

Oral History Interview
with
GENERAL HARRY H. VAUGHAN

Personal friend of Harry S. Truman since 1917; military associate in World War I and subsequently in the Field Artillery Officers Reserve Corps; treasurer for Senator Truman's 1940 reelection campaign committee; secretary to Senator Truman, 1941; a liaison officer for the Truman Committee, 1944; and Military Aide to Mr. Truman when he was Vice-President and President, 1945-53.

Alexandria, Virginia
January 14 & 16, 1963 by Charles T. Morrissey, Harry S. Truman Library

The Harry S. Truman Library
Independence, Missouri
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NOTICE

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with
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Alexandria, Virginia
January 14, 1963
by Charles T. Morrissey, Oral Historian, Harry S. Truman Library

MORRISSEY: As preparation for this interview, General Vaughan has graciously allowed me to read here in his home, a manuscript copy of his memoir which he is preparing. He has also allowed me to refer to three scrapbooks of material covering his career, two of which, which cover the years from 1942 to 1952, are currently in the National Archives being microfilmed for the Truman Library. The first and fourth volumes of the scrapbooks will also be microfilmed in the future. Other sources consulted in preparation for this interview include testimony and Congressional Hearings, magazines, newspaper articles read at the Library of Congress, and in the Truman Library.

These questions and answers this afternoon are

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not intended to cover all the topics discussed in all these sources, but to supplement some points already discussed and to raise some points which haven't been discussed. Researchers using this transcript should use as well the memoir the General has given a lot of work to since he left the White House staff in January, 1953. In fact, it's almost ten years to the day, isn't it? I hadn't thought of that.

General, I know you've told many times the story of your first meeting with Harry S. Truman, but would you tell it again for our benefit right now?

GENERAL VAUGHAN: Along about March of 1917, I was a second lieutenant with the 130th Field Artillery. Harry Truman was a first lieutenant with the 129th Field Artillery and up to the day that I mention, I didn't even know him; I had never seen him. We had a brigade commander by the name of Brigadier General Lucius Berry who commanded the 60th Field Artillery which was the artillery troops of the 35th Division. General Berry was a tough old Indian fighter and pretty hard on second lieutenants. He would have a brigade officer's call to which some 150 officers would report -- 175 -- and he was always in a

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hurry; and when he'd get to the meeting, if the officer's call was for 3:00 o'clock and he got there at ten minutes to 3:00, he would start the meeting. If you got there at five minutes to 3:00, you were late and you caught the devil.

On this particular day, there were three or four of us walking over to the Brigade Headquarters, young second lieutenants from the 130th, one of whom was Jim Pendergast of Kansas City. We were talking and laughing and as we went through the door, we were clear inside before we realized that the meeting had begun and that General Berry had a young first lieutenant out in front of him, giving him unshirted hell about the way he was running the canteen. It seemed that First Lieutenant Harry Truman, in addition to his other duties, was what we call now PX Officer -- Canteen Officer. So, coming through the door we made a lot of noise and Berry was distracted from what he was doing, and he turned and looked us over. We, of course, snapped up to attention and acted like there was nothing the matter at all, and Berry looked right at me. I was the first one in and the biggest and probably making the most noise, and he said, "What is your name, Mister?"

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Well, you may or may not recall that in those days you had to be a first lieutenant before you had any rank; second lieutenants were called "Mister."

So, I was standing like a ramrod and I said, "Vaughan, sir."

He said, "How long have you been an officer in the United States Army?"

I said, "Three days, sir," with which he proceeded to go into detail as to how he doubted very much if I would ever be an officer in the United States Army if I lived to be a hundred. And while he was giving me the business, much to the amusement of everybody who was behind him, whom he couldn't see, why, this first lieutenant stepped back in the ranks with all the rest of the officers who were standing there, and when Berry got through with me, which took two or three minutes because he really covered the subject, he forgot who he had been talking to and he went on with the meeting. Well, the meeting lasted twenty to thirty minutes and was instructions about this and that and the other thing, and on the way out, this officer grabbed me by the arm and said, "Much obliged Mister, you got me off the hook

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nicely."

After we got outside I said, "Who was that?"

Jim Pendergast, of course, knew him, because Jim had been in the 129th Regiment before he was commissioned. Jim said, "Why, that's Lieutenant Harry Truman. He lives in Independence; he's a friend of mine."

And that's the first time I ever saw Truman and the first contact I ever had with him.

MORRISSEY: Did you see much of him after that?

VAUGHAN: Well, I would see him at officer's call. He went over to France ahead of me. He was in what we call the advance detail. In fact, about a week after that particular incident, he started off for France with what they called, as I say, the advance detail for the brigade. And then I didn't see him until we got to France and I would run across him now and then. His battery position and mine were sometimes rather close, although usually their battery position was in front of us. They were 75's and we were 155's and so I ran across him -- in France probably I ran onto him eight or ten or a dozen times.

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MORRISSEY: Any specific recollections of meeting him?

VAUGHAN: Well, my particular recollection of Harry Truman is after a couple of weeks in the trenches without any chance to take a bath or to change clothes, the rest of us would look like bums with mud sticking all over us, and he always looked immaculate. And I was never able to understand why. I couldn't see myself, but I imagined I looked like a buck private in the Mexican Army, but Truman looked like he just stepped out. He was always clean and neat and dapper. I'd meet him and we'd chat. I remember riding up to reconnoiter a new gun position, and I met him coming down the road and we stopped and chatted. We were both on horseback and we stopped and got off over to the side of the road because it was a camouflaged road and it was under fire whenever there was any movement on it. That was along about the first of November, near close to the end of the war. It was up in the Verdun sector.

MORRISSEY: Did you come back together to this country?

VAUGHAN: No, no, not on the same ship. We came back on a German ship that had been turned over. They had a bunch

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of our naval recruits running the ship and they had a score of German sailors aboard because our people didn't know where the valves were to turn on. They had these Germans -- they were German prisoners -- acting as advisers to the chaps running the ship. This was, I believe, a Hamburg-American Liner that had been taken over that we came back on. About the same time, Truman's outfit came back, because we stayed in our gun positions for three months after the armistice. I never did know -- I don't yet know why we had to live in the mud there. We just stayed right where we were when the last shot was fired.

MORRISSEY: Going back a bit, do you remember anything about the canteen that Mr. Truman ran with Eddie Jacobson?

VAUGHAN: Oh well, I had been in it. You see, instead of having a big post PX like they have now, each regiment had their own canteen and it was usually in one end of the building that was the guard house; it was the guard house in one end and the canteen usually in the other. They had very, very limited supplies. They had toilet articles and handkerchiefs and they sold "near beer." Bevo had just come out, you know. We had prohibition and they sold Bevo, boxes of cookies and candy bars and toilet

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articles and handkerchiefs and things of that nature. It was nothing like the department stores that PX's have now.

MORRISSEY: Some people when they recollect their first meeting with Mr. Truman, comment upon his glasses. His eyes seemed to shine. Do you recall anything about him losing his glasses?

VAUGHAN: Well, yes, you know, he wore thick glasses, they tell me, from the time he was about ten years old. I don't know what the difficulty is. It was a lack of coordination of -- I don't know enough about the eye to be able to tell what the difficulty was. But he always had thick glasses and he couldn't get along without them. I imagine his vision with glasses is 20-20, but without the glasses he couldn't recognize his brother twenty feet away. So, he always has had several pair on hand in case he lost any because he would be so helpless without them, and he was advised that he could not wear the ordinary glasses with the side pieces over the ears in action, because it would interfere with wearing your gas mask, you see. It would leave a hole on either side

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that you would be able to get gas through. So he brought, he said, I believe he said, four or five of his lens prescriptions in pince-nez, and one night -- he always carried a pair with him and he had two or three pair in his baggage. One night, when we were moving up into the St. Mihiel, we were moving right along the front, so we had to move at night, get under cover and bivouac during the day and then after it got completely dark, we'd mount up and move up fifteen, twenty

kilometers. He'd mounted up the battery and was just about to march out. He rode under a tree and a branch swept his glasses off. Well, of course, it was dark and he couldn't show a light to hunt for the glasses, so he said he was going to have to stop and get his baggage out of the wagon and he turned back to holler to the first sergeant to hold up the battery. As he turned to the rear, he put his hand on the horse's rump to turn around, and he put his hand right on his glasses. They were sitting right on the horse's back. It was one of the most fortunate breaks because, you see, when you move at night or in any troop movement, you're supposed to move at a certain minute because you have to clear certain crossroads. You have to get your first vehicle

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at this crossroad at an absolute split second and you have to clear it at a split second because the next outfit is coming in from this other side road and the schedule gets all fouled up if you don't. So, he was right on time and a five minute stop to get another pair of glasses would have been disastrous.

MORRISSEY: Does he tell this story or were you there?

VAUGHAN: No, I wasn't there because this was in action, you see. I was with my regiment, the next regiment to it. I don't know exactly where I was at that particular moment. We were moving up, and in moving up through all that mud, we had a bigger problem than he did because his guns weighed about three thousand pounds and our guns weighed about seven thousand pounds. He was supposed to have six horses per gun and we were supposed to have eight, but we were both short of horses because a lot of our horses were killed and shot and a lot of them starved to death for lack of hay. No, I wasn't there. I've heard him tell the story.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall, at first hand, any visits to his store in Kansas City after the war was over?

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VAUGHAN: Well, no, not for the number of years he was in the business. I've been in the store a number of times after he got out of the business and Eddie Jacobson re-established it. But not while he was in there. During about 1920 -- say from '20 to '24, I didn't have much -- I'd see him at camp; that was the only time I'd see him. I didn't have occasion to be in Kansas City at that time only going through Kansas City on the way to Fort Riley, so I don't suppose I was in Kansas City at any time while he was in the haberdashery business.

MORRISSEY: Then it's safe to say that you weren't close to Mr. Truman during the 1920's in relation to his business activities?

VAUGHAN: No, I had no knowledge of his business activities. I'd see him every year in camp and we'd renew our acquaintance that way.

MORRISSEY: The same is true of his political activities -- running for county judge and that sort of thing?

VAUGHAN: Well, you see, he didn't have any political activities until about 1924. As I recall hearing they were hunting for somebody to run for county commissioner,

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and Mr. Pendergast didn't have a candidate. His nephew Jim, who had been in the regiment with us -- in the brigade with us -- Jim suggested Harry Truman. He brought Harry Truman down and introduced him to his uncle, and that's the first connection Truman had. Old Tom Pendergast wanted to have some window dressing and Truman was really window dressing for him because he could say, "Well, there's my boy Truman. Nobody can ever say anything about Truman. Everybody thinks he's okay."

MORRISSEY: When you went to reserve camp in the 20's and the 30's, where did you go -- what camps?

VAUGHAN: Most often at Riley. I think one year we went to Leavenworth but Riley was preferable because there is an artillery range at Riley and there is not at Leavenworth. We went to Ft. Sill on one occasion, I believe. It was a matter of scheduling various regiments at various places. We went one year to Camp Ripley, which is up in Wisconsin. I forgot the closest town -- oh no, it's Minnesota -- Camp Ripley, Minnesota. We were at Ripley once, Sill once and Leavenworth once, and I think at Riley a dozen or fifteen times.

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MORRISSEY: This was for artillery training?

VAUGHAN: Artillery training, yes, for two weeks.

MORRISSEY: Mr. Truman did the same as you were doing?

VAUGHAN: Yes. I think '22 was the first year we went. I was a captain and Mr. Truman was a major at that time. Then we kept on going and he always kept one grade ahead of me and when I got to be a major general, I figured I ranked except he was Commander in Chief and I really didn't rank him after all.

We were in what was known in the Reserve Division as the 102nd Division, the Ozark Division it's called. From about '35 to '40, I commanded the 380th and Mr. Truman commanded the 379th and Colonel Snyder commanded the 381st.

MORRISSEY: This was John Snyder?

VAUGHAN: Yes, this was the Arkansas regiment. It was Missouri and Arkansas that made up the 102nd Division in those days.

MORRISSEY: Did you know John Snyder well?

VAUGHAN: Oh, quite well. Of course, he was with the 32nd

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Division during the war, so we didn't meet him until the first time we went to camp which was in about 1922. He was captain then and so was I, and Truman was a major, I think. He went to camp with us and then he was in the banking business there in St. Louis and with the National Bank Examiners -- Federal Bank Examiners. Then he got into one of the St. Louis banks and he lived in St. Louis for about ten or twelve years.

MORRISSEY: Would you say he was particularly close to Mr. Truman?

VAUGHAN: Oh yes, they were very close. They used to see each other and he'd get to Kansas City quite frequently on matters of business. Yes, they were very close. They were very close friends.

MORRISSEY: Another member of that group was Ed McKim.

VAUGHAN: Well, Ed McKim was a personal friend of Mr. Truman's. They got to be personal friends after the war was over because during the war, Eddie McKim was one of Truman's enlisted men. When Truman took over this battery, Ed McKim was a sergeant and about two or three weeks after Truman took over the battery, he was sent to an artillery

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school at Fort Sill and another captain took over temporarily, a Captain Roland Ritter who was a pretty tough disciplinarian and he didn't like the way McKim goofed off evidently, so he reduced Mr. McKim to a buck private. When Truman came back from his school, why, McKim asked permission to talk to the captain and he went up and asked him -- explained that he had been reduced to a private and asked him if Truman wouldn't make him a sergeant again. Truman said, "Hell, no. I've been figuring on busting you to a private myself." McKim claimed that Truman wouldn't even make him a first-class private. For the next eighteen months he served as a buck private and a first-class private got two dollars a month more than a buck private -- he figured Truman owed him thirty-six dollars for the eighteen months time. McKim, during one summer camp, oh, I think it was along about 1930, I commanded a separate battalion of the 77th Field Artillery which was an inactive regular army composed of reserve officers. McKim was a first lieutenant and was acting that summer as my adjutant. About the last day or two of the camp, we were to have our pictures taken and this was just before evening mess. It was along about five-thirty in the afternoon, and

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there was about twenty officers. I remember another major and myself, a regular army instructor, Major Spencer, and myself and there was four captains. So we carried six chairs out and the two majors and the four captains sat down and then there were about twelve or fourteen first and second lieutenants standing behind us. That was a group picture. As I got up to walk over toward the porch where we had been sitting before, I said over my shoulder, "Lieutenant McKim, would you please bring my chair up to the porch?"

Well, McKim picked up the chair and walked along and as he went by me he whispered in my ear, "You so and so, you've ruined my record. This is the first work I've done for the two weeks I've been here, carrying this chair. You've ruined my record."

I thought that was rather amusing but never thought any more about it. About, oh, I should suppose it was ten years later, John Snyder called me one day and he said, "Senator Truman is coming in," (this was in about, I guess, about 1938), "Senator Truman is coming in on the B & O train. Let's have lunch together and go down and meet him." I think the B & O train got in at 1:20 or something like that. So we had lunch and we went

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down, to the station and we were standing and everybody got off the train but we didn't see Truman. Finally, after everybody had gotten off there, Truman stepped down and turned to help someone off. Lo and behold it was Eddie McKim. And he was skunk drunk. He couldn't stand up. Truman was helping him. I said, "Look at what we've got here." I said, "John, you and the Senator go on." I knew they were going to stay down at the Missouri Athletic Club. I said, "You and the Senator go on and I'll take this guy McKim and nobody will know that the Senator even knows him and I'll meet you." Well, we waited so long that all the passengers from the trains had gone in and there was only one taxicab. So when we got out there, there was the Senator and Snyder waiting to get in this cab. It was the only one in sight so we all four had to get in the cab. We got McKim over in the corner and he was waving at everybody going down the street -- down Market street -- and just making a nuisance of himself. When we got to the Missouri Athletic Club, I said, "I'll walk through the lobby with McKim; set him down here. You go over and register and I'll meet you at the elevator. You don't have to speak to us."

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We got in the elevator and the bellboy had the bags and I got in and was kind of supporting McKim. When we got up to the sixth floor, the Missouri Athletic Club was built like a "C" and the elevator is in one end and, of course, it would be, that the suite Senator Truman had was clear around the other end -- I suppose a hundred yards all together. So, when we got to the fourth or fifth floor, whichever it was, I stepped back to let the bellboy get off first with the bags. I let loose of Ed McKim and he fell out through the door on his face on the hall floor. I got him up on his feet and just got down under him and put him over my shoulder with a fireman's carry, you know, and went on down the hall with McKim on my shoulder (McKim is six feet three and weighed about 220 pounds at that time and this was August and hot as the devil).

Well, they had the door open and the bellboy had deposited the bags and gone and I went into the sitting room and there was a big couch there. I just made a heave and heaved McKim over on the couch, and I said, "You lie there you drunken so-and-so."

With that, he jumped up and scrambled over behind

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the couch and said, "You will make me carry your chair, you S.O.B."

He hadn't had a drink -- hadn't had a drop to drink. He and Truman were in on the practical joke to play on me and, of course, Snyder, had made all manner of fun. He thought it was a great joke on me, but it was just as much a joke on Snyder because he was just as much sold on McKim being drunk as I was -- only he wasn't charitable enough to carry the drunk around. Well, that story has been told a thousand times and it gets a few embellishments but that's the main detail.

So, McKim was very much in the picture. McKim, pretty soon he got out -- he got tired of the reserve. He did not want to work; he didn't want to pass any correspondence courses and he didn't want to do any work. I think he finally got to be a captain and then he dropped out, but he used to come down to Riley frequently in the summertime when he wasn't at camp, He'd just drive down for the weekend in between the middle of the course. He's always a delightful poker playing companion and quite a fellow, and Mr. Truman was very, very fond of him.

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MORRISSEY: This Major Spencer you mentioned is not to be confused with Spencer Salisbury?

VAUGHAN: Oh no, no. Major Spencer was a regular army -- I'm not sure whether the Major's - - I know he's long since retired. He was a regular army officer detailed as an instructor to my reserve regiment. He'd go to camp with us and I met him again when I went out to -- in 1942 -- January of '42 when I went out to Camp Roberts, California. I was commanding one of the training regiments at this artillery training center, and Spencer was one of the senior instructors at the artillery training center. He was a full colonel at that time.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall anything about Spencer Salisbury?

VAUGHAN: Oh yes, I knew Salisbury. Salisbury commanded one of the 129th batteries. I don't remember which one it was. I think it was "C" Battery -- I believe, because Ted Marks had "E" on the other side of Truman. Yes, I think he had "C" Battery; I think that battery was also from Independence -- both "C" and "D" were from Independence. Salisbury -- I never did know him well enough to know how efficient an officer he was in

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action. He was a kind of a gold brick all the years he went to camp with us there at Fort Riley. The nickname the boys had for him was -- he was called "Carranza" -- "Carranza and his Guerrillas." That was the affectionate term that Battery "D" had for Battery "C" next door.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember much about Ted Marks?

VAUGHAN: Oh yes, Ted went to work. They tell a funny story about Ted Marks. He was about twenty years old and he had served six years in the Grenadier Guards when he came to this country. He decided he wanted to enlist in the National Guard and he went down and Corporal Truman enlisted him -- made out his papers for him. Ted claims, I don't know whether there's any truth in this or not, that Truman said, "How long you been in this country?"

And Ted said, "Oh, about two weeks."

Truman says, "You speak damn good English for having been here only two weeks."

Oh yes, Ted was great; he was a very close friend of Truman's. In fact, he was best man at Truman's wedding and Ted claims that the only reason that Truman picked him out to be best man is that Ted was a tailor and Ted said he could make Harry Truman's wedding suit on

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credit and that's the only reason. In fact, Ted says both of their suits were on credit. Ted went along for many years. He stayed longer than McKim. He was a major when he dropped out and he was a great fisherman. He used to love to go fishing. He'd take time off to go fishing whenever he got a chance. He greatly enjoyed poker -- very dour poker player. His expression never changed. He could have a royal flush or a pair of deuces and he'd never tell -- he acted the same way, which makes pretty difficult competition, as you know.

MORRISSEY: Was Eddie Jacobson going to reserve camp?

VAUGHAN: Oh no. Eddie never did. After he was discharged in 1919, he was discharged as a sergeant and he never got into the reserve. You know, in those days, there was no enlisted reserve. There was no enlisted reserve until after the Second World War. The reserve during all those years of '20 to '40, I don't know why in the world we stayed in the reserve. We didn't have any equipment; we didn't have any enlisted personnel; we had no material; we had no equipment; we just didn't have anything. But we had a meeting every Monday and went to camp every year and stuck around. The idea of getting

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paid for reserve training, that never had occurred to us.

Eddie was a rather serious minded chap, very conscientious and splendid gentleman. In fact, after that business failed he and Harry Truman reorganized it and paid back absolutely every cent -- one hundred cents on the dollar on all their obligations -- which they didn't need to do if they had wanted to take bankruptcy. Eddie had a very successful store. I remember the last time I was in Eddie's store, was in about 1946 or '47. Mr. Truman was in Kansas City and we were coming back from somewhere, I don't know where it was. It was the President's car and there were two or three other cars of reporters and a Secret Service car -- about six or eight cars -- and Truman said, "Go down such and such a street. I want to buy some shirts from Eddie Jacobson."

Well, we pulled up in front of the place and the traffic jammed and it caused a "riot," you know. We went into Eddie's store. There was a half a dozen customers in there and their eyes bugged out, and Eddie was very much embarrassed. Truman says, "Eddie, I want a half dozen white shirts so and so and so and so size," (I think it was 15/33 or something like that?. Well,

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right at that time, white shirts were hard to come by. I don't know why, but during the war and right after the war, you couldn't buy white shirts. Eddie didn't have Harry Truman's size. Well, then he was embarrassed and it came out -- of course, these reporters -- it came out in the papers

that the President had stopped into the store of his old former partner trying to buy half a dozen shirts and he couldn't get them.

Within the next two weeks, Harry Truman received a hundred and fifty white shirts, size whatever-it-was, which unfortunately was not my size; but it was John Snyder's size, so he gave John a couple of dozen shirts and I didn't get any. The only thing of Truman's that I could talk him out of were hats and shoes. We had the same size hats and shoes. I've gotten away with half a dozen hats from him because he received a lot of hats while he was in the White House, too -- a hundred or more.

MORRISSEY: How about cigars?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, yes. Of course, a lot of people didn't know he didn't smoke and I suppose he received three hundred boxes of cigars during the years he was at the White House and I got two hundred and ninety of them.

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I did his official smoking until John Steelman came along. Then he cut in on my racket, just a little bit.

MORRISSEY: Was Jake Vardaman a member of this group that used to...

VAUGHAN: I think about 1924 or '5 was the first summer that Jake Vardaman went to camp. He was a captain in the field artillery also and he went along for a number of years to camp. Then he got to be a major, as I recall. When we were preparing -- we did a lot of preparation during '39 and '40 for the war that we were reasonably sure we were going to get in, for some unaccountable reason, Jake transferred over to Naval Intelligence. I never did know why. He got a commission as a lieutenant commander in Naval Intelligence, so we lost track of him from then on, I mean so far as summer camps were concerned.

MORRISSEY: You were living in Wisconsin when Mr. Truman first ran for the Senate?

VAUGHAN: I was in Wisconsin in '34 when he ran for the Senate.

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MORRISSEY: Did you try to help him?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, I corresponded with a lot of my friends in Missouri and I went to camp that summer even down from Wisconsin. We did a lot of politicking the two weeks we were at camp. Yes, I wrote a lot of my friends back in Missouri.

MORRISSEY: Did you make any effort to raise funds for his campaign?

VAUGHAN: Not up there, no. Not at that time.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall meeting Mr. Truman during his first term as senator?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, sure, I met him a number of times. Then, of course, he used to come to camp as a senator, too. I'd see him a couple of times every year, at least. I think I was living up in Wisconsin the year that we went to Fort Ripley -- maybe not. I forget which particular year that was. That was probably about '35. I was back in St. Louis by that time, I believe.

MORRISSEY: You don't have any specific recollections of any of Mr. Truman's functions as a senator, let's say

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legislation being passed in Washington?

VAUGHAN: You mean in his first term?

MORRISSEY: Yes, his first term.

VAUGHAN: No, I would correspond with him somewhat, but I don't recall. His principal activity during his first term was in the Interstate Commerce Committee of the Senate. When he joined the Interstate Commerce Committee as a freshman senator, Burton K. Wheeler was chairman and the Senate appointed a sub-committee of the Interstate Commerce Committee to write the Railroad Reorganization Act, and Mr. Truman was made chairman of this sub-committee. He really worked hard at it. I think Burton Wheeler appointed him because he knew he'd work hard, and Burt Wheeler had enough seniority that he'd just as soon let the junior senators do the work which is characteristic.

MORRISSEY: Mr. Truman was quite proud of his experience with railroad legislation?

VAUGHAN: Oh yes, I really think that he was. Probably, at the end of his first term, I don't know that there was

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anybody in the government that had a more thorough knowledge of railroad legislation and things affecting the railroads. But that's one characteristic of Harry Truman, that when he goes into something, he studies it terrifically hard. That's why I think the Truman Committee was a success, because Truman worked at it almost every waking moment.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman ever mention anything to you about an appointment to the ICC?

VAUGHAN: No, I don't recall that. I know he was very much interested in it because as chairman of this sub-committee, he had a lot of work that the ICC, as well as the railroad brotherhoods and various management. While he didn't make any concessions to them, I think he made some very firm friends among the railroad union heads. I believe there was a man, Whitney -- wasn't there a man by the name of Whitney?

MORRISSEY: Yes.

VAUGHAN: He was head of locomotive engineers, was he not? Then there was another one that was a very good -- quite a friend of Mr. Truman's in later years. They all had

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their difficulties. Like with John L. Lewis. Mr. Truman and John L. had numerous arguments when Lewis would appear as a witness before the Truman Committee, but in later years, they got to be very close friends and I think they hold each other in very, very high regard now. Every time I see Mr. Lewis, he's always asking about Mr. Truman, how he's getting along and everything.

MORRISSEY: You say you've met Tom Pendergast?

VAUGHAN: No, I never met him. I've seen him -- I saw him in Kansas City on a number of occasions, but I never had occasion to meet him. But, of course, I still know his nephew and correspond with him and exchange Christmas cards. I see him sometimes when I'm in Kansas City. Jim is out of politics now, but he's practicing law in Kansas City.

MORRISSEY: By 1940, you were living back in Missouri and you worked for Mr. Truman's re-election?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes.

MORRISSEY: In what capacity?

VAUGHAN: Well, Mr. Truman, during his first term in the

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Senate, did a lot of favors for a lot of people, perfectly legitimately so, but you would expect that these people, when it came time for Truman to run for re-election, would remember that he had done them a lot of favors, but memories are awfully short. Like Alben Barkley's statement that "You ain't done nothin' for me lately." So there were a lot of people, bank presidents, for example, or men high in financial circles, who could have been chairman of Truman's finance committee easily and could have raised considerable money for him. They were sold on the idea that Mr. Truman didn't have a chance, just like the smart money people seemed to think nationally in '48 -- this was the same way in '40. So I can think back now of at least four or five people that he requested.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any specific names?

VAUGHAN: Well, I wouldn't like to -- no sense in mentioning that because they're all prominent in Missouri and it might embarrass them to bring it up. But they all had, what they seemed to think, were excellent alibis for not being connected, but I don't think there was any

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alibi at all except they didn't think Mr. Truman could make it. And finally, by a method of elimination, everybody was eliminated but me, and that's one way to get a job, you know, if

everybody else is eliminated but you. You're a natural cinch for it. He asked me if I would serve as chairman of this finance committee, and I said I'd be glad to. "My bank balance is about \$3.25. I don't know."

He said, "Well, it's all right. People like you."

A lot of people didn't know me at all. You've got to be in a position to get money out of people, you've got to have it yourself -- that's been my experience, by and large. If you're a person of means, other people of means have obligations towards you and you can...But anyway, we put on a Woolworth campaign like nobody's business and the total amount of money that Mr. Truman had for his campaign, was \$16,000 and \$3,000 of that he borrowed on his life insurance. There were two people that gave Mr. Truman contributions -- one man gave him a thousand dollars and that was the only large contribution. Everything else was twenties and fifties, and we raised some money by appealing to people to send in a dollar to help him pay his bills. We got about \$200

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that way and spent the \$200 to buy stamps and send out several thousand requests and we got about \$800 right at the end of the campaign -- or really after the primary was over -- we got about \$800 through the mail that helped us pay our bills. We had all the funds audited by a CPA and filed, and I think that was the all-time low for a senatorial campaign. I don't imagine that there's ever been one less. The man that was running against him, spent \$100,000.

MORRISSEY: Which man?

VAUGHAN: Stark.

MORRISSEY: Did you have anybody to help you as -- you were what -- finance chairman?

VAUGHAN: I was finance chairman.

MORRISSEY: Did you have an assistant finance chairman?

VAUGHAN: No, I don't remember. There was about a half dozen names on the letter head that were on the finance committee, but I don't remember who they were. They were window dressing, I think.

MORRISSEY: Did many contributions come in after Mr. Truman

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had won the primary?

VAUGHAN: Yes, I'd say about eight or nine hundred dollars after the primary which was very fortunate because we had some unpaid obligations.

MORRISSEY: There's a story that at a meeting in St. Louis in 1940, several of Mr. Truman's friends tried to persuade him not to run.

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes. I was present. That was the meeting where he asked so-and-so if he wouldn't serve -- a banker friend of his, and he said, "No," he couldn't do it because and, and so and so...He asked another, a lawyer friend, "No," he couldn't do it because he was doing this. He asked about a half a dozen people. The meeting that I think you referred to was in the Statler Hotel in St. Louis in Senator Truman's suite and there were eight or ten people present. All of them were supposedly good friends of the senator. Many of them owed him considerable in the way of favors and things he'd done for them. He asked at least five if they wouldn't head up a committee for his renomination campaign, and they all had excellent excuses which appeared excellent

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to them, but they didn't seem to be very justifiable to me. After all of them had excused themselves -- declined and most of them had left, why, there was nobody left to do it but me and he asked me if I'd do it. I said, "Of course, I'll do it, but you certainly could find somebody that would be of more financial authority than I, because I don't have any weight...." You have to have something on some of these people to get them to contribute. They contribute to something that you want in hopes that when they're around collecting funds for something they can put the bite on you. That's been my experience. And I didn't have that kind of a lever on any of these people. But it was certainly a Woolworth campaign and I suppose, the cheapest senatorial campaign that was ever put on in the United States, I feel sure. It was audited by a CPA -- turned in, so I happen to know that everything was entirely legal.

MORRISSEY: What were these charges of a slush fund in the 1940 campaign, General?

VAUGHAN: Well, that was about five days before the primary election, Governor Stark made a statement over the air

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which was picked up by the *Post-Dispatch*, that Truman's campaign was being financed by a slush fund furnished by Tom Pendergast. Well, we didn't have enough funds to go on the air to refute it, in fact, we didn't have any funds, period. There was about \$200 that we could use for postage, so we sent out -- we had plenty of stationery -- so we mimeographed an appeal, a denial of this and said, "If you're interested in helping Mr. Truman, send in a dollar." We sent out about -- well, \$200 worth of postage. I think in those days you could send -- if you didn't seal them -- I think you could send them for a cent and a half. Well, anyway, we sent that out on Friday, I think, and there was a Saturday afternoon delivery and one Monday morning. We got about five or six hundred dollars and we bought postage with that and sent out several thousand more, all over the state. The first ones we sent out to St. Louis and St. Louis County. We sent them all over the state with the same appeal, asking them to send in a dollar and I think finally we got about \$1200 that helped to wind up our campaign expenses.

MORRISSEY: How did you counter these charges of a slush fund?

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VAUGHAN: Well, we denied that there was any such thing and at that time, Tom Pendergast was under indictment and I'm not sure but what he was in jail at that time. I don't remember exactly when he went to jail, he did at one time I know, and was released from jail because of his delicate health. We pointed out that Tom Pendergast didn't have enough money to take care of himself much less furnish any slush fund for any political activities. Tom was in quite financial straits at that particular moment. The principal argument that -- I think the thing that convinced people that there wasn't any such thing as a slush fund -- was the fact that we were asking for a dollar and anybody with ample campaign funds doesn't send out an appeal for a dollar.

MORRISSEY: Were these appeals sent out on the very eve of election day or were they sent out well ahead of time?

VAUGHAN: The election was on Tuesday and I think the first was sent out on Friday right there in St. Louis and St. Louis County so they would be delivered that afternoon. We got a few answers back on Saturday and quite a few more, a couple of hundred more, on Monday. Then on Monday afternoon, we sent out larger appeals which would

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be delivered by Tuesday morning hoping that would affect some of the votes, and asking for the dollar. Then the last group of dollar contributions didn't come in until after the primary was over, but they could be used to defray expenses. Not only did we bring in the dollar, but people reading that were convinced that this was -- that the slush fund claim was entirely erroneous.

MORRISSEY: Did you drive Mr. Truman around the state?

VAUGHAN: No, I never did drive him at all. When the campaign was going on and when he was speaking close to St. Louis, on several occasions I went out to -- in fact, I was out in Sedalia; I think the kick-off of the campaign was in Sedalia. It was a great big Democratic rally. Then I went to several in St. Louis County and St. Louis, but I never did drive him. I think Fred Canfil did most of the driving. I think Fred had been an employee at the Jackson County courthouse when Mr. Truman was County Commissioner. That's where Truman got to know him.

MORRISSEY: Did Fred Canfil play any other part in this campaign or was he mostly just a chauffeur?

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VAUGHAN: That's all that I knew of. Of course, Fred was a very articulate individual. I don't think he missed a chance to do a lot of talking when the occasion presented itself.

MORRISSEY: What function did Roger Sermon play in this campaign?

VAUGHAN: Well, Roger was the mayor of Independence at that time, I think. I think he did some campaigning up around the western part of the state. I'm sure he was a very enthusiastic supporter; he always had been.

MORRISSEY: How about Vic Messall?

VAUGHAN: Well, Vic, you see, was Mr. Truman's secretary during his first term. Vic had been secretary to a Missouri congressman by the name of Lee, who had run at large in 1938. Then when they redistricted the state before the 1940 election, Lee was redistricted out so he didn't run for re-election. When Mr. Truman came to Washington in 1940, he was a senator without a staff and here was Lee's staff without a principal. So Truman just inherited this staff. I'm in error as to the year. Lee was elected in '32, and then he was redistricted

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out in '34 and so when Truman came into Washington in January, 1935, he inherited -- he just took over Lee's staff, Vic Messall and two stenographers that the congressman had had.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember much about Tom Evans in the 1940 campaign?

VAUGHAN: No, I don't know much about Tom Evans and the 1940 campaign. Tom Evans was active probably in Kansas City. I never got to know Tom Evans very well until Mr. Truman became President and I would go back to Kansas City with the President and Tom Evans was very active, very much in evidence around Kansas City at that time.

MORRISSEY: There's another Evans too not to be confused with Tom.

VAUGHAN: That's Bob Evans who is the president of a bank in Louisville and he was the guidon in Mr. Truman's battery. The guidon is the boy who carries the red swallow tail pennant for mounted drill. His duties are carrying the flag in the drill and he acts as the captain's orderly, takes care of the captain's horse. We see Bob Evans frequently. He's still in close touch

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with Mr. Truman, He comes to Kansas City frequently,

MORRISSEY: John Snyder, I imagine, was active in the '40 campaign.

VAUGHAN: Well, John Snyder was not very active for the simple reason that he was the St. Louis manager of the RFC office in St. Louis, which handicapped his political activities considerably. In fact, John was one of those that Mr. Truman asked if he couldn't run his campaign and John, I think, was the only one of the group that refused to do it who had a perfectly legitimate reason, because as manager of the St. Louis RFC office, he just could not connect himself with a primary campaign.

MORRISSEY: Who was Reathel Odum?

VAUGHAN: Reathel Odum was a secretary -- one of John Snyder's secretaries when he was bank examiner there in St. Louis. When Mr. Truman went to Washington in 1934, he wanted a third stenographer. He'd gotten Vic Messall and two stenographers from Mr. Lee and he wanted a third stenographer, so John Snyder suggested that he take Reathel Odum and she went up there in January of

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'35, and she served with the President, and then she was Mrs. Truman's secretary at the White House.

MORRISSEY: Was Jake Vardaman active in this campaign?

VAUGHAN: No, he was not because Jake Vardaman had resigned from the job of RFC. John Snyder had succeeded him in the RFC job and Jake Vardaman was vice president, at that time, of the First National Bank in St. Louis; he was later president of the Tower Grove Bank, but at that time he was vice president of the First National. The powers that be in the First National Bank, many of them Republicans, and the rest of them didn't think Harry Truman had a chance, so I don't think that they would have looked with much favor on Jake Vardaman being very active in the campaign.

MORRISSEY: Did you think from the outset of this campaign that Mr. Truman did have a good chance of winning?

VAUGHAN: Oh, I thought so, but I was perfectly willing to work at it whether he was going to win or not. If he was only going to get his own vote and mine, why that was all right with me.

MORRISSEY: I have some names here and I don't know whether

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they'll spark any response from you, but can I throw them out and see if possible if they had any function in the '40 campaign, any contributions to make to Mr. Truman's re-election?

I have J. V. Conran.

VAUGHAN: Well, Conran was an active politician in the state, down in the southern part of the state as I remember. I'm not sure. I didn't know him very well; I just knew the name in state politics. Now whether he was an active campaigner in the '40 campaign, I'm not sure.

MORRISSEY: How about Richard Nacy?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, Dick Nacy was the vice president of the leading bank in Jefferson City and a very important cog in the Democratic organization. In fact later I think he was a national committeeman of Missouri and he has always been a very ardent supporter of Harry Truman. Dick died a couple of years ago, however.

MORRISSEY: How about Sam Wear?

VAUGHAN: Well, Sam Wear was too. They were active out in the state in certain localities. I didn't know much

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about what they accomplished, but they were names and I knew them. I knew they were active in the party.

MORRISSEY: In St. Louis were you active with Sid Salomon or Ray Tucker?

VAUGHAN: Well, I knew them both, yes. They were active city politicians as was Bob Hannegan. There was a chap with an Italian name who was the leader of one ward, I forget...

MORRISSEY: Gualdoni?

VAUGHAN: Gene Gualdoni, yes. Gene was the typical ward boss and he carried Harry Truman's ward, I mean, he carried his ward for Harry Truman. I'm not sure, but there were probably more votes than there were people in the ward, I wouldn't swear to that, but Gene got full mileage out of his job.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember anything specific about Bob Hannegan in this campaign?

VAUGHAN: In the '40 campaign?

MORRISSEY: Yes.

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VAUGHAN: Bob was supporting Truman, all right, but Bob was devoting most of his energy to trying to elect a St. Louis friend of his as governor.

MORRISSEY: Was that McDaniel?

VAUGHAN: Yes, Larry McDaniel -- I think it was Larry McDaniel. Was Larry the right name, let's see...

MORRISSEY: I don't know whether it's McDaniel or McDaniels with an "s." I'll have to check.

VAUGHAN: Yes, Larry McDaniels, that's right. They were trying to elect Larry governor and with all due respect to my good Irish friend, Bob Hannegan, he was more interested in electing Larry McDaniels than he was electing Harry Truman. He didn't do anything to hurt Harry Truman's campaign, but most of his energy went in for Larry McDaniels.

MORRISSEY: Was the Truman campaign coordinated with the McDaniel campaign? Was there any deliberate effort to...?

VAUGHAN: Not in St. Louis it wasn't, because, as I say, Truman was from Kansas City and they thought, the

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politicians of St. Louis thought, that it would be more to their advantage to elect their boy governor than it would be to elect somebody senator, and so while I don't think they were out for

Stark who wasn't too popular with them -- still the main effort was Larry. Now southeast Missouri, they were out for Truman one hundred and one percent.

MORRISSEY: Why?

VAUGHAN: We had some very good friends down around Cape Girardeau and down in that part of the country. Roy Harper was one of the principals. He's now a Federal judge. Roy Harper and Neal Helm.

MORRISSEY: Neal Helm -- is there a Bill Helm?

VAUGHAN: There's a Bill Helm. Bill Helm was a newspaper man in Kansas City with the old Kansas City *Journal*, as I remember. That's Bill Helm. He used to write a lot of articles about Mr. Truman. Neal Helm was a cotton broker down in southeast Missouri, he and Roy Harper.

MORRISSEY: And he helped Mr. Truman a lot?

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VAUGHAN: Oh, southeast Missouri was very solid for us. In fact, the boys from southeast Missouri came up to St. Louis and they were a little bit provoked at the lukewarm attitude of some of the St. Louis ward heelers. They came up and said, "If you don't put in a little more effort for Harry Truman up here, we're going to scratch your boy Larry McDaniels down in southeast Missouri."

Well, that is a language that politicians understand perfectly. In fact, I'm sure that Roy Harper and Neal Helm did Truman a lot of good in St. Louis by virtue of being able to put on the pressure.

MORRISSEY: Was there an effort you know about in St. Louis to get newspaper support, let's say from the *Post-Dispatch*?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, there was plenty of effort, but the *Post-Dispatch* and the *Globe Democrat* both invented new terms to abuse Truman. They were one thousand percent anti-Truman and the *Star* was too, although not quite as bad as the other two. The *Star* was later taken over by the *Post-Dispatch*, I believe? The *Star* was an evening paper and it was taken over by the *Post-Dispatch*. The St.

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Louis papers were very much in favor of Lloyd Stark.

MORRISSEY: Does the name David Berenstein mean anything to you?

VAUGHAN: Dave Berenstein, yes. Dave Berenstein acted as campaign manager for Mr. Truman's campaign there in St. Louis. Dave was a lawyer and a very, very good speaker and a very active, energetic sort of a fellow. He went around and organized all the Truman for Senator Clubs in the various wards and he did some great work.

MORRISSEY: Was there anyone who might be called a speech adviser to Mr. Truman during his campaign? Anyone who would write his speeches or help him?

VAUGHAN: No., he wrote all of his speeches; I'm sure of that because I've been with him when he was working on some of them. Mr. Truman speaks better when it's off the cuff, but when you're quoting facts and figures, why, you can't always speak off the cuff.

MORRISSEY: Does the name John Farrington mean anything to you?

VAUGHAN: Well, I can recall the name, but I really can't –

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it doesn't ring any bell with me. I don't have any recollection of it.

MORRISSEY: How about Dr. Thomas Brady or Dr. William Bradshaw?

VAUGHAN: Well, there again, they're names that I can recall having heard, but I don't...

MORRISSEY: How about T. H. Van Sant?

VAUGHAN: Oh, Tom Van Sant. He was a banker from Fulton, Missouri. He was in college with me and a life-long friend of mine. Tom Van Sant was a very enthusiastic Truman Democrat and he used to come to see Mr. Truman in the White House. He always referred to himself as "Mr. Average Voter." He'd come in and tell the President, "Now, I think you ought to know what the average voter is thinking."

The President always referred to Tom as "Mr. Average Voter." Tom was a very down-to-earth, astute politician. I don't know whether he'd know all the ramifications of big city politics, but he knew how it was operated in a rural community like Fulton, Missouri. His advice was excellent and Truman wanted him to accept

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the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture under Clint Anderson, but his business difficulties there -- he had business connections there in Fulton -- that prevented him from doing it. He would have been Secretary of Agriculture -- would have succeeded to the job when Anderson resigned to run for the Senate.

MORRISSEY: Was there much of an effort to get the votes of the railroad unions?

VAUGHAN: Oh yes, I'm sure there was and Mr. Truman, even at that time, he was pretty solid with labor. I had nothing to do with it because I had no connection and didn't have any acquaintances in the thing at all.

MORRISSEY: Was there any effort to cultivate the Negro vote?

VAUGHAN: Well, I don't know of any particular concerted effort that I knew of. We had one awfully good friend, a Dr. Tompkins.

MORRISSEY: William J. Tompkins?

VAUGHAN: Yes, he was a very enthusiastic Truman supporter and he was later Recorder of Deeds here in Washington.

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Mr. Truman appointed him Recorder of Deeds and he did an excellent job, too. He was Mr. Truman's particular connection -- liaison with the Negro population.

MORRISSEY: Did you have any dealings with William Hirth of the Missouri Farmers Association?

VAUGHAN: Yes, he was a friend of Truman's. I remember on several occasions he and Senator Truman spoke on the same platform at some of the Democratic rallies during the '40 campaign.

MORRISSEY: How about James Aylward? Does that ring a bell?

VAUGHAN: Yes, Jim Aylward was usually in our corner, but not always. You couldn't count on Jim one hundred percent. Jim had been national committeeman. I believe he was at that time. I'm not sure. But if things were going good, why, you could count on Jim, but you couldn't always, I don't think. That's my recollection; I may be doing him an injustice, but as I recall...

MORRISSEY: How did Mayor Dickmann of St. Louis figure into this campaign?

VAUGHAN: Well, of course, Barney was interested principally,

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along with Bob Hannegan, in electing Larry McDaniels and while Barney was a good friend of the President's to all intents and purposes...

MORRISSEY: Let me throw two more names out General, Charles M. Howell and Roy McKittrick? Do they mean anything in the context of the 1940 campaign?

VAUGHAN: They were there and just exactly what they did I wouldn't be in a position to say.

MORRISSEY: Did the Battery "D" boys help Mr. Truman out in this campaign?

VAUGHAN: Well, I don't know how much political savvy those characters had, but I'm sure they were there and doing a lot of talking and I know they all voted for him.

MORRISSEY: Do you think Mr. Truman's Masonic connections in Missouri helped him? As I remember, he was Grand Master?

VAUGHAN: Yes, he was Grand Master in '40-'41. He was Grand Master after the election. Yes, I kind of imagine it was helpful.

MORRISSEY: Was there any effort, to your knowledge, to

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dissuade FDR from endorsing Lloyd Stark in that campaign?

VAUGHAN: I don't know whether there was any effort at all. Champ Clark -- Bennett Clark -- could have, but I don't think Bennett Clark was...Bennett Clark never did favors for Harry Truman and Harry Truman in return never did for Bennett Clark.

MORRISSEY: Was Milligan, to your knowledge, maneuvered into the primary to take votes away from Stark, or did he decide to run on his own?

VAUGHAN: Oh, no, I think Milligan's candidacy was perfectly legitimate; he wanted to be nominated for the Senate. It just happened that there were three candidates. I don't think that there were any particular ulterior motives, except that they were all trying to get nominated.

MORRISSEY: Mr. Truman later appointed Milligan to a Federal job, I think, in Kansas City.

VAUGHAN: Yes, I can't recall what it was, but I remember...

MORRISSEY: Was it the District Attorneyship? I'm not sure

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myself. I'm guessing.

VAUGHAN: U. S. Attorney, I believe,

MORRISSEY: I think that's right.

VAUGHAN: Yes, I believe so, in the Western District of Missouri. That's about the same time that Fred Canfil was made marshal of the Western District.

MORRISSEY: Why do you think Stark lost? Most people thought he was going to win.

VAUGHAN: Well, I think it was Truman's energetic and forthright campaign.

MORRISSEY: Was there ever any doubt that Mr. Truman might lose to Manvel Davis who was his Republican opponent?

VAUGHAN: Oh, no, no, I don't think so. In fact, I would say ninety-eight percent of the people in Missouri can't ever remember that Mr. Davis was ever -- who Mr. Davis is and after Truman got the nomination, why, he had it made.

MORRISSEY: When did you become secretary to Mr. Truman?

VAUGHAN: The second day of January, 1941.

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MORRISSEY: Why was the Truman Committee established?

VAUGHAN: In about February of '41, we began to get a lot of letters from people complaining about the great waste of manpower and materiel in the construction of Fort Leonard Wood and Camp Crowder, and it was our system to -- when I got a lot of correspondence about any one subject, I would save them all until I got a hundred or two, and I would write a letter that would answer all of them, and take it in and get Mr. Truman's approval of it, and then I'd answer all of the letters on that subject. Well, I took it in to Mr. Truman and he said, "Don't answer that until next week. The Senate is going to be in recess for two or three days next week and I'll -- if this is happening in Missouri, it's happening out here too, so I'm going to take my car and drive around."

So he did and drove down to Camp Lee and Camp Pickett and Fort Eustis and over here at Meade and when he came back he said, "Boy, they are really wasting manpower and materiel and everything else. I think something ought to be done about that but first I'm going to talk to Bob Reynolds about it."

Well, Bob Reynolds was chairman of the Military

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Affairs Committee and Mr. Truman was a member of the Military Affairs Committee. So, he went to Bob Reynolds and tried to persuade Bob Reynolds to appoint a subcommittee to investigate the war effort and Bob Reynolds didn't go for it. He said he had no time for that. So Truman went on the floor of the Senate and stated the situation, and asked for a special committee to investigate it. He sold the Senate on the idea and they voted to have a special committee and they made him chairman. They voted the magnificent sum of \$15,000 for committee expenses. Well, as soon as they started they got another appropriation and another and altogether, in the about five or six years that Mr. Truman was chairman, they probably spent a half-million dollars. But I'm sure the Truman Committee activities, and the very existence of it, saved the American tax payers eight or ten billion dollars.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman make this tour to these army ports completely unannounced? Did he just drive in?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, completely unannounced. He'd just drive in and look around. Nobody knew he was senator or who he was. He just went around and they thought maybe he

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was a sub-contractor or something.

MORRISSEY: Were many of his Missouri constituents interested in defense contracts at the outset of World War II and possibly upset by this?

VAUGHAN: I don't recall. There were undoubtedly a fair share of them, I have no doubt. I don't recall any particular ones.

MORRISSEY: How did Mr. Truman go about hiring himself a staff for this committee?

VAUGHAN: Well, of course, it came out in the papers that the committee had been authorized and there were plenty of applications. There were several people, I can't recall now exactly who it was that recommended Mr. Hugh Fulton as the chief counsel.

MORRISSEY: I've heard that it was Robert Jackson.

VAUGHAN: Justice Jackson -- well, that could be. Jackson was in the Department of Justice then; I don't think he was on the Supreme Court. That probably was true, but Mr. Fulton's commitments in New York made it impossible for him to report for about six or eight weeks,

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and so the first two people that applied for jobs on the staff were Charles Patrick Clark, who Mr. Truman hired as associate counsel and Matt Connelly, whom he hired as investigator. Then the staff was built up from there. It never was a terrifically large staff like a lot of committees have. Both Connelly and Clark had had committee experience and investigating experience before.

MORRISSEY: Was Bill Boyle from Kansas City a member of that staff?

VAUGHAN: Yes, Bill Boyle had just lost his job out in Kansas City as police commissioner. I think there was a change of administration and he was out as police commissioner -- so Mr. Truman had me wire Bill and said that there was a job for him on this committee as an investigator if he wanted to come. Bill, of course, said he wanted to come and he started right out immediately with his family -- his wife and two daughters, and he got in all kinds of weather. He was snowed in, in West Virginia and it took him about a week to get here, but he finally made it.

MORRISSEY: What was known as "Harry's Doghouse?"

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VAUGHAN: Well, there were three-room and four-room suites in the old Senate office building and Truman had a four-room suite -- 240. You went into the center, into one room where the receptionist was and the stenographers sat and to the right was my office, to the left was Mr. Truman's office and beyond Mr. Truman's office there was another room, a little smaller room, where we had two or three leather couches, big leather chairs and an ice box and a supply of refreshments. It was used for conferences, and Mr. Truman would sneak in and take a nap on one of the couches occasionally. There was a desk in there where you could go if you wanted to do some work -- do some dictating and not be interrupted. I don't know where it got the term, "The Doghouse."

MORRISSEY: How did Mr. Truman administer his staff for this committee? How did he divide up assignments and that sort of thing?

VAUGHAN: Well, the counsel assigned the various people. They would sometimes have two or three investigations going at the same time. While they were having hearings on one matter, they would be laying the groundwork for other investigations. For example, the hearing on –

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I think, the first hearing was on the construction of camps which was the thing that really started the committee. Then they had a hearing on synthetic rubber plants; and a hearing on aluminum. There was a lot of controversy over the oil industry and its application to the national defense. So, various men were assigned to make an investigation along a certain line and they were working on several, as I say, at the same time.

MORRISSEY: Actually, you were in the Senator's office as a member of his Senate staff?

VAUGHAN: Yes. I helped in the hiring of some of the first people and in the formation of the committee. When Mr. Truman had gotten his authority from the Senate, then he went on the air at one of the radio stations here explaining what the committee was going to do, a thirty minute program. I remember going up with him on that particular occasion when he made his broadcast. But I was in the Senator's office and so after the committee got going I had very little to do with it. Of course I knew all of them and would see them and he'd give me instructions to tell them something sometimes. But

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ordinarily I was running his office -- his senatorial office was separate from the committee.

MORRISSEY: Then a year or two later when you came back from Australia, didn't you serve as...

VAUGHAN: As liaison officer between the committee and the War Department. I was still on active duty and in uniform. I was in the hospital for the first few months after I got back. Then I went back on duty with the committee and not too long after that, Mr. Truman was nominated for Vice President and he withdrew. The day after he came back after the convention he resigned as chairman and Jim Mead of New York succeeded to the chairmanship. When I got out of the hospital, I had what they call "Limited Duty" for a number of months until 1944.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember anything specific about your duties as liaison officer between the War Department and the Truman Committee? What did this involve?

VAUGHAN: Well, I made some inspections for them and went around the country to various places. Then we took a trip, especially after the European war was over (the

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Pacific war was still going on). Our army had moved away from North Africa and had left billions of dollars worth of equipment in North Africa, all conceivable materiel of war. So I took

a trip to North Africa with two members of the committee, Senator Burton of Michigan and Senator Tunnell of Delaware. We went across to Algiers and across North Africa to Cairo and into Palestine -- to Italy and then across to Jerusalem -- Damascus and Jerusalem and down through Karachi, India, looking at all the stuff that we had there, trying to find out whether it was worth bringing home or not, or whether we could sell it. Probably we gave most of it away to the various countries in which it was located. That happened from the day after Christmas to the day before Mr. Truman was inaugurated Vice President, January 20 of 1945.

MORRISSEY: I've read somewhere that the Truman Committee was very effective in lessening military secrecy.

VAUGHAN: Yes, I think they probably were because they had carried this restricted information thing to a ridiculous extreme and when we put it to the test, why, they didn't have a leg to stand on when they refused

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to permit the Senate to have certain matters. And so, being as we busted it open, then a lot of Congressional committees busted it open. I remember Mr. Truman used to refuse to accept fees for any writing or speeches, or anything, and he wrote an article that appeared in some magazine and they sent him a fee. He didn't want it and they insisted they couldn't take it back. It was a fee for several hundred dollars -- something like that. So, he gave a dinner for the staff, all the staff and everybody that was connected with the committee. He gave this dinner up at the Statler Hotel and the speaker at the dinner was Dr. Freeman of Richmond, the great authority on the Civil War. Freeman's remarks were very enlightening. He compared the Truman Committee with the very famous Committee on the Conduct of the War in the time of the Civil War.

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Second interview with General Harry H. Vaughan in his home, Alexandria, Virginia, January 16, 1963. By C. T. Morrissey, Harry S. Truman Library.

MORRISSEY: Now, the last time we were talking, General, and the time we had trouble with the tape, we were in the midst of a story about a dinner speech by Douglas Southall Freeman who was speaking to members of the Truman Committee, is that right?

VAUGHAN: Yes, as I said before, I might as well repeat it, Mr. Truman refused to accept fees for speeches and articles that had to do with the Truman Committee, but he wrote an article for some magazine and they insisted on sending a check. He didn't want it and sent it back but they insisted, for some reason or other, that it would mess up their bookkeeping or some foolishness like that. Anyway, they sent it back. It was a check for five hundred dollars, I believe, something like that. And so the President insisted on spending it on a dinner for all the members of the staff, and all the people that were connected with the committee. He got Dr. Freeman from Richmond to be the main speaker. Freeman's topic was comparing the Truman Committee with the Committee on the Conduct of the War at the time of the Civil War.

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He figuratively stressed the great difference between that and the Truman Committee which made no attempt to interfere with the running of the war, the tactics, the technique or anything military at all. All they were interested in was the most expeditious and the most economical operation of the industrial part of the war effort. And he said that history would make that great distinction between these two committees. He was very complimentary in his remarks about the Truman Committee.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall that Senator Truman had any dealings with General George Marshall during these years?

VAUGHAN: Yes, yes, he did. Probably just the normal dealings that any senator on -- Senator Truman was on the Military Affairs Committee and, of course, he had a lot to do with Marshall who was Chief of Staff. After the Truman Committee started, he had a lot to do with Marshall and Marshall appeared before the committee, I believe, one or two times. Then there was that rather amusing incident where Mr. Truman went over to see Marshall and said, "I'd like to go on active duty. I'm a colonel, in the field artillery."

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Marshall said, "How old are you Senator?"

And Truman said, "Fifty-six," or whatever it was at that time.

The General said, "Why, you're too old, Senator."

And Truman said, "Why, I'm not as old as you are by three years, General."

Marshall said, "Yes, but I'm a general and I'm in and you're a colonel and you're not in."

When Marshall was asked some time later if he would have made the same remark if Truman had asked him something like that when he was President, he said, "I think I would, but I would have been more diplomatic about it."

MORRISSEY: I think we can go on now to the 1944 convention and Mr. Truman's nomination as the vice-presidential candidate with Franklin Roosevelt and the '44 election. Did you go to Chicago...?

VAUGHAN: No, I did not go to the convention because I was on active military duty at that time as liaison officer between the War Department and the Truman Committee. I was a lieutenant colonel as I remember, and there was no occasion for me to be at the convention. Uniforms are not usually welcomed at political conventions, but

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I followed it and I knew all the ins and outs of what was going on beforehand and then I got firsthand reports on it from the vice-presidential nominee when he came back.

MORRISSEY: By the ins and outs beforehand, would you say that Mr. Truman had made any conscious effort to obtain the vice-presidential nomination?

VAUGHAN: No, no, not the slightest, because he had promised Jimmy Byrnes that he would nominate him for vice president and that's why he refused to let his name be considered. They had already started the balloting and he still refused to have his name considered. He was talking in Bob Hannegan's room at one of the hotels, the Blackstone, I believe, when Mr. Roosevelt called Bob Hannegan and asked what the trouble was. Hannegan said, "Senator Truman won't consider -- he says that he's made a commitment to Jimmy Byrnes and he can't go back on that."

Roosevelt said, "Let me talk to him." So he got on the phone and he said, "Senator, we want you on that ticket and we don't want you to split the party by any argument at this time."

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Truman said, "My commitment to Byrnes...."

Roosevelt said, "I'll talk to Jimmy Byrnes and he'll relieve you of that commitment."

And Truman said, "All right then, there's nothing else I can do if he'll relieve me of that commitment."

So Roosevelt called Byrnes and Byrnes called Truman back and relieved him of his promise. I don't think Byrnes wanted to, but that there was nothing else he could do when Mr. Roosevelt asked him.

MORRISSEY: Is this the way either Mr. Hannegan or Mr. Truman or both of them described it afterwards?

VAUGHAN: Yes, they described it to me afterwards. I believe I'm correct in my recollection that John Snyder was present when this conversation was going on and he also recounted it -- gave me an account of it.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman have much to do with President Roosevelt when Mr. Truman was serving on the Truman Committee? Were they close in any way?

VAUGHAN: Oh, no, they were not close at all. I don't think he saw the President all during 1941. I doubt if he saw the President a half dozen times and I think he had one --

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maybe two -- private conferences with him that had to do with the committee business. But the other times he saw him were at large functions.

MORRISSEY: Was one of these conferences concerning, at that time, the unknown A-bomb project in New Mexico?

VAUGHAN: No, I don't know that there was any conference, but he knew -- everybody knew that there was some top secret matter going on out there and Truman was going to send me out to make an inspection. George Marshall came to see Mr. Truman and he said, "I have instructions from the President to ask the Truman Committee to give us the benefit of the doubt on that and not to make any inspection of it. This is a personal request of the President of the United States."

And Mr. Truman said, "Well, in a case like that, we'll just forget all about it. We won't attempt to."

MORRISSEY: You say in your memoir that many people in Washington have "inside stories" about how Mr. Truman got the vice-presidential nomination in 1944. I wonder if you could recall some of these and why do you dismiss them?

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VAUGHAN: Well, there were all kinds of theories, but the real fact is that Truman did not attempt to get it, did not want it and until the last moment, as I described, refused to even let his name be considered. In the first place, a lot of people wanted Henry Wallace off the ticket because of what they thought was his doubtful enthusiasm for the war effort. Henry was an America Firster and a lot of peculiar ideologies at that time, and so Wallace was not to be considered. Jack Garner had been for two terms and Wallace for one. Jimmy Byrnes was being advocated by quite a group but labor took a pale view of Jimmy Byrnes -- wouldn't go for him. There were two or three other people that might have been considered except for labor. Because of Senator Truman's very favorable publicity that he'd gotten by virtue of the very excellent work of the Truman Committee, he was considered as a logical candidate and suggested, I'm sure to Mr. Roosevelt by Bob Hannegan. I think that Hannegan had more to do than anybody in selling Roosevelt on the idea that Truman would be the logical vice-presidential candidate. I think that's what happened and I'm sure that that's the opinion

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that Mr. Truman had.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall any of these "theories" you just referred to?

VAUGHAN: Senator Byrd of Virginia, at a rally in Berryville along about 1950, made a statement that Harry Truman came to him on the first day of the Chicago convention and asked if he could have the support of the Virginia delegation when the convention voted on the vice-presidential nomination. Several people who were present at that rally told me afterwards -- and told me separately -- that Byrd made that statement. It's wrong because, in the first place, Harry Truman wouldn't ask Senator Byrd for anything because he was committed to Byrnes. If he asked for anyone's support he would have asked it for Byrnes. Harry Truman didn't ask for anyone's support for himself until after F.D.R. had phoned him.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman have much to do with Bob Hannegan becoming Chairman of the Democratic party?

VAUGHAN: Hannegan really didn't want to become chairman.

Early in 1944, probably in February, when he heard that

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he was being considered for the chairmanship, he said he wasn't interested. "Hell, I don't want it," he said to Mr. Truman. He asked Truman what he should do if he was offered the job and I recall Truman saying "tell them you won't take it unless the President asks you directly." Neither Hannegan nor Truman expected the President to call directly, but he did. Hannegan called Truman back and asked sarcastically: "what do I do now, Coach?" Truman laughed. "You take it," he said. Truman told me about this about fifteen minutes after it happened. I doubt if Truman had anything more than this to do with Hannegan becoming chairman of the party. Hannegan, as I say, was a strong backer of Mr. Truman for the vice-presidency. When the convention was balloting for the vice-presidential nomination Hannegan went on the floor and spoke to Harley Kilgore, or Mon Wallgren, I can't recall which, and urged whichever one it was to try to get Sam Rayburn's attention. When Rayburn finally asked what was wanted the response was "All I wanted was to change my vote from Wallace to Truman." That started the great surge to Truman.

MORRISSEY: Let me go back a bit. You mentioned two things

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in your comment a moment ago. America First; when Mr. Truman was Senator and the America First sentiment was very strong, I assume that he had no respect for this viewpoint?

VAUGHAN: Oh, no, he was very much opposed to it. He thought it was lacking in patriotism because he thought it was a very dangerous attitude.

MORRISSEY: Why do you think he saw world affairs from what we might call an internationalist's position, unlike his colleague Bennett Clark, whom I think you could call an isolationist without any hesitation?

VAUGHAN: Well, I think it is due to more extensive study and reading on the subject. Harry Truman has always been a very, very intensive student. He's one of the best educated men that I know. As you know he has no formal education beyond high school, but he certainly is well read and well informed. Even during all the years he was in the White House, he read extensively. I'd say he read six or eight daily papers through, and he read all the periodicals and then a lot of the things he had to read by virtue of his position.

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MORRISSEY: Another question that comes to mind from your previous comment: when you mentioned Jimmy Byrnes, is it safe to say at this time that Mr. Truman and Mr. Byrnes were good friends?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, they were very excellent friends. Mr. Truman thought a great deal of him and had a very high regard for Jimmy's ability. He made him his Secretary of State which is certainly imposing a considerable confidence in the person, but Jimmy Byrnes, unfortunately, I think -- when things are going good, Jimmy's fine but he can't stand adversity. He's kind of

dissatisfied with one job after another. He was in the Senate and he withdrew from the Senate; then he was in the Supreme Court which for a lawyer is the ultimate, most everybody would think, and he didn't like that; and he had two or three jobs, War Mobilization Director, I believe. Then when he was Secretary of State he made some decisions that Mr. Truman criticized him for and reversed him on, and he got unhappy with that position and said that he had to resign because of ill health. But within two or three months he was running for governor of his state which certainly would not indicate any delicate

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health, I would think. It's unfortunate that Jimmy couldn't keep on the target.

MORRISSEY: One of the interesting things about Mr. Truman's career is that personally he could be on the best of terms with people whom politically he often opposed. And of course, a lot of people read, I think, more into this friendship than perhaps it deserves. I'm thinking perhaps of his friendship with Burton Wheeler who was at the other end of the spectrum in regard to foreign affairs.

VAUGHAN: Well, he had a high regard for Burton Wheeler's ability and he and Burton Wheeler worked very closely together when Burton Wheeler was chairman of the full committee and he was chairman of the sub-committee on Interstate Commerce, and so he liked Burton and admired him in this particular capacity. But Burton's ideas on the war effort -- he was very much opposed to them. He didn't hesitate to tell Senator Wheeler what he thought about it. They're on the most cordial terms now. I've been with them on several occasions during the last few years when he's been in Washington and Senator Wheeler has been present and they're on very

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cordial, friendly terms.

MORRISSEY: Some people have felt that when Mr. Truman became President that he tended to ignore some of his old Senate pals on the Hill.

VAUGHAN: I think that is less so with Harry Truman than with any man that's ever been in the White House. I've been up there with him -- well, since he left the White House, I've been to the Senate for lunch probably a half a dozen times with Mr. Truman. His old cronies were all there in the office of the Secretary of the Senate, and they weren't all Democrats either. There was a half dozen of his Republican friends that he'd served with in the Senate that he was on very very intimate terms with: Styles Bridges and Arthur Vandenberg while he was still alive...

MORRISSEY: Is this true of Joe Ball?

VAUGHAN: Yes, only Joe Ball, you see, left the Senate. In fact, Joe Ball was not in Washington here much.

MORRISSEY: He was defeated in 1948 by Hubert Humphrey.

VAUGHAN: Yes, he left the Senate in '48 and he left Washington

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shortly thereafter. Ball has been back on two occasions, I think, to reunions of the committee and staff dinners that we've had.

MORRISSEY: The Truman Committee reunions?

VAUGHAN: That's right. The President and Senator Ball are on very friendly relations.

MORRISSEY: Let me get back to 1944 again. Was Mr. Truman bothered by the condition of FDR's health during the campaign?

VAUGHAN: Well, you see, he had seen so little of him during 1944, and he didn't see him because Mr. Roosevelt was not at the convention. He accepted the nomination, I think, over the air by remote control or something, and so Mr. Truman had not seen Mr. Roosevelt personally, or close, for six months. He got back from the Chicago convention; then Mr. Roosevelt came back a week or two later, and he invited Senator Truman to lunch. I remember it was warm weather because he was describing it to me. They had a luncheon table set out under that magnolia tree on the south side of the White House and Mr. Truman and Mr. Roosevelt sitting there in the shade

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of the tree and were served luncheon out there. After the luncheon, he came back into the office about two thirty or three o'clock and he came into where I was sitting at the desk back in the "doghouse" at that particular time. He said, "You know, I am concerned about the President's health. I had no idea he was in such a feeble condition. In pouring cream in his tea, he got more cream in the saucer than he did in the cup. His hands are shaking and he talks with considerable difficulty...It doesn't seem to be any mental lapse of any kind, but physically he's just going to pieces." He said, "I'm very much concerned about him."

Now, I would say that was in August.

MORRISSEY: 1944.

VAUGHAN: Yes, late in August. Mr. Roosevelt, I think, then went down to Warm Springs and felt considerably better when he came back. The inaugural took place on the south portico of the White House. We were all standing out on the lawn in the snow, and I recall there was about fifteen minutes delay in the ceremony which was to take place at twelve o'clock noon. His inaugural address was

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not long. After the ceremonies a line formed, the receiving line, for people to come into the White House, (invited guests) to a buffet luncheon. I suppose there was a thousand or more. He only greeted the people for the first 10 or 20 minutes. By the time we got along in the line, Mr. Roosevelt had excused himself and Mrs. Roosevelt and Mr. and Mrs. Truman were in the

receiving line. Roosevelt's health was a bit better, but he still tired easily so he didn't expose himself.

MORRISSEY: Were you responsible for a Secret Service guard for the Vice President?

VAUGHAN: I guess maybe I was. There had never been any Secret Service for the Vice President and a lot of people were curious about Truman. He'd go places and people would be swarming around. I went over to see Henry Morgenthau. As you know, the Secret Service was under the Treasury, and I just said, "Mr. Secretary, it seems a little bit incongruous to me to have seventy-five or a hundred people guarding the President, which is probably right and proper, but absolutely no one guarding the Vice President."

"Well," he said, "I think that it is. I'll tell

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you what I'll do. I'll detail three men."

I didn't say anything further about it and about a couple of days later, one of these men was outside of the Vice President's office -- the Vice President has a little office back off the Senate floor, off the Senate Library, in the rear of the Vice President's desk. This boy kept sitting out there and the President said, "Who is that young fellow who's been out here? Does he want to see me?"

I said, "No, he doesn't want to see you."

He said, "Who is he?"

I said, "Secret Service."

"Well, what's he doing here?"

I said, "Secret Service is watching you."

"Well, what the hell is this," he said. "When did this happen?"

I said, "It started a day or two ago."

He said, "Bring him in, I ought to meet him."

So, he met him and talked to him and he said, "I don't see much sense in this but if you fellows are detailed to it I'll give you all the cooperation I can."

The three men were, George Drescher and Johnny

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Walker was the second one, and I can't recall who the third man was now.

MORRISSEY: I wouldn't know.

VAUGHAN: Later, when the man who was in charge of the White House detail retired, or was transferred, George Drescher was put in charge of it. John Walker left the Secret Service to be president of a school somewhere after a few years, but they were around the White House after Mr. Truman was President for several years. Drescher went back as agent in charge, I think, in Boston or Philadelphia.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman when he was Vice President tend to prepare himself for the eventuality which did...

VAUGHAN: I think that he realized and was concerned over the thing -- over Mr. Roosevelt's health -- but as is so common, people dread something happening so much that they just refuse to think about it and figure if they don't think about it, it will go away. So he just wouldn't let himself imagine that such a thing was going to happen.

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MORRISSEY: How did he administer his office as Vice President? Did he apply the same techniques and routines he had used in the Truman Committee and in the Senatorial Office as far as staff assignments?

VAUGHAN: The Vice Presidential office was very little different from the Senatorial office. He had a secretary and four stenographers -- four clerks. You see, I was attached to the committee, but I was in his office most of the time, and when he got to be Vice President, he had those same people there and he had me as Military Aide. That's all that he had all the time he was Vice President.

MORRISSEY: Why did he choose to be the first Vice President to have a Military Aide?

VAUGHAN: Well, I don't know. I was around and he probably just wanted to give me something to do. There's no reason why the Vice President shouldn't have aides, military and otherwise and so he asked General Marshall if he wouldn't designate me as Military Aide and General Marshall said, "Certainly." It just happens that he was the first person that ever asked for one, so I was the first one that ever filled the job.

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MORRISSEY: Did the press "take off" on this?

VAUGHAN: Oh, no, it was mentioned, but I don't think....They didn't give it much play. It was mentioned -- I was Exhibit A in one issue of the *Reserve Officers Magazine* because I was a reserve officer and the first reserve officer who had been Military Aide to the Vice President.

MORRISSEY: When Mr. Truman became President, did his routine in operating the presidency remain pretty much as it was at the outset or did it change as time went on? In other words, was he feeling his way in trying different alternatives?

VAUGHAN: Well, to a certain extent he felt his way. In the first place, when he became President, of course, very suddenly, he knew nothing. Mr. Roosevelt, even though he must have known that his health was not good, probably took the same attitude that Mr. Truman did, just didn't want to think of it -- if you don't think about it, it won't happen. He had never talked to Mr. Truman a minute on what happened at Teheran, and what happened at Yalta, and what happened at Casablanca, so Truman

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was not prepared at all. He didn't know any of the commitments we had made to Russia or to France or to Great Britain, and so when all of a sudden he had this job, he just had to do a terrific lot of reading and research. He talked to everybody that had been to Yalta; everybody that had been to Teheran and everybody that had been to Casablanca, to any of those conferences; he talked to all of them; he talked to Mrs. Roosevelt and even talked to Anna Roosevelt, the President's daughter, because she had accompanied the President. I'm sure she wasn't in any of the conferences but he thought she might have overheard some casual conversation that might give him some pointers. It was a terrific job to try to prepare himself because the Potsdam Conference was scheduled. We left for the Potsdam Conference on the 5th of July. This was April, with the conference sixty days later, and that's an awfully short time to get prepared. It's unfortunate because -- I can recall meetings at the Potsdam Conference where some item would come up and Mr. Churchill said, "Now, Mr. Roosevelt promised me he would do so-and-so." Well, you don't want to doubt Mr. Churchill's word, but

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Mr. Churchill is a man who is dedicated to do everything possible to the interests of the British Empire. I'm sure he demonstrated that sufficiently. Mr. Joe Stalin would say, "Now, the President Roosevelt promised that he would..." Everybody within the sound of his voice suspected that it was a lie from start to finish but how could you prove it? It was most difficult.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman express himself on his difficulties at Potsdam to you?

VAUGHAN: Oh, he expressed it to me -- to his staff on several occasions but he didn't express it publicly -- not for publication.

MORRISSEY: I understand that Mr. Latta and Mr. Hopkins on the White House staff had very complimentary things to say about the way Mr. Truman would conduct...

VAUGHAN: Well, Mr. Latta was the chief clerk.

MORRISSEY: Actually, I guess it's Judge Latta.

VAUGHAN: They call him judge. I don't know whether that is complimentary to him -- whether he ever served as judge. But he was chief clerk and Hopkins was his assistant.

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Now, Latta had been assistant to Rudolph Forster for many, many years. They were the most remarkable pair of people, those two. They exchanged, "Good morning" and "Good evening" and sat across the desk from each other for eight hours, passed papers across and probably never exchanged a word. Latta was very, very reticent. He certainly wasn't loquacious at all. We were at lunch one day and there was nobody else there. The "Judge" and I were the first ones down and for some reason everybody else was delayed. He said, "You know, the remarkable thing," (this was after about two years) "the remarkable difference between Mr. Roosevelt's operations here in the White House and Mr. Truman's, is that Mr. Roosevelt frequently would go a couple of months without having a Cabinet meeting, and he didn't object to controversies between his Cabinet members." Mr. Roosevelt kept the strings of all the departments in his hand and most of his Cabinet were really Under Secretaries. He was the secretary of probably every department. Now with Mr. Truman, he assigned a man a job and didn't want to hear about it. Of course, he wanted the advice as to what was going on, but he allowed the man to run his

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department. For example, when John Snyder was Secretary of the Treasury, I don't suppose John brought any controversial matters to the President's attention once a month, but Truman had Cabinet meetings almost every Friday (I believe it was Friday) regularly. They were not long, maybe sometimes only an hour, but everybody knew what everybody else was doing to a certain extent and there was perfect cooperation. Latta said another great difference was that there were always two or three or four factions in Mr. Roosevelt's staff who were jockeying for positions and for preference with the President. He said that for the two years Mr. Truman had been in the White House, he hadn't noticed any feuds or competition between members of the staff. It was quite remarkable because as far as he could read and as far as he knew, it had not usually been the case around the President.

MORRISSEY: Mr. Truman was careful to run his affairs in an orderly way. That is, he wouldn't use the Rooseveltian technique of assigning too big a job for one man or two men to one job...?

VAUGHAN: No, he had the jobs pretty well divided and he held a person responsible for what he was supposed to do. And

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he was systematic in that he wanted to get work out of the way. Bill Hopkins told me later, oh, this was after Mr. Truman had been in the White House probably five or six years, about the most remarkable speed with which papers went through Mr. Truman. He said, "Unless were waiting for an action of some other department, nothing stays in the White House over 48 hours." He said, "Mr. Roosevelt would go away on a trip and he'd come back, and he'd be busy with something else, and then he'd go away again and come back, and I have had papers waiting for President Roosevelt's signature piled on the table behind his desk for six months. They'd stand there for six months waiting for his signature. Even, for example, pardons or paroles, and an individual who was waiting for his pardon spent six months longer in the penitentiary than he would have if the President had signed."

Different people have different techniques about running jobs, so...The way that Mr. Truman delegated duties to the members of his staff was different from his predecessor and different

from his successor. There's more than one way to being right, possibly, so one may have as many advantages as the other.

MORRISEY: Would the President, (and I'm talking about President

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Truman here) would he be careful to follow up, see that so-and-so is doing his homework after he had assigned him something? Or would he wait until so-and-so was ready to report and not push for a decision that might be premature?

VAUGHAN: I imagine that circumstances governed his action. If there was something immediate or very pressing, why, he'd say, "I'd like to have an action on this by such and such a time," and Rose Conway would remind him of it or something would remind him of it and he'd ask about it. But he was always very considerate and very cooperative in trying to get something done. The one thing about Harry Truman is that he was completely cooperative and completely loyal to his staff in that way -- that kind of loyalty from the top down begets loyalty from the bottom up. In fact, I don't think you can have them one way without another.

MORRISSEY: How would the President run his morning staff meeting? What was his routine there, usually?

VAUGHAN: Well, he had a leather folder on one side of his desk that said, "Staff," and our names were on the various sections and on the other side he had one that

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said, "Cabinet." He had things in those particular spots and when the staff meeting started he would talk about two or three things of general interest and then he'd pitch in and get whatever it was for Charlie Ross or for Clark Clifford or for the Naval Aide or the Air Aide or -- he had three Administrative Assistants. Mr. Eisenhower had a dozen, I think, but Truman never had, I don't believe, over, three Administrative Assistants -- maybe it was four. Let's see, Dave Niles, Dave Bell, David Stowe, and Don Dawson -- four. He'd have special assignments for them too. The morning staff conference usually lasted about forty minutes to an hour.

MORRISSEY: In more than seven years that Mr. Truman was President, he had several press secretaries and you mentioned Charlie Ross.

VAUGHAN: Well, of course, Charles Ross was the first one. Josephus Daniels was the first one, of course, for about a month. We inherited him and he stayed on for about a month. He and Charlie Ross had been in high school together and he hadn't seen much of Charlie for the last twenty-five years because Charlie had been in Washington as head of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Washington Bureau.

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Charlie Ross became Press Secretary, Charlie, I think, died in about 1950, He had been in bad health, and his death was very sudden. It was very much a surprise to me -- I didn't know that Charlie was in serious condition. Then the President chose Joe Short. Joe Short had been the

White House correspondent for the *Baltimore Sun*. Joe unexpectedly -- Joe's death was also much of a surprise to me. I hadn't even known he was ill -- I had seen him two or three days before. Joe died I think just about six months before the end of Mr. Truman's term and he did not appoint a definite...Roger Tubby who had been one of the assistants acted -- Roger Tubby and Eben Ayers and a fellow by the name of Perlman. They all three were running the press matters. Tubby was the one who would attend the staff conferences.

MORRISSEY: That was a rugged job but I would assume that Mr. Truman was satisfied with not just Charlie Ross, but Joseph Short and Roger Tubby and the others?

VAUGHAN: Well, it's a rugged job and it doesn't take so much of literary ability as it takes a man who would have the endowments of a first sergeant, because you really have to ride herd on all that bunch of hoodlum

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reporters that hang around the White House. While Charlie would be an ideal man as dean of a journalism school or as editor of an editorial page, he wasn't tough enough to handle reporters and they used to ride rough shod over him. Joe Short was a little better at that because he was one of them, you see. He'd worked as a reporter. It had been so long since Charlie had been a real working reporter that he'd forgotten how ornery they could be, I guess.

MORRISSEY: One of the curious aspects of Mr. Truman's way of doing things is that he would seek very extensively for good sound advice from practically any source he could think of and yet on the other hand, many times he would seem to go ahead and make his own decision, not in disregard, but counter to the trend of the advice he was getting.

VAUGHAN: Well, he always -- of course, there were some subjects that he didn't submit to the staff because it was none of our business. It was policy that was beyond us, a matter to be decided on by the Cabinet, or by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the Security Council or something like that. But when he had a matter to decide and he asked for the

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opinions of the staff, he wanted everybody's expressed opinion. If somebody failed to say, he'd say, "What do you think about this?"

And then after we'd get through he'd say, "I appreciate all your suggestions in the matter but I'm going to do so-and-so." And that was it.

MORRISSEY: What was it in his personality that...

VAUGHAN: He's asked me on numerous occasions, "What do you think I ought to do about so-and-so?" and I would tell him. And he would say, "Well, I think you're nuts because I'm going to do just the opposite."

I said, "You asked me and I told you."

"Well," he said, "I asked you because I knew you'd tell me, and that's exactly what I want. On this case, I don't think you know what you're talking about." When everything is as free and above board as that, you don't hesitate to express your honest opinion.

MORRISSEY: Given the burdens that the President carries, I think this characteristic is quite remarkable because a lot of men in a job such as that would be so overpowered by the duties and the responsibilities that they would

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almost depend too much on their advisers rather than have the courage to stand up and say, "Thank you for your advice, but I'm not going to accept it; I'm going to go counter to what you think I should do."

VAUGHAN: Well, there was another angle that I think was very fortunate. Mr. Truman never looked back over his shoulder. I can remember occasions, not many, because I right soon learned not to do this, that I'd say, "You know, that so-and-so that we did yesterday or last week, I don't know. From the developments -- seems like a mistake."

He'd say, "We've got plenty of things to worry about and we'll have more to worry about tomorrow. I can't be concerned about what we did. If it's wrong, it was unfortunate, it was considered judgment, but we've got to do something else. There's nothing we can do about that."

And another thing that he could do that -- for example, I'll just take as comparison, Herbert Hoover. Now, I think Herbert Hoover was a man who felt his obligations and his responsibilities very keenly, was very sincere and very conscientious, but he couldn't relax. I think another four years in the White House would have killed Mr. Hoover because he was having his troubles and they

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got him down. Now Harry Truman, when he decides to lie down and take a nap, he can go to sleep in ninety seconds. That is a fortunate thing, because when you relax and you're refreshed and rested, why, you can tackle your problems a whole lot better.

MORRISSEY: The President would have no difficulty relaxing then if he went out on the yacht or down to Key West?

VAUGHAN: When we were flying somewhere in an airplane, he'd say, "Well, I think I'll take a nap." He'd lie down for 45 minutes and he'd get 44 minutes sleep. Remarkable.

MORRISSEY: Was he a man who would get nervous before he would deliver a major speech or let's say, a State of the Union address?

VAUGHAN: No, he didn't impress me as being nervous. He gave plenty of care to preparing it and it was his own speech. He never got up to make a speech, to read a speech that somebody had written for him that he wasn't familiar with, because while a lot of research was done on

speeches and a lot of the wording made maybe by somebody else, he read it over and if it wasn't his way of expressing himself, he changed it. And a major speech,

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for example, a State of the Union speech, probably had ten or twelve drafts to it, but when it was finally made, it was his speech because he had framed every paragraph of it.

MORRISSEY: Would it be fair to say he's the type of man that when he worked, he worked sixty minutes out of every hour and when he relaxed he got the full relaxation out of his...

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes. He was a hard worker and he could cast off the cares and sit down for two or three hours and play poker and he wasn't thinking about a single thing except beating me out when I had a better hand than he did.

MORRISSEY: Is he a pretty good poker player?

VAUGHAN: Oh, he was much too good.

MORRISSEY: Is he a good actor behind a good hand at poker?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes. He liked to bluff and he did it on numerous occasions, but don't count on it. It was of greater delight to him, to chase me, for example, out of a hand and then show me that I had him beat -- that was

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worth a month's pay. And he did it all too frequently.

MORRISSEY: May I ask a few questions about some items concerning the press which are not emphasized in your memoir? One of the things that you don't talk about which was bandied around at the time, was this controversy involving Mrs. Jolly from Australia? What's the story on that. I don't think I know the story myself.

VAUGHAN: Well, when we got over to Melbourne, Australia, we were setting up our office and we (the Army) didn't have a lot of WAGS in those days. The Women's Army Corps hadn't been formed, so while Art Wilson had two civilian secretaries that he'd brought over from the states, we wanted somebody that knew the ropes around Australia. So he sent me up (I was his executive officer), he sent me up to the Office of the Governor of Victoria, which is the state that Melbourne is in, and asked me to inquire where he could get an excellent stenographer. I went up to see -- I can't think of the man's name now -- Sir something or other, I met him and told him what I wanted and he said, "Well, now, my secretary could give you better information along that

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line than I could," and he excused himself.

I said, "I want the best stenographer that we can get, the best secretary that would be of help to us here in our intercourse and dealings with the Australians."

"Well," he said, "I have a young lady in mind. I think she's the best secretary I know of. She's been secretary to so-and-so and so-and-so, but I'm sure he'd relieve her for your use and it would be for your benefit. Her name is Veronica Donovan."

So, I met Miss Donovan and I told her to come up and see the General and she did -- General Wilson. He hired her immediately. I asked the secretary, I said, "We would pay her so-and-so" and he said, "Now, the going rate here, I think, is eight pounds a week." That was about thirty dollars at that time.

I said, "We were preparing to pay her fifty dollars a week."

He said, "Let's split the difference. That would be out of line with what..." So, I think she was paid -- I think we paid her eleven pounds and ten shillings -- I don't know, anyway, it was more than most of them were getting there but not as much as we would have had to pay an American girl. She came and did a very excellent

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job with General Wilson. Then a few months later, General Wilson was called back to duty in the states and she became secretary to the Base Section Commander at Melbourne, Base Section 7, I believe it was. She served with him and then went up to Sidney and was with the Base Section Commander at Sidney. Later, she was secretary to General Eichelberger, who commanded the Sixth Army, and went with Eichelberger up to New Guinea and then up to Japan. She married an Australian Air Force officer by the name of Jolly, I forget what his first name was; I never met him. A year or so after the war was over -- she had been with the Army then about four years -- she felt she was more Yank than she was Australian. So, she came to the United States and worked for the Pakistan embassy for some months -- then for the British embassy. After she had been here several years she filed citizenship papers. She had completed her naturalization when my secretary married and left. I was in need of a secretary, so I asked her if she'd be my secretary, and she agreed to do it. There was a lot of controversy. In fact, there was one congressman from Missouri who criticized very severely the fact that I'd hired an Australian when he said there were so many

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American girls that needed good jobs. I saw him later and asked him, "Who was your immigrant ancestor?"

He said, "Oh, my grandfather came over here."

I said, "Did your grandfather have a job that earned his living before he got his final papers?"

He said, "Yes, I presume he did."

I said, "This young lady was in the same position that your grandfather was."

MORRISSEY: Do you remember who this congressman was?

VAUGHAN: Yes, it was Congressman Curtis of St. Louis.

So, Curtis sparked all this controversy about an alien in this very top secret position. Well, she had been secretary to one of our Army commanders in Japan and that was reasonably top secret, I think. She was a very excellent secretary and did a very good job. She married one of the White House aides, Lieutenant Colonel Art Sweeney, and they are at present in Cambodia. He's head of an Army mission in Cambodia. Of course, long before she was married, she'd become an American citizen.

MORRISSEY: One of the questions I've had on my mind to ask

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you was the way the President would take pleasure in some of the what you might call running humorous incidents within the White House, say between some of the domestic servants, that sort of thing.

VAUGHAN: Well, the President was on very friendly terms with everybody. He spoke to everybody as he walked through -- the gardener, the painters, and had something to say about what was going on. He treated everybody with a great deal of courtesy, which was a surprise to them because Mr. Roosevelt, by and large, was too busy and preoccupied to even notice. Mr. Eisenhower treated everybody in the White House the same way he would treat a private soldier on sentry post; he would just pass him as if he was part of the furniture. But Mr. Truman knew all of his Secret Service men by their first names and would talk to them when he'd go walking with them and betting them a dollar whether it would or would not rain before noon and that kind of thing.

MORRISSEY: He was a great expert on weather conditions.

VAUGHAN: Yes, he fancied himself as quite a weather prophet.

MORRISSEY: Was he accurate?

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VAUGHAN: Well, I don't know. There was always an argument. I don't know if anybody ever kept a score on his prognostications or not but he kind of fancied himself as being an expert on the matter. I remember one feud that went on for at least five or six years. Fields was the butler and he had been butler for eighteen or twenty years. There was another man who had been there equally long, another colored man, by the name of. John Pye. John Pye had originally been a messenger but they have a score of men who can double as waiters. Then when they have a big dinner, they've got the messengers, and a lot of the men that do other things during the day who can double as waiters, and John Pye had been a waiter; he'd been there about twenty years, I think. John ran the mess. The White House secretaries had a little lunch room downstairs and Pye used to cook for us and there was about -- oh, twelve or fifteen people that ate down there.

Whenever anybody had a birthday, he always wanted to give a party. On the slightest provocation, he'd give a party and invite the wives and invite President and Mrs. Truman. The great moment in Pye's life is when we'd all be assembled down there, and he'd stand at the door and say, "Ladies and Gentle

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mens, the President of the United States," When held make that pronouncement, he'd do credit to Buckingham Palace. When the President would come down to lunch, he would say, "Pye, I told Fields this morning at breakfast, that I was coming here to lunch and he gave me some bicarbonate of soda to take in case what you served poisoned me."

Pye would appear to be very, very indignant and would make some very insulting remark about Fields' judgment on the matter of cooking and his inability to be any judge at all. Of course, the President that night at dinner, if there was just the family, when Fields would come in would say, "Well, I had lunch with Pye today and he induced me to eat a double portion of everything because he said I wouldn't get anything fit to eat over here tonight." That went on for years and each one expected it and each one enjoyed it and it never seemed to get old. I suppose I've heard them exchange insults fifty times.

MORRISSEY: Was Mr. Truman a man to be concerned that protocol be honored or was he more informal?

VAUGHAN: Oh, he was very informal. He appreciated the

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necessity of a certain amount of protocol. For example, when he dedicated the Truman Library. Stanley Woodward and his wife were in Europe at the time and Mr. Truman wrote a letter to Mrs. Edith Helm, who had been Mrs. Truman's social secretary and Mrs. Roosevelt's social secretary and, I think, she'd been social secretary for Mrs. Wilson too. Well, he asked Mrs. Helm if she wouldn't come out to the dedication of the Library. He said, "There's going to be a lot of important people out here, and I want you to handle protocol for me." Mrs. Helm wrote back and said, it was too hot in Independence in July, that she was getting too old to take trips like that, and, in the third place, there was no sense in her going out there for any protocol reasons, because he never paid any attention to protocol when he was in the White House. Likely he doesn't pay any attention at this late date.

MORRISSEY: That's Mrs. Helm -- H-E-L-M? Not to be confused with the other two Helms.

VAUGHAN: Oh, no. This is Edith Helm. She died about six or eight months ago. A most delightful person.

MORRISSEY: When did all this controversy with the press

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begin; what sparked it off, all these...?

VAUGHAN: Which controversial issues?

MORRISSEY: Well, I'm just thinking of criticisms in general and stories about yourself, your activities?

VAUGHAN: Well, they began, I think, about the second day after Mr. Truman was sworn in as President, and they continued off and on during the entire almost eight years.

MORRISSEY: Why did they begin? Did they just single you out as a target for the President?

VAUGHAN: Well, it was known that I was a close personal friend and I came in there with him as his aide. I'd been his aide as vice-president and his secretary while he was Senator and so I was just a natural whipping boy, I imagine.

MORRISSEY: Did you think about resigning any time during Mr. Truman's presidency to defend yourself?

VAUGHAN: Well, I never did think about it. He always insisted that I shouldn't take it to heart because it

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was aimed at him really. That was the time that he developed that classical remark that's been attributed to him scores of times, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." Along about '48 or '49, I was being investigated by a committee composed of Mr. Joe McCarthy, Karl Mundt, and Margaret Chase Smith. The chairman of the committee was Senator Hoey. There were three other Democratic members of the committee, but they never attended hearings -- they were too interested in other things. I was getting a lot of abuse in the press about numerous matters and I went in one day to the President and said, "It's more important that your administration have a bit of tranquility than it is that I stay around here, so if I should ask to go on inactive duty, it might relieve the situation."

"Harry," he said, "you and I came in here together and we're going to leave together and I don't want to hear any more of this damned foolishness about you wanting to resign."

So, I never brought the matter up again.

MORRISSEY: Did he prefer that you not testify at some of these congressional hearings?

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VAUGHAN: Oh, no, no. I could have, of course, refused to testify. The Presidents staff don't have to testify, but I said I wanted to do it and he said, "By all means, go ahead."

The first morning I went up before the committee, I went into see him before going up there and I said, "Well, I'm going up to see the committee this morning." (The committee was to convene at ten o'clock, I believe.)

He said, "Harry, you have run your job the way I wanted you to run it and if I'd wanted you to run it any differently, I'd have told you. You go up there and tell them to go to hell."

Well, I didn't exactly do that, but I tried to convey that opinion -- that impression on one or two occasions. I don't know whether I did or not.

MORRISSEY: When all this talk about corruption and disloyalty was being bandied around in the press and directed specifically at White House staff members or people supposedly in high places in Government, was there any deliberate effort by people on the White House staff to try to protect themselves from this

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type of slander, I think that's what it amounted to?

VAUGHAN: No, I don't know of any.

MORRISSEY: What can a man do to protect himself in a situation like this?

VAUGHAN: I don't know of anything you can do; there's nothing you can do. You have no recourse. If you answer them in the press, it just stirs it up further and gives it added coverage in the press. You can't sue anybody. A person on the White House staff couldn't sue anybody for libel. I had a score of occasions when I could have sued Pearson for remarks that were absolutely libelous, but it would just make it more newsworthy if I did, so the only thing you can do is ignore it.

MORRISSEY: In 1948, did you think the President was going to win that election?

VAUGHAN: I thought so. I had a list of the states that I kept under the blotter on my desk and I showed it to a half-a-dozen people, so I can prove that I had it along about the end of September. The only mistakes that I made are that whenever I thought a state was

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doubtful, I gave it to Dewey. I thought that the two or three Southern states that were carried by Strom Thurmond, I thought they would come back to their senses before election time and would be in the Democratic column. I erred in regard to those. But I don't recall exactly, I think Truman got three hundred and fourteen electoral votes, I'm not sure.

MORRISSEY: I don't remember the precise figure.

VAUGHAN: And I think my figure was three hundred. He got a few more than I gave him in my prophecy.

MORRISSEY: Why did you figure that a lot of people would vote Democratic when a lot of the so-called pundits were predicting that they would vote Republican?

VAUGHAN: One of the principal things was, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* and the Kansas City *Star-Times* were absolutely sure that Truman was going to be defeated. In the years that I have known both of those publications, they have never been right. So, I didn't see any reason why they should be right this time.

MORRISSEY: Did you participate in any way in this campaign,

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or did your uniform tend to restrict your...

VAUGHAN: Well, my uniform cramped my style, but I was on one or two trips, not the last political trip, but I was on one or two trips and I saw the terrific crowds that were gathering around to hear the President speak. It didn't look to me like the people in the country had lost confidence in the President. They seemed to be very friendly and highly partisan crowds. At a little bit of a town, a town of a thousand people, there would be ten thousand people at the station -- a sea, and that didn't look like they weren't interested.

MORRISSEY: A lot of the press corps on that campaign train felt that people were just coming out to look at a President rather than to look at a man they might vote for.

VAUGHAN: Well, a few people in the town will go, but no farmer is going to get up during the time of year when he's got plenty to do on the farm, he's not going to get up and drive thirty or forty miles to see anybody, unless he's interested.

MORRISSEY: There were a lot of people during that campaign,

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a lot of people who considered themselves good Democrats who didn't think the President was going to win.

VAUGHAN: Oh, certainly, a lot of them. For example, my wife and I attended a luncheon at the Italian Embassy in about August of 1948. I don't remember what the occasion was but there were fifty or sixty people there and sitting next to me was Mrs. Daisy Harriman who, of course, was a Democrat of long standing, at least she would claim she was. And, as you know, she had been a Minister to Norway and she was at that time, I believe, National Committeewoman from the District of Columbia.

We naturally got to talking politics and she said she was so distressed that Mr. Dewey was going to be elected and I said, "Why do you think Mr. Dewey is going to be elected?"

"Well," she said, "Mr. Dewey is undoubtedly going to be elected because I think Mr. Truman is a wholly inadequate candidate."

I told her I didn't agree with her about him, being wholly inadequate and I certainly didn't agree with her about him not being able to be elected. But she was absolutely convinced that Mr. Truman couldn't possibly

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win. About noon on the day after the election, when Mr. Truman's special train came in from Kansas City, she was down at the Union Station to greet Mr. Truman as if she had been in his corner the entire time. And I'm sure that she has convinced herself since that she never had one minute of doubt.

MORRISSEY: I suppose there are a lot of other people the same way. Did you come back from Kansas City with the President after that election?

VAUGHAN: No, I didn't go out there; I stayed here to vote. When we first came out here, Missouri did not have what's known as an absentee ballot, so I registered in Virginia and I've been voting in Virginia since 1941.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman, to your knowledge, ever have any intention of running again in 1952 after he had won in 1948?

VAUGHAN: No, and I'll tell you why I think I had advance information on that, in advance of practically everybody, with maybe the exception of Mrs. Truman. In November or December of 1948, after his election but before his inauguration, I was in his office one day

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to get some signatures on some papers. No one else was there and I said, "Are you going to run for re-election in 1952?"

He looked up from what he was reading and he said, "Have you lost your mind?"

I said, "I don't know; we haven't got time this morning to go into that, but if you are not going to be the candidate in 1952, you had better start getting a candidate ready because some of the Democratic National Committee will come in and cry on your shoulder and say that the party can't win unless you are the candidate and you're just the kind of a party guy that will let yourself be talked into running again."

He said, "I can assure you right here and now that I will not be a candidate for a third term unless the country is in the middle of a war, and I hardly think that's likely. So you can make book on the fact that I will not be the candidate." And he said, "You're so smart on these prophecies, who would you suggest we work up for a candidate?"

"Well," I said, "Well, I would suggest Fred Vinson."

And he said, "I would really go along with that."

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But, of course, it couldn't have been done because Fred Vinson was in doubtful health even at that time and he died after Mr. Eisenhower's election but shortly thereafter.

MORRISSEY: Was there ever any talk of Alben Barkley being a successor to Mr. Truman?

VAUGHAN: No, for the simple reason, that even the last year or so of Mr. Barkley's term as Vice President, he began to show his age considerably. He got very feeble. His signature was hardly legible. He was really showing his age. He came back and served a couple of years as senator, but even so, I don't think he could have -- well, he just couldn't have been elected in view of his physical condition. And then he couldn't have beaten Eisenhower. I don't know of anybody in the country that could have beaten Eisenhower. This hero worship idea was really rampant.

MORRISSEY: Was there any talk about the governor of Illinois, Adlai Stevenson, being the candidate in '52?

VAUGHAN: Well, he was the candidate in '52.

MORRISSEY: Yes. I was wondering when, perhaps to your

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knowledge, Mr. Truman began thinking of Adlai Stevenson as perhaps the man to push for the nomination in '52?

VAUGHAN: Well, no, I don't know exactly when he got in Stevenson's corner. He was a bit provoked with Governor Stevenson because Stevenson wouldn't make up his mind whether he was a candidate or wasn't a candidate. In fact, up to within a few weeks of the convention, Stevenson was vacillating about whether he was a candidate or he wasn't and people didn't know whether really to go all out for him or to choose somebody else. And even the second time he ran, he used the same tactics and wouldn't make up his mind until the last minute.

MORRISSEY: Did Mr. Truman, to your knowledge, ever think seriously of running for the Senate in Missouri in '52?

VAUGHAN: No, he did not. He would have liked to have been appointed to the Senate. I tried to suggest that he run for the Senate because he would have enjoyed it and I think he would have been in an excellent position

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to do the country a lot of good in that spot. But he said he couldn't conscientiously run for the Senate because it would be taking an undue advantage. The aroma, as it were, of his past position would hang around him and would give him an undue advantage to the position. Now if the Governor of Missouri had appointed him -- I wish the Governor had appointed him when Tom Hennings died. He would have liked to have served there in the Senate for two years; it would have been very enjoyable and he would have had a lot of fun, and I think done an excellent job.

MORRISSEY: Was there any likelihood of that? I had never heard of that before, I mean about the Hennings' successor.

VAUGHAN: I think Jim Blair was Governor of Missouri at that time and I think Jim was a little bit interested in the job for himself.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall your first meeting with General Eisenhower?

VAUGHAN: Yes, my first meeting with General Eisenhower was

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at Frankfurt, Germany. At the Potsdam Conference there was a three or four day hiatus right in the middle while Churchill and Atlee and Anthony Eden went back. They had a general election and they went back to vote and count the votes. Much to everybody's surprise, Churchill was defeated. I don't think Churchill had any idea that he would be defeated because he was making plans to come right back two or three days later. Mr. Truman used those three or four days to go around and review two or three divisions. He reviewed the 2nd Armored and the 84th, I believe, and a couple of others I can't recall. We flew over to Frankfurt to General Eisenhower's headquarters, and the General met us at the airport. We went up to his office in the Farben Building. That was the first time I had met him and we had lunch there that day.

Then later, I believe it was a week later, he came to Potsdam to see the President, he and General Bradley and several others -- General Patton -- a group of them came to the Potsdam Conference.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall anything about the boom for Eisenhower as a Presidential candidate in 1948?

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VAUGHAN: Well, there was some talk of it, but I don't think it had any great significance because I don't think Eisenhower at that time had made up his mind whether he was a Republican or a Democrat.

I had a rather amusing experience. I was invited to lunch at the Turkish Embassy, a lunch given in honor of the Turkish -- the Chief of Staff of the Turkish Army who was visiting Washington and making a tour of various military installations in the United States. This was a stag luncheon. I rode up to the Turkish Embassy with Admiral Foskett who was the Naval Aide, I think, at that time, and Admiral Leahy who was the President's Chief of Staff. We got out of the car and a car pulled up right behind us, and out of that car got Stuart Symington, who was Assistant Secretary for Air at that time; Tooey Spaatz, who was Chief of Staff of the Air Force and Dwight Eisenhower, who was Chief of Staff of the Army. All six of us walked in together and parked our hats and went upstairs. The Turkish Embassy has a rather large downstairs lobby and you go up central stairs which split and turn right and left and come back toward the front of the house on the second floor. Upstairs there's a rather big lobby and then to the east there's a large

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drawing room, I guess it's a room 30 by 80, quite a good sized room. The entrance to it from the lobby is in the center of one of the long sides. The Chief of Staff was standing there with the Ambassador, Erkin, and we met the Chief of Staff. I was smoking a cigar and it had gone out, so I walked right straight across the room to the far side where there was a table lighter. To my

right, toward the windows in the front of the building, there was a group of six or eight of the guests who had already assembled. Most of my party, I thought, went on down that direction, but when I set the lighter down I turned around and General Eisenhower had followed me across. The two of us were there by ourselves, thirty feet away from anyone else. He said, "Harry, what's this guy in the Pacific going to do?" (This was in about May of 1948, just before the convention.) I said, "General, I don't know what he's going to do, but I know what his friends are going to try to get him to do."

MORRISSEY: This is Douglas MacArthur you are referring to?

VAUGHAN: Yes, he was referring to General MacArthur. I

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said, "I know what some of his friends are going to try to get him to do, because just two or three days ago, my wife and I were at dinner at Cissy Patterson's home up there on Dupont Circle, and Colonel Bertie McCormick and his wife and Joe Patterson and his wife were there." (You know, Patterson had a New York paper -- what was it -- the New York *Herald*?)

MORRISSEY: The *News* isn't it?

VAUGHAN: Well, anyway, it was a New York paper. "And Bertie McCormick told us about the fact that he had hired a big four engine plane, chartered it, and was going to take a trip around the world. He was going east from here, coming back, he was going to stop in Tokyo and persuade MacArthur to come home on a visit. He was going to pick him up and bring him home on this plane. They were going to land in San Francisco and he would make a triumphal march across the country, arriving in Philadelphia just at the psychological moment to pull a Willkie and get the nomination for MacArthur," I said, "Now whether MacArthur's going to go for that or not, I don't know. But that's what they're going to try to get him to do."

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Ike said, "Oh, that would be terrible. That would be terrible, There's a lot of people that could be President of this country without ruining it, but not that fellow MacArthur. He would ruin the country."

I said, "I don't know about that, but that's what his friends are going to try to get him to do." I said, "I think it would be a mistake because he's not trained for political office; he's a military man." And it just occurred to me that "here's a good chance to get in a lick," so I said, "General, you're in the same fix he is. You're a hero to everybody in the country now but if you become a political candidate, you stop being a hero to about half of them over night. You're in a profession that's not down your alley."

He said, "Harry, I think maybe you've got something."

That was the end of the conversation and we joined the other guests.

That afternoon I was getting Mr. Truman's signatures on some things and I told him about the conversation with Eisenhower and what I had tried to say to Eisenhower, Mr. Truman chuckled and said, "Every time a fellow stoops over in front of you, you just don't

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have to kick him in the seat of the pants:"

MORRISSEY: Do you ever recall President Truman saying anything about this Eisenhower boom in '48?

VAUGHAN: No, I don't recall because I don't think that it had any significance at all. I remember a luncheon over at the Pentagon building and the President was there with Charlie Ross, Clark Clifford, Landry, and Dennison and myself. There was about eight in the President's party. General Eisenhower was the host, and he had General Matt Ridgway and all of his top staff there. The President jokingly said something to Eisenhower. He said, "General, if you ever decide you want to get into politics, you come to me and I'll sure endorse you." That was in -- well, Ike was Chief of Staff from about '46, '47 and '48 -- this was in '48, I believe.

MORRISSEY: Do you remember any response from the General?

VAUGHAN: No, he laughed.

MORRISSEY: Just passed it off.

VAUGHAN: Just passed it off. Everybody else just laughed.

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MORRISSEY: In one of the scrapbooks, I read a letter dated August 4, 1950, actually it's a telegram, pardon me, not a letter, It's a telegram to yourself from Charles M. Dickson. The telegram reads: "May I urge you to suggest to President Truman that he name General Dwight Eisenhower as Assistant Commander In Chief of our Armed Forces." And underneath in the President's handwriting is this: "In a terrible quandary over this." I wonder if you remember anything about this?

VAUGHAN: Let's see, who was it who signed it?

MORRISSEY: Charles M. Dickson.

VAUGHAN: I have no idea who Charles M. Dickson is.

MORRISSEY: I don't either.

VAUGHAN: It was a wire, I remember it.

MORRISSEY: I'm curious mostly about the President's comment.

VAUGHAN: Well, that was kind of ironical, of course. As I remember, the wire was addressed to me and I was supposed to take it up with the President. Well, I just sent it in for his remark and that's what he put on there, "I'm

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in a quandary" -- and that was the end of it. I can't conceive of why -- this was after Ike had been retired as Chief of Staff. At the time you mention, I believe, he was President of Columbia University -- probably about that time. That was even before he went over to SHAPE so the position of Assistant Commander in Chief -- there is no such position in the United States. There's a Commander in Chief but I don't know who the Assistant Commander in Chief would be.

MORRISSEY: What were your responsibilities as coordinator of Veterans' Affairs?

VAUGHAN: Well, it was more in name than in fact. Unfortunately, there are about three or four organizations that have to do with veterans and about fifteen or twenty that think they ought to have to do with veterans and they get crossways frequently and nobody can resolve the arguments. So, it was thought that if there was somebody that could kind of referee the arguments on veterans' matters, it would help things, But the majority of people didn't want to be refereed, so as I say, it was more of a title than it was a real working job.

MORRISSEY: Most of these outfits that you were supposed

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to referee were executive departments and agencies?

VAUGHAN: Oh yes, that's right,

MORRISSEY: Did you have much to do with congressmen who were interested in Veterans' Affairs?

VAUGHAN: Well, yes, I got a lot of calls from numerous congressmen but they were particularly interested in some one particular veteran -- individual cases -- so they weren't interested in policy. They couldn't care less.

MORRISSEY: Was there much pressure from veterans' organizations?

VAUGHAN: Yes, there was pressure from veterans' organizations because they all thought that their advice on the matter should be taken -- the Legion, of course, and the VFW

MORRISSEY: Do you recall any specific disputes that are prominent in your memory that you were called upon to referee?

VAUGHAN: There was one considerable dispute in the matter of the handling of home loans, The Housing Authority

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had one idea; the Veterans' Administration had another idea and the various veterans' committees of the House and the Senate had another idea and we had a meeting that lasted all one afternoon and everybody had a definite opinion and after the meeting was over, everybody, I think, had the same opinion that they'd come in with. I wasn't about to hand down any decision that was supposed to tell Congressional committees what to do, because I wouldn't have gotten to first base. So, everybody aired their views and went home and let nature take its course. I don't think anything ever came of it at all.

MORRISSEY: Can you date that? Approximately?

VAUGHAN: As I recall, that was along about 1950-51, probably '51. It was of so little consequence that I don't think there are any records of it anywhere.

MORRISSEY: Any other disputes that particularly stand out?

VAUGHAN: No, they were mostly over the phone and "what would you advise in regard to this," or "what can you do in regard to that." and frequently there was nothing I could do because people who were in dispute would pay

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absolutely no attention to my opinion. I had sense enough to keep my mouth shut when I knew it was the smartest thing to do.

MORRISSEY: In 1948 there was talk about a merger of the National Guard and the Regular Army and this caused quite a stir at the time. Do you recall anything about it?

VAUGHAN: Well, there was talk; there's always been talk about that. The difficulty was that in 1946, the Reserve had no equipment. For example, I just happen to know about St. Louis. They had a battery of National Guard field artillery there and they used to have a very nice armory. It's since been torn down, but it was on south Grand Avenue. This battery of field artillery, five officers and about ninety-five or a hundred men, had all this valuable equipment, guns and trucks and everything. They used it for about two and a half or three hours every Tuesday evening. That's all the use that the equipment had. In St. Louis there were, at that time, probably three or four hundred young lieutenants and captains of Field Artillery that could

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have used that equipment to great advantage and instead of being used three hours on Tuesday, it would have been used every evening, the entire week, all day Saturday and all day Sunday if it had been possible for the reserve officers to use the equipment. So, I wrote an article for the Reserve officers magazine* suggesting the merger for training purposes, of the Guard and the Reserve. The Guard officers would be the ones in command of the troops but the others would be attached for training -- the Reserve officers would all be attached for training. When this came out the National Guard people who, of course, are very jealous of their rights, privileges, and immunities, almost had a fit. The adjutant general of the State of Maryland, General Milton Rekord, whom I had known for a long time, came over to see me, and you would have thought I

was advocating Communism, free love and every other thing and he just liked to have had a fit. The president of the National Guard Association at that time was Major General Walsh, who was adjutant general in Minnesota. He called me and I could smell the insulation burning off the telephone wires in that conversation. Every governor in the state thought his private army was going to be taken away from him. I

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got a lot of abuse. I had taken the article in and let the President read it, and he said he approved of it heartily. But, of course, nothing ever came of it. Gradually, they built reserve training centers and gave the reserves equipment, so now the reserves, in some cases, are equipped better than the Guard. It would have saved several billion dollars to have done it that other way and would have been six or eight years ahead of where we are. But it was too practical so it didn't work.

MORRISSEY: Did you have much to do with unification of the Armed Services?

VAUGHAN: Well, I was present at many of the meetings and I sat in on a lot of the conferences and I was in the final conference, where the policy was finally decided, in the President's office. It took all of one afternoon. Dennison, I think, had just been made Naval Aide and he and I sat in. We didn't have anything to say. There was the Secretary of War, who I think was Frank Pace at the moment; the Secretary of the Navy was...

MORRISSEY: James Forrestal?

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VAUGHAN: Yes, yes, Forrestal was Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Staff of the Navy, I think, was Denfeld and Chief of Staff of the Army, I believe at that time, was Omar Bradley. Then there was the Secretary for Air, who was Symington and the Naval Chief of Staff for Air, who was Admiral Radford -- oh, there were a dozen men and we argued and argued and argued. Finally, the President said, "Well, gentlemen, we've decided so-and-so. This is our policy. Now, I expect you gentlemen who have expressed opinions a little different from this, to go along. This is my policy and this is the way it's going to be." Everybody agreed that that would be the policy. And some of those Navy fellows went out and within a week they were trying to sabotage the thing.

MORRISSEY: How did the President react to that?

VAUGHAN: Well, the President was very much provoked, but he certainly didn't react as severely as I would have. Radford, who was writing articles trying to sabotage the whole thing, instead of court-martialing him and retiring him from active duty, he kicked him upstairs to command in the Pacific. He was still out in the Pacific when Ike went out there -- that trip that Ike

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took between election and the inauguration to stop the Korean War?

MORRISSEY: The fulfillment of the "I will go to Korea," promise?

VAUGHAN: Yes, when he stopped in Hawaii Radford sweet talked himself into the job of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

MORRISSEY: Did you do much to try to get the boys in line as far as unification was concerned?

VAUGHAN: Oh, no, I was in no position to. I expressed my opinion whenever it was asked for, but in my position I had no authority to influence them at all.

MORRISSEY: Did the President seem to be close to Frank Pace? I noticed he had several jobs in the Truman years.

VAUGHAN: Frank was Director of the Budget and a fairly good one, I guess. The Director of the Budget is the fellow that makes the speeches and takes all the bows and all that. There is a professional staff, second, third, and fourth echelon of professionals in the Budget

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that go on from term to term. They're always in there -- career men. And so, whoever is Director of the Budget, he might know a lot about fiscal matters and might do a good job and another fellow might not know anything about fiscal matters and could still get by. I don't know what Frank knew about being Director of the Budget. I don't think Frank was in any way qualified to be Secretary of the Army.

MORRISSEY: Why?

VAUGHAN: He never had any experience along that line. But the man ahead of him, Royall, was less qualified than he was. And the man that followed him, Gordon Gray, a very likeable, charming, Southern gentleman, didn't know as much about it as Frank did. So the Army took a terrible beating there for about four, five, or six years.

MORRISSEY: Why do you think the President tended to appoint men who didn't have first-hand experience with Army matters?

VAUGHAN: Oh, I don't know. They had demonstrated their ability as executives, I suppose. I don't know.

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MORRISSEY: Did you have much to do with the proposals for universal military training?

VAUGHAN: Well, yes. The President wanted a study made of that and we had about fifty or sixty names of people to consider. He wanted a complete study so that a report could be made to the Congress for them to consider it. I got together about fifty or sixty names and then he picked,

I think, eight out of that. Judge Rosenman was one of them; Anna Rosenberg; President Dodd of Princeton and I think the fourth name that I can recall was Daniel Poling of Philadelphia. The fifth man was a Negro lawyer from Chicago -- I can't recall what his name was now. It seems to me I remember Gibson -- Gibson, I believe. Well, there were three or four more whose names I can't recall. They had about six or eight day-long sessions which were quite remarkable because they were all very, very busy people and they'd come down here. There was a conference room over there in our side of the executive offices there in the east....John Steelman and the aides offices were there -- and there was a conference room right across the hall where they met. They'd meet from about nine thirty

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in the morning until about six or seven or eight at night and they had hearings, A lot of people appeared before them pro and con about universal military training. The only remarkable thing I remember about it is the fact that men as busy as they were could give that much time. I happen to know that when the conference started, there were seven of the nine opposed to universal military training and when they wrote out their report, they were all in favor of it.

MORRISSEY: The President was in favor of this too as I remember.

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes. I've discussed universal military training with him as early as 1922. He was in favor of it then. I'm convinced that if we had had universal military training, we would have never had the attack at Pearl Harbor.

MORRISSEY: You say 1922, do you recall specifically...?

VAUGHAN: Oh, no, this was a summer camp conversation. It was an argument -- frequently an argument when a lot of army people got together. He was very much in favor of it and said it was absolutely essential for the

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security that we have it. I still think it would be a good thing to have because I think the draft is absolutely unfair the way it operates.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall in 1947 that President Truman called on the services to clean house on tax free disability retirement pay for former officers? Do you recall anything about that?

VAUGHAN: No, I don't.

MORRISSEY: The reason I ask, it seems to me there was a clipping or something in one of the scrapbooks and I was wondering if there was any story behind it?

VAUGHAN: Well, that's just slipped my memory. I can't recall anything in regard to that.

MORRISSEY: Did you deal with the War Department when you were the President's Military Aide?

VAUGHAN: Yes. Everything that had to do with the War Department went across my desk because I recall when General Eisenhower came in to thank the President for appointing him Chief of Staff, the President called me over and I went over to his office, (I didn't know

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who was there). Matt said, "The President wants you," So, I went into his office and the President and General Eisenhower were sitting there, He said, "Sit down Harry," and he and Ike went on with what they were talking about. Pretty soon he said, "Harry, I called you over here because I wanted you and the General to have an absolute clear understanding about how I wanted this to work. Whenever I want anything brought particularly to General Eisenhower's attention, I will give it to you and you will give it to the General and call it to his attention." And he turned to Ike and said, "General, whenever you want anything to come to my attention quickly without any loss of time, you send it to Harry and he will bring it in and give it safe-hand to me." And then he turned to me with a twinkle in his eye, "And at all other times you will mind your own damned business."

Ike was very much amused at that and as we walked out I walked out in front with Ike to his car he said, "You know, I was very much amused to hear the President say that, because that is very different from the instructions that Mr. Roosevelt gave his military aide in the presence of the Secretary of War. He told the

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Secretary of War, "Whenever Pa Watson tells you anything, it's an order from me. Even if I never heard of it, it's an order from me." And Ike went on to say, "You can well understand how Pa Watson ran the Department of the Army.

MORRISSEY: When you say Secretary of War, was that Henry Stimson?

VAUGHAN: No, that was the boy from Kansas.

MORRISSEY: Harry Woodring? I just wanted to get the names straight.

VAUGHAN: Yes, Harry Woodring. It was told to me again from another source, by Louie Johnson, who was Harry Woodring's assistant and he was present when it was said.

MORRISSEY: You were involved in getting Winston Churchill to speak at Westminster in 1945 and I notice from the scrapbook that at other times, you asked Fred Vinson and General MacArthur if they could go to Westminster as well? This was news to me; I didn't know anything about this. Both men -- of course, MacArthur was far out of the country and Vinson refused on the basis that he was a member

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of the court and wouldn't take speaking engagements while the court was in session.

VAUGHAN: That's right. Yes, I asked them both, They have a small endowment at the college given by the family of the late Judge John R. Green of St. Louis, called the Green Foundation. The proceeds from this fund are used to bring world-prominent figures to the campus. The President of Westminster College in 1945 had been a classmate of mine there, the class of 1916 - - Frank McCluer, affectionately known by everybody as "Bullet" because he's about five feet tall and a very energetic little guy. He came into my office one day -- it was along in about October of 1945 -- and said, "Mr. Churchill is going to be in the United States in the spring. It sure would be great if we could get him to come out to the college and make a talk."

I said, "Well, why don't you write to him?"

He said, "I got a letter right here," He handed it to me and I read it.

I said, "Let's go in and see what the Boss thinks about that." So, I called Matt Connelly and I said, "Is the Boss busy?"

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He said, "No, his last appointment left and he hasn't got another appointment for ten minutes -- fifteen minutes, something like that."

I said, "Bullet McCluer is here and we'd like to see him."

"Well, if you come right over now. I'll have to throw you out in about five minutes but you can get in right now."

So, we went over in a hurry and went right through Rose Conway's office. I stuck my head in and I said, "Boss, I've found you've got five minutes free and I've got a guy here from Missouri who wants to see you -- Bullet."

He said, "Well, come in, Bullet. How are you?"

They chatted for a minute and I said, "He's got a letter he wants you to look at."

So. Bullet gave it to him and the President said, "I think that's a good letter. That might work. Wait a minute." So he took up his pen, (it was a short letter so there was plenty of room on the bottom) took up his pen and wrote on the bottom in long hand, "Dear Winnie: This is a fine old college out in my state. If you'll come out and make them a speech, I'll take you out and

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introduce you, Signed, Harry Truman." He said, "Now, you send him that."

So, we went out and Bullet was very much elated, About five or six weeks later, he called me up from Fulton and I think if he'd had the window open and his head out the window, he wouldn't have needed the phone. He said, "Mr. Churchill said that he will come and make this talk and that it will be the only public appearance that he will make during this trip to the United States."

Well, they set it up for some day in March, wasn't it? The fifth or sixth of March? The following March anyway. So, he came out and came to Washington and we took him out on the train.

MORRISSEY: Why did he agree only to make one appearance?

VAUGHAN: Well, he had not planned to make any appearances at all. He said he would make this exception because of Mr. Truman's request and he said, "It will be the only appearance that I'll make on this trip," because he was coming over here for some medical check-up. He came to Washington and then to Missouri and then went down to Florida for a couple of weeks, I think. I'm not sure, but I believe he went to Florida after that,

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we didn't come back with him -- yes we did. I'm thinking of another time. Yes, we came back to Washington with him and he went from here down to Florida, that was it. I don't think that there was any significance because he made this appearance he didn't think he could make any other. He hadn't planned to make any.

MORRISSEY: I imagine Mr. Truman had a good time taking Mr. Churchill out to Missouri?

VAUGHAN: Oh, yes, we enjoyed ourselves. He's a most delightful conversationalist and a most delightful companion, you know. One of the most amusing cracks he made was when we were -- you see, Winston Churchill has built up a metabolism, I guess it's been curtailed a bit now, but at that time, his daily intake of alcoholic beverages was at least a quart a day, I mean, of spirits. So, if he went as much as a couple of hours without a drink, I imagine he began to really need it. We got aboard the train and we'd gotten about up here to Silver Spring. Mr. Churchill and his secretary (I forget what his name is -- definitely a roast beef Englishman with a big mustache) and the President and I were sitting there in the car. The President said,

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"What do you have to do to get a drink on this...thing?"

So, I pressed the button and a steward came in and pretty soon Mr. Churchill had a tall whiskey and soda in his hand. He held it up and let the light shine through it, (it was about four o'clock in the afternoon) and he said, "You know, when I was a young subaltern in the South African War, the water was not fit to drink. To make it palatable, we had to put a bit of whiskey in it. By diligent effort I learned to like it." He was quite a fellow.

MORRISSEY: I've heard stories that Fulton is a dry town and you had problems when you got out there.

VAUGHAN: Oh, when we got to the campus. You see, we went to Jefferson City and got off and it's twenty-five miles up to Fulton. We drove up and had a parade through town. Mr. Churchill met the faculty and all the dignitaries, the Governor and everybody was there. Then they took him upstairs in the President's house to one of the bedrooms so he could put on his robe and his hood, and his tam-o'shanter, the black velvet tam-o'shanter, a Cambridge robe, I guess it is. Well, again,

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there had been quite an extent of time when Mr. Churchill hadn't had any pick-me-up, and Mr. Truman said, "Harry, you better get Mr. Churchill a drink before we go into the gymnasium," where the ceremony was going to be. So, I scouted around and it was a little bit difficult. My friend, Tom Van Sant scouted around and found a pint for me. I went out to the kitchen and got some ice and a pitcher of water and a glass and went upstairs. Mr. Churchill was sitting there with his robe on and I said, "Mr. Churchill, here, I thought maybe you might need a little pick-up before we go over to the gymnasium."

"Well," he said, "General, am I glad to see you. I didn't know whether I was in Fulton, Missouri or Fulton, Sahara."

MORRISSEY: Perhaps not too apropos at this discussion, what was the story at Baylor University when you went there with Mr. Truman?

VAUGHAN: We were coming back from Mexico -- Mr. Truman's trip to Mexico and we stopped at Baylor. Mr. Truman was to make a speech at a convocation there and to get a Doctor of Laws degree. As we got out of the cars to go into the headquarters building at Baylor, somebody

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for some unaccountable reason slipped a package in my hand and said, "This is for the President."

Well, we went on upstairs and in this headquarters building, they had two or three rooms upstairs, a sitting room and a bedroom that had been the apartment of the original president of Baylor. It was furnished with furniture -- they were very proud of the fact that this furniture had been brought from New England by covered wagon out to Waco, Texas, and this was the original furniture -- colonial furniture. It was a great, big bed; one of these beds that looked like it had about three feather mattresses on it. It was about four and a half feet from the ground and very billowy looking with great big bolsters. We went in there to put down our coats and hats. I had this package and I took the paper off of it. It was a quart of bourbon whiskey. I couldn't conceive of what we'd do with it or where in the world we'd put -- it was like two tails on the dog. We certainly didn't need a quart of bourbon whiskey when we were about to go on the platform in the auditorium of Baylor University. Baylor University is certainly not a very wet institution I don't imagine. So, I couldn't think of any place to put it except to slip it right under

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where the bedspread was folded back up over the bolster -- I just slipped it back under the bedspread. When the affair was over, we were in a hurry because the plane was ready to take off. We wanted to take off at a certain time because we wanted to be in Washington at a certain time. Of course, there had been more speeches made than should have been made, and the time ran over what was scheduled. Everybody was rushing to get their hats. Oh, I had shown the President this bottle of whiskey and I said, "What will I do with it."

"Well," he said, "put it out of sight; don't let anybody see you carrying that thing around here; we'll be shot."

So, when we got back on the plane, it just occurred to me and I said, "Boss, you know what I did with that quart of whiskey?"

He said, "No."

I said, "I put it in the old president's bedstead."

"My God," he said, "when they find that...Of course, they may not find it for months because that bedspread is only changed once a year, probably." It may still be there as far as I know.

MORRISSEY: Were you concerned with the issue of integration

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of the Armed Services?

VAUGHAN: No, that thing seemed to get started and to be affected with less fanfare and less notice. I didn't pay any attention. I saw in the press every now and then something about integration of the services. I went to a military review somewhere and all of a sudden I saw a company marching by and about every third man was black, much to my surprise. I hadn't realized it was going on. The Army used to, at one time, limit the recruitment of Negro soldiers to ten percent because the Negro citizenship of the United States is about ten percent. Now, I don't know whether they still keep a ratio like that or whether it's of no importance at all, because I've seen some units where the black soldiers were down to one or two percent and I've seen others where it would look like there were about twenty-five percent. So, I don't know whether there's any percentage -- whether they pay any attention to it or not.

MORRISSEY: Historians in the future will probably be very concerned with the question, why a man from Independence, Missouri, should become known throughout many parts of

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the country as an advocate of civil rights when he was President.

VAUGHAN: Well, I don't know why that should be of any surprise. This recent Supreme Court decision on integration of schools, I think was handled with a minimum amount of difficulty in Missouri. They integrated their schools and while they had a little trouble in certain places, there's hardly a child in grade school now that ever realizes -- that remembers when it was ever any different.

MORRISSEY: Do you recall Mr. Truman ever talking about his ancestors who had fought in the Civil War and what-not?

VAUGHAN: Well, you see, his father was, I think, of the wrong age. His father was a young boy about...

MORRISSEY: I don't recall how old his father was when the Civil War was being fought. His father died in 1914, but I can't recall how old he was when he died.

VAUGHAN: Well, he wasn't an old man. I think he died of pneumonia and I think he was in his....Harry Truman, you see, is the oldest child. When his father

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died, Harry was only about eighteen, I think. He died in '14.

MORRISSEY: As you look back on all the years you've served Mr. Truman as secretary in the Senate and as his Aide when he was Vice President and as his Aide when he was President, how had he changed his way of doing things over the years? How was the operation of his office different, let's say, when he was President than when he was Senator?

VAUGHAN: Well, I can't think of any particular difference, except the difference that would have been inherent in the different jobs. Of course, when he was Senator he had a much smaller staff and many fewer problems and much less to do. I think his technique of running the job was pretty much the same.

MORRISSEY: When he was President, was there any great change in the way he did things in contrast, let's say, from the first few months he was President, then well along later?

VAUGHAN: Well, of course, for the first few months, he was feeling his way. Then he got more confident about what

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he was doing and otherwise I can't think of any difference.

MORRISSEY: Would you say that he had confidence in what he was doing well before the '48 election when he was vindicated by the public?

VAUGHAN: Oh, I'm sure he did. He had absolute confidence. What he was doing, for example, when we went over to the Potsdam Conference, he and Jimmy Byrnes and Admiral Leahy and a couple of other chaps -- a State Department assistant secretary -- Jimmy's assistant (I can't think of his name now) -- had conferences all the way over. Every morning, they would have two or three hours of trying to go over all the things that should be on the agenda. When we got to the conference, (the first afternoon meeting) Truman, of course was the only head of state; the other men were both prime ministers. There's a president in Russia only nobody knows who he is, you know, And, of course, there's a king in England, but President Truman was, of course, the ranking person present, so he assumed the job as chairman of the meeting. He asked them if they had agendas and neither one of the others had so his agenda was accepted. Of course, as a matter of course, as every item came up,

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the Russians refused to agree to it. Every now and then, they'd argue and argue and argue and finally they would reluctantly agree to something, which they had intended to agree with really from the start. But that gave them, what they thought was trading material, because then they would come up with some proposition like having Great Britain turn over the Suez Canal to them and Turkey turn over the Dardanelles or some little item like that. Then they'd say, "Now we've agreed to two or three things that you wanted that we weren't in favor of and now it's time for you to agree with some of ours." Kind of a childish approach that didn't fool anybody but themselves, but that's their technique. So we, having an agenda, it gave us considerable advantage.

MORRISSEY: What was Ed McKim's function on the White House staff in the short time that he served?

VAUGHAN: On the day that Mr. Roosevelt died, Ed McKim was in my office and he said, "I'm sleepy; I'm going back to the doghouse and take a nap." So, he went back to the Doghouse and went to sleep. Along came the call from the White House. Matt Connelly and I dashed out and

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grabbed a taxicab and went down to the White House and everybody forgot about poor old Ed McKim. He woke up about six o'clock in the Doghouse and found out that Harry Truman was President of the United States. He didn't know anything about it. He came barging down to the White House like a bat, you know. "Why didn't you wake me up?"

"I forgot about you. I didn't know you were out there."

So he finally got in. He didn't get down there until after Mr. Truman had been sworn in as President. Oh, he was fit to be tied. He was like a kid who had the mumps when the circus came to town and missed the parade.

MORRISSEY: He didn't stay on too long, did he?

VAUGHAN: Well, no, he never intended to stay on. He had an important job and a job in which he had a lot of rank and seniority in the Mutual Insurance Company of Omaha. He got a three months leave of absence, that's all he intended to stay, and Ed was a pretty good executive. The President gave him the job of reorganizing a lot of the help around the White House. The White House under the Roosevelts had been run like a hotel. It

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was a large family with relations and grandchildren and friends and people staying there. The dining room at the White House was like a short-order restaurant. Everybody was getting dinner at all peculiar hours. The Roosevelts had plenty of money and so the expense of the White House didn't concern them much. We discovered when we got in there that there were literally hundreds of people eating at the White House that had no business eating at the White House, and, of course, all the food for the White House comes out of the President's pocket. I don't care how many people eat at the White House, the President pays for it. There was just a lot of extra, surplus help around there that Mr. Truman didn't think they needed. So Ed made a study of that

and suggested this change and that change and, of course, he made a lot of enemies because a lot of the people were being changed out of jobs and they took a pale view of it. That got to the press and the press began to criticize McKim for messing in things that were none of his business. It was his business because Mr. Truman had told him to do it and Ed stuck around for about three months and had a lot of fun, stepped on a lot of toes, kicked a lot of shins and

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then went back to Omaha.

MORRISSEY: How about Bill Hassett?

VAUGHAN: Oh, Bill was a fixture. He'd been there all that twelve years Mr. Roosevelt had been there and he stayed with Mr. Truman all the time as correspondence secretary. Bill had a delightful sense of humor and an unlimited vocabulary, great teller of good stories and jokes. He could write the friendliest letter with the most words saying absolutely nothing, making it all right for not doing what people have asked you to. They were referred to on the staff as a "Hassett Valentine." They were very sweet, but didn't commit anybody to anything.

MORRISSEY: In your years in Washington, is there any one or two representatives of the press who you could term as reliable reporters for our future scholar to read with some sense of reliability?

VAUGHAN: Well, I would say that Eddie Folliard certainly was. He represented the *Washington Post* at the White House all the eight years. He's now feature writer with them, I think. Ernest (Tony) Vaccaro, who I think was with Associated Press. He was an Associated Press

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representative at the White House. I think he's now Associated Press up at the Senate press gallery. Those two occur to me immediately as being completely reliable as to what they would report. Also Pete Brandt who is the Washington representative of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

MORRISSEY: Would you care to go to the other end of the spectrum and isolate one or two that you would warn our future scholar against relying on?

VAUGHAN: Well, I wouldn't place too much credence in Mr. Drew Pearson's accounts. There are several others, in fact, there are numerous others that I imagine are sometimes a little bit biased in their statements.

MORRISSEY: Do you think that Mr. Truman personally was more conservative than his Fair Deal Program would indicate? Or did he believe heart and soul in all the proposals that he presented up to Congress?

VAUGHAN: Well, yes, I think he believed in them, I think he was thoroughly convinced as to the fairness, because Truman is a thorough constitutionalist. I think he takes the Constitution literally that every citizen

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of the nation should have equal rights, privileges and opportunities of every other citizen regardless of race, creed or color.

MORRISSEY: Mr. Truman has said that one of his most difficult problems as President, was getting good people to come to Washington and serve the government and after your own experience in Washington, I would assume that you would understand why a lot of people would shy away from taking a public job for a term or two, not just for reasons of a decrease in salary, but for reasons of their public reputation and what can happen to people?

VAUGHAN: Well, there is a lot to that. A lot of people want to have no part of it because you get considerable abuse. But I'm a little bit unconvinced about many of our people who take jobs on the Cabinet and various other places and talk about the terrific sacrifice they make. They give up a job, but they put all their stock in their wife's name and they get a lot of prestige and notoriety which they can afford to pay for. For example, during Mr. Truman's time, after we got unification, we had a Secretary, an Under Secretary and three Assistant Secretaries in Defense and each of the three services, That

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made about twenty. During Mr. Truman's Administrations; I think there was probably such a turn-over in those twenty jobs, we had them filled by eighty different people. There were a lot of people who took a job as Assistant Secretary of Defense, for example, for Manpower or for some other purpose, or something, who had no intention of staying longer than a year. They just took it for the privilege of being able to say that they had been Assistant Secretary of Defense or Army or Navy or whatever it was. And it takes at least a year before they find out what the signals are and what it's all about. So they do the job and the government absolutely no good whatever. There are a lot of people that do that; that take a job for prestige with no intention of keeping it. Then there are a lot of people that you never hear of that are good and hard working, conscientious public servants that do twice as much as they're paid for.

MORRISSEY: Within the last year or so, there was an article in the *New York Times Magazine*, an effort to evaluate our Presidents throughout our history from George Washington forward as to their greatness, and Mr. Truman came out extremely well in this article. I don't know

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whether you saw it or not?

VAUGHAN: Nor I didn't see that, but I have seen other articles that evaluate the Presidents.

MORRISSEY: I would assume that you share this viewpoint.

VAUGHAN: Why, yes, I think so, and the fact that he gets any favorable note of mention while he's still alive is remarkable. I think the only fair evaluation would come fifty or a hundred years from now.

MORRISSEY: That's his position too, that a lot of time is going to have to go by and a lot of emotions, perhaps, dissipated before people can approach himself and the Administration and the problems and actions...

VAUGHAN: I've read that the most vilified President we ever had was George Washington. During his second term terrible things were said about him. They said if he had of run for a third term, he probably would have been defeated.

MORRISSEY: Well, I've run out of questions unless you have any more comments to make.

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VAUGHAN: No, something will occur to both of us next week, probably, but they can always be added, I'm sure.

MORRISSEY: I want to thank you very much. It's been very generous of you to have me over to your house and take all this time.

VAUGHAN: It's a pleasure; I'm glad to do it.

MORRISSEY: Thank you again.

VAUGHAN: I'm very much prejudiced on the subjects we've been discussing, as you can well imagine.

MORRISSEY: Thank you very much.

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