

**Earl Graves Oral History Interview- RFK #4, 8/30/1969**  
Administrative Information

**Creator:** Earl Graves  
**Interviewer:** Roberta W. Greene  
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**Biographical Note**

Graves, Earl; administrative Assistant to Senator Robert F. Kennedy [RFK], New York (1965 - 1968). Graves discusses his role as a black member in RFK's presidential campaign (1968), the racial dynamics that existed within RFK's campaign, campaigning in Indiana, Nebraska, Oregon, and California, and the importance of the Omaha University student volunteers for RFK's Nebraska primary win, among other issues.

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of EARL G. GRAVES**

Interviewed by: Roberta Greene

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Earl Graves- RFK #4

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Fourth Oral History Interview

with

EARL GRAVES

August 30, 1969

Armonk ~~Westchester~~, New York

By Roberta Greene

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

GREENE: Well, we've more or less finished Indiana, so why don't you start with explaining how you got to Indiana and what the state of affairs was when you got there?

GRAVES: This is probably <sup>enough</sup> ~~not~~ for the record.

GREENE: Okay, let's just begin with Nebraska and how you got there and what you were doing and with whom you were working.

GRAVES: Okay. Now let <sup>me get the</sup> continuity in which ..... how these primaries started. The first primary was Indiana. The second primary was. . . .

GREENE: Nebraska.

GRAVES: Nebraska. The third was Oregon and fourth was

California, And in between there, of course, South Dakota and Washington, D.C. Okay. I've been trying to think back as to how I got into the Nebraska primaries. We did reasonably well in Indiana. I'm just trying to remember if I. . . . It seems to me I came back from Indiana. Of course, in between that you had the death of Dr. King. When <sup>91</sup> ~~I say came back. . . . Whenever I say. . . .~~ Whenever I make reference to "coming back" what I'm talking about coming back from is coming back from one of the primary states to New York city, which I was using as the national base for what I was trying to get started and had gotten started in the black community <sup>ies</sup> across the country. And that may also include Washington, D.C., to a point, but I don't think it's very necessary to make reference to the particular place unless you want me to.

GREENE: No.

GRAVES: And as far as Nebraska was concerned, I got a call that they wanted me to get started in Nebraska in the black community and to take a look at where

the biggest black communities were. And, now, I  
think I got that call from... [Theodore C.] I think Ted  
Sorensen called me again at this point, or [Philip C.]  
Phil Sorensen, his brother, who was running Nebraska  
and asked me to come out there and get a... take  
a look at it and get it organized. And he said he  
thought the two cities were Omaha and Lincoln which  
have the sizable black populations to talk about,  
that it probably made sense to try and do something.  
And I did go out to Omaha, And the first trip I  
made out to Omaha I took [John] Johnny Ford, who I made  
reference to in the past interviews, with me. Now  
Johnny Ford was a very good community organizer  
who had worked with the Boy Scouts in New York city  
and knew community organizing. And Johnny Ford is  
the kind of action-oriented guy who doesn't need a  
lot of direction in order to get his own thing going  
off. And I convinced him that what he should do,  
if he really was committed to trying to do something  
in the campaign, was to come on out to Nebraska,  
take a leave of absence as a professional scouter

and come out to Nebraska. <sup>9</sup> Ford had never done any real organizing politically, but once you kind of have a direction as far as community organizing itself it concerned, political organizing is not that much different. It's just a matter of organizing people for a certain thing ~~and~~, you know, it's organizational. It's all the same; ~~it~~ doesn't matter what kind of organization you're talking about. Ford and I got out there and I would imagine ~~the~~. First time I went out there, it was about three weeks prior to the Nebraska primary. ~~What~~ I don't even remember the date.

GREENE: May <sup>14th</sup> ~~fourteenth~~.

GRAVES: May <sup>14th</sup> ~~fourteenth~~ was the Nebraska primary? I would say ~~it's~~ safe to. . . And the Indiana primary ended what day?

GREENE: May <sup>7th</sup> ~~seventh~~.

GRAVES: Ended May <sup>7th</sup> ~~seventh~~. Now, I had made a trip out there prior to the Indiana primary. When I left Indiana I went out to Nebraska from New York city with Ford and set Ford up. I think ~~I~~ ~~prob~~ Ford was

probably out there about three weeks prior to the Nebraska primary. And in Nebraska, basically what we did was I went out there and met with Phil Sorensen, the former Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin. Uh, Oh, what's the guy's name?

GREENE: [Patrick J.] Lucey.

GRAVES: Pat Lucey, a guy by the name of [James F.] Jim Green, who was a very great guy. I don't know whether you had a chance to interview him. Real first rate guy. And O'Brien eventually got out to Nebraska; He was not out there in the beginning. But the three people who were making it happen when I got out to Nebraska were Phil Sorensen, Pat Lucey and Jim Green, and they. By this time the nonsense that we had had going on in Indiana had started to distillate a little bit, and when I got out there they kind of said, "Okay, we're glad that you're here and whatever you think makes sense, we know you're the guy to do it in the black community, and why don't you tell us what has to be done, and we'll get it going, and whatever you need

let us know." <sup>SA</sup> And they were particularly cooperative as I look back on it, as far as <sup>the</sup> Nebraska thing was concerned, and it was not a matter of coming out there and they said, "Now we're going to tell you who it is that we think you should talk to in the black community." They just said, "Just tell us what it is that has to be done." <sup>9</sup> Took Ford <sup>in</sup> Johnny Ford <sup>in</sup> there, told them that we had to open up a store front. We went into Nebraska and couldn't find anybody to really get it started, and the people who you would normally try to get as starters like NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] types and the fraternity and sorority types, the joiners and establishment types, couldn't seem to really generate anything with them. We spent about two or three days making phone calls and I wasn't satisfied the way it was going, and I made some inquiries as to where the Kennedy volunteer <sup>Corps</sup> ~~core~~ was, and it turned out that at Omaha University, ~~which is in Nebraska,~~ which is in Omaha, Nebraska, <sup>just</sup> just outside, in fact, within the city limits, <sup>but on</sup>

the very outskirts of the city limits<sup>1</sup> they had  
a Kennedy program going on, Kennedy volunteers  
going on, Kennedy..... Excuse me. <sup>2</sup> A Kennedy  
volunteer <sup>corp</sup> core of students who were recruiting  
other students at that point. But again this was  
about almost a month prior to the Nebraska primary.  
So I took Ford out to the campus and I remember  
it was a rather interesting visit. <sup>9</sup> We went out  
there, and I remember going out there dressed the  
first time. When I say "dressed," other than our  
denim shirts and work..... and bib overalls that  
we wore, depending on what we had to do and where  
we had to go, depending on who we were dealing with  
and what..... what dress fit<sup>at</sup> particular occasion,  
and, you know, if it sounds like we <sup>did</sup> had what we  
had to do in terms of our dress for what fit the  
mood in the community, that's accurate. You know,  
when we wanted to identify much more readily, it  
was just..... it was much more desirable for me  
to wear my overalls than for me to wear my Brooks  
Brothers suit. <sup>9</sup> When we got out to Omaha University

on the particular day, ~~particular day~~ we went out there, we were going out there really to take a look at what the volunteer operation was, and to find out who the black students were who were out there and so that maybe getting them involved. Got out there, <sup>and went to</sup> ~~looked at~~ the student union building. And we got out there around eleven o'clock in the morning and we had made up our minds ~~that~~ by that evening we wanted to try and have something going on, at least in terms of having a meeting to see if we couldn't get some interest going, knowing that if we had to pay some volunteers, we would; We had the moneys to do it. <sup>H</sup> As we went into the student union building, I remember ~~right~~. There were two tables next to each other as you came in the front door of the student union building. One table said, "Volunteers for [Richard M.] Nixon" and the other table said, "Volunteers for <sup>[Hubert H.]</sup> Humphrey." And the tables were not near each other; They were next to each other. They were actually touching! And, you know, it seemed that the students were just

Do you  
mean  
Bunbury?

getting along just fine. Those who were for Nixon went over and volunteered, and those who were for Kennedy went over and volunteered. <sup>41</sup> I remember going up to the Kennedy table and not identifying myself at all, just to ask questions. I just said I was a guy from out of town visiting the campus. I just wanted to see what kind of response I could get to what was going on. And I asked the person; I said, " <sup>is</sup> who was in charge." And they brought over a youngster; They told me he was in charge. And I said, "Fine. Why don't you tell me something? <sup>→</sup> I'd like to know something about what's going on in the campaign." <sup>S</sup> In other words, I mean <sup>I've</sup> I'd done some work for Kennedy before. <sup>11 R</sup> I didn't want to blow the thing out of order or have them over-reacting. I wanted to get some rather honest answers from them. I thought if I identified that I worked full time for Kennedy, he was going to tell me things other than what might have been fact as far as what was going on. He indicated that at that point he had approximately. . . . I think he told

me he had <sup>a hundred and fifty</sup> 150 volunteers, thus far, who were signed up to work for Kennedy. And I said, "Of that number, how many of them <sup>are</sup> were black students?" And I believe he told me something that went to. . . .

It was almost like three to one. I think of the <sup>hundred and fifty</sup> 150 people who had volunteered, a hundred of them turned out that they were black students. And I said, "That's interesting." I said, "How many students on campus?" <sup>"Seven thousand five hundred,"</sup> And he said, "<sup>things</sup> 7,500" or some <sup>things</sup> around eight thousand. I said, "Fine."

I said, "How many Negro students are there on campus?" And he said, "<sup>a hundred fifty</sup> About 150." I said, "Well, now let me ~~.....~~ Let me just get these statistics straight. You got a"--and this is actual conversa-

tion, basically, we had; I mean, not verbatim, but it went something like this. <sup>a hundred and fifty</sup> He had 150 volunteers, <sup>a hundred</sup> 100 of which were Negro. He had <sup>a hundred and fifty</sup> 150 Negro students on the entire campus; ~~both those living. . . .~~ All

of them lived off campus because there were no dormitories at Omaha U. <sup>And</sup> the total student body was <sup>seven thousand five hundred,</sup> 7,500. It seemed to me that we were very much in the

majority in terms of the support he had. <sup>9</sup> I said, "Well, could you tell me who some of the leaders are in the Kennedy ~~students~~ <sup>students</sup> for Kennedy?" He said he was, ~~And~~ <sup>And</sup> he was white. ~~And~~ <sup>And</sup> he talked about his assistant and he was white, and he talked about whoever ~~this~~ <sup>this</sup> president was, and he was white. Said, "Fine." ~~I said,~~ <sup>I said,</sup> "I'll tell you, I'm going to be back." ~~And I said,~~ <sup>And I said,</sup> "Just tell me the names of some of these kids that have signed up, and who are some of the leaders." ~~And~~ <sup>And</sup> it turned out that one or two of the leaders who had signed up were actually members of the black student union on campus, which at that school was not an ultra-militant group. It just was a ~~loosely~~ <sup>loose</sup> loose confederation of black students who had come together and wanted to do something and just hadn't made up their mind what it was they wanted to do. I went into the cafeteria, coffee shop, and Johnny Ford and I kind of fanned out. He went in one direction; I went in another to get a hand on who was who. I told Ford, "Just get some names. Talk to some people and

I'll do the same thing, and we'll meet back in a half hour." ~~So both of us,~~ <sup>↖</sup> between the two of us in about forty-five minutes we got a hand on who these guys were and who it was that could make it happen. ~~And~~ <sup>↖</sup> fortunately, at the time we were out there that morning the leader of the black student <sup>who</sup> group was also very much interested in politics, happened to be there. ~~And~~ <sup>↖</sup> I talked to him; ~~And~~ I said, "You know, what are we talking about?" ~~And~~ <sup>↖</sup> [ ] Brookins was one kid's name. Three very, very sharp kids trying to. . . . Brookins was one. Oh, I can pull ~~out~~ <sup>↖</sup> the other two out of my files. <sup>↖</sup> But, anyway, there were three black students who were out there who were kind of the conduit for what happened as far as the black student<sup>s</sup> <sup>were</sup> concern<sup>ed</sup> on the campus. ~~And~~ <sup>↖</sup> they wanted to get involved, and when we started talking they <sup>said</sup> say, "Well, no, they haven't given us anything to do yet," ~~—~~ meaning they, the other white students <sup>↖</sup> "And they haven't told us what to do. They said they'd let us know." I said, "Well, I tell you. I got a job

for you." I said, "You just became the co-head of Students for Kennedy," I said, ~~"If in fact,~~

~~At least on this campus, and likewise in town,~~ as far as I'm concerned, you're going to run the whole operation." I said, "If in fact, we can <sup>have a hundred fifty</sup> ~~150~~ students sign up as volunteers, <sup>a hundred</sup> ~~100~~ of which turn out to be black and you've got <sup>seven thousand five hundred</sup> ~~7,500~~ students and only <sup>a hundred fifty</sup> ~~150~~. . . .

~~I mean there are only. . . .~~ That means that only a third of the students who are black on this campus are not for Kennedy or <sup>have</sup> ~~are~~ not signed up to work, whereas you've got less than one percent of the white student body signing up, or even less than that." <sup>Sorry about</sup> Besides the math, I can't do it in my head. But it just said that based on the percentages of students we had on campus, meaning black, and the white student body, that right out in front of everyone they shouldn't have a co-head. And I remember going back over to the table, and I said to the student leader, I said, "Look," I said, "you're going to have a new co-leader of Kennedy. Students for Kennedy." Said, "I wanted you to meet him."

He said, "Well, I know him ." He said he knew the kid. I said, "Well, from now on this guy is your new co-head of Students for Kennedy." And <sup>✓</sup> I didn't get any resistance from the kid; He was just obviously taken back. And I didn't ~~.....~~ I just told him that I worked for Kennedy and I had thought, you know, <sup>I</sup> ~~he~~ was going to be looking out what was going to happen in the black community and I had the authority to do it, ~~and~~ I wasn't questioning what he had done thus far, but I thought in terms of making it happen, so that he could ~~.....~~ Many guys say "happen," <sup>61</sup> Keeping the black students involved in the campaign, he should do this. And <sup>✓</sup> if he had any questions about it he could, you know, check, or whatever he wanted to do. And <sup>91</sup> ~~he~~ didn't seem overly perturbed, although I did get the word later on that he had called downtown to find out who I was, ~~and~~ <sup>✓</sup> he called Phil Sorensen, as a matter of fact, And Phil Sorensen told him that if he decided that he had to go, that he was gone. You know, I found this out from the kid later, <sup>b</sup> because

the kid obviously was taken back by me because I hadn't bothered to identify the fact that I worked for Kennedy. I didn't think it was really necessary, and I thought it was probably ~~.....~~ It would seem like I was trying to intimidate the kid to do it. And he was a youngster and he was a good kid; He just didn't happen to respond in terms of what I thought he should have been doing in order to really make something effective happen as far as the black students were concerned. <sup>It</sup> So we took ~~that same.....~~ the nucleus of that same black group, went into town, opened up a store front. Now, I'm going to try to move it along, <sup>but</sup> because I just wanted to make the point of how out of whack things were until you really got a hand<sup>le</sup> on them and made it happen; and how we might never have made happen in Nebraska what did happen if it had not been for going out to that campus, taking a look at it, giving these kids a chance to do their own thing. <sup>It</sup> I told these kids, "Look, we're going to open a store front. It's going to be your store front. You're going to make

it happen, "I said, "And you people, ~~are~~, you kids,  
are what it is. You can do what it is that  
<sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ relevant to being able to speak to the black  
community, whether those people are the affluent  
or the establishment, being doctors and lawyers,  
whoever they might be, or whether or not, in fact,  
they are the ghetto poor," which certainly Omaha  
has." ~~And~~ we were in the area called "the albino  
area," as a matter of fact. The black community  
is called "the albino area" <sup>in</sup> Omaha, Nebraska. We  
went and opened on Wilshire Boulevard <sup>Wilshire</sup>  
and Main. ~~Here are~~ <sup>They're</sup> the two main streets, but it's  
like the main drag. It's what's called the <sup>100</sup> hundred  
percent corner. <sup>100</sup> You can have a hundred percent  
corner in any community in the United States. The  
<sup>100</sup> hundred percent corner in any community in the  
United States is where all the action is, ~~and Flatbush~~ <sup>S</sup>  
I think I mentioned this to you before, ~~and Flatbush~~ <sup>In</sup>  
in Brooklyn, it would be Flatbush and Church Avenues.  
That's the heart of the Jewish area of that community.  
When I went to high school, I went to <sup>Hall</sup> Erasmus High <sup>^</sup>

School which is right in that area, in fact, a  
half a block away. Well, that's where the <sup>100</sup> hundred  
percent corner is for the middle class Jewish  
community in Brooklyn. For the black community in  
Bedford-Stuyvesant it's the corner of  
and Fulton. For the black community in Omaha,  
Nebraska, it was the corner of Wilshire and Main  
Street, I believe. <sup><91</sup> And the same thing is true in  
each community. In Oregon there was a black  
community. In California there are <sup>100</sup> a hundred percent  
corners where they have the <sup>Watts</sup> watch riots, <sup>→</sup>  
the <sup>Watts</sup> watch riots started right on the <sup>100</sup> hundred percent  
corner in the black community and burned out from  
dead center <sup>of the</sup> to black community. <sup><91</sup> And any community,  
ethnic community or group community, wherever you  
are in the United States, or for that matter in any  
country, is bound to be that corner where all the  
action happens. In Times Square it's Forty-second  
Street and Broadway. And so, you know, so. . . .  
In the Bronx it's the Grand Concourse, <sup><91</sup> and where  
you're going to have the rally, where you know you're

what  
start

going to. . . . And in Queens and I'm talking about  
white communities, <sup>I just thought I'd</sup> now tell you about the <sup>100</sup> hundred  
percent corners.

So we let the kids. . . . We went into town  
and the thing we wanted to do, really, in all the  
black communities, <sup>and this is</sup> the reason that it was  
so important, as far as everyone wanting to get into  
the act as far as the black community is concerned,  
is what we were trying to do is to get a registration  
drive started. <sup>cause</sup> we assumed that any person  
that we could register was probably going to. . . .  
<sup>[Eugene J.]</sup>  
not going to vote for McCarthy and certainly not  
<sup>[Hubert H.]</sup>  
going to vote for Humphrey when his name was not  
officially on the ballot. They were going to vote  
for the Senator. <sup>And</sup> we set up and made an all-  
out goal of registering as many persons as we could.  
91 Now, realistically, when I talked with Larry O'Brien  
and Phil Sorensen about it, we talked that maybe we  
could register three or four hundred people, because  
we weren't talking about big numbers. We were only  
talking about. . . . Oh, I gave you that newspaper

article from the Washington Post. I forget the exact figures on how many people finally . . .

GREENE: You never gave it to me. It was one of those thing you were going to locate.

GRAVES: Well, I did locate it, so I have it in the office. I'll have to get it.

GREENE: Okay. I haven't seen it.

GRAVES: The number of people we were talking about is about five thousand who actually <sup>W</sup> could vote as far as the black community is concerned. I could be off in the figures, but anyway it was not large numbers. In California Los Angeles County, we're talking about <sup>four hundred fifty thousand</sup> 450,000 <sup>1</sup> people, and, you know, in Omaha we're talking about five thousand. We went out there and Johnny Ford, being the kind of guy he was, <sup>S</sup> he went off and had parades and rallies and was really getting those kids. <sup>2 A</sup> And ~~then~~ the other thing I did was I said to the kids, "Look, if it's going to be your thing, let's let it be your thing." <sup>3</sup> I said, "I don't care whether you wear dashikis that say "Kennedy for President," or you wear loincloths,

or you wear  
^ Brooks Brothers suits, the main thing is that it happens." I said, "Now what I think is kind of relevant to Dr. King and would be identified with the whole thing as far as poor. . . . the poor is concerned, is that if you all had bib overalls." I said, "Anybody that wants bib overalls, I'll buy them." I said, "And it will be your way of identifying, without, you know, walking around screaming who you are that Kennedy is here and you represent Kennedy." Well, I ended up with thirty guys from the campus here, Omaha University, all black, really bright kids with blue work shirts, denim work shirts, and bib overalls walking up and down the main street of Omaha, Nebraska. Well, I mean, those kids so identified turned that town on that where they had identif. . . . where they had normally only registered seven people in a whole week, they registered 576 people in one day, and then they went in to register no less than a couple hundred a day, so when we were finished we had, from the previous point we were talking about, we had registered

almost a couple thousand people that had never been registered before in that town. And, of course, as I said, in terms of the turnout, we were, you know, we were voting 110 percent of the precinct, which is not easy to do. I mean, we. . . . The turnout we had was phenomenal as far as the black community is concerned in Nebraska. And, of course, the Senator. . . . Now, I'm kind of skipping ahead a little bit, but as I think about it, <sup>and I think</sup> in terms of the job that those black students did, I had those black students come out to California. That's how good they were. Three of those kids who organized Nebraska for me I brought out to California, I gave each one of those kids a community to run in Los Angeles County for the "get-out-to-vote on election day", and those kids took off, and they really made it happen. So that's how good they were. And Kennedy made it a point, when he came into the headquarters, I made it a point to get everyone of those kids a ticket into the election night celebration. We had one. . . . We had our

celebration in our headquarters. We had beer and all the stuff ~~that~~ and we bought. And then we ~~we~~. Everybody got dressed and came downtown. Then we had a party after. And it was just a real thing that we got the kids involved in so that they knew that they had done a good job which they had, and Kennedy made reference to it that night, and he had those kids right up there on the platform with him, and it's just a great thing. Probably there were parts I skipped over as far as Nebraska is concerned. Kennedy for the first time is a . . . Just trying to think back now, recapitulate on what I <sup>might have</sup> left out. For the first time Kennedy, as a white politician, the first white politician to ever come into a black community in Omaha, Nebraska, was Kennedy. Came right on the main street and had a rally in the pouring rain, Walked down Main Street and had a rally there.

McCarthy had a store front about six blocks up from the house, which was not even a contest. I mean, between the denim dungarees and having a black

student union and having gone out to all of the churches--John Lewis, myself and about six of these students covered about thirty churches on that Sunday prior to election day--I mean, it was just no contest. I mean, it was exciting and challenging and ~~it was~~ I think, of all the primaries that I was involved in the most enjoyable for me was the Nebraska primary in terms of what, you know, the feeling that everyone got from the thing and the spirit of the whole thing. <sup>H</sup> The California primary was much more impersonal. It was just so huge that I was sitting up, you know, ~~with a eight . . .~~ running eighteen rooms, ~~you know,~~ with forty telephones and <sup>S</sup> guys, the only way I could reach them, they were so far away, was by phone and, you know, and meeting interpreters for the Spanish-speaking communities, and so forth and Mexican-American communities. It was just no. . . . <sup>H</sup> I was removed from it. I was, ~~you know,~~ twenty stories up in the air and as many miles away from the nearest action, as far as what was going on; whereas, in Omaha, I was

right down in the street with a pair of dungarees on making it happen with those kids. And it was just, you know, ~~it was~~ just as important to make it happen in Nebraska there, in terms of the way the press <sup>Saw it</sup> ~~thought~~ and the way the Senator felt about the thing, as it was to go out and do the entire Los Angeles County of four hundred thousand black/ people.

GREENE: Did you have the same problems with the militants in Omaha that you had had in Indianapolis?

GRAVES: No. The reason I had the problems with the militants in. . . . Well, I take that back. You had. . . . In Omaha you did have Ernie Chambers who's the barber who's a very kind of a famous militant, not a person, I think, <sup>it would</sup> ~~can~~ be particularly <sup>advantageous</sup> ~~advocated~~ for you to interview in terms of the history of the thing. He's very <sup>vehement and</sup> very bitter and very much anti-Kennedy <sup>^</sup> very much anti-white, <sup>^</sup> Not just Kennedy. And he. . . . <sup>^</sup> I sent Johnny Ford down to straighten things <sup>s,</sup> <sup>^</sup> try and make some peace with Chambers, who's a recognized. . . . He's kind of like the professional militant. There are some people from

Reader's Digest that interviewed me here at the house a couple weeks ago, and they said they had been down to see him and that Chambers was just as bitter and angry then ~~as he~~, you know, as he ever has been. And he has reason to be. ~~I don't~~, you know, I don't differ with him. Just as I said to you before ~~prob--~~I'm skipping around ~~and the~~ problems that ~~you had~~... we had right here in Pittsburgh. I'm saying "we," the black people of this country had, I say, in Pittsburgh just a couple weeks ago, or last week, says that we <sup>ve</sup> just got such a long <sup>way to go.</sup> run of... Maybe Chambers is right, <sup>need to</sup> maybe we'll even have that revolution. Maybe we're going to have to have that revolution in order to overcome the problems we have. I'm not sure how you're going to do it otherwise.

But in answering <sup>your</sup> question about the militants, Chambers was really the militant, and Ford went down and talked with him, and he... and I remember that Ford came back and said that what he had resolved with Chambers was, that, "Look, I'm not looking. . . . You know, I got enough going on, I'm not worried about

Whitey. And if you ask me about Kennedy, he's just... You know, he's just the best of the... of a bad lot," which was a kind of begrudging kind of well, okay, you know, if you're going to have three bad guys, he's the best of the three bad ones." And that was kind of... That was the only kind of problem we had with the militant element. And the term is Chambers really represented what was, in fact, the militant element in Omaha. I would say to you candidly that those black students in Omaha, Nebraska, really made it happen. No question about it. In fact, in Oregon the reason I was able to get something going on in Oregon was the fact that I could look back and say, "Well, look, the black students made it happen in Nebraska, and there's no reason why you all can't do something in Oregon." It was not... The spirit of the thing--excuse me--the spirit of the thing was not as great in Oregon, I might say, as far as the black students were concerned, as it was in Nebraska. It was just a... It was just a series of circumstances that all kind of meshed together, that really got it off the

ground and made it happen. Kennedy coming to town and being able to pay bands, and recognizing bands, and Kennedy walking into Negro beauty parlors where women were just, you know, ecstatic. I mean, well, ~~but~~ I've seen them do that in white beauty parlors also. But the thing was that it was Kennedy, nobody <sup>had</sup> ever done it before, Joan Kennedy came there. It was just a good thing. The whole thing just worked out extremely well. When I think of all the primaries <sup>as I said</sup> that I set, all the buildup to the primary <sup>ies</sup>, that was the most enjoyable one. The problems of the militants <sup>we had</sup> to answer your question really five minutes later <sup>that I had in</sup> Indiana ~~that~~ I did not have in Nebraska. I would not have had the problems in Indiana that I had, had I had not. . . . had I not had people second-guessing me in terms of the decisions I'd made, and likewise had I not had this guy, <sup>[Franklin W.]</sup> Holgate, who just was not a very good fellow in terms of being a guy who was doing other than looking out for himself. So that ~~you know~~ he created a lot of the problems for me there.

GREENE: Do you have any special recollections of Robert Kennedy's visits to Nebraska during that last week after Indiana before <sup>the</sup> Nebraska primary?

GRAVES: Well, he came to the black community just once in Nebraska. That rally, when I was saying he went into the beauty parlor, <sup>and</sup> so forth, were the thing. . . . We had built ~~..... We had built~~ toward that thing all day long. We had a flatbed truck out; we had signs that covered a square mile that Kennedy was going to be in town, that Robert Kennedy was coming <sup>that</sup> and he was a concerned politician who was white. For the first time a white politician had come into town. ~~And Kennedy's coming--excuse me--~~ <sup>it</sup> was something that he wanted to do. <sup>It</sup> I remember the reporters who covered this particular stop, a lot of them sometime didn't even bother to get off the bus at some of the stops in the white communities, <sup>be</sup> because it was just another stop in another shopping center. But ~~I.....~~ They were stepping on each other that particular afternoon. ~~I mean,~~ and when I tell you it was raining, it was a downpour. <sup>59</sup> And I remember that I had had on my

dungarees all that day, my bib overalls and my jacket and my work shirt, and had planned to go and change, because the Senator was coming and I wanted to be still his staff guy. <sup>When</sup> And that rain started coming down, I was never so delighted that I had on my old clothes at the time and never bothered to change, and I remember seeing him on the street, and I remember him asking me, ~~you know~~ "Can I get in one of those outfits?" because he was soaked. <sup>S</sup> And, you know, and we kidded around about the fact that, ~~you know~~, the outfit I had on and was I going to be able to change back to my regular clothes when this whole campaign was over. He said, "Boy, there's nothing you won't do to get a couple of votes." You know, we just joked about the whole thing. <sup>AI</sup> But he felt very warm about the job that those students were doing and he let those students know that on election night. He had those students right up front on the platform and I. . . . The kids all wore their overalls to the victory celebration and so forth. <sup>S</sup> And, you know, the whole thing worked out just fine. <sup>AI</sup> We had a couple of alcoholics from

the very. . . . ~~You know, from. . . .~~ We were sitting, again, in the poorest part of Omaha, Nebraska, and we had about three guys who were real drinkers; you know, literally the town drunks as far as the black community is concerned, who came around, and they kept coming around, and we'd have them sweep, and we'd have them help out as far as the storefront is concerned. And finally, Ford decided he should buy them overalls, also, if they agreed to at least keep themselves reasonably sober so they could not blight the name of our campaign effort by stumbling up and down the street with our dungarees and work shirts on. And I think we actually dried out three or four of their local town drunks, at least for the period of time that we were running the campaign. It was just. . . . The whole thing was very warm feeling. The town drunks who were I used to call them "drunks for Kennedy" a special committee. They had a thing of cleaning out the garbage every morning. And I noticed that you know, in the private store you'd have to have a private refuse collection company come around.

And these guys would tell me, "Don't worry about that. We'll take care of the refuse, and we'll get rid of it." And I really never bothered to question where they were getting rid of this garbage, until a guy came over one morning. ~~He said,~~ "Look," he said, "I've had it." ~~He said,~~ "We've been putting up with this for five days," ~~he said,~~ "and, you know, the back of my yard is not to be believed." And I said, "What <sup>are</sup> ~~re~~ you talking about?" <sup>¶</sup> I went around and the garbage that, ~~you know,~~ these guys promised me to get rid of, which I hadn't really thought..... given it too much thought about where they were taking it, <sup>are</sup> ~~re~~ this guys have been taking it around and about a half a block away and dumping it in this guy's back yard. So, of course, we paid a rubbish man five or ten dollars and <sup>he</sup> ~~he~~ came around and got the thing out of there. Of course, it's very funny that these guys, ~~you know,~~ thought they were doing a job for us, and once they were ~~doing it~~ <sup>done,</sup> that was it. ¶ But it's a matter that what had to be done, no white person could ever have gotten along. First of all, he'd have had all the hang-ups and problems of being

afraid of who was going to steal something, or how to talk to the guy, and how to get along with him. ~~And~~ it wasn't a matter of just being black either; It was a matter of being able to deal with human beings. That's why these guys. . . . These guys were guys who had problems as alcoholics, guys who drank, And they just happened to be black guys who drank. ~~But~~ it's just a matter of the whole thing of being able to deal from the black students to the black ministers and black NAACP, and having the important people in town riding on the platform, <sup>or the</sup> flatbed truck when the Senator came, and putting the right people from in town in the car with him, getting a couple of the black students in the car because they were running the campaign headquarters, and my walking along the car. . . . the outside of the car talking to the Senator about who he should recognize and so forth. It was just a thing that had to be well thought out and well planned. ~~And~~ all you did was take it and in terms of Oregon, Oregon was basically almost the same size as Nebraska. In Oregon you had a. . . . Excuse me. In Nebraska you had Omaha and Lincoln. In

Oregon you had Portland and you had. . . .

GREENE: Seattle?

GRAVES: Seattle. Right. Those are the real black communities and after that you really have nothing to talk about <sup>in terms of size.</sup> Is Seattle in Oregon? Not Seattle.

GREENE: Oh, I'm sorry. Seattle, Washington.

GRAVES: Washington, yeah. We weren't in the state of Washington, no. In a place called Salem.

GREENE: Salem.

GRAVES: Salem.

GREENE: Who was working in Lincoln? Did you go out there, too?

GRAVES: We sent John Lewis out to Lincoln, Nebraska. There was really no more than about five hundred black people in Lincoln. ~~And~~ <sup>what</sup> we had going on there was we had a rally in memory of Dr. King. They had a march for Dr. King, <sup>and</sup> they had this march at the time ~~excuse me~~ going on all over the . . .

[ Interruption ] <sup>It</sup> John Lewis went out and spoke for us at a rally they had for Dr. King <sup>with the</sup> ~~was a~~ march. Some black students marched up there for us in Nebraska. In Lincoln, Nebraska, they had a rally up there, <sup>at</sup> ~~The~~

university up there. University of Nebraska's in Lincoln, and Lewis went there <sup>91</sup> because he was, you know, ~~he was~~ a student leader. He swung student. . . . head of SNCC <sup>91</sup> Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee <sup>91</sup> and he was a good guy to send up there, and he went up. Other than that, I never even went up to Lincoln. It wasn't a matter of ~~not~~ <sup>5</sup>, you know, not being able to go, not just. . . . Well, it was a matter of not being able to go, ~~because~~ I didn't have the time. I just didn't go; <sup>91</sup> it was just enough to do in Omaha. And then, of course. . . . Well, I make it sound like I stayed in Nebraska the whole time, but I want to make a point that ~~Johnny Ford~~ <sup>5</sup>, when I talk about registering 576 people in a day, Johnny Ford registered 576 people in a day. He was <sup>the catalyst</sup> ~~a capitalist~~ that really made it happen. <sup>91</sup> And <sup>=</sup> so when I said we had "drunks for Kennedy," it was Johnny Ford that put all that <sup>91</sup> together. I mean, he really did a first-rate job, <sup>91</sup> and Johnny Ford is now working as the model cities head in Tuskegee, Alabama, and, ~~you know~~, he may not be a bad guy to talk to one day. At least, you know, in terms of his views of the whole thing. <sup>91</sup> One of these

days Johnny Ford's going to be a politician himself, if not the first black mayor of Tuskegee, Alabama. I don't know what more.....what else I can say.

Q Kennedy only made one visit into the black community.

The other Kennedys made a couple of visits there. We, you know, we had really had something going on which was very exciting, and I think that was kind of it interesting.

GREENE: Yeah. Okay. <sup>Let's</sup> Move on to Oregon. ~~Would you.....~~

When you left Nebraska after setting Ford up, did you go up to Oregon at that point, or did you go back to Indiana, or to New York?

GRAVES: To be honest with you, I think you have to use this as a basis for what the problem is. I criss-crossed the country in those cities and states so often that I just don't remember how I. . . . In other words, I don't remember the continuity of the thing. You had about five different situations going. You had the Washington, D.C., primary to be concerned with. You had the New York primary which I was planning on and working, involved in, coming up. You had the California primary that I had to go out, <sup>and see. I</sup> made one trip

out to the West coast. I made a trip to Oregon and I don't remember <sup>whether when</sup> when I went out to Oregon. . . .  
Yeah, I did. When I got to Oregon, I stayed in Oregon. ~~I didn't. . . .~~ I didn't leave Oregon and come back. I think I did go. . . . ~~I went to. . . .~~  
my first swing through <sup>California. . . .</sup> Calif. It's kind of foggy in my mind, / But I know I ~~went to. . . .~~ from Nebraska I did go to Oregon.

GREENE: Okay, what was the situation there? Did it differ very much from the other cities because of the greater prosperity in that area generally?

GRAVES: ~~Oregon was kind of a prob. . . .~~ Oregon was a bit of a problem. The reason that Oregon was a bit of a problem was that <sup>by</sup> first of all, / the time I got there, there was very little going on as far as. . . . We lost Oregon, as you know. <sup>It</sup> The reason we lost Oregon because ~~it~~ was just complete lack of organization. / The people who were running it, the people who were making some judgments. It just never got off the ground there. I'm not talking about the black community, I'm just talking about the total effort behind it. When I got into Oregon, which was about a week before the primary, and there

was just ~~excuse me~~ literally nothing going on in the black community. They had one kind of very, very pathetic store front open that nobody could quite figure out who was supposed to be running it. They had one girl who was kind of paranoid who was running the thing. I don't remember her name. She was . . . . Seems to me I heard like she was a registered nurse or a school teacher or something, Absolutely out of her mind. She was the appointee of Edith Green. She's the representative?

GREENE: Yes, that's right.

GRAVES: And Edith Green had come out with . . . . You know, see, the thing they were living with in Oregon was Edith Green had come out for John Kennedy and endorsed him early when John Kennedy was running for President, and likewise, she did the same thing for Robert, and she called the shots, and they let her call the shots in Oregon. So that was their first mistake. But they should have had a deal with her where, okay, fine. we got your endorsement. We appreciate that, and that's just fine, but we're going to make it happen and we have to decide how we want to . . . . we want to

run our campaign, <sup>''</sup> but they didn't have that agreement. <sub>=</sub>  
They told her she was going to be the person and they kind of started to cater to her and that was a mistake. It was a mistake in that she started naming some people who probably should not have been involved in the thing, and by the time they <sup>started</sup> ~~tried~~ to really get a hand<sup>le</sup> on the thing it was, you know, ~~it was~~ going off in the direction of a loss. <sup>Q</sup> We did get it going in the black community. Trying to think how Kennedy. . . .  
~~We had. . . .~~ We had a rally. Kennedy made about three different stops in the black community, two of them on one day, and I think one on another day. Just can't remember the very first one he made, <sup>But</sup> the one where he made two in the same day, he went into a. . . . It was kind of an unscheduled stop, and Rafer Johnson was with him at the time. He made a stop in a black organized and run cultural arts center where they did a lot of <sup>handiwork,</sup> ~~handy-work~~ and they manufactured leather goods, and it was a senior citizens' home <sup>we</sup> that kind of thing. <sup>we</sup> Made a stop there. ~~And~~ then that evening of the same day we had a rally in ~~the~~ the black community in a park where there was some

concern as to whether or not we would fill that  
park for him. <sup>91</sup> And again, they sent in the white  
advance guys to take a look at it with their exper-  
tise, and, of course, I just went through the usual <sup>routine of</sup>  
calling Larry O'Brien and telling him either I was  
going to leave or they were going to leave, that I  
wasn't going to have them second-guess me in terms  
of the rally, and they got them out of there. <sup>91</sup> But,  
you know, I want to make that point, that it was  
<sup>always</sup> almost a thing of somebody white trying to second-  
guess you because, one, it was a black community and,  
two, because there was somebody black that was running  
it, that they always had to come in and try to second-  
guess you as far as what went on in that community.  
In other words, it was most disconcerting to have . . .  
to always . . . You know, you had enough . . .  
You had enough pressures on you trying to do what you  
had to do without always having to be bothered with  
somebody coming along trying to tell you what they  
thought, and how they thought, because they had some  
great expertise in terms of what they thought should  
happen in the black community. <sup>91</sup> And it was true in

Oregon, And in Oregon the reason I couldn't organize really the way I would have wanted to, although we did well, was ~~that~~ this woman that Edith Green had ~~that~~ we had to kind of live with her because she would have gone off and literally just called a press conference, which she had threatened to do, and say that Kennedy was <sup>trying</sup> going to come in and <sup>ing</sup> try to dictate how the community should be run. She just made life rather difficult for us, and we had to try to work around her, and I think I even ~~..... You know, the office, .....~~ Like ~~I think I even~~ assigned one of the guys to try and date her or something like that. She was a single girl <sup>just</sup> and absolutely hideous, but I remember trying to get one of the guys to go above and beyond the call of duty, as I call it, by trying to just get her out of town for a while, by just taking her off somewhere and just, you know, taking her out, entertain her, wine and dine her, but just let me get this campaign organized. And I think that did work to a certain extent; we were able to get her out of our way. And she had no concept of what was going to happen election day and what was going to happen leading

up to that, and getting the volunteers and going to the churches and all that. And I kind of just worked out of that place that we had set up that Edith Green had kind of found for us and we were paying for, and kind of just worked around her and made it happen. The students from Oregon State. . . . Was that the school that's important?

GREENE: I think so, yes.

GRAVES: I have to ask you <sup>be</sup> because I just can't remember.

Those students were not as cooperative as the students at Omaha U. And I went out and made a pitch to them, and told them what had happened on the campus at. . . . in Nebraska and said that I had hoped that I was going to <sup>be able to</sup> secure their support in the manner which I had gotten it in Nebraska. I did not get, <sup>a</sup> you know, an exuberant response from those students. They were less than jumping up and down as far as wanting to come and work for Kennedy. <sup>H</sup> What we're really saying is, basically, they were a much more militant group than the kids at Nebraska. The kids at Nebraska were <sup>good, but</sup> a bit more. . . . <sup>They</sup> had the feeling that <sup>"</sup> let's give the establishment one more chance to see whether or not

it would <sup>do</sup> be the right thing," meaning Kennedy. The kids at ..... in Oregon had kind of made up their mind they had given the establishment their last chance and they had blown their chance, and now, they weren't going down the road of trying to hand their hat with anybody, that maybe Kennedy would win and, "yeah, sure, maybe the guy would be President, but he's not going to really do anything, so why knock ourselves out?" You had that kind of thing.

Why don't you go to your next question? What was that about?

GREENE: Well, what about in the Oregon communities as a whole, outside of the universities? did you find more cooperation there? were they more apathetic than they'd been in Nebraska and Indiana because of the greater affluence in the state in general?

GRAVES: I could never get a sense of involvement, but ~~I could never get a sense of.....~~ I was there for only a week. That's number one. And by the time we got there, ~~I mean~~, the campaign was already lost; and we could see that it was lost. But I could never get a sense of total involvement by anybody. In Nebraska

I knew that the ministers <sup>were in</sup> ran it and the civil rights groups <sup>were in</sup> ran it and the students <sup>were in</sup> ran it. I couldn't put a hand<sup>le</sup> on it, and it had nothing to do with the fact I was getting <sup>it</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~was~~ only seven days to go prior to the primary, because that would not have mattered. ~~That~~ <sup>you</sup> know, you could have gotten around that. It's just a matter I couldn't get a sense of people being really aware of ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> that concerned with a primary that was going to come off, that we were talking about picking the next President of the United States. We were able to get the people interested in coming to the rally in their ~~car~~ <sup>park</sup> ~~car~~; we filled that <sup>park</sup> ~~car~~. And we were able to get the message across that. . . . Kennedy was very warm with that group. I remember that also. We ~~just~~ <sup>just</sup> ~~just~~ I just couldn't seem to get it going the way I would have liked to have seen it happen in Oregon, as it did in Nebraska.

See, in Oregon you had a community, too, that was laid out ~~like~~ <sup>like</sup> ~~like~~ somewhat like in Los Angeles County, a lot of. . . . You didn't have high tenements, <sup>tenement</sup> structures, <sup>it</sup> But you had ~~just~~ <sup>just</sup> ~~just~~ just went out for miles.

This was spread out and all over the place. You know, just <sup>a</sup> lot of hou. . . . ~~lot of~~ homes, and it was difficult to really get into those places and really get a sense of where you were going.

GREENE: What about Kennedy's people that. . . whose names have been written about as far as Oregon goes, [William J.] vanden Heuvel and [E. Barrett, Jr.] Prettyman? did you have any contact with them, <sup>Do you</sup> and think they really played a major part or were they . . .

GRAVES: I think the first guy, whoever it was that was in there, did a very poor job of organizing. He was obviously not a person. . . . [Herbert] <sup>Shmerz</sup> Herb ~~Schmertz~~, was that his name?

GREENE: Yeah, I think that's right.

GRAVES: I think Herb <sup>Shmerz</sup> ~~Schmertz~~ is a fine guy, but it's just obvious that he should not have been the person to organize Oregon. He was not an experienced political organizer and to hand an important situation, such as a state where we have to win a primary, to a guy who had not done it before was unreal. And vanden Heuvel, by the time we sent him in, <sup>he</sup> was already going into a . . . You know, it was like trying to cut out a

cancer that's already become terminal. It's just a matter of how long can you hang with it, and vanden Heuvel already walked into a situation where he just ~~he~~ was in trouble. ~~And~~ when I came in with seven days to go, I did not have the sense of this was one we could win. I really didn't. And when I started moving around the black community I couldn't get the sense of really something going on so that I really felt we were going to win, and then the guy that, such as [David M.] Dave Borden who was running this, the local Portland operations for vanden Heuvel, I. . . .

4) Again, Dave Borden happens to be a guy that I know, and, you know, but I just didn't have the sense that Dave Borden had enough of a get-up-and-go, fireman type of let's-make-it-happen thing that was needed in a person who was <sup>going to</sup> organize the whole city of Portland. It took a real political, ~~political~~ politically oriented type of guy, and Dave Borden was not that. I mean, he had a Phil Sorensen and a Jim Green and a Pat Lucey doing Nebraska, how can you come and have Dave Borden who's run a black association and a black street group in East Harlem running all of Portland,

Oregon? Excuse me a second. Interruption

GREENE: Did you find the people in the black communities of Oregon any more issue oriented than those in the other states?

GRAVES: No.

GREENE: The state itself supposedly was. You didn't find that to hold true in the black communities?

GRAVES: What I found, as far as the black community is concerned, was that there was a total, ~~not total~~. There was a lack of receptiveness as far as any politician is concerned--white--coming into the area--and black <sup>be</sup> cause they had been had so many times in terms of promises. ~~And~~ when you started ~~dealing with the~~ <sup>doing</sup> . . . . Young people, ~~those~~ <sup>those</sup> were the people who I thought could do the best job for us as far as the overall effort, and that was to win these primaries and simply do well in the black communities. ~~You~~ found them being completely disenfranchised ~~with the~~ . . . . disenchant~~ed~~, ~~excuse me~~, with the white politicians across this country, and feeling that there was just. . . . You know, they were going to be had again and <sup>it was</sup> just a matter of, you know, who

And you mean agree?

did it and who did it a little bit more sophisticated than others. And just a complete lack of trust. And what I was able to say is, you know, "I couldn't disagree with you more," which is what I said to them, "but why don't we just give it one more... give it one more try and just see? Let's just put our faith in this guy and see where we go." And right now, today, if I had to go back out. . . . When I finally went out and started talking about Humphrey, it was exceedingly tough because, one, I'd already said, "Now, let's just do it, because I believe that Kennedy's the guy who probably spells it out the best," and, two, because of what had happened in Chicago was just an impossible situation. Now, the only thing I could justify Humphrey in terms of the people we were talking to was you compared him to a Nixon, and really, then, you got the answer, "well, we don't care; it's all the same anyway." And, of course, that was part of the problem you had when you tried to... when we tried to put together the effort for Vice President Humphrey. When we tried to win or get a winning situation

going for Humphrey it was just a matter as far as the black community is concerned <sup>of</sup> it was going to be all the same. ~~And Kennedy.~~ I was able to overcome that to a greater, much greater extent as far as <sup>a</sup> a Kennedy because he had the mystique of being <sup>a</sup> the Kennedy and maybe there was something that could happen <sup>and</sup> the idea and spirit of what John Kennedy had started gave us all a little bit of a head start.

GREENE: Was McCarthy any more attractive in the black areas of Oregon?

GRAVES: McCarthy was a complete out. Nobody knew who McCarthy was. He was just completely out. That wasn't even a part of the discussion. Humphrey was much more of a viable. . . . That would have been much more of a. . . . You would have found competing against the Humphrey people much more difficult in terms of what they had to sell and <sup>vis-a-vis</sup> a Humphrey as opposed to a McCarthy. And I wasn't overly impressed by the fact that they had thousands of young, white college students, because what I had to run up against <sup>vis-a-vis</sup> ~~I had to meet them on.~~ They had to meet me on my ground, my ground being the black

community.

I had to meet them ~~in the . . .~~ on my ground. My ground was the black community.

GREENE: What about the King wire tapping charges? What kind of an impact did that have in Oregon? I think it came out during the Oregon phase of the campaign.

GRAVES: It really just surfaced, to any great extent, right at the end. ~~It came out . . .~~ It came out at the very end of the Oregon thing. It really did not catch hold enough to really be of any great impact at all as far as the ~~beginning of the . . .~~ the end of the Oregon thing was concerned. And when we got out to California, of course, we had about a week to go in California, and some people did make . . . . You know, like we already discussed, what <sup>hay</sup> was tried to be made out of that thing, and how <sup>we</sup> ~~he~~ turned it off, and the over reaction, which I thought was a ridiculous situation as far as the King record was concerned. I think that even ~~. . .~~ Had King lived and that come out, King himself would have vindicated that whole situation, would <sup>have</sup> vindicated the Senator in terms of the whole situation. But, you know, I don't think

that that's something  
/we could have. . . . we would have been overly  
concerned about, had we gone the full route as far  
as the campaign is concerned, meaning all the way  
up to November, when I'm sure that we would have  
won.

GREENE: Were you able to do much with the professional  
class in the black community? Were they receptive?  
I know in Indiana you said they were more difficult  
than the average person.

GRAVES: The reason they were difficult in Indiana wasn't  
difficult in terms of receptivity. It's just a  
matter that, you know, they were like the establishment.  
They were no different in terms of being. . . . The  
only difference between them and the white establishment  
was the fact that they were black. But as far as  
getting them geared up, they were all kind of prima  
donnas and you had to go and talk to them and treat  
them all in a certain way. And I didn't have that  
kind of time, and they weren't the persons who were  
going to be, in quotes, "the marines" out on the street  
for me really getting it organized and getting it  
done. So it did not make sense to go off and conk

my head on a wall, knock my head on a wall, trying to get them involved where I would have to hire them and give them money and court them and coddle them, and I didn't..... You know, we just didn't have that kind of time. So there, you know, I didn't find it any more difficult than Oregon. The persons in professional ranks or community organizer types or the VIP types of any community, when an organization such as our own comes into town, they want to be treated like VIPs. And when you start treating them like VIPs then, you know, you have to spend time sitting <sup>ground</sup> there holding their hands and you're just not getting it done, as far as what we need..... what we needed to accomplish, and that was to win that election.

GREENE: How much time did you spend with Robert Kennedy himself in Oregon?

GRAVES: Personally with Kennedy?

GREENE: Yeah. Well, how much time did you spend while he was in Oregon with him advancing his trips?.....

GRAVES: I spent very little time personally with Kennedy. In the whole camp..... In the total primary effort.

~~Whenever I had.~~ Whenever I had to get through to Kennedy, it was no problem of getting through to him if I wanted to say something to him, or if I wanted to get the message across that he needed to be doing a certain thing he wasn't doing. Like in California I couldn't seem to get the people who were working on mass media to take off the law and order transcript or law and order recording that we were using in the white community off the black radio stations. You know, here was Robert Kennedy talking about law and order on the black radio stations in California. Well, it's all well and good, you know, I was realistic enough to know that he may be had to say that in radio stations being piped into Orange County, which is all John Birch, but, ~~you know~~, that was not the answer for what I needed in the black community. And I couldn't seem to get it off. And I told the Senator; I said, "You know I've been telling them for three days that you're piping law and order messages into the black communities on the black radio stations and ~~they don't seem to be.~~ Nobody seems to be responding." Well, Kennedy turned around and, ~~you know~~,

told. ~~...~~ said something to [Frederick G.] Fred Dutton, and I mean it was off. You know, Dutton turned around and told the communications guy and it was yanked, and the reason I know it was yanked, because they came back to me and got the text of what they should be saying. And so therefore, in those kind of situations, I could get to Kennedy. I don't want to overstate the thing in terms of how often Kennedy picked up the phone and said, "Should I check with Graves?" I think that the Senator was responsive to the idea that I was the person who was doing the job as far as organizing the black community. I think a lot of the tangible results were probably pointed out by Larry O'Brien to him. And when he had a problem even with these records, this Martin Luther King record, I never got a call from Kennedy personally that said, "What do you think about so and so?" Kennedy would call Burke Marshall, who was his friend, a trusted friend, and Burke Marshall would call me and say, "I just got a call from the Senator. What's going on with such and such a situation?" Or he'd get

a guy like John Siegenthaler from Nashville,  
Tennessee, who was another guy he identified as  
being a guy who knew his way around the black  
community, and <sup>so</sup> therefore, really what I'm saying,  
and I'm not sure if I want this on the record or  
off the record, is that I was the black person  
in  
closest to what was happening/the black community  
for the Senator nationally in his campaign, and yet,  
in retrospect, the Senator--and it wasn't retrospect;  
I was aware of it even then--did not get on the  
phone and call me up when he had a . . . . when he  
wanted to identify his first problem. He would call  
his friends who he thought were white, <sup>who</sup> and had some  
sensitivity as to what was going on in the black  
community. <sup>so</sup> And I think that that <sup>has</sup> ~~is~~ have to be said.  
It's not an indictment of him; It's just a matter  
that he went with ~~what he . . . .~~ were persons who he  
knew were persons who could be trusted and had ~~a~~  
some sense of empathy about what it was that had to  
be done in the black community. And he went with  
them prior,  ~~. . . .~~ certainly before calling an Earl  
Graves, who he had known two years, three years all

together.

GREENE: Would you concur in his opinion that Siegenthaler and Burke Marshall did know their way around the black communities and were sensitive to the problems?

GRAVES: I would say Burke Marshall and I agreed. I think that Siegenthaler was influenced by persons. . . . See, you had the problem of guys. . . . each guy having his own guy, and when I say that, it's kind of very poor use of words, but, as I said before, in a campaign, it's, you know, it's not a Sunday school picnic, and again and again you have guys lining up to get their lines straight in terms of who their lines of communications are going to be, and into who, and who has the weight where. And so, therefore, you have like <sup>guys</sup> [ Thomas <sup>m</sup> A. ] Tom Johnston being close to John Siegenthaler, and Tom Johnston and I had to work together, and Tom Johnston had an awful lot to do with my ending up working for Kennedy, but Tom Johnston was probably saying to Siegenthaler that, "Graves has worked for me, so if there's any problems in terms of what's going on and what's Graves working on, check with me." Well, what that did for Tom

Johnston is it made it possible for Tom Johnston to be on top of the pile or to know what was going on in a given situation because a Siegenthaler was coming back to him to keep Tom Johnston informed in terms of what Earl Graves was doing. ~~And I didn't think that Siegenthaler.~~ . . . . Siegenthaler did not have the sense of things that were important in the black community to the extent that Burke Marshall did, to answer your question specifically. There were persons who were involved in the black community who were that much further away and more out of touch with it. <sup>A</sup> Walter Sheridan was a guy who I really thought was, ~~you know,~~ completely out of it in terms of he was a guy that got involved in that whole situation in Indiana and ended up with mud all over his face. He was a guy that was assigned to work in the black community in California, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> when Larry O'Brien came in, he was so annoyed about the fact that I was ~~supposedly.~~ . . . . <sup>A</sup> had to go and talk to Walter Sheridan to find out what was going on, he refused to actually get involved with Walter Sheridan. <sup>A</sup> Larry O'Brien just told me, "Just ignore him and just go ahead and

do whatever we have to do." 'cause he was organizing in the black community because somehow he, you know, he had won the friendship and the confidence of the Senator a long time ago, and somehow he had convinced someone along the way that he knew what was going on in the black community, which he didn't. So I think he was an example of a person who I thought should not have been organizing in the black community or have been involved in the black community. I think that Dave Borden's sense of organization in terms of what he was doing--He was the guy who was in Oregon--was, again, an overstatement of the fact, in terms of the facts as far as how good he was at doing his particular thing in the minority community. I think had a guy like John Doar been involved in the campaign, I would have been able to work with John Doar pretty easily. John Doar understands what it is that were about. I think that Frank Mankiewicz understood a lot of what happened in the black community. I think that Mankiewicz did not respond or react at all times the way I think he should have or I would have wanted him to, but I think he had a sense of what

was a hustle and what was not a hustle, and I liked Mankiewicz in terms of the kind of individual he was, and whenever <sup>we</sup> he had dealings as far as the black community is concerned, I think he was reasonably responsive. But there were very few guys who really had a sense of where they were going. Bill vanden Heuvel in the beginning had something to do with the black community, and he knew black people, but that's not enough, just to have black friends. I mean, it does not make you an expert on the . . . being sensitive as to what is going on in the black community. I'm going to give an example right now. You've been to my office a couple of times. I just let a girl go who was my secretary who was a black girl, very good as far as technical skills are concerned, but not particularly good in terms of taking professional pride in what she was doing. And now . . . And within the last month and a half, or last four weeks any way, I've been looking for another secretary. I've interviewed at least a dozen girls, Negro girls. I've not found more than two that were reasonably acceptable, and one that was very good which

I didn't get. It just didn't work out. So now I've reached the point that ~~I'm going to . . . .~~ I want to hire a secretary. ~~It doesn't . . . .~~ I wanted to have a black secretary because, number one, I just thought it made sense to have the first person who was going to talk to me be somebody black rather than somebody white, in terms of my clients and in terms of just my basic philosophy. And then I just think that in terms of my office I just want to have an integrated staff, and it ends up that I would have had myself and Rowland Ireland was black, and I'd end up. . . . We've got three women in the office, one being the secretary would be white and the two staff people who worked for me before in Kennedy's office who are still with me, Edna Greenbaum and Judy Wough who is now working for me full time. That would have meant three white and two black, and just seemed to me that kind of the balance wasn't right. And if anybody wanted not to be accused of looking to an integrated situation and a balanced situation seemed to make sense, trying to put it together a little differently. All right, well, the point I'm making

is that here we are and I right now I want to hire a secretary and I'm going to probably end up hiring somebody white. Well, the difficulty of hiring somebody white is not that she will not have her technical skills down. That won't be a problem at all. But when I say to that person who's white, "What do you think the AKAs [Alpha Kappa Alpha] will do?" If that person were black or what do you. . . . If I said to that person as I'm dictating a letter, "Oh, yeah, send a copy of this letter to the national head of the AKAs," she would know that AKAs were one of the largest Negro sororities in the country. And if I said to send it to the head of the national. . . . If I said this to a white secretary, I've got to explain to her who the AKAs are and where she might possibly locate that information. Well, she could probably do that. The same thing is true if I said, "Send it to the Jack and Jills." The average black secretary coming into the office would know that Jack and Jill is a very kind of bourgeois-type of organization of middle class Negro children for the cultural mission of middle class Negro children. And,

~~you know,~~ so what I'm saying is ~~is that~~ that sensitivity of knowing that in a particular town in Omaha, Nebraska, the president of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity chapter would not be really a heavy-weight. The reason he wouldn't be a heavy-weight is because there are not very many fraternity guys in that town. A white guy would not have the sensitivity if he was in that town. A Burke Marshall or a John Siegenthaler, as good as they might be, would not have the sensitivity of how to use those guys or how to call it. And that's the point I make. ~~And it just~~. You know, unless you've lived there and been there, there's just no way of getting in there. You're just not going to gain that kind of insight, and that's the problem I have right now in hiring a white secretary ~~is that~~ if I hire her, there's no question about the fact that she would be very good as far as her professional skills are concerned, in terms of professional pride and as far as her work is concerned, and likewise in terms of confidence but the problem is how do I get her to understand all of the demographics, if you will, of what happens

in the black community and who it is that we should know in the black community, and I don't know what the answer is to that.

GREENE: Yeah. Well, you said in the first interview that there were people that you took this question to who understood the nature of the problem, and yet nothing was ever done about it. Who was particularly responsive as far as understanding the problems? Was there anyone who would come to you even if they were doing the advance and say, "Well, you know, who should I see?" who would seek your advice?  
[James]  
Would Jim Tolan or Peter Smith come and say, you know, "I'm advancing in this black community. Is there . . ."

GRAVES: Yeah, I would get . . .

GREENE: "Are there people I should see?"

GRAVES: Yeah, when they had an advance, which used to kind of aggravate me, but when they had an advance that was in the black community, sometime it worked one way and sometime it worked another. If they had an advance in the black community where I was not in that town, they'd call me up and say, "What do you

think we should do with so and so? How do you think it should happen?" I'd say, "Why don't you go talk to so and so?" and I'd give them a list of two or three people. The other way around, <sup>when</sup> I was already in the community, I'd probably get a call and they'd say, "Do you want some help from us, or should we come down and help you in the black community?" I'd tell them <sup>no</sup>, because I was already there, and, you know, I didn't think we needed to do it twice. So I don't think a Jim Tolan or a Peter Smith. . . . ~~Peter Smith just treated it. . . .~~ Peter Smith would <sup>treat</sup> just it that, if it's in the black community, let Earl Graves handle it. "You know, it's one of those kind ~~of things~~" "Let me keep my hands off it, because I don't know what I'm doing with it." Jim Tolan treated it that, "I don't think Graves knows what he's doing, so I'm going to go in there and try to move it around a <sup>bit</sup> little." I think that was ~~his~~ kind of would have been the attitude of Jim Tolan. Jim Tolan would have treated it that, "I can handle this thing. It's only ~~that~~ just black people, and I think I understand

how to handle it. I know Rafer Johnson, You know, and we talked, so it's all the same thing." I mean, it's that kind of basic lack of empathy for what the real problem was, <sup>I think</sup> ~~that day~~.

GREENE: Was there anyone else in the advance that you found particularly insensitive in this way, like Jim Tolan?

GRAVES: Well, I told you <sup>[Gerald J.]</sup> Jerry Bruno was just outrageous.

GREENE: Yeah. Right. Anyone beyond that?

GRAVES: And then ~~the~~ . . . I think that the . . . Well, I think that . . . I don't think that [Joseph] Joe Gargan, who was supposedly in charge of the advance, was particularly sensitive to what had to be done as far as to understand the black community. And, you know, treating a black community in terms of advancing ~~is no different~~--that's what I'm trying to get a point-- it's no different to advance something in the black community than it is in the white community. You've got to get people to a certain place at a certain time <sup>What</sup> ~~but~~ the problem was, <sup>would come</sup> is that they were coming in, crunch all over people's toes, maybe pick out the wrong people to help them get it together, you know, and ~~have a~~ . . . You know, ~~and~~ just leave things in

shambles when they left. That was the problem. ¶ I  
don't mean that Gargan necessarily would do this per-  
sonally, and I'm not necessarily justifying, you know,  
what I'm saying about Gargan in terms of a lack of  
sensitivity. I just think that <sup>as</sup> the guy who was totally  
in charge of advance, he didn't. . . . Well, there  
were no black advance men. And I don't think that  
you'd necessarily have to send advance men. I mean,  
I think I said this in the very first interview,  
when I was going around for Kennedy; when I went out  
to Portland, Maine, and organized the [Kenneth M.] Curtis  
campaign, <sup>and</sup> I went out to Omaha, Nebraska. ~~Not~~  
Omaha, Nebraska. Excuse me. What's the western  
<sup>next to it?</sup> town? Montana. ~~I don't think there was.~~ You  
know, I don't <sup>think</sup> there's six Negroes in the whole state  
of Montana. ¶ When I went out there, I was the advance  
man for those trips, and it had nothing to do with the  
fact I was black or white. I was the advance man,  
period. Well, I mean, it just seemed to me there <sup>would</sup>  
have to be places that they could have pulled in two  
or three advance guys. ¶ They had Baron Martin. Baron  
Martin got out to California and Jerry Bruno wanted

state?

to put him back on the train and send him back.

That's what he told

Baron Martin. Baron Martin is a guy with four degrees, you know, one of the brightest lawyers you want to meet out of Boston, has, ~~you know~~, an income in excess of a hundred thousand dollars a year, and, ~~you know~~, and teaching, ~~you know~~, almost as a full professor in a law school, and

~~You know~~, <sup>9/</sup>so, I mean

~~you had~~, ~~you know~~, there just seemed to be some inconsistencies with what we were talking about. And ~~they~~ had one or two guys that they had doing advance, but those guys were in the inner circles. ~~And~~ the thing that aggravated me about it is that the advance men that they had doing advancing were just guys who just came in, and ~~they~~ got a little experience and all of a sudden they became advance men. And ~~there~~ was any number of black guys who were equally as capable that I knew of that could have done the job that these

guys were doing, and better, and I don't mean in the black community; I mean in general as far as advancing was concerned. You put a guy into downtown Chicago.

You go <sup>up to</sup> and ~~put~~ a local political organization and say, "I'm here from Kennedy's staff," and they wouldn't care if you <sup>ive</sup> got horns. You're not talking about living next door to them or going to school with his kids. All you're talking about doing is, "Let's get a crowd out tomorrow because Kennedy's coming, and you can do it." And they had no hang-ups.

Q I've been into Detroit and done it for Kennedy. I went all over Michigan. I went into conservative areas, Ypsilanti, Michigan. I can name towns across this country that I've been into for the Senator, and I was just a guy getting off that airplane being the only one out in Butte, Montana, you know, in the middle of the night. <sup>It</sup> Had nothing to do with color. And those people got the people out, so there's just no reason why I couldn't have had it. <sup>SA</sup> And not just that, but we <sup>ive</sup> sat here and talked <sup>now</sup> ~~kind of~~ three or four different sessions, and we don't know another person that's ~~in~~ was in communications, speech writing,

right across the board, <sup>^</sup> policy making <sup>^</sup> that you can go and talk to that worked for Robert Kennedy that did anything. Now, who? ~~..... You know, who.....~~ What are we going. . . . We <sup>re</sup> weren't going to make Rafer Johnson Secretary of State, <sup>?</sup> you know, so where were we going to start pulling these names from? <sup>and</sup> when we were going to start using these people? Right in the Washington headquarters you can't tell me who you can go talk to that was black. When I wasn't there, there was nobody. I'm not talking about secretaries. So, you know, the campaign just lacked a lot of color, in quotes, "color."

GREENE: What did you feel about the scheduling? Did you feel that the black areas were slighted at all in the scheduling by Joseph F. Joe Dolan and other people working on that?

GRAVES: No. No, I thought that Joe Dolan did a good job of scheduling into the black communities. ~~They didn't.....~~ They didn't slight the black community, because the black communities were what they were going after. They were hanging their hats on the idea that they were pulling a good vote out of the black communities.

that was going to be a big help to the Senator as far as his winning in those particular states, because if we could get the black people out, those people were going to vote for the Senator. So I don't think there was a problem at all, in scheduling .

GREENE: Well, maybe one more question. I had heard, also, that, in California particularly, <sup>that</sup> there were groups that complained that there wasn't enough personal attention given to the black community. I guess that's really what I meant, particularly by the Senator and his top people, that they didn't see enough of him.

GRAVES: Well, that's that thing. I've got a copy somewhere. I don't even know where I can find it. <sup>I'll</sup> Look down in the cellar, <sup>I've probably got</sup> ~~and try to get~~ some of the <sup>it</sup> ~~.....~~ in the cellar. In fact, I might have that article I told you about from Omaha down in the cellar, in the ~~base.....~~ <sup>Excuse me</sup> The basement.

. That was ~~.....~~ Those guys ~~.....~~ .

91 I think I mentioned that, also, in the first interview. In Los Angeles we had some of them. [ Mervyn M. ] Merv Dymally, Bill Greene, the guy who headed up the

Urban League office out there, three or four of <sup>other</sup> ~~the~~ elected officials who were looking out for themselves, as good politicians, in terms of what was going to happen in the Kennedy campaign in California. They wanted to be top dog, and they didn't want to be top black dogs. They wanted to be top dogs who happened to be black. And those guys complaining about the Senator's lack of sensitivity was only a matter of him not recognizing them and not so much that he wasn't recognizing the black community, although I think there was a certain amount of validity to the fact that we could have done more in terms of how we responded to the black community, and in the first instance, they were talking about something completely different.

GREENE: Okay. I think we ought to change the tape.

[/ BEGIN SIDE II, TAPE I /

GREENE: What about primary day in Oregon, in terms of getting ~~out-to~~ <sup>the</sup> vote? How did you organize that?

GRAVES: Let me just think a little bit about <sup>it</sup> ~~it~~. Sometimes Oregon and Nebraska all become the same and I'm just trying to remember what we did in Oregon. Let me see.

Could you click this off a second? [ Interruption ]

91 I think what you have to understand is that as far as the get-out-<sup>the</sup>to-vote efforts were concerned in the black community, ~~once~~ we had had some degree of success in Indiana, and then we went on to Nebraska and did extremely well, when it came down to election day in <sup>a</sup>the Kennedy campaign, we pulled all the stops. Whatever had to be done in order to get it done was done, ~~and~~ that meant that when I said we needed to have ten cars and they only had five cars, they found another five. Now, the numbers don't matter; The point I'm making is that they got whatever I said we had to have in order to get it done. ~~And~~ I know sitting in on the last-minute strategy sessions, in terms of the get-out-<sup>the</sup>to-vote sessions, the long and the short of the whole thing was, <sup>"</sup>in the final analysis the difference is going to be in the black community, if we can get out the vote. ~~And~~ anything we can do to help Graves get out the vote, let's do it."

I remember vanden Heuvel saying it. I remember Larry O'Brien saying it. ~~You know, I know what. . . . You know, I can stand. . . .~~ I remember those meetings as

if it were an hour ago, the various persons who made these comments in various states as we went across the country. <sup>SA</sup> that where the effort had to be made, in the final analysis, was the black community, and if we could get a real good turnout in the black community it was going to be helpful to the Senator. So, in Oregon those same statements were made by Bill vanden Heuvel and Larry O'Brien, <sup>SA</sup> and it was understood that when they couldn't think of something else, when they had extra persons to work or volunteer in the get-out-<sup>the</sup>-to-vote effort, they would send them over to me and my ~~and~~ and the people who were working with me that were being sent in, it was understood that on election day a lot of those people were going to be white, because <sup>SA</sup> it didn't matter at that point, because what we were talking about is sending out white people to go and baby-sit, sending out white people to go and drive people to the polls, and it wasn't a matter of turning them off. A lot of them guys did come with suits and jackets on, but at that point it didn't matter. ~~We were at the~~. You know, we were at the end of the wire and if the people were

going to be resentful ~~that, you know,~~ we'd already  
been past that kind of stage. One of the  
Fitzgerald brothers was ~~.....~~ worked out of the  
campaign headquarters, and he did anything I wanted  
that day in terms of what we wanted accomplished.  
And when I didn't have enough cars available to go  
out and pull people, I just picked up the phone  
and called the local taxicab company and told them  
to send me down ten taxicabs with ten drivers into  
the black community, right outside of my door were  
sitting ten drivers with ~~ten cab. . . .~~ in their  
cabs, <sup>When</sup> and we had a person to send off <sup>we would</sup> ~~who'd~~ just send  
those drivers off, and those bills were paid. So, when  
I say that all stops were pulled, that's what I meant,  
because in the McCarthy campaign they might not have  
had moneys to do this. In our campaign that was not  
part of the discussion; The discussion was to get  
out the vote. And however you had to do it, you  
did it. And, well, in Nebraska the same thing was  
true. The morning of ~~election. . . .~~ of primary  
day, sitting out in front of my headquarters at seven  
a.m. was twenty taxicabs with meters and drivers who

knew the black community. ~~And~~ those guys were available to take my campaign workers to the ~~campaign~~.  
Excuse me, to election polling places, to take my people around who were going to do canvassing, to take my ~~pullers~~<sup>pollers</sup> around, baby sitters around, whatever the case was. So we always had that available. On ~~the elec.~~ On the primary day, whatever I needed was available to me, and they knew I was doing the job, and I'd get. always get a couple of calls from Larry O'Brien. "How is it going?" And Larry O'Brien if I said to him, "They told me they were going to have ten cars and I only see two," a half hour later there'd be another ten cars sitting out in front of the place. I don't know how they did it, where they got them from. I know how they did it, but the point is that they got it when I needed it on election day, and the same thing was true in Oregon. In Oregon, for the people that we got out, and for how we got it out, and still having to work around Edith Green's people who were difficult to work with, I had total cooperation in terms of the Kennedy people.

GREENE: <sup>Were</sup> ~~Was~~ Edith Green and her people interested in the minority

communities or did they chose<sup>o</sup> more or less to leave  
that to you?

GRAVES: Oh, I think Edith Green was interested in the minority community. Edith Green was like a. . . . ~~She was like the. . . .~~ What do we call it? The hall of fame, we call it "the-hall-of-fame" types. They were completely above that. You know, she just assumed. . . . As far as Edith Green is concerned, ~~that~~ this young girl that I can't think of her name, who she had sent out into the black community, she probably really in her mind thought that this girl was doing the job that she had sent her out there to do <sup>- she</sup> or just thought she'd sent her out there to do. She was so far removed from it in general; she just was interested when the Senator came to town that she would, you know, ~~that~~ ~~she would~~ be the person that was courted, and the person that was taken around, and the person he was going to be seen with, ~~and, you know,~~ I mean, he was going to campaign with her; That was her interest.

91 In terms of actually, ~~the~~ you know, coming down to the basics of the thing, and did it happen, and how did it happen, and who's doing it, and is it being very

organized, she was removed, totally removed from that. I'm sure that she thinks that this girl, to this day, maybe got it done as far as Oregon was concerned. And <sup>as</sup> I think back on her, I don't know how much input she made into. . . . Well, if she'd <sup>had</sup> ~~have~~ made any real input, maybe he'd have won, but I mean, you know, she probably thinks she was doing quite a job.

GREENE: Did you have the feeling going into primary day that it was pretty much lost? <sup>and</sup> did everybody share that opinion, or did you think there was still time ~~not time, but~~ that it was still possible?

GRAVES: No, I think there were a number of persons who thought we were in tough shape as far as Oregon was concerned. ~~and~~ I was convinced that unless something unforeseen happened the night before election night, I was convinced that we. . . . By the time I got in there, I had a feeling that it wasn't going well, and by about three days prior to primary day, over that weekend, I was convinced that we were going to win it in the black community, but as far as the ~~cam.~~ the election itself was concerned, I thought we were in

very bad shape, and I had . . . I based it almost totally--and this is not an indictment or anything-- but I based it a lot on this kid, Dave Borden. I could. . . . Dave Borden was not the person that you have taking the total. . . . When you take a look at the total population of Oregon and you realize how many people live in Portland, Oregon, which is the largest city, and you say to yourself that you've got a Dave Borden organizing that total community . . .

[ Interruption ]

GREENE: I had heard from, I think it was from Walter Sheridan, that the original plan in California, [ Jesse M. ] Unruh's plan, was to organize the black community in a fairly conventional way with precinct workers and the usual thing, but to do it strictly by mail, by mail, ~~m-a-i-l~~. Did you hear about this? What was your opinion on that?

GRAVES: Yeah. The operation was going to be run by Williard Murray and he was going to be working out of the southern California headquarters. Williard Murray was a guy who worked for [ Samuel W. ] Yorty, who was a black aid<sup>e</sup> to Yorty, a guy that was going to make a

pretty good dollar out of the campaign, and, you know, I don't argue about that because I think if white guys can steal in the campaigns. . . . Let's strike that part completely. If white guys can do well in terms of campaigns, running them and financially, and who others are able to help<sup>be</sup> financially because of the moneys they've had available to them, then I don't have any problem with Williard Murray being in that position to be able to hire people or fire people, whatever the case is. <sup>4</sup> What I do have a problem with, and which I had a problem with, was that Williard Murray was not the guy, and the system they were talking about was not a system that was really going to get out the vote. There was no guarantee that that was, in fact, going to get out the vote. <sup>9</sup> What they were doing was sending out mailing pieces to certain persons who, in fact, would become ~~who~~ who would send back a card and say, "Yes, I will be the captain on my block." And then based on having that name. . . . They sent out, let's say, I think <sup>to</sup> all the registered Democrats asking them to be captains on their blocks, and whoever sent them back, who seemed to make

the most sense, who agreed to be a captain on their block, that person would be sent the wealth of material, doorknob hangers and so forth, for election day, and it was that person's responsibility to go around and knock on doors and ask persons, "Have you voted yet? and if you haven't voted, when are you going to vote? and will you go out and vote?" Now there were so many fallacies in a system like that, and there were so many unknowns in it, that it just said it couldn't work; It was an unreal system. And Walter Sheridan said that was the system. That was the system until Larry O'Brien got there and looked at that, and got on the telephone and called me long distance in Oregon, and told me that Oregon was already lost, to come on out to California and pull it back together, because you had three or four different situations which were leading down the path toward disaster. One was that the black elected officials were saying that Kennedy had not, in fact, dealt with them. That was Merv, Senator Dymally, which you've talked about already. And they had this program which was not a good program in terms of what you could do to get out the black vote.

~~It did.~~ You know, it didn't identify specifics. It didn't say who it was that was going to be on the phones looking at, or in campaign headquarters in these local communities saying, "We don't have something going on here. Let's get something happening." ~~San Diego,~~ I went down to San Diego, and granted that was not Williard Murray's area, but there was absolutely nothing going on in San Diego, California, before we got people down there. And then you go in Pomona <sup>or</sup> Compton, California, ~~Compton,~~ which is just a suburb of Los Angeles County, and there was literally nothing going on in these areas. ~~You know,~~ there was no way of identifying who your people were going to be because this mailing system only said that on election day, supposedly, this person will emerge -- You know, it's like some huge underground -- and he'll go into these communities and make these other people come out, that he was going to be the catalyst that was going to make it happen. And no way of knowing who these people were that you were talking about, so, it was an un-  
The whole thing was unreal. We could probably spend a couple of hours talking about Oregon and I think <sup>it would</sup> of

~~the~~ . . . I want to try and narrow it down a little  
by just getting to some specifics. I came in. The  
first thing we did the first evening upon arriving  
was to meet with the black officials who were supposedly  
dissatisfied, find out where <sup>their</sup> the guys <sup>were.</sup> I met  
with their A.A.s [Administrative Assistants], called  
Larry O'Brien, told him the problem and then had  
Larry agree <sup>1</sup> who was coming in that night <sup>1</sup> to meet  
with them at the Ambassador Hotel for breakfast. <sup>I</sup> Had  
Senator Dymally, Bill Greene, <sup>5</sup> and just the two of them  
came. Supposedly, they were representing the dissatis-  
fied element. <sup>5</sup> And the dissatisfied element was, in  
fact. . . . <sup>A</sup> What we said was, "Okay, now what does it  
take in order to get the dissatisfied element satis-  
fied?" and <sup>5</sup> we worked it out that there were certain  
moneys that <sup>had to be</sup> they put into the campaign in terms of  
the people that <sup>5</sup> they were going to be <sup>paying</sup> paid within their  
campaign headquarters, and I forget the amount of moneys  
that were involved; There were several thousands of  
dollars, which we worked out. They told us what they  
thought the problem was, and <sup>5</sup> the problem was, you know,  
it was a matter of pride, it was a matter of respect,

and it was a matter of dollars and cents, <sup>SA</sup> and the  
dollars and cents part of it, Larry O'Brien told  
me to go get it worked out and ~~let me know~~ . . .  
let him know what it was; which we did, and I took  
a lot of the soft dollars out. They had a lot of  
soft dollars built into their campaign budget, in  
terms of what they thought they had to do in the  
black community, which we picked up. In other  
words, what I'm saying is whereas they said that  
maybe they were going to need five thousand dollars  
for telephones for ten days, I would say to them,  
"Okay, we'll put in the phones for you. Let's take  
that ten thousand dollars or that five thousand  
dollars out of your budget." <sup>A</sup> Now, that didn't  
make them happy, because we were, in fact, incurring  
the expenses of the phones, and it didn't leave any  
slush fund over. In other words, it's easy to say,  
"I'm going to spend five for phones," and actually spend  
three. And when I say, "I'm going to do it for  
you, and I'm going to give you all the phones that  
you said you wanted," I say to you, "How many phones  
does this represent?" You say, "Forty." I say, "Okay,

you got them. Forty phones. I'll pay for them." Then, you know, that's got to make you unhappy, because now it's taking some of your initiative away. Well, it's not initiative; it's taking some of your. . . . You know, you don't have the power any more. Right. You don't have the leeway any more. So that didn't make. . . . They couldn't argue with that, because then it would appear that you know, we were talking about other things, we were talking about things we were concerned about other than just winning the local, winning the. Excuse me; This is dragging terribly. But winning the primary for the Senator. Then, the third thing we did was to start lining up and getting all the people who were VIP types into California to do the job that we could, because McCarthy really was. . . . You know, that was McCarthy country. And McCarthy was going to do very well, and so the black people I was getting there, Senator Leroy Johnson and John Lewis and tried to get Julian Horace Julian Bond, and his wife just refused to let him come out to California. But we had enough people like that,

we were sending them into synagogues, not into the black community. Charles Evers was out there. And we sent those guys in on Friday nights into synagogues, because those are where the McCarthy votes were; they weren't in the black community. We thought we had the black community. I'd get a lot on the texts that we used for radio spots when we had these problems of law and order spots. We pulled those off and we put on decent spots and spots that really had some appeal and were relevant to what it was all about in the black community. I had quite a bit to do with trying to square away the whole problem of the Martin Luther King wire-tapping issue. Had a lot. . . . And then just in general playing fireman for any number of problems that would come up. Steve Smith and Larry would just call me up and say, you know, "We've got a problem of a storefront where McCarthy's got twenty volunteers who are giving out materials all over the black community. Do you think we can do something to offset it?" And we would. I won't get into the specifics of how we'd offset that, but we could, because for the most part his people would be white people who were

doing it, and we could some way find a way to balance that a bit or turn it off.

GREENE: Were there still people in California who were objecting to you doing things in your <sup>own</sup> way, who were kind of standing between you and what you wanted to do?

GRAVES: Oh yeah, Walter Sheridan was a part of ~~that mail~~ that mailing operation. He was a part of that thing. But Larry O'Brien came in and just said, "Okay, let's put together this thing in a way <sup>that's</sup> it's going to win" and my operation, ~~He~~ He just said, "Don't bother to tell Walter Sheridan anything about what you're doing. Just go ahead and put it together, <sup>be</sup> because you're doing it with me. I'm running this campaign."

GREENE: Was anyone else like that?

GRAVES: Bruno was out in Cal<sup>ifornia</sup>. ~~Bruno~~ Bruno didn't get directly involved into that part of it. ~~He wasn't~~. He wasn't heavy enough to get into the thing of being able to turn off what happened in the black community. He knew at that point that he couldn't, you know, screw around with what it was that I was doing, but he ~~He~~ He was always just a thorn in the side. ~~If I said, you know, I went in a sense~~. You know,

~~I always had. . . .~~ If there was something that had to be accomplished vis-a-vis Bruno, he always threw a monkey wrench into the thing to kind of screw things up. And there was no way of getting around<sup>it</sup>. It wasn't a matter that. . . . You couldn't go to Larry O'Brien and say, "Bruno's a pain in the ass." Scratch that part, ~~but~~ by the time he did that, not only would it have been juvenile, but it wouldn't have accomplished anything, ~~because~~ because I could have just waited the thing out, ~~and~~ it would have eventually worked itself out. ~~The people. . . .~~ Sheridan knew that I had another operation going on, and he was aware that I had other guys in. ~~And~~ Sheridan finally got the message that he really should have been coordinating, and had to coordinate what it was he was doing, through me, because that was going to be really the effort ~~on~~<sup>or</sup> the push on election day, and not what was going to be happening through Murray, ~~because~~ we had eighteen surrounding communities, ~~areas~~ covered areas that you could identify in Los Angeles County, ~~covered~~ by guys for the most part out of New York city, black, and guys who I knew could get it done.

GREENE: How much contact did you have with Unruh's people in Los Angeles, Art Seltzer and guys like that? Were they . . .

GRAVES: They recogni... <sup>S</sup> Yeah, they finally realized, <sup>that</sup> that they knew that that mail operation was not going to work the way it was supposed to. <sup>S</sup> And Steve, when he got it all calmed down and squared away, ~~and Steve~~ said, "Just try not to aggravate them too much and go ahead and do your thing." And I just went in. <sup>[Steven E.]</sup> And finally Art Seltzer and Steve Smith ~~who~~... ~~Steve Smith east, Right,~~ <sup>^</sup> West, rather. ~~Right,~~ <sup>^</sup> Sat down and calmly accepted the fact that I had another operation going, <sup>get</sup> and as long as I didn't <sup>^</sup> Williard Murray all upset they were willing to let it go the way it was going, <sup>be</sup> because Larry O'Brien said, "I assume that what it is you're talking about is winning." ~~And he said...~~ <sup>S</sup> they said, "Yeah," <sup>^</sup> And he said, "Fine. Then we need to have this <sup>other</sup> operation. We're going to have it going on. ~~We're not going to...~~ <sup>S</sup> We don't have to get anybody's feathers ruffled at this point. Let Williard Murray keep doing his thing, <sup>be</sup> because it probably won't hurt. It's probably going to

do well, but we're going to do this other thing."  
And we went ahead and did it. So those guys. . . .  
~~You know, and~~<sup>91</sup> then it reached the point that not only  
did I come in and overcome the thing of them having  
another operation and putting my thing together,  
but it actually reached the point that Steve Smith  
~~would call me up. . . .~~ Both Steve Smiths would call  
me up and ask me to come down and, "Let's talk about  
it." ~~And~~<sup>92</sup> we'd go from talking about how we were going  
to react to the Martin Luther King thing to how we  
were going to react to another specific situation  
that might have come up in the black community. So,  
you know, in a very short period of time they got  
the message that I was dealing with it at a different  
level. <sup>93</sup> And, of course, I had a Williard Murray. Williard  
Murray resented the fact that I was another black  
guy coming in, which I can understand, ~~and,~~<sup>94</sup> you know,  
~~and~~<sup>95</sup> I think he is a technician of sorts. ~~There is. . . .~~  
He is a bright guy, and he does some things that are  
good things, so I don't think it was all bad on his  
account either.

GREENE: What kind of problems did it present having Williard

Murray from Yorty's office involved in the Kennedy campaign when Yorty was such an antagonist towards the Kennedys ?

GRAVES: I never got any real feedback or flack that that was such a huge problem. The Senator <sup>^</sup> Senator Dymally <sup>^</sup> and those guys who made the big beef to the newspapers about the fact that Kennedy was not dealing with the right people, they didn't like Murray at all, but those guys were the <sup>pols</sup> powers, those were the professional politicians. In terms of people within the organization being upset about the fact that Williard Murray was a Yorty guy, Williard Murray supposedly had taken a leave of absence from the Yorty operation, had told Yorty he was going to do it, <sup>had</sup> and gone with Yorty's blessings, and he was there. <sup>^</sup> And when I got there, I mean, it was a totally acceptable thing that he was doing what he had to do. Whether or not, in fact, it was something which was going to be relevant, meaningful, and accomplish anything, was something else again. Those are two separate things we're talking about. But whether or not there was a problem of his being there, I don't think that was a huge problem at all.

[Stephen E.]

GREENE: Did you deal with Steve Smith east directly, or  
through Larry O'Brien? How helpful was Smith?

GRAVES: Well, I'd kind of. . . . I guess we did it kind of  
through the back door with Steve Smith west, in  
that he was supposedly responsible for all the moneys  
that were going to be spent, so when ~~he~~<sup>we</sup> started getting  
into spending five thousand here and ten thousand  
there above what was originally budgeted, then Larry  
O'Brien had to call him up and say to him, "Look,  
we're going to have a little side operation going  
on, you know, and I want you to pick it up and make  
it happen." Because they were writing the checks and  
paying the moneys and, you know, and Steve Smith east  
was there with him. And so there was no way of,  
you know, and the kind of moneys I was spending, it was  
unavoidable, that they had to know that I was there  
and to either to like the idea or dislike it, or you  
know, shoot it down or let it live, and they just  
decided to live with it, because O'Brien spoke to them  
and said, "Look, you got, you know, this is what we  
got to do."

GREENE: Did you spend any time in northern California or

mostly in the L.A. area?

GRAVES: No, I went up to San Francisco, but then you had. . . .

I was up in San Francisco. I met with Assemblyman [Willie L., Jr.] Brown, <sup>and</sup> the guy who publishes the Oakland Post. I can't think of his name now, Black guy. ~~And, you know, met with. . . .~~ took a look at the situation with the Panthers out there in Oakland and ~~the. . . .~~ And then the big college up there <sup>is</sup> Berkeley, isn't it? Yeah. Went over to the campus and took a look at that and recognized that we weren't going to get very much out of trying to deal with the student union, black student union at Berkeley, because that's where the real militants are. Those guys out there they <sup>play</sup> their game of militancy with a real. . . . with real vigor, <sup>and</sup> you're talking about a different thing when you're talking about the black student union in Omaha, Nebraska, as opposed to out there. <sup>It</sup> It turned out that Los Angeles County was so huge, and the problems so great, that when I got back out to California for the final push in California I recognized that I was not going

to be able to be two places at once, and I'd  
sent. . . . I sent Gene Simpson down, who was a  
press guy working with me in the campaign. I sent  
him over to San Francisco to take a look at things.  
But I even was. . . . I was even involved in things  
like having black reporters brought in as Kennedy's  
guests so that the black press could be covered,  
because the black press supposedly could not afford  
to have guys out on the West coast, and Kennedy wanted  
to have black guys covering what went on. And I  
thought. . . . It was my judgment to get those  
guys out there and I got it approved by Larry  
O'Brien. "Let's get these guys out here, so they  
can write about what's going on, so when we come  
back East for the New York primary, the sensitive  
thing being, if the Amsterdam News covers by a staff  
writer who we brought out, that Kennedy's doing well  
and he's doing all these things in the black com-  
munity, it's got to be a plus for us statewide  
in the black community when we came back to. . . .  
when we come back to New York."

GREENE: Did you find the situation in northern California any different than in L.A.? Was it any . . .

GRAVES: Yeah, I think it was much more organized than . . .

GREENE: Oh, more organized?

GRAVES: Yeah. It didn't have all the problems and all the nonsense going on. You know, there wasn't as many names that were yet to be recognized and people yet to be satisfied. They kind of got it together rather quickly, and had it off and running, and didn't have all of the thing of this guy being angry because this guy wasn't in charge and somebody else being angry about something else. They really did have. . . . See, in. . . . They had Dymally wanting to run all of Los Angeles County and Yvonne Brathwaite and the other people wanting to run Los Angeles, the city of Los Angeles itself, and then working it out so that they let Assemblyman Brown run the northern California as far as San Francisco and the Bay area is concerned. Now, another thing is you had. . . . I tried to stay on top of the total thing, but then, again, you get into

the whole thing, by this time, coming back again to guys like John Siegenthaler being in San Francisco, and wanting to run San Francisco themselves, and supposedly being the expert, the white expert, as far as the black community in San Francisco is concerned, and being the guy that was making it happen there. It was just too much to envision trying to run the whole thing myself. And I. There would have been no problem of my doing it, except that I got there with only about seven days left to go in the campaign. I got there having to put out a dozen different fires in Los Angeles County. There was just not enough time to go over to San Francisco and start making it happen there. So I did send Gene Simpson down to try and take a look at what was going on, and I did talk to John Siegenthaler, but for the most part. Not for the most part; Everything I did, you know, physically where I was, was in Los Angeles County.

GREENE: Did you find the black leaders that you were dealing with in Los Angeles any different in terms of their

motivation than you'd found those in Indiana? Were they also out to a large extent for themselves? Was there more idealism and more thinking about their own people?

GRAVES: No, I think it was much more obvious in Los Angeles. You<sup>re</sup> were dealing with a much more professional breed of politician in the black community than you were in other places. I mean, in Los Angeles those guys were definitely. . . . They were more sophisticated. It wasn't a matter <sup>of</sup> they were any different than the white politician; <sup>^</sup> They were looking out for themselves. And that's what, ~~you know, that's~~ ~~what~~ politics is all about in terms of how it's accomplished. I'm not saying I agree with that's ~~what~~ why it should be all about, but that's where we are.

GREENE: Did you ever get complaints on the fact that you were black when you'd go into the black community?<sup>?</sup> I had heard, I can no longer even remember where, that some black groups objected to a black person because they felt <sup>^</sup> he already knows our problems. <sub>=</sub>

We want to speak to somebody who isn't yet familiar with them." Did you ever get that kind of complaint?

GRAVES: Yeah, I got that, but, ~~you know,~~ and with the advent of the black revolution, ~~you know,~~ probably being two years old ~~I could--~~ at that time being two years ~~old, I mean--~~ I was able to ride that out by being able to say, "Look, if you want me to go back and find <sup>a</sup> Larry O'Brien so you can say you're talking to somebody white--" this is what I used to say to the black groups-- "I don't have any problem with that. I'll go back and get him." I said, "But that's a bit naive." I said, "You know, and I think we all have been past... been over that... down that road and over that before, and I thought what we're interested in is something which is right for us." I said, "I have enough clout to go back and get a Larry O'Brien to sit right here, and if you want me to produce the Senator, I'll do that, but I don't think that's necessary, and I don't think this is that kind of group." I said, "But if it is, you know, or you've got a problem of dealing

with me, fine, let me go back and get somebody that's important, "I said, ~~or~~ or that you think is important in the white community for the Senator. You know, because what I'm concerned with is winning the campaign for him, and if winning it for him means that I <sup>ve</sup> got to bring a white guy in that you can talk to, since you feel, ~~you know,~~ that you're dealing with the power structure, fine."

9 There's no doubt in my mind that there's justification for how they felt, because if they looked around they say, "I don't see any black guys getting off the airplane with the Senator." The Senator had nobody other than Rafer Johnson, when he was available, traveling on the plane with him. ~~And that. . . . It was only. . . .~~ They only put Rafer Johnson on that plane, and started doing it on a regular basis, after I screamed and hollered about the fact that he couldn't have an all white campaign staff. I mean they didn't even have a least stewardess. I mean, at <sup>least</sup> ~~the Humphrey. . . .~~ <sup>in</sup> '64 Humphrey went out and at least had a black stewardess.

9 They didn't have a black advance man traveling with them, a black press ~~man~~ Well, I've said this already, but I just want to emphasize so that ~~it goes . . .~~ It's somewhere historically written that the ~~person~~. The persons who should have been aware and conscious of and wanting to make it a really integrated situation, as far as that campaign was concerned and as far as the Senator's image was concerned, were completely oblivious of the need for this. So there is some justification for. . . . ~~And I feel . . .~~ From time to time when I go into a situation, I go to talk to some company, and they turn me over to the black guy to talk to. I know that's not the guy that's got the clout, because I know the image of that company, and I know the policies of that company, and it tells me that that black guy is not heavy enough for what it is that I'm talking about. So I can readily understand when I walk in and I say, "I'm Kennedy's guy," that people are going to have a problem with that. In fact, I think that I was recognized in

these primaries, by any number of circumstances which brought it to be, to be much more of a heavy-weight than I personally thought I was, or that I think the Senator recognized me to be in terms of his picking up the phone, and saying, "Let's check with Graves about this," because I think we've already said that when he had a problem in the black community he'd say, "Let's check with Burke Marshall first," because that was his safe guy. But I think that because of Kennedy's image and because of the press job that they did, my image was blown much more out of proportion to what it was. . . . what it was than and what it really was. And as I look back on that now, I don't have any problem saying that, because I think it has to be said, as much as I'd like to be able to say that I was the heaviest thing that ever happened and in that Kennedy campaign that, you know, Kennedy didn't move unless he checked with me when it came to the black community. I think that if we're going to be accurate so that somewhere in history it'll be written that in 1968 when Robert Kennedy, who

understood and had a ~~apathy~~ <sup>S</sup> sense of empathy  
that  
for the black community, was running because he was  
so removed from it, we did not have this image that  
everyone keeps saying we had. It was not there.  
And, you know, <sup>S</sup> and I think it's important you know  
that, because as I see this country going, I think  
it's important <sup>to</sup> you know that because as I see this  
country going, I think it's important to know that  
even then, when we say or we make claims that we  
had it all worked out and blacks and whites were  
singing and happy together, it was nonsense. <sup>S</sup> And  
it's important because I think that as this country  
polarizes in a black and a white situation that  
we're pointing towards a lot of unpleasant days  
down the road across this country, and it may be  
important that in history <sup>S</sup> that when somebody says,  
"Well, <sup>in</sup> when Kennedy's thing, it was different," <sup>S</sup> It  
wasn't really any different. It was different as  
far <sup>as</sup> <sup>S</sup> Kennedy himself was concerned, but in  
terms of the people surrounding him it wasn't any  
different at all.

GREENE: Did you have anything to do with [James] Jim Brown's group, Manpower and I can't remember the second part of it? <sup>Manpower and Development or something.</sup>

GRAVES: Yeah, there's a guy by the name of Booker Griffins who ran Jim Brown's operation and I <sup>had</sup> have young Jay Cooper, who was president of Black Law Students Association for the country, working with Booker Griffins. Booker was Jim Brown's executive director for his Black Economic Development Union. That's what it is. <sup>is called.</sup> That's the name of the operation out there. And they had things like . . . "New Breed" was the name of his operation. "New Breed" was the name of a manufacturing operation he had and his total operation was called the Black Economic Development Union out there. And <sup>basically,</sup> what they did was send people out to rallies and have Kennedy girls and they were rally-type, you know, crowd. . . . It was like, you know, they were part of the side show. I mean, you know that's what it amounted to. <sup>I mean</sup> this is not an indictment

of Jim Brown or his operation. Jim Brown probably was off making a movie, making 100 Rifles in Mexico or wherever it was he was doing it, or <sup>in</sup> Europe, wherever it was, with Raguel Welch, so he wasn't aware of what was going on. <sup>91</sup> But their relevance to the campaign was nothing more than how much they were involved. <sup>e</sup> And in whenever they, you know, <sup>S S</sup> they had a Kennedy rally or something, <sup>well,</sup> where they were there or a Kennedy dance or something. <sup>91</sup> And I mean if all. . . . I could have stayed up night and day and not have attended all the cocktail parties, coffee klatches, and other kind of festive activity they had in the name of the Senator and for the Senator that he attended and that they asked me to come to, if I'd <sup>S</sup> have just had the time. But it was much more important to organize that campaign, <sup>S</sup> and I don't remember leaving that hotel room too often. When I went out of that hotel it was just to get a. . . . you know, <sup>S</sup> just to see what the outside world was like.

GREENE: And mainly, when you were holed up in the hotel, you were making phone calls and sending telegrams, <sup>?</sup> is that the kind of thing <sup>?</sup> you did?

GRAVES: Yeah. Right, right. Exactly. I spent all day and night on the phone organizing ministers, organizing this group, organizing that group, speaking to various people trying to iron out<sup>t</sup> problems, getting moneys to the people who needed it, solving the problems of ~~outlining~~<sup>outlying</sup> communities who thought they were kind of removed from the campaign ~~and~~<sup><</sup> by them, you know, getting a personal call from me to say I was Kennedy's guy.

9 There's where I think that we did a good job of building image. That's where I went from being a guy who was just a staff assistant <sup>to</sup> being Kennedy's guy on the scene, which I think was helpful for him. ~~And~~<sup><</sup> in that instance I did come out well in terms of being a heavy-weight, if in fact, that's what we're trying to project. Whether or not, in fact, that was true is something else again. It was <sup>in fact</sup> true as far as Larry O'Brien is concerned. Had we gone all the way the route to November I think that I probably would have had the total responsibility for the entire country as far as the black community is concerned. I think Larry O'Brien was that satisfied with what had happened. ~~And~~<sup><</sup> it speaks for the fact that as soon as Kennedy. . . .

As soon as the Kennedy thing was over and everybody had a chance to calm down again and Larry went off to Humphrey, he was right on the phone to me and had me doing it. I organized the get-out-the-vote effort for Humphrey in the black community across the country for O'Brien, and that was in the last two weeks. So it says something, anyway. I'm not sure exactly what it says. And when you go and sit down and add all of this up, Roberta, you've probably <sup>have</sup> forgotten it. Probably it wasn't nearly as important you think it is. But maybe it's important, or should be important.

GREENE: On this telephone canvassing action that you were doing, were you working with Byron Martin?

GRAVES: Byron Martin or Baron Martin?

GREENE: By. . . Maybe I'm saying it wrong.

GRAVES: Baron Martin.

GREENE: Baron Martin. Oh, I thought. . . . Byron.

GRAVES: B-A-R-R-O-N. Baron Martin, out of Boston.

GREENE: Baron Martin, right. Was he working for you on that?

GRAVES: In. . . .

GREENE: The hotels and doing the calling and all that.

GRAVES: Yeah, Baron was great. Yeah. Great. Great guy.

Bright, sharp. You give him a job to do, it's done. Baron is absolutely great. It's too bad you don't have time at least to call Baron, you know.

GREENE: Well, you know, I always make a note of anybody that you suggest that you think would be helpful, and then when we get the opportunity to expand we, you know, very possibly could include something like that. [ Interruption ]

GRAVES: I was so disenchanted when the campaign was over, although I'd finally, you know, I'd probably cut myself out a real notch in the thing by the good grace of Larry O'Brien and my own ability to accomplish what had to be accomplished. I was so dissatisfied in terms of having to fight to do what I did in terms of the black community and <sup>having</sup> have to live through all the nonsense, that although I recognized that politics is a tough game and it takes a tough guy to play, I said to myself that in the event that it happened again, meaning 1972 that [ Edward M. ] Ted Kennedy <sup>were</sup> would off and running, that I would have to take a real hard look at whether I wanted to get into it, unless I had some definite understanding with whoever it was

that was running that campaign, hopefully it would  
have been Larry O'Brien, that if I'm going to do it,  
then I'm going to do it, and when I say, "Get that guy  
out," that guy's got to be out, because if a white guy  
said that about a black guy in a white community,  
that guy would be on the next plane going somewhere  
other than staying right there, and if he can make that  
judgment as far as a white community is concerned, then  
certainly a black guy who's going to have the respon-  
sibility of the kind that I'm talking about has got  
to be able to make that judgment as far as the black  
community is concerned, or what are we talking about?  
'cause I know you're not going to give me that kind of  
responsibility in the white community, and if you're not  
going to give it to me in the black, then what are  
we talking about?

GREENE: All right. How much complaining did you hear  
among the other people on the campaign about overlapping  
responsibilities? Did you ever hear of people beefing  
because they were told to do something and when they  
got there to do it they found five other guys <sup>doing it</sup>?

GRAVES: No. I think the one thing I found out a long time before

that campaign ever got started was that the Kennedy way of doing things is to let six people do it and let each one<sup>of</sup>/them think that they're doing it, you know, and they're solely responsible. Okay. <sup>??</sup> The only problem was in the black community <sup>is</sup> there was only a certain. . . . You know, the market is a limited market, ~~and then~~ <sup>you</sup> pick out who it is that runs the market, and there's only so many guys can go talk to him, and so, therefore, it wasn't a matter that you could. . . . ~~You know,~~ <sup>you</sup> you couldn't have Sheridan coming and talking to Dymally in the morning and Graves coming and talking to him at lunch and Manfred <sup>h n</sup> Orestein coming talking to him in the afternoon. It's got to be like <sup>||</sup> who's going to do the talking, <sup>??</sup> otherwise you just blow the whole thing out of order. One guy's promising the guy five thousand dollars, the next guy's promising him no dollars and the next guy's telling him he's got carte blanche. Well, you've got to get a bit more organized. So, that's the difference. And so you had to know who you were talking to.

GREENE: All right. Now, when you were doing all this telephoning

and you said you were dealing with ministers and on this level, community organizers, did you make the judgments yourself as far as who would get money, how it would be used, how much it would be? Were these all your judgments, or in each case did you make a vague promise which had to be confirmed elsewhere?

GRAVES: No. Once I worked out what I thought was an acceptable budget. . . . Well, let's go back to the black officials that called the press conference just prior. . . . right at the end of their Oregon primary <sup>and</sup> said that Kennedy was not dealing with the black community.

9. When they brought their budget to me I worked out what I thought was realistic, based on what they were asking for. <sup>I</sup> took out the soft dollars, or limited the soft dollars, left the hard dollars. . . . I paid the hard dollars. <sup>That's what it was</sup> and left the soft dollars, and the hard dollars being like phones. I paid for them. "cars. <sup>I'll</sup> get you the cars." Okay? "You need printing materials, <sup>?</sup> tell me what has to be printed, bring me the materials, and I'll have it printed for you." Took a lot of the initiative away from them, ~~you know~~, but it also saved us a lot of dollars. <sup>And</sup> I made those

judgments. I went to Larry O'Brien ~~gave it to~~.  
Usually I gave it to Ira Kapenstein, he gave it to  
Larry O'Brien, Larry O'Brien said, "Fine, tell Steve  
this is what's going to happen," and it was done.

As far as the other budgets were concerned, for the  
most part, I just set them up and said, "This is what  
I think we have to do," and we did it. Hell, I mean,  
I spent twelve hundred dollars in the whole thing in  
Nebraska, I spent twelve hundred dollars. So, I mean,  
you know, when you talk about ~~I mean~~ and we won a  
whole community with twelve hundred dollars. Larry  
O'Brien assumed that I was going to spend twenty  
thousand dollars. Told me that, ~~I~~ Thought I'd spend  
twenty thousand, minimum. I spent twelve hundred. So  
when you come with that kind of credentials he doesn't  
bother to quibble about <sup>it</sup>, you know.

GREENE: ~~Did you have~~ <sup>?</sup> Were you involved at all in those  
meetings that Robert Kennedy had with the black  
leaders? I understand there was one that was criti-  
cized . . .

GRAVES: No, I wasn't there at that one. Yeah, I know about  
that one. But that was typical of the Kennedy kind

of operation. And they weren't treated that way because they were black; people were just treated like that in a Kennedy operation. They'd try to squeeze, you know, a thirty-hour day into eighteen hours, and somebody's got to get their feelings hurt, and that was a real mistake. It was a very poor judgment, lacking in judgment completely to have a group like that together. Those are super names. To have a group like that sitting around for breakfast, waiting an hour and then come down and spend fifteen minutes and get up and walk out is not the answer, because those guys are too sensitive, and, you know, and what happened is exactly what you would expect to happen. They got annoyed, and they went out, and they called a press conference about it. He's lucky he came out as easy as he did.

GREENE: You weren't present at the next meeting then to kind of console them?

GRAVES: Yeah, I was. I helped put that meeting together. We had that meeting in the Ambassador Hotel and we brought them all together. We brought guys like as far to the left as Ron Karenga into that meeting. Brought in the

guy who was head of the Coalition, the Black Coalition out there in Los Angeles County. <sup>I</sup> Forget his name now; I have it written down in my notes. I just can't think of it. And then, of course, Senator Dymally came; Senator Dymally's fiancée; Bill Greene. I guess, in the room, about thirty people, Militants with dasheikis and the sunglasses, and the, you know, movie star types, and the whole thing when Kennedy came in. <sup>29</sup> And Walter Sheridan, of course, came to that meeting, was again trying to push himself as being the guy who really understood what it was all about, after I had put this meeting together. And he still wanted to brief Kennedy on the side, and then I remember that meeting, we had the meeting and they said, "We don't have any problem." Kennedy got up to leave, and he turned, and he said, "I'm going to have Mr. Sheri. . . ." and then he realized what he was saying, because they had just got through complaining about the fact they didn't like the way it was going, and he said, "Well, Mr. Graves, you know, will be in touch with you, and Mr. Sheridan will be working with him." But had Kennedy done what he was normally used to doing or

saying he would definitely have said, "I'm going to have Walter Sheridan work with you." And that would have like had them off doing cartwheels right out of that hotel suite all over again. <sup>H</sup> So, I mean, that's the kind of thing you were dealing with. I mean, Sheridan should not have been there. It should not even have been on his mind that Sheridan was going to do it, because Sheridan. . . . I mean, you tell me about Sheridan. . . . [ Interruption ]

GREENE: What about this meeting that we were talking about with the black, more or less, militants in the hotel?

GRAVES: Who came back, you mean, after the dissatisfaction? . . .

GREENE: Yeah, right, after the first meeting. How satisfied were they after the next one?

GRAVES: Kennedy said, "I agree with you that I've got to, you know, I've got to make time and I've got to do what's right, and, you know, and what <sup>do</sup> I have to do?" In fact, <sup>as</sup> downstairs you had a big rally being hosted by such names--this was in the Ambassador Hotel, being hosted by such names as--it was the last big indoor thing he was going to have, or last big rally he was going to have, like a cocktail party--being hosted by

Shirley MacLaine <sup>and</sup> Shelley Winters, ~~and he said--I'm~~  
~~sorry--~~ he said he was only going to sit. . . . Well,  
we agreed that this meeting was going to last about  
fifteen or twenty minutes and Sheridan was telling  
<sup>him</sup> them, "Well, you know, do it for fifteen or twenty min-  
utes, <sup>then</sup> and I'll try and do it." And I just pulled ~~Walker~~ <sup>Kennedy</sup>  
aside and said, "Look, there's a couple things wrong  
with this. One is that Sheridan's telling you what  
he's going to try and do, and the second is you can't  
do it for fifteen or twenty minutes, <sup>be</sup> because that's why  
you <sup>ve</sup> got to have this meeting, <sup>be</sup> because you're trying to  
do it for fifteen or twenty minutes." <sup>A</sup> So he went  
in, <sup>and</sup> they gave him hell about <sup>you know,</sup> the time that he walked  
out on them and all that, and he said, "Well, okay,  
I'm here now. I'm willing to sit." He ~~said,~~ "And  
if I've got to sit here. . . ." He said, "Realistically,  
I've got five thousand people waiting downstairs," ~~he said,~~  
"but if it's important enough, I'll sit." And he sat  
there for <sup>fifty</sup> fifteen minutes and, ~~you know,~~ and they went  
through the whole thing, and he said, "Okay," ~~he said,~~  
"the problems we have," ~~he said,~~ "You know, we're going  
to try and get them resolved." And I told you the part

about Graves and Sheridan and clearing that up quick.

Q And then he said, "I'll meet with you again. You tell me the time where, and I'll come the day after election, wherever it is that I have to come the day after the California primary." He said, "I was supposed to go with my family, but I'll come to you." He said, "Mr. Graves will set that meeting up," He said, "And I'll come and meet with you." And he said, "I'll come back from Malibu or wherever it has to be and I'll come meet with you." He said, "I'm going to be up at Malibu. I'll come down to wherever you pick for the meeting and we'll have it." He said, "And I want to do it." And he committed himself to that and I went off to start talking to the guys, you know, along with getting going towards the primary day, I said, "Why don't you go and get that set up and get back to me, feed me back information on that?" And the afternoon before primary day Burke Marshall called me up and said, "You know, Kennedy's committed himself to that meeting with the black leaders tomorrow and he's awfully tired. He's absolutely exhausted. You know, it would be great if he could go off with the family

and not have to come down to that." He said, "Is there any way <sup>we</sup> he can get out of it?" I said, "You can get out of anything you want to. The question is what do you do when you get out of it, <sup>"</sup>you know."  
And Burke Marshall said, "Well, yeah, I think, but if <sup>there's for him to</sup> some way <sup>we</sup> can get out of it, we ought to try and get out of it." Now, that's what I mean, that's a perfect example what I mean of how, instead of the call coming down and saying, "The Senator asked me to. . . ." <sup>"</sup>  
You know, or from Fred Dutton or somebody who was out on the road with him, instead of the call coming down and saying, "Graves, the Senator said to see if he couldn't get out of that meeting, <sup>"</sup> or, <sup>"</sup> call him about it," it came vis-a-vis Burke Marshall, wherever the hell he was, to me to say he. . . . Now, it recognized that I was the one who was closest to it, so it would have to come to me, but it came through Burke Marshall to me, <sup>and it</sup> just seemed to me something like that, <sup>that</sup> was that sensitive, by the time <sup>I gave</sup> it back to him the problems of why I thought he shouldn't have cancelled it out, maybe I should have said it in the first instance, because it would have meant more if I'd have said to

him. Okay, but that never happened. Didn't happen like that.

GREENE: So, did you agree to cancel it? Was that the way it . . .

GRAVES: No, I think I went back to the Senator and I said, "~~You know--~~the next evening, which was primary evening, the night he was shot--" I said, "Burke talked to me about trying to cancel that meeting you<sup>vc</sup> got with the black leaders for tomorrow." I said, "And we can get out of it." I said, "I just. . . ." because by that point I was ready to get out of California. I was just as happy to come back two weeks later and do it, which I would have. I said, "We can get out of it," <sup>but</sup> I said, "I just don't know if it's the best thing to get out of it." And by that time I was even amenable to the idea of getting. . . . I was tired, <sup>ed</sup> want to get back to New York. I said, "I'm amenable to the idea of you trying to get out of it; I just don't <sup>know</sup> if that's what you want to do." <sup>9</sup> And Kennedy said, "No, I'm going to go to that meeting." He said, "Whatever time you set it up. You just go <sup>ahead</sup> and put it together and we're going to have that meeting

tomorrow and I'll go." He said, "I'll come down from Malibu, ~~and he said,~~ "just don't make it at 9 o'clock in the morning, ~~so that~~ I'll come down and be <sup>down</sup> ~~done~~ there by 11 o'clock or whatever it's got to be. ~~He said,~~ "You set up the meeting and I'll be there." And that was the night that he was shot that he said that to me. So I think it's rather poignant that, ~~you know,~~ he wanted to do it.

GREENE: Well, do you get the impression, then, that maybe Burke Marshall was acting on his own, using his own judgment? Maybe it didn't come from Robert Kennedy?

GRAVES: There's a good possibility of that. I'll never know that, but there's a good possibility that's the case.

GREENE: Did he seem surprised that you thought he might want to cancel?

GRAVES: I was surprised <sup>and</sup> when you make this reference to the fact that maybe it was a Burke Marshall judgment, I was surprised that he so readily said, "No, I'm going to do that meeting <sup>and</sup> that, ~~you know,~~ I said I was going to do it." That he so . . . ~~You know, it~~

~~just. . .~~ It hit me then, that evening, although it's all muddled now with him being shot and everything and killed, ~~that how he responded,~~ but it hit me when he said that that he really never had given. . . . It hit me that he was surprised that I said that to him. In other words, like, where did you get that from? That was the kind of thing. But he didn't compromise Marshall by saying that was something he did on his own, But I definitely had the impression that he never had any, you know, . . . or if he had considered it or contemplated it, he had only considered it for five minutes and then cancelled it out of his mind.

GREENE: What further <sup>policy did you have</sup> with those black leaders that were at the meeting, <sup>you or</sup> Baron Martin or anyone?

GRAVES: Well, you know, we agreed that everything was going to. . . . ~~You know,~~ we were going to leave everything at a status quo kind of thing and go out and win the primary, as all good Democrats and people who wanted a better country, and then we were going to come back and continue establishing an ongoing rapport right after.

GREENE: Did you get any feeling--particularly I had in mind

the Watts tour, the tour through Watts; I'm not sure of the exact date--<sup>5</sup>but did you have any feeling that that was poorly advanced and too rushed, that they should have stopped along the way? I had heard complaints along that line?<sup>h</sup>

GRAVES: Are you speaking of the last Watts tour?

GREENE: Yeah.

GRAVES: I knew about that, but I had a feeling then that <sup>with</sup> the advance guys who were in that and the big thing about that being <sup>1 1 1 1</sup>that was like an eighteen-hour <sup>1 2</sup>trip or some nonsense like that. I forget; It was a long day. <sup>5</sup>And they were just going to go all the way through Los Angeles <sup>1</sup>Country. Had I gotten into that, I only would have gotten into the part that dealt with the black community. <sup>4</sup>that he had like half a dozen football players and six guys who <sup>could</sup>~~were to~~ sing songs riding with him, and I didn't know what dimension I was going to add to it by showing up there, other than to say I was there; so I never really went to that thing. <sup>91</sup>I had a couple guys that just went down to see what was going on. They said it was a circus. They said he roared through there, ~~you know,~~

with the car open, just waving, you know, like, and the people throwing flowers like it was Caesar or something, and I don't think Kennedy really intended for it to be like that, but I mean, that's the way it came out. ~~And it's just got to. . . . You know, it. . . .~~ The whole thing, as you look at it, was just like a big holiday kind of thing. You know, <sup>it</sup> we're bringing out athletes. "Look who all my friends are." You know, athletes and singers. <sup>it</sup> And it wasn't Kennedy who was doing this either; This is the other thing you've got to understand. Kennedy did not see Rafer Johnson as an athlete; He saw him as a friend. But the other people saw him as a super-human being. You know, he wasn't just. . . . I mean, see, <sup>it</sup> the thing is that even <sup>and</sup> as though this is my community, I live here, these people in this community do not just see me as a person. ~~You know, they. . . .~~ I mean, as significant or insignificant as my role was at working with Kennedy, I <sup>mean</sup> I'm not going to latch on to Ted Sorensen in their minds, because this is how they justify for themselves that they have a black guy in the community. ~~You know,~~ the fact that I probably

am as qualified or more qualified than any of them  
to be here; whether or not I worked for Kennedy or  
not is irrelevant. What they see, in their <sup>own</sup> minds, as  
justifying is that here is this super-guy who lives  
in our community. You know, I mean, the newspapers  
picked it up <sup>like that</sup> ~~right then~~ up here. I mean, you know,  
press, ~~reporters~~ reporters coming to the house, you know,  
until finally I said, "Look, I just want to live  
here. You know. Let's stop the nonsense." And I make  
that point to come back to in terms of the white guys  
who advance and plan these things, ~~that~~ they didn't  
bring these guys in in terms of guys who really were  
adding a dimension to the campaign. They brought them  
in as guys who were good identification for Kennedy.  
You know, in other words, had it been up to Graves,  
I'd have had riding with him ~~Doctor~~ <sup>Doctor</sup> James Dumpson,  
one of the foremost guys in the welfare legislation  
in the country. All right, that would have been the  
kind of thing. ~~If somebody.~~ They'd have had  
to say, "Who is that guy?" But the reporters would  
have written that Kennedy had Dumpson riding with  
him who was a bright guy and ~~in~~ in welfare legislation

going with him, because that's what's important.  
~~Because~~<sup>Q</sup> in the final analysis, when it all boils  
down and distillates, if I have to go back and  
identify now who it was that Kennedy had working  
with him,<sup>if</sup> I was going to try and identify that with  
the militants, I'd say. . . . What am I going  
to say? <sup>Rosie</sup> [ Roosevelt / Rosie Grier / strums on a guitar?  
Rafer Johnson who runs track? What do I sell to  
them that said<sup>^</sup> right now if I had to go back and  
deal with the militants in terms of identifying the  
Kennedy thing<sup>^</sup> that he did, you know, Kennedy really  
had a sense of what was going on? <sup>9</sup> The mystique<sup>^</sup>  
you know, and I haven't said this in five interviews,  
I haven't said this<sup>^</sup> ~~But~~ The mystique of all of the  
qualities that made Robert Kennedy the hero to the  
black community that he is today is greatly and grossly  
overdone and overstated in terms of what it was we were  
doing in 1968 as far as our total effort in the cam-  
paign was concerned, and likewise in the black community,  
and what it was that the people who surrounded him were  
all about in terms of where they were and how they  
felt. I mean, outrageously out of proportion to what it

was. And, ~~I mean~~, just the fact that the only persons you've talked to is myself, ~~-----~~ Rafer Johnson, and ~~Loosie~~ Grier says it. I mean, it's just that simple. Tell me even a minister that you went and spoke to who's a leader.

GREENE: Well, of course, as I explained to you . . .

GRAVES: Yeah. Okay. I agree. I agree. Right. Okay. I agree. ~~But I . . .~~ But you know. . . .

GREENE: . . . You know, but you can complain that there is no one on a high enough level, not in quantity, but in terms of the authority.

GRAVES: And I do. I do. When you tell me that what was most important to you was that you won in the black community, then I definitely argue about it.

What's your last two questions?

GREENE: Okay. Did you have any contacts with the Viva Kennedy movement of Mexican-Americans?

GRAVES: No, I was kind of. . . . I mean, I knew it was going on, but ~~I was . . .~~ There was too much going on in the area I was concerned with to get into it.

GREENE: Okay. What did you do on primary day? That's always interesting.

GRAVES: Well, first of all, I had eighteen guy. . . . As I said before, we had eighteen different communities covered, each of them covered by a . . . one of our guys. This is on top of ~~the thing~~ this mailing bit they had going on, this mailing volunteer operation. And we had the operation operating for the most part out of the Sheraton-Wilshire Hotel, which is ~~about a half block~~ directly across the street and <sup>about</sup> ~~above~~ a half block up from the Ambassador Hotel. We had a . . . Well, we had . . . What we had was in each one of those eighteen communities we had a duplication of what we did in the . . . in Oregon. No, <sup>I</sup> take that back. In Nebraska; Nebraska had one black area. So what I did as an individual <sup>with</sup> ~~the~~ people working under me in Nebraska, we, in fact, did in the eighteen communities surrounding Los Angeles County. We duplicated that eighteen times over. And then ~~we~~. Of course, we did it, and it was a matter of delegating responsibility, whereas I did it in one community, I had eighteen different people doing it in others.

GREENE: Did you have any shortage of volunteers/<sup>on</sup> primary day

~~at~~ that time?

GRAVES: No.

GREENE: No. Because I understand there was in other parts of Los Angeles.

GRAVES: No.

GREENE: Well, can you remember the last time you saw Robert Kennedy, or the last time you spoke with him?

GRAVES: Uh huh. The last time I saw him was when. . . .

And the reason I wasn't at Kennedy's side--this

is for the record, should be on tape somewhere,

should be said--<sup>we</sup>The last time I saw Kennedy alive

was when/were walking to the elevators to get ready

to go downstairs to the ballroom in the Ambassador

Hotel. I was in his suite. My wife was there with

me. <sup>J</sup>And as we were going down the hall, by this time

we thought we were going to win and we waited, and<sup>S</sup>

<sup>91</sup> of course, Pierre Salinger had come upstairs and let me know. . . . If any night I was probably. . . .

received all kinds of accolades, it was that night,

because it was the black community that won it for

Kennedy in California. <sup>S</sup>And Frank Mankiewicz just

couldn't say enough. Kennedy was happy and told me

I did a hell of a job, and, you know, all the slaps on the back that I could get, then I got that night and at that time. And I was upstairs with my wife, Barbara, and any number of people, all the people you've named who were . . . could get in . . . or up to where the action was upstairs in the suite. And he got together with his entourage to go downstairs, and just as I'd done it in Nebraska and Oregon, of being right at his side, so that one. . . . We understood by that time the necessity for the things that he had to have. He had said it. Somebody else had said it that was close to him. "Please be there, because, one, we want the world to know that he's got somebody black working for him, and, two, you know, he knows you and he knows that, you know, you can help get him through the crowd, whatever the case is, you know, advance the thing or make a judgment if there's a problem. Why don't you be there?" And that night when it was time to go down I said, "Well, let me get, you know, into my usual role of going down to push and shove and to be there." We started down and there was Grier, six foot, ninety-five inches, you know, I'm clowning

now, but there was Rosie Grier, you know, available. There was Rafer Johnson available. So that gave us all the color we needed in terms of people who were going to surround him and it gave him. . . . You know, he just didn't need it. And I looked, you know, and there's everybody pushing and shoving to get on one elevator, or the two elevators we had there, and I said, "What the hell, you know, who needs it, that night?" I mean, you know, I just. . . . There was just no need for me to go downstairs just to be standing there and just be another face in the crowd or be helping to advance his getting an elevator. I mean, it got to the point that everybody just wanted to be there, you know, and just "wear the white hat" at that time and--as Ethel would say, using that "white hat" terminology--and I just turned around and said, "Well, you know, I'm going to go back," and I think I said it to Ethel. I said, "You know, I'm going to go back and I'll watch it on television." And he turned around. The last thing I said to him was that. . . . The last thing he said to me was, "You did a hell of a job here, and these guys that you had here in California

are fantastic, and you've got to bring these same guys to New York." And I remember looking at him and smiling and saying, "These guys are from New York." And we just both laughed. And that was kind of a . . . I guess that was probably the last conversation we had while he was alive. And the last thing maybe I said probably was to Ethel that I wasn't going to go down, and I went back into the room and that was the last time I saw him alive. It wasn't the last time I saw him alive, the last time he would have recognized me while he was still conscious.

GREENE: Is there anything else on the campaign that you want put on tape?

GRAVES: If I think of anything else I want to say about the campaign, I guess you're going to give me the option of calling and just dictating something to you over the phone.

GREENE: Oh yeah, and I'll come back . . .

GRAVES: And you're going to come back. Yeah. Yeah, why don't we just leave it open? I can't. . . . I think you've done a rather good job of hitting on the points that were important and pulling out the things that had to

be said and not the nonsense about how many fliers were given out in the particular community. That's garbagey. But stuff that really was relevant, I think that's what we hit on, which are the things which I think have to come out. So I think you've done those.