would go up into these places and become their press aide. So we had all of these guys. They were very friendly with us. So, I mean, all of these were sources of information. But we were moving well by the time that Brown.... Of course, Unruh [Jesse M. Unruh], a lot of talk about him playing both ends against the middle. I don’t know. Unruh always has been a pretty tricky guy, but I think he was basically loyal to Kennedy. And, of course, there was the problem about Unruh stealing all the thunder. But, you know, Unruh made a decision, at least a public decision, whereas Governor Brown was withholding, when everybody knew by that time where his aides were. You know, Dutton by that time was doing lots of work for us. But I didn’t participate in any of the California caucuses or anything like that. I maybe

[-13-]

went to visit. Don’t forget, we had that set-up there once that Convention started. We had our press headquarters, we had our trailer and all that kind of business. It wasn’t a trailer, it was a house. Then I had duties on the floor and that type of thing.

HACKMAN: Can you go through the, or can you recall other things at the Convention that were particularly interesting or you think are not on the record, that people don't know, that you were involved in?

HATCHER: No. I'd like to give a little more thought to the breakfasts where we were getting the blacks to take over, to accept Johnson. Not here, but I do have some notes and things on that. I probably ought to go back. That could be helpful. I don't know how well that's been covered by other people.

HACKMAN: Had you talked with Salinger at all on the vice presidential choice? Or what were most of the Kennedy aides saying? Do you have a feeling for that, before Johnson was selected?

HATCHER: We were—after my own thing after Engle got out, I was for Scoop Jackson [Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson]. And when the word came down that Johnson was going to—I heard it in the press room, or in our own press room (not the Convention press room) in the hotel, oh I'd say about six hours before it was announced—it was unbelievable. And I had even denied it to some of the press.

HACKMAN: You mean after you heard about it.

HATCHER: Well, I mean after I heard the first rumor. No, I don't think I was officially told until about an hour before it became public knowledge.

HACKMAN: What other kinds of ties—you said that you were working with Sarge [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.] on a number of things. Are there other things that you were doing with Shriver?

HATCHER: I knew who Sarge was, let's put it that way. And I had handled Sarge in a couple of press conferences because of Eunice [Eunice Kennedy Shriver]. But as I recall now, I guess I really didn't work that closely with Sarge until during the campaign.

HACKMAN: How did you find those people to work with—Edward Kennedy, Eunice Shriver....

HATCHER: No problem. None at all. One thing I remember

[-14-]

about the Kennedys is that they brief well, because I always considered quick briefings a specialty and I was always gratified, you know, that....
And they....

[END OF INTERVIEW]

Andrew T. Hatcher Oral History Transcript – JFK #1
Name List

A

Abbott, John, 3, 8

B

Blair, William M., Jr., 5
Bradley, Don L., 3, 5, 6
Brown, Edmund G., 4-7, 9, 13
Butler, Paul M., 7

C

Carter, Albert J., 8
Copertini, Cyr, 3, 8

D

Daly, Charles U., 11
Dawson, William L., 3, 10-13
Dutton, Frederick G., 4-7, 13

E

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 3
Engle, Clair, 4, 9, 13, 14

F

Finnegan, James A., 2
Forbes, Fred, 9, 11, 13
Francois, Terry A., 10

G

Gatov, Elizabeth R. Smith, 3

H

Haddad, William F., 12
Henning, John F., 5, 12
Humphrey, Hubert H., 8

J

Jackson, Henry M. "Scoop", 14
Johnson, Lyndon B., 6, 9, 12, 14

K

Keene, James P., 9, 13
Kefauver, Estes, 2, 3
Kennedy, Edward M., 10, 14
Kennedy, Ethel Skakel, 10
Kennedy, Joan Bennett, 10
Kennedy, John F., 1-4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14
Kennedy, Robert F., 10

L

Linton, Ronald M., 9, 11, 13

M

Martin, Louis E., Jr., 11
McClellan, John L., 3
McCormack, John W., 3
Meyner, Robert B., 8

N

Neville, Michael J., 1

O

O'Donnell, Kenneth P., 7
Oliver, William H., 12
Onassis, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, 4

R

Rayburn, Samuel T., 3
Rivkin, William R., 2
Roche, Charles D., 13
Roosevelt, Eleanor, 8

S

Salinger, Pierre E.G., 1, 3-6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14
Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr., 2
Shriver, Eunice Kennedy, 14
Shriver, R. Sargent, Jr., 14
Smith, Stephen E., 10
Sorensen, Theodore C., 4, 10, 11
Stevenson, Adlai E., 2, 3, 5, 10-13
Symington, Stuart, II, 9

T

Tanner, Jack Edward, 10
Troutman, Robert, Jr., 9
Truman, Harry S., 8
Tubby, Roger W., 13
Tuck, Richard G., 6, 7

U

Unruh, Jesse M., 13

W

Weber, Stanley E., 9
Wilson, Donald M., 10, 11

Z

Ziffren, Paul, 7