

Earl Graves Oral History Interview, 7/17/1969
Administrative Information

Creator: Earl Graves
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Biographical Note

Graves, Earl; administrative Assistant to Senator Robert F. Kennedy, New York (1965 - 1968). Graves discusses his knowledge of and involvement in, Robert F. Kennedy's presidential campaign announcement, the complications surrounding the Indiana primary campaign, issues relating to its organization, non-experienced staff, reaching out to black and minority communities, and Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Franklin W. Holgate's roles and impact, among other issues.

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Interviewed by: Roberta Greene

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Earl Graves- RFK #1

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Oral History Interview

with

EARL GRAVES

July 17, 1969
New York City

Roberta W. Greene

GREENE: Mr. Graves, would you begin please by first explaining how you first learned that Robert Kennedy was considering the presidency in 1968.

GRAVES: I think it goes back to early February of 1968¹⁸ when there was much discussion¹⁹ both within and without, or outside of the Kennedy ranks, regarding whether or not the senator might run. He sought our council²⁰ in terms of what various members of his staff thought. I remember suggesting to him in January of 1968, when we were making a trip up to Westchester County, that~~—~~or I remember having some discussion in the car with Jack

[MRS.]

Newfield, Ronnie Eldridge ^{ME} Elgers, and myself--

that he should give some serious thought to his
 candidacy in 1968. And he asked me what was my
 opinion,
 definite/ or definitive, opinion on the thing. I
 told him that I would write a memorandum to him
 regarding this question, and I did in February, of
 1966--sent him a five^{ME}-page memorandum outlining
 why I thought, based on his support in the
 minority community, this was the year for him
 to make the push^R, as far as his candidacy for
 the presidency. In terms of having serious dis-
 cussions with the members of his staff, I think
 that that really started to take place possibly
 about two weeks prior, or right after--during
 the period of time leading up to the New Hampshire
 primaries.

New Hampshire ^R into ^{ME had}
 Right after the/primaries ^R we had/any number
 of discussions with persons on his staff. And
 some of these discussions I was ^R priveleged to ^R ^{FRIVY}
 sit in on, and others^R I was not^R because they
 were with his more intimate friends and staffers

that he had worked with over the years. This is
 Kenny [Kenneth] O'Donnell, and [LAWRENCE F.] Larry O'Brien, etc
 cetera. However, approximately about four days
 prior to his announcement it became rather obvious
 that this, in fact, was going to happen. ^{that} He was
 going to announce ~~actually~~, going back, it's
 probably about seven days prior to his announcing, ^{I was}
 pretty certain it was going to happen, based on
 conversations I'd had with him and other members
 of his staff, and we started looking at what
 our responsibilities would be in an overall push.
 I would say that it was at least a week prior
 to his announcing that Kennedy said he was ^{IT BECAME REALLY CERTAIN THAT}
 going to announce. And it seemed to me that
 although the responsibility I'd had in the office
 had been rather broad-based and had not been
 limited to the work exclusively in the Black
 community. - If anything, 10 per cent of my work
 had to do with minority communities. -- that the theory is
 I was to be able to offer the greatest services
 to the Kennedy organization, then rallying persons
 IN TERMS OF

would be in the minority community. There was not a wealth of persons who had the contacts that I did in this community across the country and. . . . I'd spent some time during the early part of 1968, compiling this list of leading Black persons across the country, just in the event that ~~some-~~ ~~eventuality~~ of his running did come about. So that did give me kind of a head start, as I attempted to look over my region for letters we might send out. And I was given the responsibility the night before he announced it, ~~for about~~ forty-eight hours before he announced it, a list of leading Black persons across the country who should get telegrams stating that he intended to run--he intended to run was going to run.

I would think that we probably spent the day of his announcement, which would have been Saint Patrick's Day, early of the . . .

GREENE: 16th.
 GRAVES: . . . of March 16th, of 1968. I'd spent approx-
 imately three hours on the phone calling various

IN TERMS of whom
Am I REACHING IN THE
for about
the night before
of compiling
AND

Black leaders and minority leaders across the country^R to say that he'd decided to announce. And most of these calls were accomplished out of his apartment, and some calls, I think, in the car^R traveling back and forth during that particular day. At the same time that he was in the throes of his announcement, I believe^O we were directly involved^S also^R in what Eugene Nickerson was going^g to do in terms of his own candidacy for Senate. I remember the day prior to his announcement we spent that day out in Nassau County^R and of course^R at that time we all knew he would announce. But I remember going back to Jack John F. English's office in the Nassau County Democratic Headquarters, and having several conversations^S long-distance^S if you want to consider fifty miles from New York City to Long Island long distance--with Percy Sutton, who in fact at that times had agreed to run as a senatorial candidate, and then having further conversations with Eugene

Nickerson, in terms of his picking up the ball
 and running with ^{it} not literally, but in the event
 that Percy backed out. Those conversations never
^{will} we too conclusive ⁱⁿ terms of coming up with the
 final answer. Of course, it was all resolved
 when Percy dropped out, and Gene decided ^{to} con-
 tinue by saying he would run. I think there
 was a feeling on the part of the persons ^{IN NASSAU} ^{announcin} that
 not ^{mean} ^{but} Jack English, probably Mr. Nickerson, --
 that ⁱⁿ the event that Gene did not win ^{that}
 of course the Senator would support him in some
 later effort that he might have wanted Interruption

Right after he RFK made his announcement,
 of course they started looking at the idea of
 setting up headquarters—how ^{do we} to get the thing
 off the ground? And considering that ^{RI} they knew
 I had a responsibility. . . . It seemed to me
 that where the real action was, was in New York,
 and I was somewhat reluctant to want to move to
 Washington D. C. and not have gotten together
 the New York situation completely in terms of

minority community. There were just so many ^{leadings} recognized Black figures from across the country ^{and} in New York City--Whitney Young, Percy Sutton, the leading ministers, leading educators, sociologists, and so forth, authors, writers--that it seemed to me to have left New York ^{well-} and now ^{It} have it completely organized, to go off to Washington to be involved in a total citizens' effort, which is what they wanted me to do ^{in terms of a} Black community ^{did} just run that thing ^{did} not make sense, and so therefore I started some meetings with Steve [Stephen E.] Smith and other Black leaders ⁱⁿ the city ^{and} agreed that I would go to Washington two or three days a week until I thought it was well enough together in New York that I could really stop and stay in Washington full-time.

GREENE: They wanted your base to be Washington throughout the campaign, ^{or} or just in this early period?

GRAVES: Well, ^{NO} ~~now~~ The national headquarters effort--it was decided ~~that~~ it was not going to be in New

York, ^{is that} but it was going to be in Washington, that they were going to ^{out} the campaign headquarters in Washington. And so ^{therefore} the person who had the greatest contact and ~~new~~ knew who the senator had been dealing with was myself, as far as the Black community was concerned. And they just felt it made sense to have me there, ^{that} so when a question came up of who ~~it~~ was that he been ^(REIK) talking to in a particular situation, or ^{where} ~~where~~ ^{what} a judgment had been made in the past, that I would be right there, rather than having to pick up a phone and call me, ^{is} although it was only two hundred miles, ^{is} and ^{is} at modest expense in terms of cost, ^{is} that I was there, that I was more available to the persons who were running the national effort--that national effort in terms of communication, ^{speech writing and} and Larry O'Brien, and so forth ^{was all} and so on, happening ^{is out of} at the Washington headquarters.

GREENE: But then they didn't think at that time that you would be going out to the different primary states,

or that it would be . . .

GRAVES: No, that wasn't. . . . Going out on the road at that time--I didn't think that was going to happen. What happened was ^H they got out into Indiana, which was the first effort, and realized that they still had time to run a registration effort, and they still had time to rally ^H persons who normally did not vote in a primary, and that those persons got to the polls ^H meaning persons who normally did not go to the polls ^H minority persons, and poor persons ^H who took a very apathetic view of primaries in general ^H that, if ~~in~~ fact they went to the polls, they would probably be supporting the candidacy of the senator. So therefore it made sense to make a real push to get the persons who were not going to ^H come out ^H to try and do it. And Ted ^H Sorensen called me ^H from Indiana ^H and asked me to go out there. He said he knew I was involved in the organizational effort in New York, ^H to make ^H that thing get off the ground was much more important. If I got

it off the ground, then left some^{ONE} out there from
the staff^H to^H make it happen, then I could come
back and continue with ~~thinning~~ the national desk.
And I was somewhat reluctant to go. It just
seemed to me that you could not be organized^{RING} to
what was going to happen nationally^H and be in
Indiana. But^H, with some other calls from Steve
Smith^H and just a couple of panic calls~~he~~ he said,
"You gotta come now!"--I ended up^{out} in Indiana,
on a Sunday, oh, I guess about ~~two~~^{three} weeks prior
to the Indiana primary^H and was amazed to see
the lack of organization that existed at that
time. There was just nothing pulled together
at all. We hadn't even opened a store front--
forget about the Black community--we had't opened
up a store front anywhere^H by^H the time that I'd
gotten there. We ~~degraded~~^{just decenter}, really, on a
hotel situation--money that we needed to make
these things happen out there had not started
coming in yet, and it was just kind of we were
doing it with band-aids, instead of major surgery,

which was what was needed^H and required. I had a list of persons who were in Indiana. Most of these states when I went into them, I started working off of lists that I had, basically that that involved civil rights leaders, and involved the leading ministers, and that involved persons who worked in the poverty programs^H because these are the action-oriented people in any of these communities^o and usually you are going to find-- both in the Black and white communities--that the person who is a member of one organization^H and is doing the job. . . . If he's involved in a scouting program, he's probably involved in the Kiwanis organization, and he's probably involved in the American Legion (which is not one of my favorite organizations) ^Hlaughter^o but is involved in six other things--he's a joiner, and a guy who makes it happen. This is certainly true in a vacuum. ^Hthe beach community^o

I had an opportunity to meet with some people on the Sunday that I arrived. I don't

remember the exact Sunday, but I know it was the Sunday also that Ted Edward M. Kennedy came to Indiana, that particular Sunday, to give the real impetus and push to the campaign. He was in Indianapolis that particular night. I remember having a meeting in the--is it the Marriott Hotel we were . . .

GREENE: ^{Bye} Yeah, motor court.

GRAVES: Right. They were still sending bills up to two weeks ago.

GREENE: ^{is that's} There's another subject we can talk about.

GRAVES: Right. ^{OK} On the Indiana primary, but anyway, ^{SENATOR} Ted was there, and he was first ^{just} making assignments in terms of congressional districts for the state--who was ^{is going to} gonna, you know, go out and do what--^{then} and I was amazed also at the amount of ^{is we were} lack of experience in the persons he was sending out to the field to be, in fact, representative of the Kennedy push.

GREENE: Who do you mean in particular?

GRAVES: Well, persons who I had not seen before, who

obviously either had been recommended by some-
 body, or might have been some friends somewhere
 down the ^{H.P. KEA} back or had gone to school with someone
 who knew the Kennedy's. And they ^H in fact, ^H because
 they could afford to take off time to come to
 Indiana--let's say some young lawyer--had been
 given a congressional district. And these guys
^{WELL} ~~made~~ just being sent out ^H on the basis of the
 fact that they were available and they could go,
 and not that they had any particular organizational
 ability, as was proven later on ^H 'cause you have
 guys going off that you'd given them your authority
 to do it, that would walk into a hotel room that
 was going to be the room they were going to sleep
 in, and call the phone company and tell th em to
 put twelve phones in, as if they were ^{going to} gunna run
 some bookie operation, rather than a real effort
 and that would, you know. . . . I'm not questioning
 the idea of putting in twelve phones; I'm questioning
 the idea of putting ⁱⁿ twelve phones out of his
 motel room, rather than putting ^{2th W} em downtown

somewhere^h where they would be most meaningful and could be useful. And it was just the whole wisdom of the way it was done; I felt, in many instances, great waste^h on the part of the persons who were representing us out of there^h. In the first instance^h as the thing started to sift out a little, and you had the good guys coming to the surface, then we could start tightening up. In Indiana, I mean, I saw guys who were grossly inadequate for the job^h and out of their environment out there^h ^h ^h ^{PUE} disporting themselves to represent the senator^h. In many instances^h . . .

GREENE: Who would you be speaking about, specifically?

GRAVES: I don't think I ^h ^h ^h ^h ^h could name the people; I'd have difficulty naming them because I didn't know a lot of the people^h and that's the point I make also, that many of them who were going out. . . . But they were persons who--what they did^h in the campaign, initially on that first Sunday I was there, which was an organizational meeting set up by Senator Ted, was to break down the

persons who had come in, ^{S AND} who were available, ^R into—
assign them geographic responsibilities throughout
the state. Well, one guy had Fort Wayne, and another
guy had South Bend, Indiana, another guy had,
you know. . . . Maybe six of them had the
southern part of Indianapolis city proper, and
maybe six more had the northern part. But the
guys who were going out were just guys who, maybe,
were lawyers, and this is not a qualification
to really run an organized campaign—^{R (they)} had no sense
of organization in terms of what they were about.

This became quickly obvious ^H because ^R in the
four days I was there prior to going on to South
Bend and Fort Wayne, in order to meet up with
the Senator to see what was going on in ^{the Black community in} the rest
of Indiana. ^H I got all kinds of calls from the
guys who . . . When a guy got to ^H let's say
South Bend—I forget the person who was running
South Bend at that time ^H (that was prior to the
death of Martin Luther King) ^{P AND} prior to the senator's
visit there ^H—the person who was running ^H that

knew absolutely nothing about the Black community. And I'd get calls like, you know, what do they eat on Monday night? Not only were they patronizing calls, they were insulting calls, not to me, but just in general. I mean, they had no grasp of what they were about—and these were the same persons that. . . . Maybe that same person would have done fine enough, even, of course, if you were just working in a total community, meaning probably an all-white, middle-class, conservative community. But when you put the guy out in a sensitive area like a place like South Bend, where he was supposed to have some sense of empathy about what he was about, and he called back and just had no sense of that, because we were dealing with ^{the} Black community on one hand, and the Notre Dame students on another, who, in one instance may have been very conservative ^{very kind} in another instance might have been SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] students. It just said to me that those guys were not

representative of the senator's ^{in his} best interest.

Now, the situation with the advance men, that was something else again. We always seemed to have the capacity to be able to rally large crowds. That was not the question ^{but} in terms of organization that went into the general situation once the senator had come and gone, that was something else, again. Of course, by the time the primary rolled around, we had ^{literally} gotten enough people out, I mean we just had hundreds and of people ^{and} then thousands of people in that state. I think ^{we} increased the population of Indiana by five thousand people, leading up to the primaries, in terms of people who were there, and people who were doing things--athletes coming in, and VIP's coming in, and rallies all over the place. I think that places like Gary, where we did exceptionally well, and I ended up spending the primary ^{at} primarily ⁱⁿ there in Gary, in terms of helping the ^{Richard G.} Hatcher's ^{spend} the whole day with him in the evening. We did well,

one, because I guess part of it has to do with my being there, but, secondly, that Mayor Hatcher happened to have a rather good organization. Now I'm talking primarily about the minority communities across the state, where we did exceptionally well, ^{VIA} It was the direct result of the fact that we had good organization in terms of the persons who were there even prior to our coming, that people knew it was going on, and you had persons who had a political sense of what had to be done.

GREENE: These were Hatcher's people, rather than Kennedy people?

GRAVES: Yeah, they're definitely Hatcher's people, ^{most definitely} you're thinking of Black community. I mean, the other ^{which} hassle that you had, was I found very aggravating, and very annoying, was the number of white experts we had on the Black community. I mean, some guy might not have known about television, so he left that alone to Joe Napolitano. And some guy might not have known about broadcasting, so he left that alone to somebody else. But it

seemed that anybody ^{IP} that had one Black friend, ^{IP} knew exactly how to handle the Black community. And I had any number of arguments and run-ins with persons who purported themselves to be in fact in charge of the particular areas as far as the Black community was concerned. It took a while to get the message across to the people who were running the total citizens' effort, that I in fact was going to make the judgments as far as what was happening. It took a while for them to recognize that when I left the national headquarters going out to one of these states, that they didn't have to give me a list of who the Black people were, or that when I got there somebody who was there didn't have to give me a list on who they were; I was going to find that out for myself, because that was the expertise that I had.

GREENE: Who were some of these people that you had problems with?

GRAVES: Well, it wasn't the ranks of a Ted Sorensen, or

a Steve Smith, it was the people who had been brought in, and ^{I'm} not being ^{without a} on base ⁱⁿ terms of names, I'm just . . .

ERASIVE ABOUT IT IN

GREENE: Gerry ^{I GERRY} Doherty, how was he on this? Did he leave very you/much on your own, or was he a problem?

GRAVES: Well, one of the problems I had in Indiana was. . . . just

Well, let me site an example, in terms of what happened in Indiana. The Black community is as subtle and as sophisticated and as unsophisticated as any other community when it comes to wheeling and dealing, and you treat them any differently and you end up with mud all over your face. I came into Indiana ^{HP} and had made up my mind that I was going to do the thing ^{IN} a certain way in terms of organization. I understood what had to be done ^Y understood how the senator treated things in the past ^{HP} and assumed that he was not going to spend huge sums of money, which I found out differently later, in there, on things that were frivelous. When I had my first couple of organizational meetings in Indianapolis, I kind

of made it rather clear that we wanted their support, but we were not going to be throwing money up into the air. Now, Indianapolis had a group of militants who were not happy about the fact that I came in and said that we were not going to literally throw money up into the air.

On the night prior to my leaving, which was approximately three days after I got--I guess the Tuesday after I got to Indiana--the assistant majority leader from Boston came in, a person by the name of Interruption Frank Franklin W. Holgate came in, and said that he came representing Senator Ted. I had no problem with that--he had talent--because I thought that anybody that was talented-- . . . I'd never had any problem. . . . Fortunately, working for the Senator, if you had no doubts about yourself in terms of your own abilities, you didn't have to worry about who the other guy was who was coming in. And I had no problems with it. And I took the guy at face value, that he said he came to represent Senator

Ted, and he was concerned about the campaign, he ^{and} was ^{going to} gonna support whatever had been goin' on. I had spent about three hours briefing him, in terms of where we were, kind of outlinin' what I was doin', and did not recognize at that time that he had some concern regarding who, in fact, would be be running the show as far as Indiana was concerned, in the Black community. I'd left that night for Fort Wayne, and, fortunately, I'd left John Lewis, former head of SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee], back in Indiana to work. . . .

GREENE: Was he with you right from the start?

GRAVES: Yeah. John Lewis caught up with me ^{right on} about Monday. I got there ^{the} Sunday; he came in a Monday, and stayed with me pretty much after this. Is this thing on now, did I turn it back on for you?

GREENE: Oh, yeah. ^{yes}

GRAVES: I left him, and I just said to John to work with the assistant speaker, and told th them to work together, and there was no question of jurisdictional responsibility, that was not important. The

important thing was to get out the vote, and I kind of left a format of what I thought they should be trying to accomplish in the next couple of days until I got back not anticipating anything such as the tragedy of Dr. King's death.

When we came back in on the night of Dr. King's death, that was . . .

GREENE: April 4th.

GRAVES: April 4th was that a Thursday evening?

GREENE: Yeah.

GRAVES: Yeah. . . . came back in I found. . . . John Lewis came up to me, and someone else came up to me, who was Black, and said we had some problems, that the person I had been dealing with had kind of turned around and had gone to talk to Holgate because they were trying to get some money out of the campaign, and Holgate had responded to this, and again, I'm quoting exactly what the person said to me, and Holgate had responded to this, because he in fact saw an opportunity to place himself on top of the pile, in terms of

running the effort there, and had said that the effort initially started by myself and the other persons there had not been a good effort, that the people were angry, and the militants didn't want to deal with me, and they weren't going to deal with me if in fact they had to. If I can get it straight, they were not going to support the Senator's candidacy.

Well, it turned out, basically, what it boiled down to, they had a meeting the night we got back there, which I was not invited to, and I just happened to walk in on--I didn't know where it was going on--and about twenty Black guys came up, mostly militants from the area . . .

GREENE: This was after the assassination, and after the senator had spoken?

GRAVES: Yes, both things. We didn't get into that, because we spent the whole half hour of conversation on the road, and spent the time in terms of what he should say and how much he should say about it.

GREENE:

Yeah, right.

GRAVES:

They had a meeting that Gerry Boherty knew about, and the senator came to, as a matter of fact. Frank Holgate put it together ~~who~~ else was in that meeting ~~Jim~~ Tolan was involved in it . . .

GREENE:

William Bill Barry?

GRAVES:

No, Bill Barry was not there, but Jim Tolan knew about the meeting, and as a matter of fact, Jim Tolan responded to what it was that Holgate had said to him, because by this time Holgate realized that this was an opportunity for him to come out on top of the pile. And, you know, you were dealing with the human frailties of life, in terms of the campaign. There were persons who saw this as a fantastic opportunity. They looked all the way forward to November ^{AND} then into the following January ^R and said, you know, "We're not playing a game of Sunday school picnics. This is not a Sunday school picnic. We're not playing games; and if I can make myself the hero of this thing, I'm the guy that comes out good at the end. So, if I have to step on somebody in order to get

there, fine." This is not a reference to Jim
just
Tolan. Jim Tolan, I think, fell into the thing
of being another white guy who, in fact, could
not make a really critical analysis of who was
right and who was wrong in the Black community,
and ^{just} such saw a situation, ^{THAT} then said it looked
volatile, and went with what looked like a way
to cool the situation, ^{TO DEAL WITH IT} by having the senator
meet with these people.

Well, to make a long story short, a month
ago these same people that purported themselves
to be leaders in the community, and so forth--
and it isn't the fact that they got a huge pile
from
of money/out of that meeting and ended up doing
nothing for us as far as Indianapolis was con-
cerned--well, some of those same people, a month
ago, in 1969, were indicted ^{CH} on federal charges.
It had to do with narcotics, and several other
assundry-type charges, in the city of Indianapolis.
And so this speaks for Mr. Holgate and the
other white persons who thought that they knew

what they were doing, were dealing with. One, they ^{had to} were dealing with persons who were literally just gangsters from the ^h getto, who were looking to do nothing other than hold up the campaign, which they did, ^{bc} cause they did get their money ^o much over my objections. And fortunately, I was able to get a total picture of what had happened ^o because John Lewis came to me and said--and John Lewis was a very fine fellow and was a personal friend ^o of the senator's--that there had been a movement ^o of part of the persons ^{who} I had left there in charge ^o to try and take over the thing, in my absence, and that taking over the thing was much more important to this person than an actual effort to make the campaign go. And he was doing it, you know, to make himself look good, obviously at my own expense. What had happened there was. . . . I think the fact--the guys being ^{within} indicted ^o in the last month, in 1969, doesn't necessarily prove anything ^o, 'cause that could have happened in the white community ^o also. What it does prove is that

There

it was a judgment on the part of white persons who did not understand the Black community, but just assumed that they didn't have to have any particular expertise in what to deal with^{IN}--it was just something that they could just go in and do, because they had one Black friend. And if I sound facetious about this particular point, I am being facetious about this, that it was the aggravation that I had to deal with. I would say that the turning point in my responsibilities in the campaign, and not having to put up with any nonsense and aggravation, was after we really put it. . . . Well, one was when Larry O'Brien came in, and we won, and. . . . When Larry O'Brien came into the campaign, he wanted to know who was the Black guy, who was making it happen? I had a meeting with him, and Ira Capenstein--first-rate guys--Ira Capenstein was a first-rate person; Larry O'Brien was administrative assistant. And we won in Indiana, and we did extremely well in Gary, and ^{the} word filtered down that I had

played a major responsibility in Gary and had done a pretty good job of organizing, vis-a-vis the telephone ^{and making some} back and forth ^{trips} into other areas in Indiana that I had played a major role in. I did not go back into Indianapolis at my own choosing because I just thought that the way things were going, the best thing to do was to stay the Hell out of there. If they were going to be satisfied with giving money to this group, which was not going to produce any effort, . . . Our winning in the black community in Indianapolis was not a result ^{IN ANY WAY} of any ~~work~~ ^{who} of the twenty people that they met with. If anything, they did nothing other than take that money and go away. And they were given a huge sum of dough to go, and they accomplished absolutely nothing, ~~enough for~~ the money.

GREENE: Who were some of these, ^{who} quote, black "leaders" that you are talking about, that were at this meeting?

GRAVES: I can't even remember names, ^{who} when they had names like Mobutu, and, you know, three or four of them

had taken African names. Literally, I mean, I dealt with thousands of persons in the campaign, and probably, we're talking about ~~six~~ six different situations. We're talking about Indiana, Nebraska, Oregon, California, and, you know, to remember names by name . . .

GREENE: No, I'm talking about specifically in Indianapolis . . .

GRAVES: In Indiana, I realize that, and I can't even remember. I think ~~you~~ you know, one guy ~~named~~ ^{might have been} Cookie ~~named~~ ^{So} I mean ^H they had names such as I can't even remember.

But ~~when~~ I say Cookie or Snookie or whatever it is, they were not leading black persons that would have been known outside of Indianapolis. They were no persons of that stature. They were persons that were known only ^{unto the persons} within the particular spectrum of that black community in Indianapolis.

And even that was on a limited thing. That's all you were dealing with. They were known by the chief of police ^R because, you know, whenever something happened, they knew who to come ^R to ^{AND} talk to.

But ~~the~~ returning point--so we can cut it off here, and you'll have to come back again; Obviously, we're going to have to do this for a couple of hours--it was when O'Brien came in, when I went into Nebraska, after the Indiana primary, and literally was just given a carte blanche to make it happen, put it together. And I went in there with a guy by the name of John^Nie Ford, and Larry O'Brien just said, "Whatever you have to do ^{in order} to make it happen, fine." And about two days into the situation in Nebraska, Larry O'Brien came down and saw what I had organized, and was so satisfied with the whole thing, that he just told me to take off and go.