

Oral History Interview
with
JOHN P. MCENERY

Member of California State Democratic Central Committee, 1944-48; and Vice-Chairman, 1946-48.

Monterey, California
March 11 and March 12, 1970
by James R. Fuchs, Harry S. Truman Library

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FUCHS: Mr. McEnery, to start would you mind giving a little background sketch, when and where you were born, and something of your education and career up to the time we are most interested in?

MCENERY: Well, I was born in San Jose, California, 1906, lived there all of my life. After school, I attended Santa Clara University, and prep school there, and then university. During the depression, after two years of college, I was forced to leave. I then

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went in the hotel business, where I was at the St. Clair Hotel until 1933 and then went into business for myself; and I have been connected in business in Santa Clara County since that day.

I was primarily in the hotel business, and the hardware business, known as the Farmer's Union Hardware, which is perhaps the oldest hardware store in California, having been formed in 1878.

FUCHS: Is that throughout a certain area, or just in one city?

MCENERY: No. It's just in one locality, in San Jose. San Jose, California is the only place it's operated. It's odd that it was originally started as a cooperative of farmers and then became a stock corporation later on.

As I say, I've been primarily in the hotel business, and the hardware business, but I have skirted around the end of real

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estate and so forth, always within walking distance of my home, practically. I liked the idea of looking at what I own instead of trying to open a safe deposit box and looking at papers.

I became active in the county central committee during the Al Smith campaign.

FUCHS: Was that your first venture in politics?

MCENERY: That was my first venture in politics, yes. I had done a little work in politics for local candidates and so forth, such as counsel and supervisor members, before that. But then I became very active in Democratic politics and after Clyde Redwine, who had been chairman of the county Democratic committee in Santa Clara County for a number of years, decided that he was getting a little bit too old for the job, I was elected chairman. I was chairman of the

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county central committee of Santa Clara County off and on for about ten or fifteen years.

I attended all of the state central committee meetings during those years and was a delegate to those central committee meetings all the time, and in 1946, after the debacle of the primary election...

FUCHS: What was that?

MCENERY: That was the defeat of Attorney General [Robert W.] Kenny, who ran for Governor. At that time we had cross filing in California and the Republican, Mr. [Earl S.] Warren, received the Democratic and Republican nomination, which eliminated our candidate for Governor.

FUCHS: Why was Warren so popular?

MCENERY: It wasn't a matter of being Warren was

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so popular; the Democrats hadn't built anybody up for the Governor's job, and Attorney General Kenny became the nominee of the party just out of loyalty, figuring that they had to put up somebody. In fact, Kenny immediately after being picked as the candidate to run for Governor against Earl Warren left for Europe and was gone for a month or six weeks and didn't come back until shortly before the election. He did very little campaigning, had very little money. It's the old story about people that are interested in politics don't put up money for what they consider to be a losing candidate. Kenny would have made a wonderful candidate if he had gotten in and pitched and had any support of the Democrats. But evidently Earl Warren was very strong; and you ask why he was so strong, why, he practically took over the Democratic program in the state. You might as well say

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that between his election and first term and his second election, he could have easily run on the Democratic platform that we used in the election for Kenny. Having the cross filing issue, at least it gave us something to fight for, and I think I was very instrumental in helping to end cross filing in California. I kept fighting it every place I went, and I used it as a kind of a whipping boy, in every speech that I made, for any state or any county central committee.

I told you about the defeat of Sinclair, and then his campaign manager becoming the candidate for office in '38 and being elected.

FUCHS: Who was that?

MCENERY: Culbert Olson, and Culbert Olson was, to my way of looking at it, a very fine Governor and a very good Democrat. He alienated himself with a lot of the old,

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what the opposition might call, party hacks, but we remained very loyal to him in Northern California with the exception of San Francisco, and that mostly was a fight with Bill Malone and George Riley as to who was going to be chairman of the county committee. Culbert Olson took the side of George Riley and helped defeat Bill Malone. Well, all the Bill Malone boys just went out -- and after all he had control of the Democratic Party for years up there and was chairman of the committee -- and they just went off and sat on their hands.

FUCHS: What year was that?

MCENERY: That was in 1938. Earl Warren ran and was elected in 1942. He defeated Culbert Olson. We were loyal to Culbert Olson and I thought he made a good Governor; but the thing that defeated Culbert Olson more

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than anything else, was what we used to call in those days the leftwingers, and maybe sometimes we called them Communists; although we weren't sure what they were. They all took the line that the national administration should have opened the second front to relieve the pressure on the Russians.

Well, the United States wasn't ready to open the second front, but all the leftwingers kept agitating against Culbert Olson and the thing finally mounted until Culbert Olson just couldn't win. He was in almost as bad a fix as Kenny was in 1938, I would say.

FUCHS: Was there anyone of prominence that was involved in this leftwing agitation for a second front?

MCENERY: I can't remember who they were right now. I imagine if I looked through some

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names that were prominent. I would say that it was some of the groups whose names are still familiar in the labor movement, particularly the CIO. I can't remember the names right now.

FUCHS: Was Harry Bridges involved in that at that time?

MCENERY: Harry Bridges was very active, yes; that is a name that I could have mentioned but he was not active in Democratic politics. He supported Democratic candidates most of the time, but a good example of his support, and nonsupport of candidates, was in the case of Frank Havenner.

Frank Havenner was a very liberal Congressman from San Francisco and had always received labor support. When Frank Havenner wouldn't come out in favor of the opening of a second front, Bridges opposed him. He had supported

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him two years before for Mayor of San Francisco, but when he was running for Congress for the third time he opposed him. I can't think of any other names.

But getting along to some of the things that we're more interested in, and the background, I started off to tell you about my election to chairman of the party in Northern California, that was in 1946.

I went to the state convention having no idea at all that I might even be nominated for chairman, but it came down to, I guess, that the old politicians figured we had better elect somebody from the country that don't know what it's all about. They had known me, and I had some opposition to some of their statements and some of their plans in the past, and we had not been very successful in Santa Clara County, in electing Democrats.

First of all we had no paper. We had

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no radio, we had no support of any kind, and we had a tremendously strong candidate for Congress who was consistently being reelected, by the name of Jack Z. Anderson. He was a Republican and he was in for years. Later on he served with Eisenhower when he became President, as liaison between himself and the Congress.

He was a farmer but a very strong candidate, and our problem was always getting an outstanding Democrat to run, of which there were many, but we couldn't convince them that they ought to run, because they didn't think they had a chance against Mr. Jack Anderson.

Anyhow, we went to the convention in 1946 and we had a good loyal cohesive group from Santa Clara County. At that time we, and for some time past, had worked with San Mateo County and they had a pretty good group. They nominated myself and somebody

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from Oakland, there were three of us nominated. I don't even remember who the opposition was at the time. Anyhow, we won on the first ballot and I was elected; and when the caucus come in from southern California it was Mr. Jim [James] Roosevelt who we had heard was going to be the state chairman. He was elected from the south. Every other year they used to call the chairman in the north the state chairman, and every other year they called the man from the south state chairman.

So, when Roosevelt was elected he became the state chairman. I technically was known as vice-chairman, or chairman of northern California as it later turned out to be, because we operated as two separate committees in the state.

FUCHS: Who did you succeed?

MCENERY: I succeeded Bill Malone.

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FUCHS: And Roosevelt succeeded who?

MCENERY: I'm not sure, was it [Henry I.] Dockweiler? I can't remember now who he succeeded.

Anyhow, I was quite impressed by Jim Roosevelt. In fact, I had no inkling as to what kind of a man he was. He impressed me with his drawing power primarily; everybody seemed to want to see the senior son of our great President. He had arrived in California and we didn't know a lot about his background in Massachusetts or New York. Of course, it didn't take me long after I became vice-chairman, or chairman of northern California to be told by a number of prominent people just what I could expect. But I'm the sort of guy that doesn't believe all the rumors I hear, and I went along believing in Jim Roosevelt and thinking he was a great guy and he was just what the party needed. I felt almost sure that he would be our next Governor

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of California.

I really believe that he could have been the next Governor of California had he not made such a fool out of himself in the year of '47 and at the convention in 1948, because I think that the Democratic Party was getting pretty close together (both north and south), until Mr. Roosevelt came on the scene.

I said that many people told me about Jim Roosevelt; I hadn't been chairman in northern California for six months when I met with an old friend of mine, who had come to attend a meeting of the committee of the United Nations. Everybody knows this gentleman, it was Jim [James A.] Farley. I had been friendly with Mr. Farley in the earlier campaigns. We had had him earlier in Santa Clara County; we had had him for the dedication for the new Post Office in San Jose. Jim Farley's a great guy for writing letters

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and I communicated with him; and I used to see him every time he came to California. I met with him at his request, he said he wanted to see me. He congratulated me on being elected chairman of the party in northern California; and he thought I could do some good, but he warned me at the time not to trust this Jim Roosevelt, that he just couldn't be trusted. I didn't understand what he meant at the time, but I learned about it real well in the next two years.

We had constantly made agreements, and when we had troubles we tried to settle them by (between the north and the south, whether it was financial or whether it was about speakers from the national committee) conferences between ourselves; but I found out that after you made agreements with Mr. Roosevelt, they didn't amount to anything. He not only wouldn't say that he didn't

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make the agreement, but he'd say he never met with you. So there wasn't much of a basis to argue.

I say I was warned by not only Jim Farley, but also a number of other prominent people, the Dockweiler's in the south, and any number of people that I knew told me to be careful of him. However, we started off this campaign, after this debacle, and I was elected after the primary election in 1946. I found out why I was elected when I went to San Francisco to take over the Democratic office. I found out that we not only hadn't paid our rent in three months, we hadn't paid our phone bill, and a very outstanding Democrat by the name of Mr. Doorman, who had lent us the furniture for the office, came up the first day I was there to pick up the furniture, which he had lent us. He heard that we were going to be evicted from

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our office for nonpayment of rent and so forth, and he wanted to get his furniture.

So I, sizing up the situation as it was, decided to call a meeting of the northern California executive committee and let them know just what the situation was and to try to plan some kind of a money raising dinner or something to see if we couldn't at least get ourself on a pay-as-you-go basis.

I like to tell the story about after I couldn't make a phone call and I was being evicted from my office, that I decided to write a telegram. I went over to the Western Union office which was about a block and a half away from headquarters to send out fifty telegrams, all alike, but to different members of the committee, urging them to come to San Francisco for a Saturday and

Sunday meeting a couple of weeks hence. And by God, the Western Union wouldn't even let me send a telegram and charge it. I had to pay with

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my personal check.

So that was the state of the Democratic State Central Committee in San Francisco when I took over in '46.

FUCHS: Why had they become insolvent?

MCENERY: They knew that they had to do everything desperate, anything they were grabbing at straws to try to help get Kenny nominated. They knew from the polls and everything that they were being defeated, and they were trying so hard to get Attorney General Kenny nominated for Governor, that they spent every cent they had and they went into debt. Naturally, after losing the candidate for Governor, a lot of people that had promised to put us some money didn't put it up, and they were left with this deficit.

FUCHS: Had the southern California group done the same thing?

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MCENERY: Southern California, I understand, not only didn't raise any money, but they didn't go out and do anything for Kenny at all. So, we found out afterwards that he had very little or no campaign. Most of it was done by personal friends of his who had met him through the legal profession. He was a very outstanding lawyer and a great Attorney General and he is now serving as Superior Court Judge, by the way, in southern California. He was appointed to the Superior Court by Brown just before he left as Governor four years ago.

FUCHS: Kenny wasn't a political factor in the state after that, though?

MCENERY: He was never a political factor in the state after that. As you know, we had another man that ran for Attorney General, who was elected, and is now serving on the Court of

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Appeals. This gentleman's name is [Stanley] Mosk, he came along and was elected later on, along with Brown, to the Attorney General's office.

In fact, if you'll look at the reelection then four years afterwards, Mosk got almost a million votes more than Brown did when he got reelected. So, Mr. Mosk made a good Attorney General, too; but Kenny was real good. But Kenny was more of an intellectual and a lawyer than he was a politician. Maybe he concentrated too much on his offices in Sacramento, Los Angeles, and San Francisco; the people out in the great San Joaquin Valley didn't even know who he was.

So, again, we're going back to 1946. I'd like to go on a little bit without saying too much more about this state central committee affair of 1946. One point I'd like to bring out is that we had our campaign and

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having very little or no money, we held this dinner afterwards where I sent the telegram, and we raised about \$25,000. I think we gave ten to the national committee, and we kept fifteen ourselves. Along with other money that we raised I imagine we distributed among the candidates between sixty and seventy thousand dollars. The three candidates left were Jack Shelley for Lieutenant Governor, Pat Brown for Attorney General, and Will Rogers, Jr. was running for the United States Senator.

When the campaign started out, I thought that Will Rogers was almost a cinch for United States Senate, but evidently a lot of the Helen Gahagan forces who had supported her for the Senate -- she ran against Manchester Boddy and was defeated -- just didn't come around to Will Rogers' help at all in the campaign.

But as it turned out, as we went down the straightaway in 1946 to the final election, it

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looked to me that Pat Brown was kind of the dark horse and could possibly win, although you still have to remember that we had Earl Warren's name at the head of our ticket running for the Governor of California. And it is kind of hard to start voting for a Republican up on top and then switch over to voting for Democrats for the other three offices.

Anyhow, in northern California we thought up the idea, not having any money, to start what we called "the caravan," and we got all of the Democrats that we could together, got their automobiles decorated and we started off on schedule with a kind of a front-runner, who was Pat Frayne, a former newspaperman, who was also working in our office. He went ahead with correspondence and everything, We laid out schedules, and

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we went through all of northern California, everywhere. We went up to Santa Rosa and even to Crescent City, which was the farthest northern spot you can go before you go into Oregon. Then we came back and we even went to the little town of Weaverville, which nobody heard of except as a place to go hunting.

And we ended up, with the help of Clair Engle and his airplane, flying around the state. We flew into Alturas. They had never had a Democrat or Republican state office candidate come to the little town of Alturas. That's practically right up against the Nevada border. We went into every one of these localities and we were able, in towns where we didn't even have a central committee anymore, as a result of this -- this '46 campaign and our caravan -- to get the Democrats out from under the rocks. We finally got some leaders in each one of those towns and we got them to start central committees where there weren't ones,

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where there wasn't a committee. This all paid off later on in '48 because the attendances at our dinners came up much better. We consistently used to have a dinner once a year for fundraising.

I don't think anybody outside of a few officers of the state central committee and myself, included, knows that during the year '46 and '47 and the twelve month period we held three dinners and raised money. Everybody will tell you that they went to the annual dinner, but we had three dinners. We were practically -- we were broke after the final election was over again, and I've got to say that all three of the candidates, Rogers, Shelley and Brown were all defeated. This was due to the fact that you couldn't get the three candidates to run together. They all thought that they had a chance of winning with the exception of Will Rogers.

Will Rogers cooperated with us fine in

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the north, but I hear that he didn't cooperate with the state central committee in the south; but told me afterwards that he couldn't cooperate with Roosevelt. When Shelley and Brown had meetings in northern California, we didn't want Roosevelt to be there, because Roosevelt had to make a half or a quarter of an hour speech and everybody seemed to want to see Roosevelt. Brown and Shelley thought they were the candidates and they were the ones that ought to see the people. But as long as everybody came to see Roosevelt they weren't particularly interested in the candidates, and little by little I found out that I didn't have either Shelley or Brown in attendance at our meetings when Jim Roosevelt came.

So, it was a matter of just the chairman and the vice-chairman trying to pep the Democrats up to vote for some candidates that

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wouldn't come to the meeting because Roosevelt was there.

FUCHS: You spoke of the debacle in the '46 primary, was that just the fact that Kenny was defeated, or was there a general defeat?

MCENERY: No, just the fact that Kenny was defeated, but there evidently were a lot of Democrats that voted for some of the other Republicans besides voting for Earl Warren. In other words you could cross party lines, you could vote for anybody you wanted. Every Republican ballot. The Republicans, however, seemed to be better educated and they knew who were the Republicans on their ballot and who the Democrats were; but the Democrats didn't seem to understand that the Republicans and the Democrats were both on their ballot. And they had picked the name of the person that they had heard the most of and they didn't

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know whether they were Democrats or Republicans. But that, thank God, is all behind us. We don't have the cross-filing to contend with anymore; and it almost makes me sick in my stomach, that every once in a while I hear some Democrat say that maybe you should have a change in the primaries to be able to vote for a good Republican if you want to. Well, this destroys party loyalty, and in fact, it destroys party organization. This was the reason that through the years the Democrats were never able to get a good strong central committee; that the Republicans were constantly getting elected, and they were getting elected with the help of Democrats. Democrats just didn't know who the Democrats were on the ballot.

FUCHS: What year did cross-filing end?

MCENERY: Cross-filing ended in '52. It ended

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after Jim Roosevelt ran against Warren for Governor.

I want to get to this next point, unless you can think of something more that I ought to say about that 1946 campaign. We had very little contact...

Oh, one thing that happened in the '46 campaign that I started to mention (and I don't know whether I said it was in '46), we in northern California wanted Alben Barkley to come out and speak and I talked to the national committee at that time. I guess to McGrath, or maybe it was Gael Sullivan, and we made arrangements. They wanted to be sure that if he came to California he talked both north and south. And I went down south and talked with Jim Roosevelt, and Jim Roosevelt wouldn't have Barkley, he wanted Henry Wallace.

Well, this was just about the time of the

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blowup when Henry Wallace was eliminated from the Cabinet and having Wallace come out I figured could do us no good at all; but all of the wild-eyed liberals in the party wanted Henry Wallace to come out, and most of them were in southern California. So, we went ahead and we made arrangements with the national committee to have Barkley come to San Francisco.

However, when Barkley got to San Francisco and had made his speech, and we had used him in a couple of places; and he made a speech to the farm groups and he made it from San Jose, California, Civic Auditorium. This is the one where the radio man forgot to turn off the button, and we paid for a half an hour speech and Alben Barkley kept on talking to the audience afterwards. When we got through the National Broadcasting Company wanted us to pay for an hour talk.

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And that was the time that Alben Barkley said to me, "My god, what did I say in the last half hour?" He said, "I thought I was talking just to the local audience."

Anyhow, after we got back to San Francisco we got some calls from the national committee and Jim Roosevelt was saying he had to get Barkley down to southern California. So a number of us, along with Senator Barkley, went down to southern California; and when I got to my room which was reserved at the Biltmore Hotel, Jim Roosevelt and Wallace and a half a dozen other people who I don't remember right now were in my parlor and waiting to meet Senator Barkley when he came.

Senator Barkley walked in and shook hands with Wallace, and Wallace said something about he hadn't seen Alben Barkley since before he went to Europe or something. Senator Barkley said that by God, he hadn't seen him since

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the commotion in the Cabinet that happened while he was away, which meant that Mr. Wallace had been eliminated.

However, Mr. Wallace did a good job in southern California in his speechmaking . He went wherever he was asked. I was given the job of going along with Mr. Wallace out to Pasadena or Glendale, I don't know which. Jim Roosevelt took Mr. Barkley in tow and he went someplace else to introduce him. He went to Pasadena and we went to Glendale, or the other way around. I was with Mr. Wallace for two days.

By the way, there's another note that comes in. Senator Barkley made a call from his room that day I was with him. His wife became very ill, had been ill for a long time, but this was her last sickness; and Senator Barkley turned around to me and he said, "Will you take me out to the airport after

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we finish tonight?"

Senator Barkley went through with his two speeches and made them that night, and I took him out to the airport about twelve o'clock at night and he started back for Paducah, Kentucky, or wherever his wife was. I think she was at home. And she was very ill and shortly after this she died. But to show you what a great soldier the guy was, he didn't leave right away, he had these two speeches to make and by God he made them. He put everything he had into them; and nobody knew, outside of myself who was in the room at the time of the phone call, how serious she was ill. It was the nurse that had phoned the Senator and told him she didn't think his wife would last very long.

FUCHS: Why had you wanted Barkley in particular to come to California?

MCENERY: I had hoped that they wouldn't bring Wallace into California, because I felt that it was just going to perpetuate this fight between the national administration and Mr. Wallace. I wanted somebody that was an out and out party man. And Barkley, being the tremendous speaker he was, perhaps the greatest in the country, was easily the greatest in the Democratic Party, and the best audience pleaser you could get. And he was pretty well-known by us in northern California having come out here a number of times to make speeches. We never did get along very well with Mr. Wallace. In fact, Mr. Wallace didn't make many trips to northern California, and when he did he never had much to do with the party organization. He always seemed to have to do with some people that were interested in agriculture, or some particular project that he was on, and it seemed to be a kind of a

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personal thing.

Mr. Roosevelt felt that Wallace was the kind of a guy that he needed in southern California. But then when he had Wallace down there, he insisted on Barkley coming down, too. There was a great discussion and a great lot of debate went on between the national committee, and so forth, as to whether they wanted Barkley to go down there or not. However, he did go, and, as I say, he made a wonderful talk both at the Olympic Theater that night, and in Glendale. He made one of his best speeches at the Olympic Auditorium that night.

By the way, it was quite odd. This was primarily set up for a prizefighting arena and all the speeches by the politicians was made from the ring. The place was packed to the ceiling. It was a well-organized and an enthusiastic meeting, but Mr. Barkley didn't get near the hand or the ovation that

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Mr. Wallace got.

FUCHS: In what city was this meeting?

MCENERY: This was held at the Olympic Auditorium in downtown Los Angeles.

FUCHS: You went down to that?

MCENERY: I was there, yes. I almost got killed that night between the bodyguards and the people wanting to see Wallace, primarily. They didn't seem to be interested in touching the coat of Mr. Barkley, who I thought was one of the most wonderful men we ever had in the Democratic Party. They all seemed to be interested in just getting to lay a hand on Wallace, and we kind of got caught up in the turmoil, the police and everything, taking us into this auditorium which was crowded to the rooftops, as I say; and there were people outside and we just got

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jammed up in the crowd. Anyhow, we got into the auditorium, and we got out all right, and I did drive Alben Barkley to the airport that night and he left. On the following day Mr. Wallace was going to northern California.

This thing of Mr. Wallace going to San Francisco, we didn't even want him in San Francisco. When he told me he was going to go to San Francisco I told him, that I was sorry that we didn't have some arrangements made. He says to me, "Well, the national committee told me that you didn't want me in San Francisco."

Well, I didn't even know that he knew. He had been nice to me for two days. I didn't even know that he knew that I didn't want him in northern California, but it was the opinion of everybody that he couldn't do us any good in northern California. However, he did come to northern California.

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Without mentioning the names of people in our office, there was a slight bit of confusion that resulted. All of the appointments for Mr. Wallace were made at one hotel and Mr. Wallace was over in another one of the leading hotels in San Francisco with another member of our office; and everybody came to the hotel and Mr. Wallace hadn't arrived. Three hours later Mr. Wallace left San Francisco and he hadn't seen anybody, including the newspaper people who were waiting around to see him and heard he was coming. Nobody saw him in San Francisco; he was gotten into San Francisco and out of San Francisco without anybody having an interview with him. We just didn't want it. We figured that he couldn't do anything but cause more turmoil in the party.

As it turned out, in southern California it didn't cause any more turmoil than they

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had down there. You can't win anything in California unless you can get that southern California vote going in one direction. It was even worse in 1946 than it is now.

FUCHS: Why did James Roosevelt urge so strongly the bringing of Wallace to California?

MCENERY: I imagine it was a matter of old friendships and, maybe, underneath he may have thought the extra liberal group that backed Wallace and later on the third party group, that he could kind of bring them into the Democratic fold. But I didn't see any attempt to do this in southern California. It all seemed to be making a hero out of Wallace in California. I don't know what Roosevelt had in the back of his mind, but it would have been much better if in California, we had just forgot about Wallace during this particular period, there was so much discussion about

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him, and stayed with the regular Democrats and brought them in. Of course, a politician, a man in charge of the party, thinks about all of this a lot different than maybe some of the liberals or maybe some of those who maybe don't consider themselves politicians. They want to hear all sides of it. Whereas you, as a party organizer, want to keep your party together and you want to keep everybody working for the candidates and not getting all split off in the extracurricular debates that always happen among the Democrats. It doesn't seem to happen in the Republican Party near as much, although of late it has been, the last few years; but it didn't happen in the days of '46 and '47.

I'd say that if I had to give the main reason for it, it was Roosevelt, even at this time, attempting to promote himself for a future office in California rather than the

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candidates. I felt that Pat Brown, and Rogers, and Shelley felt that way during the '46 campaign. That he was building himself up as a candidate for public office, rather than building them up to help them get the votes for the election that they were in.

FUCHS: Do you know why he came to California?

MCENERY: No. I don't. I heard rumors. I never did get it direct, but I heard that he had to come to California, that he had to leave Massachusetts. He came here primarily, as I understand it, to go into an insurance business with somebody else, where there was a potential of making some money. These are all things that I heard. He was in the insurance business in Southern California. It was Roosevelt and somebody else, I don't remember what the name was; but there was two of them in a company. I think that the

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fellow that he was in business with was also an easterner, from around Boston or someplace like that. We heard all these rumors; but I was so completely sold on the guy when he was elected chairman in the south, on account of his drawing power, that I thought if he just went along and worked like the dickens for the candidates, as we were doing in the north, he would have done a heck of a lot more good for himself politically for the future; and, of course, if he hadn't done what he did to Harry Truman in 1948 at the convention.

FUCHS: How else did the Democratic National Committee assist in the California campaign in '46? Did they send anyone else from the Cabinet or other high ranking Democrats to help him?

MCENERY: I'm not sure, but I think that year Secretary [Julius] Krug came out to one of our dinners.

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FUCHS: How did he fare?

MCENERY: He wasn't much of a speaker. We had heard that he wasn't a good speaker before, and of course when we don't have good speakers we always use a lot of California wine to fill in. Instead of having two bottles of wine on the table we have three, on each table. A little later on in the evening I was master of ceremonies of that dinner and I had an awful time controlling the audience. Three times I stopped Secretary Krug and asked them to be quiet, and a little later on in the evening somebody yelled out, "Where's the last page of the speech?"

And Krug for the fourth time asked me to intervene, and I said, "Where is the last page of the speech? I can't control them," I said, "I can't keep these guys quiet."

Oh, there was one thing I did as a country

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boy. I changed all these dinners from the middle of the week to weekends, so we have it on a Friday or a Saturday night in San Francisco. And right away the audience went up from twelve to sixteen or seventeen hundred because the boys came in from down the San Joaquin Valley and up Sacramento Valley and clear up, as I said, to the Oregon border, and they came down to spend the week-end in San Francisco. These meetings are kind of long, anyhow, and I think the boys wanted to get out and see Chinatown or go to a show or something, and they thought Krug was taking up too much of their evening. I tried to tell him so, but he kept on grinding away on something that nobody was interested in, telling about the wonderful things Interior was doing.

Mr. Krug that night left right after the banquet and went off in a huff. I went over to his room to apologize to him for

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the way the audience had acted and everything, and he thought I was as impertinent as they were. But the only thing that I was trying to do was to keep everybody from getting up and walking out. Secretary Krug was a nice man. He had a man by the name of [Carlton] Skinner with him as his executive assistant, who later on became Ambassador or representative of the United States to Guam, I believe it was; Governor of Guam. And he is now a resident of San Francisco, or he was just a short while ago, now in 1970. He was very close to Secretary Krug; he was in Washington with him, a very outstanding man, too, great ability. But Krug almost got mad at him because he thought that I handled the audience pretty well that night in getting the meeting over as well as I did. After all, we were primarily there to raise some money, both for the national committee

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and ourselves.

We never had a lot of trouble with the national committee over the splitting of money until George Killion became treasurer, and he had so many contacts in California that he thought that all of the money should go directly to the national committee. We used to have a few tickets we would sell at a thousand dollars apiece for the dinner, but that didn't happen after Killion became national treasurer. He was able to know where that money came from and he had it sent directly through to the national committee, not to us. So, we had quite a time raising the funds that we did.

I had a wonderful helper in Herb Erskine, who was my treasurer. Harley Hise, who later on became chairman of the RFC in Washington was the treasurer one year. Ed Heller and Bill Malone were co-chairmen one year for

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one of our dinners, and all of them were very successful, as I say, with the exception of the big contributions. They seemed to go...

FUCHS: Just how would they divert that?

MCENERY: They would get it direct to the national committee. They'd buy a ticket in Washington and they'd buy a ticket or two for the dinner here, and maybe they'd buy five or six tickets and maybe give us fifty dollars apiece, \$250 for the dinner, where they used to give us two or three thousand for three tickets. We didn't sell any \$1,000 tickets during the time that I was chairman of the party in northern California.

FUCHS: You couldn't remonstrate to Killion?

MCENERY: Oh, we did. The only time that we were successful in our pleading with Killion was to go ahead and have the dinner and decide

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how we were going to split the money afterwards. Mr. Killion always wanted to have the decision made before as to how it was going to be split, but after arguing a long time I'd have somebody like either Ed Heller or Bill Malone or Sheridan Downey or somebody to get ahold of him, and he'd capitulate; and we'd go ahead and have the dinner and then we'd give them two-fifths or one-third or whatever we had left on the dinner. We'd keep the rest of it, all of which was spent to keep our offices running. In northern California, which is a very pivotal state, when you hear about the money spent on national elections in Pennsylvania and Ohio and Illinois and New York we're running a fifteen cent store operation out here, we always were. Up till the time of the coming of TV.

Everybody today -- even a man running for

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United States Senator or Secretary of State -- says that he needs eight or nine hundred thousand or a million dollars for his campaign for the primary. Well, Lord, in the 1946 campaign I don't think there was two hundred thousand spent on Rogers, Shelley, and Brown's campaign together in the final election. I know there wasn't. Brown ran his election on a shoestring, and I'm sure Rogers spent a lot of his own money, and that of a few of the friends that his father had had down south. He had been a Congressman for awhile and I guess made some friends in his own district there; but we were always selling pencils and shoelaces to try to raise enough money for the campaign.

FUCHS: You mentioned three dinners in that one year, did that include the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner?

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MCENERY: That's what we called them all. We called them all the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner. And I don't know how Jefferson and Jackson had so many birthdays, but we'd have one for Jefferson and one for Jackson and then we'd have one in between for just a prominent speaker, but we still called it a Democratic money raising dinner.

Cross-filing, first of all, was our number one handicap for years, and thank God we haven't got that any more. The Democrats in Congress that we have are practically all of them from California with the exception of [Don] Edwards, and maybe [George E., Jr.] Brown, from down south, who by the way is running for United States Senator now; they're of the middle of the road character, practically all of our Congressmen.

Of course, that doesn't please the extra liberal element in the Democratic Party.

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Sometimes I feel that they think the best thing to do is just to defeat this Democrat that's been in there for a number of years and elect a Republican, because the following year we'll be able to defeat the Republican and put in our own man. So they are willing to sacrifice any of these fine

Democratic Congressmen we've got in California just to make sure that two or three years or four years hence they might be able to elect one of their own type in the Democratic Party.

Consistently, in those places where we have Democrats for a number of years, and they decided to bolt this Democrat and a Republican was elected, we have great trouble in ever getting the Democrat back in again, even their type of a Democrat.

FUCHS: California is an agricultural state and I was wondering if you brought anyone in that field to California in that election, other

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than Wallace of course?

MCENERY: Oh, yes, we had Secretary [Charles FA Brannan. Brannan came, he wasn't a good speaker, but wherever the farmers came he was very well received. You know he talks in a very conversational tone and he wouldn't be the kind of a fellow that would get you to run out in the street and start campaigning for your candidates; but he gave us plenty of ammunition and he was particularly good at coming to the smaller meetings we held, particularly in universities and colleges around the country.

I remember even after he was Secretary of Agriculture he came down a number of times from Colorado to San Francisco State and Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo, which is primarily an agricultural school. He came down to Santa Clara University, which is located in the middle of the Santa Clara Valley and

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is very much agricultural, and he made talks down there and was very well received, very cooperative everywhere.

FUCHS: Do you have anecdotes about him? You came in personal touch with him and they might help delineate his character for historians?

MCENERY: Not particularly. I know when he came to Santa Clara, Eisenhower had just been elected President of the United States and in introducing him I had a very fine introduction made out for Mr. Brannan. I happened to just think of something extemporaneously on the stage, and I said, "This is quite contrary to our President, who is now playing golf down in Georgia." The Republicans who were very much in the auditorium almost booed me off the stage, but Brannan got quite a kick out of it. He was wonderful about the way he'd answer questions, and he had the answers.

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I was quite surprised, you know, when everybody was complaining about the stockpiles that we had of food in the United States. He had a list of how long the supply of corn and wheat and flour and everything we had in the United States would last if we had very little or no production for a year or so. We'd practically be out of everything in three months. And everybody is talking about the tremendous stockpile we have. He thought it was wonderful for us to stockpile

a lot of this stuff even though we weren't using it, just as insurance to protect ourselves from a day when we might have a blight or something and we wouldn't have the production we have now.

Of course, we that live in California like to think that, as Brannan always used to say, that the war was won on food. And seeing that we used to be primarily a food

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producing state -- and we're still producing a great deal of food in the state, not as much as we used to in the fruit end, but more in the truck gardening end than we used to -- we still feel that California's primarily an agricultural state, although we have the electronic industries and everything else here at the present time.

FUCHS: I came through the artichoke capital of the world on my way over here.

MCENERY: Well, on your way back to San Francisco tomorrow or today, you'll go through what we call the lettuce bowl of the world, which is the Salinas Valley. You came down through Santa Cruz and over here to Monterey and you passed nothing but artichoke fields. And this afternoon when you back, if you go slow, you'll pass through nothing but lettuce fields, and -- well, I shouldn't say only lettuce fields

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you'll run into a lot of cauliflower and cabbage down there now. We were wonderful in this locality for strawberries, but strawberries will only grow for three years in any quantity in a particular place or a particular soil, and then that whole strawberry patch has got to be plowed up and you've got to put in something like alfalfa or something of that type to put the oxygen back in the ground again. The fourth year you try to raise strawberries in that patch you wouldn't get enough strawberries to pay for the harvest.

So, you will, after you leave Salinas Valley, come into Santa Clara County and you'll still go through quite a few acres of orchards of prunes and apricots. Where the whole Santa Clara Valley back in the '20s, that is, Santa Clara County used to have a population of around a hundred thousand,

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it's now a million two or a million three hundred thousand; and San Jose when I was a boy used to have 20,000 population, it's now over 700,000 and it's gone primarily industrial. We have in the Santa Clara Valley the finest soil in the world and the only thing we're doing is building houses on it. There's only one place in the world that has deeper soil than Santa Clara County, that's the Nile Valley. Our loamy soil in Santa Clara Valley runs forty feet deep. Digging down for the foundation of a building or anything down there, you can go down forty feet and find nothing but fine soil. If it were topsoil anyplace else, a foot and a half deep would grow anything. But we have it just stacked up there and now we're just building houses on it.

All right. We talked a great deal about '46 and now we come to 1947. Perhaps the

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greatest thing that happened to us -- in 1947 there was a young Congressman who was defeated, came from San Luis Obispo, and San Luis Obispo is primarily a railroad town. He was George Outland, who was in Congress, had stuck with Truman in ending the strike on the railroads. The railroad people got organized down there and they said that they couldn't stand this Outland anymore, so they defeated him in the election of 1946 and he moved to San Francisco and became a professor at San Francisco State College. He was a natural -- former Democratic Congressman and a very intelligent and fine speaker. He used to be in and out of the office, and he worked with us on many things in the office. But in 1947 he, in conjunction with Jim Roosevelt, came up with the so-called "policy statement" for the Democratic Party of California. The actual mimeographing of the final copies was

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done in my office and it was mailed out with the northern California central committee envelopes, to every Democrat in California. We never saw it until some of the Democrats started getting it and showing it to us and showing the envelope. We called Outland in and he said it had been okayed by Roosevelt, had been corrected by him, and so forth, and that this was going to be an adopted policy by the executive committee and the state central committee.

Well, the policy statement was a criticism of Truman's foreign policy. It was a criticism of everything Truman was trying to do and I believe we called it, what was it, "the containment of Communism," at the time?

Well, anyhow this statement went out and we repudiated it in northern California, and Roosevelt said it was going to be the statement of the Democratic state central committee

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and we called a meeting. Roosevelt insisted on it being held in southern California and it was held at the City Hall in Los Angeles. The only date that I can remember was it was held the morning of the night after Mrs. Truman, the mother of the President, had passed away. We had met the day before at the Biltmore Hotel, along with all of the other officers of the state central committee. Ollie Carter was there, and Mrs. Heller was there, George Luckey, Roosevelt, a number of others were present there, who we thought could lend some support. We tried to lay out a procedure or a program for the following day for the state central committee, and we did. We laid out an agenda, and we went to the meeting the following morning and Roosevelt met me at the stage there and he said, "Well, the first thing we've got to do before we get into this agenda is have a resolution passed

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of sympathy to send to the President over the death of his mother."

Well, at 11 o'clock at night or 11:30 that evening, after holding a meeting from 10 o'clock in the morning, we never did settle the most important thing on the agenda, which we felt was the endorsing of the President's foreign policy. They wanted to pass the so-called policy statement that was written by Roosevelt and George Outland.

Well, the meeting adjourned about 11:30 or 12 o'clock at night on a motion by me to adjourn the meeting. We couldn't get anyplace, it was just ending up in a debating society meeting. Of course, the press were there and recording all of the differences of opinion between the Democrats, which gave them enough to print the newspapers for the next three months, showing of the problems the Democrats were having.

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This was the beginning of the real problem between -- well, most people will say it was a problem between Jim Roosevelt and myself, but it wasn't. It was a difference of opinion as to whether we should go along with the national policy as given by our President in helping him out every way we could; or whether we should try to have a foreign policy of our own promulgated by the state central committee of California.

FUCHS: I'm interested in why Roosevelt would come out against the policy which, primarily, Truman had just enunciated that became known as the Truman Doctrine, aid to Greece and Turkey? And a little later on we had the beginning of the Marshall plan in Marshall's speech at Harvard. Was this strong feeling against the way the country was spending money?

MCENERY: I told you before that I can't tell whether

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it was a matter of Jim Roosevelt already trying to promote himself for public office in California or whether it was his attempt to placate the great number of liberals that were in southern California who, after we finished the war, thought that we should do a lot more for our former ally Russia, than we were doing. I am beginning, as years roll by, to think that it was more a matter of Roosevelt promoting himself. He was naturally anxious to get the backing of that liberal element in southern California. It practically didn't exist in the north and they tried several times to get it going in northern California. The closest they ever came was when they got a Senator George Miller in, who was from Alameda County, to start supporting that kind of a program, and he did pretty good in it for a short while in Contra Costa County. George Miller later on ran for Lieutenant Governor, maybe on the same

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ticket that Roosevelt did in 1950 (I don't know whether it was '50 or not, but it was around that time). But Senator George Miller became disillusioned with Roosevelt later on and didn't have near so much to do with him after the election of 1950, after he ran for Lieutenant Governor.

I can't really tell you, I only have my own opinion, and I'm inclined to think it was more an attempt on the part of Roosevelt to get this liberal element to back him up for whatever statewide office that he was going to seek later on.

I don't really think that he intended in the beginning to run for Governor of California; I think that he originally had his mind set on running for United States Senator. But the field seemed to be overcrowded there with other candidates wanting to run, and he drifted into the idea of

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running for Governor as time went along. He finally did become the candidate in '50.

FUCHS: Would you comment on this excerpt from a memo which Will Rogers, Jr. wrote sometime in early '47, it's undated?

MCENERY: By the way, Will Rogers was practically always with the people from northern California in supporting Harry Truman and his policy. Go ahead, you read what you've got there.

FUCHS: Well, the gist of this long memo, two and a half pages, is that he was opposing the statement of policy, and also the fact that the state chairman had called a meeting to discuss anything in the field of foreign affairs. He pointed out that the '46 platform of the Democratic Party of California was exhaustive and complete, and contained an anti-Communist preamble, which the statement of policy did not. He said, "This 'Statement of Policy' as

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submitted by George Outland, endorsed by James Roosevelt, and sent to the State Commitmen [sic], says, in its section on Foreign Affairs: 'Neither American arms nor American money for arms should be loaned or given to any country unless the proper United Nations authority has certified that such loans or arms are necessary to resist outside aggression. We specifically include Greece and Turkey.'" Then he says further: That sort of statement should not appear even in a draft of a Democratic policy proposal." Now this is bringing the United Nations in. I wonder....

MCENERY: George Outland and Roosevelt together prepared the statement, it wasn't all George Outland's statement. This statement, as I found out later on, was bantered back and forth for a couple of months between Roosevelt and Outland, and Outland made trips to southern California with whoever Roosevelt was getting

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to help him write that statement. There's no doubt at all that that is only a part of the statement. It wasn't a statement of the Democratic state central committee and it was never endorsed by the state central committee. The only motions that came out of any of our meetings was an endorsement of Truman's foreign policy. And that came out in various times. As I say, I don't believe it came out from that meeting in Los Angeles called by Roosevelt -- we had an awful time getting the middle-of-the-road or the conservative Democrats to go down there. They all had to go down at their own expense. This was two or three hundred people that had to go down there. Not only that, but Roosevelt had the room packed with the noisiest element you could get ahold of, as proved by the fact that at the closing of the meeting Judge O'Day got hit on the head with a chair, Judge O'Day from San Francisco

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because he thought they needed a second to the motion to adjourn the meeting and he jumped up to second the motion, and somebody hit him on the head.

This was just a complete rabble-rousing meeting and it got worse as the day dragged on, and they found out they couldn't do anything. There was an assemblyman by the name of Lewis that was quite a rabble-rouser. He was defeated later on, came from Buttonwillow, a little town down by Bakersfield. He was one of the most rabid speakers there was in that meeting of 1947. I don't know how I remembered that name, just out of nowhere. We had helped elect him to the Assembly.

Buttonwillow is a little town that sprang up out of old cardboard cartons and so forth, down there on the side of the hills outside of Bakersfield during the depression with the, we used to call them the pakies that came in here. But they had to land someplace and I

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guess nobody owned this land called Buttonwillow and they just went and moved in down there and built themselves whatever they could in homes. And this Lewis was a product of this locality and we thought he was a pretty good boy, and we sent him some money from the state central committee in '46, in the final election, and we helped him get elected. But you will see his name mentioned quite prominently in, for instance, the problem in regard to the boycotting of the grapes in California at the present time. I've seen his name mentioned there.

Rogers was completely loyal to the President all the way through. He was a great fighter and he knew how to expand on his thoughts and he was a wonderful influence at all of these meetings as well as -- at the convention in 1948 he was quite a stalwart. He helped swing many people who were on the fence

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in southern California because of Roosevelt's antics, and who, even in the caucus in 1948, didn't vote for Truman. But when we came on the floor and the vote was taken, the California delegation voted for Truman and there was no doubt about it.

FUCHS: What part did you play in this meeting in '47?

MCENERY: In '47 I was nothing more than a vice-chairman. The main thing we did was to convince every state central committeeman that he should attend the meeting, and if he didn't attend the meeting he should see that his proxy was given to somebody. We had to vote the proxies because we knew, the meeting being held in southern California, that anybody that was wavering at all would go along with Roosevelt down there, and that's exactly what happened. At first, this morning at the

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state central committee, I was really afraid if we had a vote what might happen. But as the meeting went on a little bit we found out who these various people were. We found out that most of them that were making the noise -- Roosevelt was letting everybody talk including those who weren't officers and members of the state central committee -- letting everybody speak at this state central committee meeting. We had a great argument in the middle of the afternoon about this, that this was a meeting of the state central committee and we finally moved the members of the state central committee up to the front, and made the other people move to the

back. But still, as the day dragged on and the evening dragged on after dinner, we still had most of the noise from the back of the hall. They were just going to disrupt the meeting if they could. In fact, it was the audience that kept us from actually having the right kind of a motion

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passed. Roosevelt, presiding over the meeting, just added to the commotion and to the disturbance that was going on by recognizing certain people that should not have been recognized.

Anyhow, I think that we did real well in keeping everybody in the north . We lost three or four who were friends of Outland and friends of Roosevelt. We lost a few of those. I guess we lost about three or four of them from the north, but outside of that the north stayed solid behind Truman. Every time we had a meeting we endorsed the Truman doctrine, which later on turned out to be the saving of Greece and Turkey from communism. It was wonderful that Truman was able to do what he did do there at the time and everybody recognizes it now, of course; but it was kind of hard to recognize what was happening there at the time.

FUCHS: Nothing really came out of this meeting then?

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MCENERY: The statement of policy was dropped. It was never endorsed, it never came up for a motion to be endorsed; it was bombed from every side, by every right thinking Democrat that was there. There was only one thing to do, as Will Rogers said there -- the policy statement was made by, not the executive committee of the state central committee, but by the state central committee itself. And that remained the policy of the state central committee until we held another meeting. There was never any intention that the executive committee of the state central committee could change the platform on which we ran in the election, and which we, with changes of course in '48, some bringing it up to date, would run on again. It was practically the same statement. But not only did the policy statement die, but nobody ever heard about George Outland again; he's still a teacher at San Francisco State, or was the last I heard, and we never heard

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anything about him.

FUCHS: What tack did Roosevelt take from then on, from late '47 up to the election?

MCENERY: He then started off on this campaign that he had to elect himself national committeeman from California. He started in concentrating on that, and he first of all lined up the backing of southern California. He never should have got the backing from northern California; but there was a deal made along the line, as we say, when McGrath came out here and so forth. Again, the people who came out here wouldn't believe what I said about Jim Roosevelt anymore than I would believe what was said about Jim Roosevelt when I was elected chairman of the north in 1946. The fellow had a wonderful, selling way about him and he gave you the impression that he could do a job and he was all for the Democratic

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Party. But as it turned out, he wasn't for the Democratic Party, he was just for Jim Roosevelt.

Now he started off then, I guess, after 1947, lining up some support for himself and started out then, of course, talking about delegates for the convention. Then, of course, we went into the episode where we had to have McGrath -- we first of all had Gael Sullivan, his executive assistant from the national committee, out here, and he couldn't do anything; and we had others come out.

FUCHS: When was this?

MCENERY: This was in the latter part of '47 and early '48. It kept going right up to the time that we held our meeting in San Luis Obispo where a number agreed, and I capitulated on it. As far as I was concerned if these people wanted Roosevelt for a national committeeman it was all right with me. He

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seemed to have the votes in southern California, whether or not we actually knew he had the votes. When McGrath came out here and he laid out the policy as to how we should pick the delegates to the convention, they had no objection to Roosevelt being national committeeman and many other people in the north that hadn't come too closely in contact with him didn't have any objection. So when it came to a matter of picking the delegation and this is unheard of, electing a national committeeman before you go to the convention. The national committeeman was ordinarily elected by the delegates to a convention, at the convention site. This was the first time it was ever done this way in California that I know of.

FUCHS: Now the state convention is every two years...

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MCENERY: Two years.

FUCHS: ...in even years.

MCENERY: Yes, but that's not when the national committeeman is elected. The national committeeman is elected by the delegates to the national convention.

FUCHS: Oh, at the national convention.

MCENERY: At the national convention he's always elected, not at the state convention. And we objected to this at the time and we actually should not have elected Roosevelt at San Luis Obispo, but we did it.

FUCHS: Now what year was that?

MCENERY: This is early, this is right in the beginning of '48 after the delegates were picked, and we went down to San Luis Obispo and held this meeting.

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FUCHS: That was just a meeting, it was not the state convention?

MCENERY: No. This was a matter of just the delegates meeting, at San Luis Obispo. It was the state central committee; but we laid down the policy there as to how the delegates should be picked for the national convention. And this policy was agreeable with Howard McGrath, the procedure where we were bringing the congressmen in and we'd elect them from the congressional districts and so many from each district; and at large, they would be picked by the state officers and so forth.

Can you give me any help on that, are....

FUCHS: Well, I have a letters here from James Roosevelt in which he points out to the President that a meeting of the full California Democratic state committee (600 members), has been called for July 26 and 27 in Los Angeles. [Letter, James Roosevelt to President Truman, June 25, 1947, See appendix.]

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MCENERY: What date was that?

FUCHS: This letter is dated June 25, 1947, and he says that at that meeting I think the air will be considerably cleared as to just exactly what the situation is within the Democratic Party here in California. And then he suggested that the President "invite Mr. Edwin Pauley, Mrs. Edward Heller and myself to meet with you as soon after [this meeting] as is convenient....I think it of extreme importance."

MCENERY: Well, that's the policy meeting, is it not? We never held a meeting there, we held it at San Luis Obispo.

FUCHS: Well, I don't know, I was wondering how Pauley came into the picture in opposing Roosevelt as to the method of selecting delegates?

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MCENERY: Well, he lost his power. He lost his power there. Pauley didn't stay too active in the picture; and Roosevelt knew that Pauley wasn't with him, Pauley never was with him. I heard Roosevelt talk about Pauley many times when we were alone, and he didn't have much respect for him and I think it was mutual. Roosevelt said he wanted Pauley, Mrs. Heller and himself, and who else?

FUCHS: Just the three of them to meet with President Truman.

MCENERY: That was constantly the way he did things. And that letter was June or July '47?

FUCHS: There was an earlier hassle at the Jackson Day Dinner at the Biltmore in Los Angeles, which is, I believe, some of the background for this. Do you recall that?

MCENERY: Where was the dinner held?

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FUCHS: At the Biltmore in Los Angeles.

MCENERY: Dick Nacy was there. It was a lunch meeting wasn't it?

FUCHS: Well, this was a dinner at which, if I remember correctly, they were supposed to have insulted Mrs. Roosevelt. [Here McEnery read the letter by James Roosevelt of June 25, 1947. Letter is appended.]

MCENERY: This meeting here was never held in Los Angeles.

FUCHS: It wasn't?

MCENERY: No, unless this is the policy meeting, it was held, I think -- unless you can find out the date that President Truman's mother died. If it happened to be around July 25th,* then this was the policy meeting that was held. Of course he, the President, and the national committee were thoroughly familiar with this

* President Truman's mother died July 26, 1947.

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policy statement because it caused an insurrection. "To secure that unity is, of course, the main hurdle which we have to overcome and I believe that the only feasible way of doing this is to lay the cards on the table, quite frankly, secure certain decisions and go ahead with an agreed upon program. **

Well, Mr. Gael Sullivan and Mr. McGrath came out here and had a laid out program with the guy and it was never kept, and nobody else ever got him to keep anything.

FUCHS: "Jefty" O'Connor wrote...

MCENERY: Oh, Jefty O'Connor, he became a great pal of Pat Brown's later on. What year was that, Jefty O'Connor...

FUCHS: That was July 9, 1947.

MCENERY: Oh, Jefty's boy, excuse me, not Jefty himself. This is Jefty when he was, what

**Read from letter, James Roosevelt to President Truman, June 25, 1947. See appendix.

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was he, president of the Infantile Paralysis and he retired...

FUCHS: No, you're thinking of Basil O'Connor. This is Jefty O'Connor who was U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of California.

MCENERY: Excuse me. Is this the son of that O'Connor?

FUCHS: Well, I don't know about the son, this was Jefty O'Connor who was the judge, writing from Los Angeles on July 9, '47; and he wrote Matt and said, "I was happy to learn that the Chief [which is the President], will discuss these differences with James Roosevelt and Edwin Pauley." I just wondered if you knew about this?

MCENERY: There never was a meeting held. Ed Pauley and Mrs. Heller wouldn't go a meeting back there with him.

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FUCHS: Now this letter didn't mention Mrs. Heller, but do you know if he might have....

MCENERY: This one here did.*

FUCHS: Yes, that one did. Do you know if this meeting might have been held with Pauley and Roosevelt?

MCENERY: I don't think that Pauley ever attended a meeting with Jim Roosevelt. If they did it was unbeknownst to me. I didn't know a think about it and Pauley used to phone me up all the time about what was going on, let me know what Roosevelt was pulling, and what he thought about it. We acted our own way here. We always used to say to him, "Well, damn it, that's your problem down in southern California; you've got lots of friends up here, but we can't help you out if you can't get along with that guy, and we know

* James Roosevelt to President Truman, June 25, 1947. See appendix.

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you can't."

I couldn't keep anything straight for a week at a time, let alone for three or four months. I think that Howard McGrath and Gael Sullivan thought we were too strong against Jim Roosevelt and his cohorts of southern California until they got a taste of it. I'd like to see some of Howard McGrath's memorandums on the thing as to what happened, because he figured he just wasted his time coming out here. He thought that he had everything fixed up when he went back and it just wasn't fixed.

We did say something didn't we -- started to anyhow -- about Howard McGrath going down there, and how we fixed up a formula for picking the delegates to the national convention ?

FUCHS: What was that?

MCENERY: This was a formula where they agreed that

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they should be picked by congressional districts and that there should be nominees from the district, and we should pick the delegates provided that no one was on the delegation that was particularly obnoxious to the Congressman in the district. The Congressman could have a veto over whether a certain party was going to serve on the delegation.

Then we had the problem of picking half the delegates women and half of them men, and there weren't that many women active in Democratic politics in the north, although they seemed to have gotten sufficient prominent women in southern California. I remember they had a Mrs. Sayre, I believe that was her name. She was a very fine woman and very prominent and worked in Democratic politics for many years down there. She was loyal to Truman and they put a lot of pressure on her in southern California to have her go along with those

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who were undecided.

That was what they first had, they were undecided about Truman. They'd never say that there was anything wrong with Truman, with the exception of that policy statement. The only thing that they'd say was that Truman couldn't get elected. That was the old story.

Well, you don't give up on your friends just because they can't get elected, you owe some loyalty to them. Even if the man could not get elected, if he was following the policy of the Democratic Party, you should stay with him. Later on my problems with Roosevelt, or I'd say the northern California problems with Roosevelt, was that we knew that no matter what the policy or platform was of the Democratic Party, he wouldn't follow it, he'd make up his own. And you never knew what it was from one day to another. You couldn't proceed on the assumption that it was going to remain this way, because he said so. He'd

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talk to somebody else and he'd change his mind about it. It never occurred to me that you ought to be for Truman, or against him, just because you felt he couldn't be elected. You just go up and do the best you can. It was true in the Culbert Olson campaign in 1942. I felt that he was the Governor of California, he'd followed the Democratic platform, he did what the Democratic Party wanted, and you owed your loyalty to him to support him. Of course, this isn't the way it's always done in politics.

They say you've got to be practical. I don't feel that way about it. I think that loyalty should come first. I don't think that you could find a statement made by Gael Sullivan or Harold McGrath; or anybody that ever came out to California from the national committee, that wouldn't say that we were trying to do everything we could do to promote the Democratic ticket. We had loyal Congressmen,

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loyal to the party, and loyal to the President, and they were reelected. In southern California where they had Congressmen that were always going off on their own thoughts on this stuff and

trying to promote new policies before we held conventions and so forth on their own, they were very shortly defeated.

Clair Engle was a great example of a man who stayed with what he thought was right and he became United States Senator, and had he lived would have been a great United States Senator. He was a fighter, but the poor fellow, came down with that brain trouble; and it threw California into quite a turmoil because Clair Engle was a quite healthy man when this thing came on and it just hit him all at once. They figured every day that this operation or that one would have made him the old Clair Engle that he was. It was the statement

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of the Democrats that caused the constant delay. I think if that was handled right, from the beginning -- but it was handled from California with Pat Brown worrying about whether Clair Engle was going to run or not; and him trying to urge a statement on the thing, and the constant contradictory statements made to the press, that caused great troubles in Democratic politics here in California, and which later on caused us to lose the United States Senatorship.

Can you imagine a state like California, with at least 3 to 2 registration Democratic (it used to be 2 to 1 Democratic), selecting two Republican United States Senators? I don't think it's ever happened in the history of the country before where a state that had a predominately one party registration elected the other party's men to the Senate.

You had the case of Kennedy, John Kennedy's press secretary coming out here at the

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last minute and filing for the United States Senate -- he was pulled out and Salinger came in. Salinger won the Democratic nomination fairly easy, but he was defeated by Murphy because everybody had connected Salinger with the East, although he was a prominent Californian and a member of the press and a good reporter, and worked in San Francisco for years. We all knew him in San Francisco, and Pierre would have made a good United States Senator, yet he was defeated, and why? Why didn't the Democrats vote for him? Murphy was no outstanding man to become United States Senator, and I think that the Democrats will very probably replace him this time by the Democratic nominee, whoever he is. It's now between [John V.] Tunney and Brown, and whoever else is running, whoever gets that nomination. I don't think that either Tunney or Brown are strong candidates. Neither one of them are known at

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all in northern California. Tunney comes from Riverside County which is away down in the extreme end of the state. He spends all his time down around Palm Springs. I don't think he's a strong candidate, but I don't know Brown at all. He may be a very fine candidate, too; but I'm always suspicious of anybody that gets the endorsement of this extra liberal club that we've got in the Democratic setup here in California. It was originally formed as a club to put United States Senator [Alan] Cranston over. Yet they turned on him when he was running for United States Senator. He's the guy that started the club.

FUCHS: What's the name of that?

MCENERY: That's the -- oh, the C.D.C., Californians Democratic... I don't know what, I keep forgetting the name of it now but they've gone to practically nothing, but the Republican

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press gives them a lot of space every time they hold a meeting. They just got through defeating Tunney, I think, 600 to 50 or something like that at their convention. He went down there to get the endorsement of this organization and they turned him down.

Anyhow, we're getting into United States politics and not as much on the information that you want.

FUCHS: When did Roosevelt first come out for Eisenhower?

MCENERY: He came out, practically, against Truman right after we had elected him national committeeman at San Luis Obispo; and he wasn't for Eisenhower then, but I think the attempted Eisenhower boom came along about two months before we went to the convention. We were on the train going to Philadelphia in '48 when Eisenhower made his famous statement that

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military men should not seek the Presidency. His training was wrong for that kind of position, and that the civilian should at all times hold that type of position, and a military man should not be the leader of the Government, and should not run for President. And eight years later he runs and gets elected, which -- lucky the country was in good shape after all the years of a Democratic Party, and lucky the Democrats came along afterwards to put it back in shape again.

FUCHS: Well, you don't think he did that just to prove his point, do you?

MCENERY: Hardly, I think he tried hard, but he's like many, another guy. He gets to a position where he doesn't particularly know anything about the job and relies on somebody else, and the somebody else that he relied on proved to be not worthy of the trust. That's all that we can say about it.

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FUCHS: When did Roosevelt come back into the fold?

MCENERY: Going across the country, I imagine we were the laughing stock of the nation; Californians going across on this special train. We were hooked together with the southern delegation at Ogden, and we practically had set up a twenty-four hour a day watch to see that nobody from southern California came into the northern California, train.

At least we'd hear the rumors as the train stopped to take on a little water or make one of its regular stops going across the country. After Eisenhower said he wasn't a candidate, and made it very definite, the next thing we heard was that the southern California delegation was going for Douglas. When we got off the train at Philadelphia, Douglas had pulled out and said he wouldn't be considered a candidate and wouldn't be

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nominated -- and then when we arrived at Philadelphia there was a big banner that the southern California group was carrying, and it had [Claude] Pepper for President and Jim Roosevelt for Vice President.

Well, that never got outside of the depot where the picture was taken. I got pretty disgusted both with Mrs. Heller and Jack Shelley at the time, because they, after riding across the country and not talking to Mr. Roosevelt, they stood under this banner in Philadelphia and had their picture taken. I told them that the banner should be removed; and this was in all the papers in the country right after we arrived, in fact, that was the picture of the California delegation, with Pepper for President.

FUCHS: Were they serious?

MCENERY: Well, I imagine they were serious about anything but Truman. But we took care of that

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the next day in our caucus when Jack Shelley recognized me and I called Jim Roosevelt everything that I felt he was. I gave a history and told how much I thought that he was needed in the Democratic Party and so forth in California, and what a wonderful thing he was in helping us gather audiences and talking to Democrats. Then I went through the whole history of disappointments that we had with him. And I ended up by making the motion that we ask for his resignation as national committeeman. I was supported in that by such people as Pat McDonough and Will Rogers. Chauncey Tramutolo, who was the United States Attorney in San Francisco, and 12 or 14 others. After my motion was made, and it was seconded by Will Rogers, somebody made a motion, after a great deal of discussion and a few very frail attempts to defend what I had said about Mr. Roosevelt, and of course, reprimanding me

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for the terrible things that I had said about him that shouldn't have been said. And I said, "Well, I first of all made the motion that we have a closed meeting here. I told you this was going to be a family fight and we shouldn't have anybody in, but you people voted to have the press in here hoping, of course, that would stop what we were going to do. But we can't stop what we figure we've got to do here. We were elected by the people of California and we said that we were pledged to Truman and we're going to cast the ballot that way."

Later on, the following day, after the motion was made to lay on the table and that carried, we had a meeting, or maybe it was the second day after that, and there was a lot of politicking going around, and some of Roosevelt's friends said that Roosevelt had to be vindicated, that we had to give him a vote

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of confidence. And he was told in no uncertain terms by many delegates, both north and south, that if the motion came off the table and they had to vote on it, they had to vote to ask him to

resign. As a result of that no motion ever came to take it off the table and we went on to the convention and the California delegation voted for Truman.

I don't think that there were any people at that convention that Mr. Truman thought any more of than he did of the delegates that came from northern California. In fact, when he came to the convention that evening, when he gave his acceptance speech, which was held up until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, while we debated about a minority-majority plank on this minority question of civil rights I think that the California delegation spent two or three hours then visiting with Mr. Truman in the back room of the convention

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hall; and there didn't seem to be anybody that he was more pleased to meet than the Malones and the Hellers and the Chows, and the McDonoughs, and all of these other people who went into the back room to meet him. I guess half of the delegates from northern California went in to see him.

FUCHS: Do you recall any of the conversation that occurred?

MCENERY: No. I do recall one particular piece of conversation that I might put on the record. When we arrived in Philadelphia I got ahold of Howard McGrath, and I told Howard McGrath what I was going to do. I asked him what they wanted us to do, and I told him what I had planned on doing, and Howard McGrath told me afterwards it was up to us, we were to handle our own affairs. They'd like to have the California delegation, though, issue some kind of a statement to the effect that there

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was nothing to all this newspaper talk in regard to bolting Truman and the Democratic slate and considering all these other people.

We arrived in the morning and this meeting was held in the afternoon. The *Oakland Tribune* scooped the story on all the California papers, because in their afternoon edition (it's one of those clippings I gave you there) a man by the name of Thomas printed the story of what we were going to do. And it happened just the way that we told Thomas that we were going to do it.

I get back to this story of Howard McGrath. I told him what we were going to do and he consulted with the White House, I guess, on it and I was told by McGrath that the President said he didn't care what we did with Roosevelt, but if I was going to do anything rash like murder the guy or something like that, be sure I did it in the Post Office so

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he could pardon me. I'd be tried in the Federal court.

We didn't have to murder him, but we murdered him with words I'll tell you, and the fact that Will Rogers was so strong in that meeting really shook more people than my speech against the fellow. Although I didn't miss any points in what had happened, about the beginning of my feeling about Roosevelt being a great guy and in what he could help us do, and then my trouble

with him over the policy statement, and then the various other deals that we made along the line, nothing of which was ever kept.

Well, I think that all's well that comes out all right. I think that President Truman, and I have always thought, will go down in history as one of the greatest Presidents we ever had. When the whole thing is analyzed, and we see what a mess the world is in today, it was much better to do it the way he did,

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all the way from the Berlin airlift to the stand we made in Korea. When people read the history books and they know everything that was behind all these things. Even the MacArthur story, which caused such commotion; he was as right as any President ever was when he let MacArthur go. Maybe my feelings didn't predominate at the time, but as we read history, it seems like that's the only thing the President of the United States could do as long as he is the Commander in Chief of the Army. He has a right to have people take orders, and when they don't take it you've got to get somebody to take their place.

Every year that goes by I have more people say to me "Boy, you sure were right on Truman, he was a great fellow." And I don't think half of them voted for him when he ran for President, but as they read the history books you have more Republicans say it to you than Democrats.

FUCHS: Did California vote as a unit?

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MCENERY: We voted as a unit. California voted for Truman.

FUCHS: There was no one, as you recall, that was adamant against Truman?

MCENERY: Oh, there were a lot of them there that voiced their opinion privately, in fact, I told you I was very disturbed about the statement that was printed in the paper that Jack Shelley made, where he said that we're going to vote for Truman, but we're not doing it enthusiastically. Well, that may have been Jack Shelley's spontaneous thought at the time, whatever he was upset about at the moment, but Jack Shelley had been consistently for Truman. He never wavered at any time. In fact, Mr. Shelley was chairman of a couple of small dinners we held in San Francisco, which were non-political, but at the same time there were nothing but Democratic politicians

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there.

I remember that Jack Shelley's wife was very seriously ill, later on died. A magnificent big bouquet of red roses, three or four dozen, was presented to the President (and I think his daughter Margaret was there), and the President took the bouquet of roses and gave them to Jack Shelley and wrote a card and said, "Take these to Mrs. Shelley and tell her they came from the President."

I think that, maybe -- I'm sorry it came out in the press -- but I think that maybe Jack Shelley was doing a little probing to find out what some of these other guys were thinking and what they were going to do.

FUCHS: I found in my notes on this southern California Democratic meeting in June of '47, at which it was said Pauley forced the withdrawal of Gael Sullivan and muzzled Secretary of Treasury John Snyder, and Mrs. Roosevelt

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was insulted by the fact that she had to carry the whole burden of the speechmaking at this meeting, that at this time they were urging the ouster of Pauley as national committeeman.

MCENERY: Oh, they were urging it all the time. Jim Roosevelt felt that he couldn't beat Pauley for national committeeman unless he sabotaged him and he was just consistently doing it, both in his private conversations and public, when he had his friends around, "that we had to get rid of Pauley, and we couldn't have people like Pauley, they didn't represent the Democratic Party," and things like this. He was successful in southern California in neutralizing Pauley, there's no doubt about it, because he was constantly in there. Mr. Pauley only worked on politics as a side issue. He was a business guy and Mr. Roosevelt practically spent his entire

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time working on politics, and collecting money, and signing notes as chairman of the state Democratic central committee, and borrowing money.

We made a financial statement consistently to the state central committee, and in the minutes of those days you'll see where we gave a financial statement of what we took in and what we spent. I don't think any place in the record you'll ever find a financial statement of the Democratic central committee of southern California, and after all, the money we spent was supposed to be incorporated with his financial statement.

I remember asking Roosevelt one time, "What are we going to do about repaying all these notes, and all this money that you're borrowing, not to promote candidates, but to promote only the people you want, and to eventually get more of a control over the state central

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committee?"

He was helping out assemblymen and senators and anybody that was a "Roosevelt lover," as we said. And those that didn't love Roosevelt and didn't go along, such as people like Vin [Vincent] Thomas of San Pedro, who was a great assemblyman, and who should have for years been chairman of the Democratic group in the assembly, and who by the way, was defeated by [Jesse M.] Unruh for speaker, when Unruh first became speaker in the assembly.

Well, Vin Thomas never got any help from anybody in southern California, he had to go out and get his own support. Vin Thomas is now, I guess serving thirty years in the legislature; a real leader, he comes from San Pedro. In fact, they've just built a big new overpass out of San Pedro

that goes over the harbor there, and they call it the Vin Thomas Viaduct, great big bridge that goes over the

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town. He's well-loved down there. And those are the kind of people that we liked in northern California. When they've got a guy like Clair Engle, or Jack Shelley, or Frank Havenner, or George Miller or any of these Congressmen that we had, there was never any real trouble in reelecting these people. They followed the Democratic platform and the Democratic policy statements, and they represented their district, and they represented California.

It seems like too many of these people just get elected to one office and they're campaigning for another one right away. Clair Engle was a good Congressman from the cow counties, as he used to call it, and that's all he ever wanted to be. He never wanted to be United States Senator until the people of California discovered what a great guy he was. He was a great speaker, he was a regular keg of dynamite. He didn't wear himself

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out, he just got a sickness that took him away from us; but Clair Engle could have been anything, he could have been something in the national picture had he lived. And loyalty could have been his middle name. He was a great Democrat and he was very highly thought of by Senator Downey, Sheridan Downey.

Between Sheridan Downey and himself, they are responsible for the tremendous allotments that California received from the Federal Government through the years. They were great in working on the Colorado River water project. Clair Engle was chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee of Congress. He'd been in for a number of years, and besides the dynamic leadership that he showed on the Committee, he became the chairman, did great things for California.

Well, those are the kind of people that we like in northern California, and I always

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figured that loyalty was one of the greatest things that you could show in politics or anything else. We are sorry that we didn't find the same feeling in southern California among a few of them.

FUCHS: At the same time, in this meeting I referred to, a Judge Stanley Moffett who was vice-chairman of the state central committee,* came out praising Wallace for bucking the Truman Doctrine, do you have any reflections on that?

MCENERY: That is a Stanley Mosk, Judge?

FUCHS: Well, now the paper or the clipping that I saw said it was a Judge Stanley Moffett, vice-chairman of the state central committee, now maybe that was in error because the newspapers make all kinds of mistakes.

MCENERY: Well, that would be Judge Stanley Mosk.

FUCHS: Was he the vice-chairman in '47, June '47?

*Moffett was vice-chairman of the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee, not the Democratic State Central Committee.

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MCENERY: No, he wasn't. He wasn't a vice-chairman. Is that a newspaper clipping?

FUCHS: I took it from a clipping. A Judge Stanley Moffett.

MCENERY: No, it's Mosk, Stanley Mosk, he later on became Attorney General.

If you attended one of those meetings down there in southern California you'd be dumbfounded at the things they'd cheer and the things that they would hoot at down there.

There are so many Democrats like myself that were considered to be extra liberal back in those days of '40 to '48,, we were considered to be too liberal, and today when they talk about you, you're the ultra-conservatives in the party. I don't know what happened whether the party left us, or we left the party, but I don't figure that we've changed any. I think that I'd like to know where Mosk

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was supposed to have made that statement?

FUCHS: Well, this was supposed to have been made at the time of that meeting in June '47 where Sullivan was to have spoken, and Snyder, and neither of them did. The same clipping said that this Judge Stanley Moffett had praised Wallace for bucking the Truman Doctrine.

MCENERY: I don't think Stanley Mosk was too much of anything in the Democratic Party at that time. He came along later. Stanley Mosk was a young guy who became secretary to Culbert Olson when he was elected Governor of California in '38, and I don't think that there was anybody did more to destroy Olson than Stanley Mosk did when he was his secretary. He thought he was running the whole office.

FUCHS: You don't recall Stanley Moffett in late 1947?

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MCENERY: No, there was no Stanley Moffett that I know of. There could have been a Moffett in southern California, but I never heard of him. And he surely wasn't a vice-chairman of the Democratic Party. He could have been a member of the state central committee, but I never heard of him. And the word Stanley is not a very common first name.

FUCHS: Henry Wallace announced his candidacy for the Presidency late in December, 1947; that was on the third party ticket of course. What effect did that have here?

MCENERY: Not near as much effect as it had on the Democrats when he was dismissed from the Cabinet. There may have been a little smoke left in December, but I don't remember how many votes he took in California. Have you got a total of that?

FUCHS: I don't have it here, it wasn't a great many.

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MCENERY: I'm sorry I'm not where I had those books available, we could talk a lot about figures and about various counties where we had the real Democratic leadership. In Alameda County, for instance, where we had Monroe Friedman,, and Pat McDonough. John Perchio wasn't in the picture then. Also Deeden who is now a superior court judge, by the way, in Alameda County. When we had that kind of leadership in Alameda County it told in the election returns. If it hadn't been for the vote we got in Alameda County and San Joaquin Valley, and in Sacramento as a result of the support we had from the Sacramento -- and Fresno -- *Bee* oh, I wanted to say something about the Sacramento *Bee*.

The Sacramento *Bee*, as I told you, is published in Sacramento and Fresno. It's published and has the biggest circulation all through the San Joaquin Valley. Truman

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when he came to California early in 148, and made this so-called non-political trip, was met at Klamath Falls by Ollie Carter (now Federal judge in northern California) and a few other Democrats. They were able to convince the President and the people that were traveling with him that the speech on public ownership of utilities had to be made at Sacramento right after he came to the capital of California. Well, there was a great deal of argument, but Ollie Carter and some of the people, I'd say primarily Ollie, were able to convince them that that speech had to be a strong, hard-hitting speech. There were several corrections made in it, and right after Truman made the speech the Sacramento *Bee*, which was kind of standing on the sidelines, came out with a full editorial endorsement of Harry Truman. I think that that had more to do, Alameda County and that

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endorsement of the Sacramento *Bee* in the great San Joaquin County had practically all to do with the carrying of California for Truman.

FUCHS: What else do you recall of that trip that was billed as non-political in June 1948?

MCENERY: We had that meeting at the City Hall of which George Riley was chairman, and I gave you that picture of the President walking in and the speech that he gave was mostly on the United Nations. We were successful in getting the President to talk a little about labor, because San Francisco is a great labor center. However, we arranged a meeting in Alameda County; the Alameda boys were very put out that the President was not coming over there. So, we arranged a meeting for the early following evening, and the President talked from the shores of Lake Merritt. We set up a meeting in just about a day's notice over there.

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We were successful in getting the President to stop in my home town of San Jose. I told them that I thought there would be few people there even though he was coming through at 11:30 or 12 o'clock at night, and we had no notice of it. But the President himself decided that if there was going to be a couple of thousand people down there, he'd stay up. Everybody wanted him to go to bed because he was supposed to make a speech from the back platform of the train at Santa Barbara at 6 or 6:30 the next morning, and they wanted to be sure that the President had gotten some rest. The President said to me, "If you can get 2,000 people out there, we'll make a speech."

So, seeing this was a non-political trip, I raced down in my automobile, called all the newspapers, and we put on about twenty or twenty-five announcements on each one of the

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little radio stations in San Jose. When I got over there about 10 o'clock at night, the depot was full and they were hanging from the rafters and over fences and everything else. By the time the President arrived they had to clear the crowd out of the way to run the train into the depot.

Margaret Truman came out first and I gave you the picture of Margaret waving to the crowd there in San Jose. She said a few words to the crowd, and hello to them and so forth, and the President walked out behind her and took a look at the crowd, and he said, "You ought to be a Republican."

I said, "Why, Mr. President?"

He says, "Two thousand people!" He said, "There must be ten thousand here!" He says, "Where did they all come from?"

"Well," I said, "Mr. President, if we had a couple of days notice here I guess the train couldn't have gotten through San Jose."

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"Well," he said, "you should have been a Republican, two thousand people?"

FUCHS: Did you have any other personal contact with the President? Do you have any anecdotes?

MCENERY: We had another one that happened there. I introduced the President two or three times in two days when we went out on that "dollars for Democrats" march. I was very formal and I was watching myself, and I was always calling him "Mr. President." When I sat down after introducing him at the Fairmont Hotel at lunch to about fifteen hundred Democrats, I just got up and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, the President of the United States," and I sat down.

He says, "Fine." He says, "Not many people do that right." But he says, "We'll be around a day or two, you'll make a mistake."

And I did just fine, for two days or two

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and a half, I was with him, until we were in my home town, and everybody was yelling, "Give 'em hell, Harry:" Everybody was yelling, "We want to see Harry."

I was standing right in front of the microphone, didn't know it, and I said, "Harry, they want to see you down the side of the train here, will you lean over?"

He said, "Give me the five bucks*"

We had bet five bucks that I was going to make a mistake, and by god, I made it just before he pulled out of the depot.

Well, he was always a great fellow to be around. You know, we'd get pretty serious about this politics situation and he'd kind of convince you that everything was going to be all right, no matter what was happening. He instilled a lot of confidence in anybody he was around and he was a great fighter. I think that was typical when he came out in

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his campaign trip in '48.

Later on when we had the campaign trip, there was nothing that he and Barkley wouldn't do for us in northern California. I don't know what happened in southern California. He made his appearance down there and made his talks, but it wasn't the same as it was in northern California. The President was wanted everyplace here, and I'm not sure that in southern California they wanted him everyplace down there. I had the feeling that they kind of wanted him in the town and out. The same thing was true of Alben Barkley. They were in love with Henry Wallace and -- I told the story about us going down there with Alben Barkley.

The Democratic committee down south was constantly letting out releases and so forth about Wallace and Wallace's statements. And many of them, including Jim Roosevelt, agreed with the statements made by Wallace and figured the

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President as wrong in the way he was proceeding in our foreign policy. They were constantly letting this stuff out down there and everything seemed to favor the Wallace stand. Very few of them were giving the President the support that he needed or was entitled to.

But we couldn't, in northern California, have gotten any more help from the national committee than we got. They did everything that we asked them to do.

I don't know whether you ever saw any of Gael Sullivan's letters. Have you run into many of them?

FUCHS: Not a lot. I remember that I've seen some of them in the files.

MCENERY: Well, if you ask Gael Sullivan a question, he never wrote a letter of more than about five lines. If you ask him to do something,

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he'd answer you and say, "Your matter of such and such, Joe Smith or Brown, he says we'll try to clout that one out of the lot for you. We'll get to work on it right now."

I guess the man used to write about a thousand letters a day with two or three lines in them. I heard afterwards at the Democratic National Committee that he used to keep two girls busy all day long, just taking letters. He used to put out so many of them that they could hardly keep up with him. It was unfortunate that Gael Sullivan wasn't around longer.

He got in a little mix-up going back home one weekend. I guess you know about that? He stopped to see some of our Democrats along the line and he ran into a buttress or something, and some policeman that didn't know who he was had him arrested and the newspapers carried it as being

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a drunk driving charge or something like that, but he was never convicted of it. He was released afterwards, but the newspapers played it up so much that you'd think it was a tremendous crime. Anybody can have a few drinks and run into a wall. It's lucky he hit the wall and not somebody else.

But Gael, he was the man that made Howard McGrath click as chairman of the party, because you've got to remember that Howard McGrath was still the United States Senator from Rhode Island, Providence; and you had a man by the name of Senator [Theodore Francis] Green there at the time, who was the other Senator, and I'm sure McGrath was doing most of the work. Although Rhode Island is a small state, it still is very close to Washington and it doesn't take them very long to get from there over to Washington to make their requests.

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You know that's another thing, when I first became vice-chairman of the Democratic committee, and I made a couple of trips to Washington, the first one I made I am sure that many people in Washington still thought we were chasing Indians down Market Street in San Francisco and that the Democratic Party didn't amount to very much in this state; but it can all be attributed to our own failure to do the job we should with the registration we had.

Again, I come back to that terrible thing we had, that cross-filing. If we didn't have that cross-filing in California we would have had a tremendous Democratic organization. You can't do anything when the Democrats start going to the voting poll and they find nothing but Republicans on their ballot. They will make a mistake and put the "X" in the wrong place.

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But if we did nothing else in California, I think that the period from about '46 to '50 finished cross-filing in California. We woke everybody up to the fact that it had to be eliminated. And by God, there were a lot of talks made about it before '46 and they never got anyplace.

FUCHS: McGrath spoke at a Jackson Day Dinner in Los Angeles on April 13, 1948, and Truman was supposed to have been snubbed by the fact that James Roosevelt never mentioned him by name. McGrath ended up tossing aside his regular speech and talking about Truman, and then he was even booed at the end. Did you happen to be there?

MCENERY: No, I didn't attend that meeting, but I know all about it. It was a terrible meeting! They didn't even mention the president of the United States. You see the meetings that we had, any pictures that I've got, and whether

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it was FDR, or Truman as Vice President, the pictures were always hanging up there. Although they called them a Jefferson banquet, the only guy that ever said anything about Thomas Jefferson was myself, and maybe about two paragraphs at the start of the meeting; and from there on it was talking about our leaders, whether it was FDR or Truman. I often wondered what FDR would have thought if he was alive and found his senior son treating the Democratic President of the United States like his son treated Harry Truman. FDR expected loyalty and he got it from most of his friends. Maybe it wasn't always reciprocal, but he managed to keep them in line, anyhow.

It's too bad that in this great state of California, which is now the largest state population-wise, we don't have two Democrats as United States Senators; and we ought to

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have about four-fifths, or almost -- there are a couple of localities, I'd say that Orange County and certain parts of Los Angeles, and maybe over in the Riverside location, might have a Republican Congressman there shouldn't be over three or four of them in California. We were just lucky we came out of that last one the way we did, even to have the kind of a Democrat that we got; and even at that, he was one of the guys that was picking on Johnson all the time.

I don't know how we can be in a position to know the facts to criticize the President on what he's doing on his foreign policy. I hear an awful lot of criticism of Nixon today in Vietnam, and I feel very much like every American ought to support him in what he's doing and if we have to get out of there let's see if we can't do it with some honor. If we have to keep fighting someplace, and

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it's the national policy, we ought to go along with it. I don't think that our foreign policy can be made up in the streets of Los Angeles or San Francisco, or Santa Clara County. Because all you've got to do is see the problems that Truman had with his formation of the United Nations, and even the problems they have every day in the United Nations, even to the financing of the organization.

FUCHS: I believe Judge Oliver Carter was selected at the state convention, after the '48 national convention to be state central committee chairman. Have you any remarks about him and the way he ran the campaign in California for the Democrats?

MCENERY: There's nobody that knew California any better than Ollie Carter did. And Ollie Carter was a very calm, reasonable fellow, he had years of experience in the Senate.

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He started in up there when Senator John Foley, Senator Jack Shelley and Ollie Carter were the only three Democrats in the Senate. They put through a lot of good legislation that was sponsored by those people, and Ollie knew the art of compromising. Ollie did a wonderful job for the campaign in northern California; but, I think if you would ask Ollie himself, that he would say that he wasn't successful in doing the things that he wanted in southern California. The money wasn't forthcoming down there. They should have collected their own money. The last \$150,000 raised in northern California went to southern California and it was given to a committee of men from the movie industry. What did they call it -- the Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. At that time a fellow by the name of [Ronald] Reagan, was executive secretary, or president of the theater union; and he

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and a number of others in that particular committee handled -- along with George Luckey in southern California -- the distribution of the money that we raised in northern California, that was sent to southern California, because there was nothing happening down there, other than what George Luckey and a few of his people were doing.

Roosevelt went through the motions when he came back in, saying he was for the President, and we had to support the ticket and everything; but I think you will find his actions became nil in comparison with what it was before, when he was promoting himself. He did ride with the President in the parade when he came down to Los Angeles.

FUCHS: What principal issues do you think might have swung California into the Democratic column in 1948?

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MCENERY: I think it was President Truman's campaign and his fight and making the 80th Congress the issue, the so-called "Do-nothing Congress." I think he was successful in convincing the people that if the Republicans came into power they would not have the assistance that they were being given agriculturally, and in a water way, and in many other things. He made it clear in California what the Democratic Party had done for labor, what it had done to bring water to California, what it had done for Agriculture, what they had done for the homeowners through the years, saving their homes as I was saying earlier about the Homeowners Loan Corporation. The Frazier-Lemke Act saved thousands of ranches in California for the old owners that had held them for years. I feel that the President, practically with his own power, was able to do more than anybody else to sell the

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California voters on the fact that they should vote Democratic and vote for him.

I told you about the couple of things that I felt. One was that the *Sacramento Bee* had more to do with turning things around in the San Joaquin Valley. I think the San Joaquin Valley was going Republican if the *Bee* had not come out for him. There was a man by the name of Jones that was the editor of the *Sacramento Bee* at the time, I don't remember what his first name was. He was a real good editorial writer himself, and Miss MacClatchy, of course -- there's a story, and I'm sure it's correct, that Mr. MacClatchy, the man who started the *Sacramento Bee*, the grandfather, was in favor of public ownership of utilities and Government assistance that they have given for the developing of natural resources. I think that Truman's speech that he made in Sacramento when he first entered the

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state there in that non-political trip was the thing that turned them around and tht* in turn saved the state for Truman.

His ride through the San Joaquin Valley on that whistlestop was a tremendous thing, and Ollie Carter was with him every inch of the way on that; and I'm sure that Ollie Carter is no amateur at politics. He knows what makes the public feel the way they do about certain things and he seems to know how to express it. I think that he was a tower of strength on that whistlestop all through California, and although my makeup is altogether different, no one, including Ollie Carter, could have done anything with the period that we went through in '46 and '47 and early '48, and up to convention time with Jim Roosevelt. The only thing you could do with Jim Roosevelt was just stay away from him, and we felt that if we kept our own house in order in

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northern California that we were doing all we could.

We had good loyal people down there such as Congressman [Harry Richard] Sheppard, and people of that type, that kept us informed of what was going on, but we couldn't do anything about it. In southern California, you've got to remember that those cities run right into each other and the populations are tremendous in all of them. They don't have the organization down there that they were able to organize here in northern California. Even the Republicans today have trouble down there. They don't seem to be able to get the cohesion down there that they do in northern California.

FUCHS: Have you any further anecdotes about the September campaign of Mr. Truman in San Francisco, or any other place in California you might have come in touch with him?

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MCENERY: Well, my memory doesn't serve me too well here, it's come on so fast.

FUCHS: What about the incident in connection with the Union Club in September?

MCENERY: Oh, that was when we were going out. Yeah, that's quite an interesting story. We were going out that day for the "dollars for Democrats" and the large Union League Club that's

across the street from the Fairmont Hotel -- they always told the story that whenever Truman, or for that matter any Democrat, but more particularly Truman, came they always used to pull down all the shades on the side of the Club that faced the Fairmont Hotel.

And Truman said when we were across the street starting down California Street, going out with our cans trying to get the dollars for Democrats, that he wanted to walk down. We got down past the front of the Union League

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Club and a little park that's across the street, and Truman said, "Let's walk down here and see if the shades are down on this side too."

And we did; we walked down a little ways, and the shades weren't down, and he says, "Well, I guess that's right, they only pull them down on the Fairmont Hotel side, they don't want the President to look in," something to that effect. It was rather odd that the President should want to walk a half a block down to see if the shades were pulled down.

FUCHS: This was the big businessmen's intended insult to Mr. Truman?

MCENERY: That's right, they didn't want to even see him. They didn't want to see him and they didn't want him even to look in on the Club.

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Well, we had another one on one of these trips; President Truman being the Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge in Missouri, was rather anxious to see the new Masonic Temple on California Street in the city. I had heard that only the members could go in and we were with President Truman and he says, "Come on, we're going to go in and look at their ritual," what would you call it, their ritual pieces.

I said something about, "Well, I thought only members were supposed to go in."

He said, "Just keep quiet, and you'll see something a Catholic never saw before."

So, we marched in and they opened up the safe and they took all their ritualistic stuff and much of it Truman made a lot over it, but it didn't mean anything to me. I didn't know what it was particularly, but there was a lot of talk about it, and Truman

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saw their new auditorium, it's a beautiful building. It was just new, see, when he was making this trip out here. But, I don't know, there was five or six of us, we all walked in that day with the President and saw the whole inside of the building.

Oh, another one, when I went to the city that morning I was successful in getting them to make the stop in San Jose. Everybody was against it. I got there about 7:30 in the morning and I knocked at the door and Margaret Truman answered the door. The security men were out on the outside and I had been thoroughly cleared. I had been around with them for a few days and they

knew very well who I was, so I asked them was the President up and they said, "Oh, he's been out for the walk already, and he's back." Well, I saw the afternoon papers, it was full of him. They always liked to take pictures of the

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President going on his walk and he usually was rather humorous on all them. He used to kid the newspaper guys along on whether they could keep up with him and so forth. But I knocked at the door and Margaret answered the door and she said, "Good morning, Mr. McEnery," or something like that. I had driven up from San Jose. I had gone home and gone to bed and came back up the next morning, and I was quite anxious naturally to have the President stop in my hometown.

So, a couple of fellows were sitting in the living room there, and I heard somebody call out from the other room there, "Who is that?" or something like that. Margaret said, "It's Mr. McEnery," and Mr. Truman took one step out into the hall and he was in his woolen underwear, and he was shaving with the old -- I don't know whether it was a straight edge or safety edge razor, he had whiskers all

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over; and after he went out on the walk he evidently came back and did his shaving, he didn't do it before he went out for the walk.

This was when we got into the conversation, a little later on after he came out of the room, everybody was against him stopping in San Jose. The President said, "Well, if there's two thousand people there we're going to stop." That finished it, the stop was arranged after that. But I never thought I'd see a President of the United States shaving himself at 7:30 in the morning.

FUCHS: The Independent Progressive Party of California had some strength in 1947, were you apprehensive about the inroads that they might make?

MCENERY: Oh, we were! In '47 we were more afraid than we were as we headed to the election.

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FUCHS: Why was that?

MCENERY: They seemed to hit a peak and they seemed to be going downhill. The first real commotion was caused when Wallace made his trips out here, after he had been dismissed from the Cabinet. Truman, if the newspaper polls are correct, was about at his lowest ebb then. You couldn't help but read the papers and realize that it was going to be rough. But it looked a lot rougher in '47 than it did when we came up to the convention, I think that Ollie Carter and I had talks about that at various times. It felt to him that way, too, that they had shown their real strength too soon and it was petering out a little bit. Maybe, again, it was true on account of the fight that Truman was putting on.

I always felt that the Republicans were very upset about, and so was Congress, being

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called back into session after the Democratic convention; but, after all, they had adopted a platform that almost said that they were for everything that Truman had asked them to do and they didn't do it. There was only one thing left for the President to do, was to find out did they want to do it or didn't they? They had had their convention before ours and they again came out for all of these things. So Truman made it plain in his acceptance speech that if they felt that way they should have voted that way. If they still felt that way after their convention, he'd call them back into session; he'd ask them to do these things that they said they wanted to do in that platform.

I think that was a tremendous stroke of strategy. I don't know who finally made up their mind that they were going to do that, but if I'm any judge of Harry Truman, he most

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likely had the final word on that. I think that that particular line of his acceptance speech got more of a rousing reception than anything else he said. In fact, it was almost as great as the reception that Alben Barkley got when he talked about the Republican spider. When he said the spider was so weak when the Republicans were in that he couldn't hardly weave a web. Alben said that when they were critical about the Democrats and said that spider webs were on everything. Well, he said that they were so weak they couldn't weave a web when the Republicans were in there.

I think that if you'd say anybody other than Truman won the election in California, or anybody did anything that was of tremendous significance in that election, outside of Truman's campaigning through California and his whistlestops and his trip down through

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San Joaquin Valley, I think you'd be wrong in giving credit to the Democratic organization, the Democratic leaders, the guys that put up the money or anything else. I think that it was Truman and Truman alone that practically won California for the Democratic Party.

I think that's a pretty good place to stop unless you've got some other questions?

FUCHS: Well, I have some more but we can continue later.

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Second Oral History Interview with John P. McEnery, Monterey, California, March 12, 1970, by J.R. Fuchs, Harry S. Truman Library.

FUCHS: Well, one thing I would like to ask you about is the two minority motion roll calls that occurred in the 1948 convention. First, a gentleman from Mississippi introduced a minority report regarding the seating of the Mississippi delegation, and Jack Shelley objected, as well as the Illinois delegates, that there was no roll call and they wanted to be recorded as favoring the minority report. Do you have any recollections of that?

MCENERY: Was that about the time that the Southern delegation walked out?

FUCHS: No.

MCENERY: When the Southern delegation walked out, shortly before that -- this was an awful mess, this auditorium, the aisles were plugged and

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everything. I went out to get about a dozen orange juices for everybody in the place, and I was coming back into the back of the hall with my big box of orange juice, maybe a dozen of them, and as I was walking down to the California delegation, I got caught right in the middle of the Southern delegation argument and all the noise back there. I sat down next to a man and asked him if the delegation was going to walk out. He said, "Where are you from?" He took a look at my badge and he said, "Oh, you're one of those California guys. Evidently you don't want the South in the convention," or something like that.

I said, "I don't know a thing about it. I've been outside." I said, "What's your name?" And I looked at him and it was Senator [Lister] Hill that I was sitting next to, a man in a white suit. He started giving me the dickens when he saw I had a California

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badge on. But I had been out for maybe ten minutes before that waiting in line getting this juice.

Those things, as you look back at them now, they seemed awful important at that time; but the only reason that Jack Shelley and some of these people were so anxious to get this thing on record was to make sure that the minorities back home knew that we were fighting for them, because there is a tremendous minority vote in California that has always belonged to the Democratic Party up till the last few years. Now, talking in 1970, there are some leaders of the minority groups that are strong Republicans now and they do split it up a little bit. But in those days they voted the straight Democratic ticket all the time. I remember an awful lot of commotion. I was a delegate in '52 and withdrew because I was in the Mint; but in '56 and '60 there

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was nothing to compare with that '48 convention for excitement and uncertain things happening all the time. You never knew what was coming up. If it wasn't for the masterful handling of the convention by Rayburn I don't know what would have happened. Sometimes he made some rulings there that were almost dictatorial, but by God, he either had to make them or the convention would have ended.

FUCHS: Was this in part, this concern of the California delegation about civil rights, occasioned by a fear of Wallace's appeal to minority groups?

MCENERY: I wouldn't say so, no. I mean the California Democratic Party and its leaders have always been very cognizant of the fact that they represented a lot of segments in the political

picture and you have to keep all of those segments together just as you do nationally, if you're going to win. They are a great

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bunch of fellows for fighting even between themselves in off years, but somehow or another they always vote Democratic on election day.

FUCHS: The former Attorney General, Robert Kenny, came out about the 19th of July, 1947, in Fresno, to organize a move to elect Wallace, to pledge delegates to the '48 convention. He was chairman of the PCA, Progressive Citizens of America at that time. What do you think about this? What reflections do you have on Kenny's going over to such a movement?

MCENERY: I think that after the way Kenny acted in the election of '46, and after his nomination, and the way he acted in the election, I think that he was just not reckoned with in the Democratic Party. I think he had some of the extra, extra liberals under his wing, and he was kind of one of the leaders of it; but I think that Kenny at first felt a little bitter

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towards the Democratic organization.

We felt that he didn't do anything to help himself, and he felt that the Democratic leadership didn't do anything to help him in his abortive run at the governorship. But it's kind of hard to campaign for a candidate when he gets on a plane and leaves for a month or so when the campaign is going full speed. You've got to have the old body in there at least .

Summarizing, I just think that the Democratic Party, at least in the north -- see I still keep going back to the fact that we have almost two Democratic organizations in California, you have the north and the south -- I think that this is partly true with the Republicans.

I don't know what they were doing down south, I never heard Kenny's name mentioned much after that 1946 election and I don't

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think he was even considered as a delegate to the convention in '48. I don't remember whether he later on became a delegate to the convention in '48 or not. I don't think so. And that naturally would have made a man that was such a leader in the party very bitter.

FUCHS: How many delegates would you normally send to the convention?

MCENERY: Well, at that time we had one full vote, since then they've changed it to a half a vote. So I think in most of the roll calls I think we had about what was it, about 70. Seventy delegates with a full vote each, and of course, then the alternates.

In the north there was another thing we always did do. When we were in control of the picture, these alternates always went to the convention, and we'd always arrange for them to take our badges and get down on

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the floor for one of the votes, just to let the records show that they were there in the convention.

Today, having a hundred and fifty delegates at the convention, with a half a vote each, we couldn't get our roll call votes recorded in 1948 when we had half that number. Today, California coming so early in the roll call, they're just not going to be recorded because there's no way of finding out when these motions come up how the California delegation feels. Unless you have some fellow that exercises some leadership in the thing, like Jack Shelley when he was in his prime; he was very robust and boisterous and he was quite a leader. If he didn't know how the delegation stood he'd get up and give a vote anyhow. But then, after that, we ran into our elastic Pat Brown who never could make a decision on anything. He always wanted to know what the delegations thought.

I remember in one of the conventions in

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'56 when he was the head of it, they passed out a paper for each row to record their vote. When the thing came back, you'd vote one way and the guy down the line would change your vote. You couldn't even get a legitimate vote of the delegation. The only way you could have had it would have been to have a ballot and let them drop it in and count it.

Well, you can imagine, when there are only three or four states before you how quick they got to California in that roll call. And they're always waiting to see what California does. It's quite a tip-off as to what's going to happen. Then when California passes all the time on these important votes, it makes it look like the California people don't know how they are voting or how they are thinking. But actually what happens, it's the mechanics of it. You can't get their vote recorded that quick. And so many of

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these things, after we passed and they had the roll call, it didn't make any difference how California voted then. If all the votes went one way or the other it wouldn't change anything. Where California could have been a tremendous influence on any convention with that big bloc of votes, it just didn't happen, because we never got our vote on record.

FUCHS: Have you a comment about Pauley's resignation as national committeeman on January 3, 1948? He, by that time was a special assistant to Secretary of the Army [Kenneth C.] Royall.

MCENERY: No, I have no comment on it. I'm sure it was caused by the constant agitation against Pauley by Roosevelt and a few of his friends; it was part of the campaign Roosevelt to get rid of anybody that was a leader in the party in southern California.

FUCHS: He was involved in grain speculation

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investigation by that time?

MCENERY: I don't think that had anything to do with it. You know, when you work in this politics a long time and you run into a guy like Roosevelt that's just about sabotaging the whole thing to get himself ahead, you finally say, "Aw to heck with it;" and you say, "I've served long enough." You say, "Well, I'm ready to retire from it now." I think that Roosevelt was responsible for an awful lot of fine people just walking out of the party in southern California. Of course, he got an awful lot of people into the setup in northern California in an attempt to get some votes here from the state central committee and so forth.

FUCHS: A little bit more on '48. Did Jacob Arvey approach the California group in early '48 in regard to his concern about dumping Truman, so to speak, for Eisenhower?

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MCENERY: It was just the opposite to that, in my recollections, and I've given you a picture there of Pat Peabody and Jake Arvey and myself in Los Angeles. He gave us the impression that he was in California at that time, and a young man who had served in his office in Chicago was then becoming prominent in southern California politics, and later on became national committeeman, Zefferen I believe his name was, became national committeeman from California.

And as I understood it, from all the conversation we had, and we met him at the Chapman Apartments on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles and we spent quite a bit of time with him, Mr. Peabody's brother was part of the Democratic organization in Chicago, and was chairman of the racing commission in Illinois. Naturally, Peabody didn't have any trouble in getting in to see Mr. Arvey. In fact, we had an appointment when we went over to see him, and he gave me

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the impression that he was going to do all he could, at the time, to help out on the Truman campaign. He didn't give me any idea at all that he was in favor of dumping Truman as is stated in the press. And I sometimes am led to believe that Jake Arvey, the clever politician he was, was out here doing a little probing. I was surprised and almost dumbfounded when I heard his name mentioned first as a part of the group that was trying to convince Mr. Eisenhower that he ought to accept the Democratic nomination with the idea of dumping Truman. And I'm sure that Patrick Peabody of San Jose can substantiate my thoughts on that because Peabody was as strong for Truman as I was. I can't believe that that's true, that Arvey was out here that early with an idea of dumping Truman. Now somebody else may have a different slant on it, particularly Mr. Zefferen who is his fair-haired boy here

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in California.

I think that's about all I can give you on that.

FUCHS: Yes. Did you come in touch with Oscar "Jack" Ewing in any way?

MCENERY: Not Oscar Chapman.

FUCHS: No, but I want to ask about Oscar Chapman. I'm thinking of Oscar Ewing who had a policy strategy board operating in this period.

MCENERY: No. My only contact were with Howard McGrath and then later on with Oscar Chapman.

FUCHS: When did you come in touch with him?

MCENERY: I went to school with a fellow by the name of Jim [James] Rowe, and Jim Rowe was very prominent in Washington at the time. We were in the same class in high school. I believe somewhere (I don't know where it was)

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I met Jim Rowe and Rowe introduced me to Chapman and later on we became pretty good friends.

In fact, in the '60s when I was very strong for John Kennedy, Mr. Chapman was interested in the Johnson campaign. The night before we left for the southern California convention, the '60 convention, Chapman called me, or sent me a telegram inviting me to come to a dinner at the Fairmont Hotel for Mr. Johnson, then the leader of the Senate. I went up to San Francisco, at Chapman's request, and ate dinner and they called on me to say something. I told them that I was always happy to meet a leader like Mr. Johnson of the Senate, but I felt that John Kennedy had done a very thorough job and that most of the people I knew that were delegates to the convention and friends of mine, were all committed to John Kennedy; which was rather a strange statement to make, because I think Mr.

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Chapman was the man that called on me to say a few words at the dinner that night.

Commenting on that, it was a shame the leaders of the Democratic Party that were invited to that dinner that night (I think there were about forty or fifty of them invited from northern California) felt so committed to Kennedy that they wouldn't even come to see the leader of our Democratic Party in the Senate, wouldn't even come to see him when he came to San Francisco. It was quite odd that within another week he was the vice-presidential nominee on the ticket with Kennedy.

I have not kept in touch with Oscar Chapman in the years since then. I understand he has an office in Washington, doesn't he? I haven't kept in touch with him at all; but Oscar Chapman was very active in coming to California on a number of occasions during the early part of '48, and I guess I saw him on two or

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three occasions. But the story, again, was always what are we going to do about southern California? There was no problem that we had to take care of in northern California; once in awhile there would be a few alternates or something that would start a little difficulty. I don't even remember their names now, but it never got anyplace.

Of course in southern California they'll say, "Oh, it's the political bosses here that are running the party." That's not true. The people in northern California -- I come back to that old word loyalty again, they're not jumping all over the place with every liberal idea that comes along. You can have all the ideas you want and have all the things you wanted incorporated in the platform as long as it don't hurt the candidate, or as long as the candidate is satisfied with it. You confuse your Democratic voters, when you're having

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policy statements on everything all of the time; it ought to be enough that the state central committee meet every two years and draw up the platform and support the candidates that have been nominated.

FUCHS: Oscar Chapman was advance man for Mr. Truman in his campaign in '48. Do you recall meeting with him about the California trip and any anecdotes, if so?

MCENERY: No, I really don't. It doesn't occur to me that there was anything in connection with the Chapman trip that was important. I say it's kind of hard to think of these things when there wasn't some excitement connected with it. We were for Truman and it didn't make any difference if anybody in southern California was for him at all.

FUCHS: There weren't any problems that arose in regards to the arrangements for his halls, or his

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welcome, or funds involved, or anything like that?

MCENERY: No, we were constantly having trouble over funds for the national committee, mostly with the treasurer of the national committee, our friend from California. But you had Ed Pauley in there before Killion. That was one of the things that Roosevelt used to harp on all the time, that the national committee was taking all the money, all the big money, out of California.

Well, with the feeling that existed with Roosevelt towards Pauley, then naturally Killion, who was a good friend of Pauley's, did a lot of talking and maybe writing to Roosevelt; but underneath I know how they both felt. It may not have been so in the beginning, but the feeling between Roosevelt and Pauley became very antagonistic. I don't remember a time when Ed Pauley and Jim Roosevelt came

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to the same meeting in southern California. I used to see Pauley at one time when I'd go down there, and then if I'd go to a meeting the next day Pauley wouldn't be there and Roosevelt would be there. Kind of hard to run a party when you can't get the national committeeman and the chairman of the party in the same room, or talking to each other.

FUCHS: Did you by any chance discuss with Jim Rowe the course the Democratic Party should take to win the election in '48, the issues as he saw them, and the various problems involved?

ENERY: No, I don't think I had any conversation with Rowe about that at all. I did have some with Chapman, and I couldn't say what time of the year that was, it must have been early in the year. As I say, Truman's popularity was at a very low ebb. But we never had any idea of ever considering dumping

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Truman; we never thought about anybody else. I've got to say that I was just like everybody else, including Truman. There were times when we didn't think we could win in California, but nobody ever heard me say it out loud.

FUCHS: Did you have an impression of Rowe as being a very astute observer of the national political scene, or did you not think he was especially knowledgeable about that?

MCENERY: He was in the picture all right, but I don't know where. I thought that he was working with Chapman. That may have been true and may not, but I went to Washington and (I don't know when that was), and we went to see Alben Barkley at that time in his office, and at that time I met the Secretary of the Senate, Mr....help me out there.

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FUCHS: [Leslie] Biffle?

MCENERY: Yes, Biffle. We had some discussion at quite some length in his office about the California situation. Barkley was present, and Biffle, and I don't remember who else. Patrick Peabody from San Jose was with me.

FUCHS: What was the situation in regard to Sheridan Downey after the November election? I understood that he was not especially in Mr. Truman's favor.

MCENERY: Well, if it was true right after the election, it sure wasn't true a year later. I never remember Sheridan Downey having any problem, never heard of him having any problem with Truman. I never heard Senator Downey say anything -- and I met with Senator Downey many times; in fact every time he came to the coast I was with him. I went with him to look at the Berryessa Canyon near Vallejo,

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which now has the large reservoir up there with the water for Vallejo and Solano County, and I never heard Downey say anything but favorable things about Truman.

I think that Truman and Downey were the same kind of Senators. They were both working Senators, took care of their homework, and took care of their state problems; but you've got to remember this that when you talk about a United States Senator from California, you are talking about one now representing twenty million people, and even at that time their office staff was not large enough to take care of all the correspondence.

I remember Sheridan Downey telling me that he and Wally Phair came to work at six o'clock every morning -- and Wally Phair was Sheridan Downey's executive assistant, he practically ran the office -- I was very surprised that a United States Senator had to

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come to work at six or six-thirty in the morning. I'd been in Sheridan Downey's office at seven o'clock in the evening when he started home. That was a pretty long day. But if you're going to be a United States Senator from California, I guess you've got to make up your mind to be a slave to the job, and you can't be worried about all these other political campaigns. Wally Phair later on went to work as executive secretary for Bill [William F.] Knowland. He told me afterwards that he couldn't stand it. After working for Downey who was always taking care of everything, Knowland he wouldn't see half an hour in a day or two. He couldn't work for Knowland, he only stayed, maybe, six months, and he went to work then after that for the Kaiser Company. He didn't want to. He liked the job of being executive secretary to the Senator from California,

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but not after working with Downey, who was almost a slave driver, and very particular about every message that went back to every constituent that inquired about anything. A lot of people may have interpreted Downey's lack of interest in all the other elections, other than his own, as being cool towards Truman, but I don't think that was at all true. When the Truman Committee came to California, I heard Sheridan Downey introduce everybody on that committee in San Francisco. We had a dinner in '45, and at that time I wasn't a leader of the party except in Santa Clara County.

FUCHS: Was that after Mr. Truman had left the committee?

MCENERY: No, Truman was on the committee.

FUCHS: Well, he resigned in August of '44 after he was nominated for Vice President?

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MCENERY: That's right, I got the years mixed up. Well, then it would be June, it would be June of '44 that he was out here, it could have been '43.

FUCHS: Was this on an investigation?

MCENERY: Yes, that was an investigation. The Truman Committee never investigated anything with the idea (the way it looked to me) of creating a lot of press releases on it. They were very quiet about their investigation. They were down and investigated what we called the Hendy Iron Works in Sunnyvale. The whole Committee was there.

FUCHS: Yes. Well, I just wondered if he was here for a political event or for an investigation.

MCENERY: No. the whole committee attended the Democratic fundraising dinner; it was at the Palace Hotel, and it must have been '44 as

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you've refreshed my memory. And Sheridan Downey introduced every one of those Senators and gave a speech about each one of them. He must have talked for an hour and a half just presenting these people.

I say, I never at anytime heard Sheridan Downey say anything but something favorable about Truman. If you will investigate the motions and so forth that were made on the night that Truman made the speech where he requested permission to take over the railroads, Sheridan Downey had no interest in what Mr. Roosevelt was doing in southern California at all. He would answer him and Mr. Downey was a very polite and nice man, and smooth, and even if he was mad at you you would have an awful time knowing it. He wasn't the kind of fellow that would just chop you up, you know. He would just be cool to you, that's all. Oh, I heard him

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talk many times about his feelings towards Roosevelt and what he was doing to the party.

Of course, the United States Senator had a pretty good following in southern California, too; and I always felt that he, and Pauley and Killion, and that group were very friendly. I know that anything that I would say to Downey somehow or other would get back to Killion or Pauley. I don't know how, but it used to the rounds and it would be visa versa, too. If you said anything to McGrath, when he was head of the Democratic National Committee, somehow or other it would get back to Downey. I don't know when all these little conversations took place, whether it was in the Senate lunchroom or what it was. Sheridan Downey didn't make many trips to California except he was taking care of Senate business and it was always a quick trip.

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If he would come to northern California, it wasn't uncommon for him to call my house and ask me to meet him at the airport if somebody else didn't meet him, say Mrs. Smythe, or one of his other secretaries. I'd used to get called quite often to pick him up at the airport, take him to San Francisco, or take him to Oakland. I've driven him to Sacramento on occasions.

FUCHS: You say he would usually come on Senate business, or....

MCENERY: Senate business, yes.

FUCHS: ...rather than Democratic...

MCENERY: Democratic business. He would be there when you needed him. But he never insisted on being at dinners and so forth, and he was a hard man to get to come out just to a Democratic dinner, to sit at the head table.

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If you needed him for a speech, which -- we ran into some trouble with a speaker from the national committee, a couple of weeks before the dinner was held -- we had to get Downey to fill in. I don't know what dinner that was, it was one of the three dinners we held in '46 or early '47,

latter part of '46 or early '47. There was no problem at all about Sheridan Downey coming out, and he made a tremendous talk.

I remember he stayed at the St. Francis Hotel and after he got through with the dinner that night he and his wife and I walked from the Palace Hotel over to the St. Francis, oh, sometime around 11:30, 12 o'clock at night. He always liked to take a walk before he went to bed. It was quite surprising, as we walked down Market Street and then up Powell Street to the St. Francis that there wasn't one person said hello to the United

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States Senator walking down the street. Nobody seemed to recognize him. So, he wasn't a popular figure in political gatherings, he just took care of his homework, that's all. I know that McGrath on several occasions mixed Senate business and Democratic meetings together. For instance, McGrath was on the Senate committee handling Federal prisons, and I went to Alcatraz Island with McGrath, and he was investigating the living conditions and so forth, at Alcatraz; and we had lunch with Mr. Johnson, who at that time, was head of Alcatraz Island. He later on became head of all the United States Federal prisons, a year or two later. I don't think that McGrath hardly knew Johnson until the day that he ate lunch over at his house there on the island. But that was a matter of Senate business, and then we had a number of meetings in regard to Democratic politics.

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Our meetings were always so hospitable, we were never fighting about anything. Practically every time any leader came from Washington they came to San Francisco first and met with us. And the whole conversation would be, "Well, what can we do about southern California?" Well, what do I know about what they could do about southern California? I couldn't even get along with my own counterpart down there.

FUCHS: Well, one thing that prompted my question about Downey's being out of favor with Truman, was that a press report in December of '48 said that William Malone, the Democratic leader in San Francisco County, had gone back to Washington in regard to patronage in California. And in the same context, they mentioned that Senator Downey was not particularly in Mr. Truman's favor. I suppose the implication would be that he had dragged

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his feet in the campaign and Mr. Truman had won, and therefore he was out of favor. But I wondered what your thoughts about it were.

MCENERY: It would be very easy to interpret Senator Downey's actions in the campaign as dragging his feet, because you couldn't get him interested in what was going on in the campaign. He was having quite a time with the Corps of Army Engineers and the Department of Interior. He had a running fight with the Department of Interior all the time, and that may have created some animosity between Downey and the President. But if there was any feeling existing at all between the President and Sheridan Downey -- and I was around Downey as much as anybody was when he came to California -- he never said a word to me about feeling anywhere bad about

the President. But, as I say, if you needed Downey he was always there, but he wasn't one of these

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fellows that was going to go tramping up and down the state with you. He felt that that was a problem of the party organization. I know he always felt very good about coming to San Francisco and northern California and he was just like everybody else from the national committee, "Well, what do I do when I go to southern California?" Well, the only thing he did when he went to southern California was take care of whatever business he had to take care of as Senator from California.

In December of '48? -- oh, we were having some trouble over the appointment of Federal judges. I think that very probably this was the problem that we had with Senator [Patrick A.] McCarran who was chairman of the Judiciary Committee -- and it took some time to get Ollie Carter appointed Federal Judge. McCarran held it up in the Judiciary Committee until the President asked for another Federal Judge in San Francisco. The Senator from Nevada

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wanted a man by the name of Ed Murphy for a Federal Judge and they finally ended up by creating another Federal Judge and appointing Carter and Murphy at the same time. That may possibly have been what Bill Malone went east for. Bill Malone was always very friendly with the President from the time he was a Senator.

FUCHS: John Shelley, at the same time, was back in Washington attending the 15th National Conference on Labor Legislation and this article mentioned that he had at one time been mentioned for a Cabinet post. Do you know what that was?

MCENERY: It was in Labor, it was Secretary of Labor. There was some talk, and it got into the national press. There was some thought that Jack Shelley might possibly be made Secretary of Labor. It didn't materialize,

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I don't know what happened after that, '48, early '49.

FUCHS: When Mr. Truman was coming out here in June of '48, I have been told that they first wanted to book him into Kezar Stadium, so to speak. Do you know anything about that and how it turned out that he spoke at the Golden Gate Park on, I believe it was Flag Day, at a ceremony sponsored by the Elks.

MCENERY: Kezar Stadium is an awful place to hold any kind of a meeting. It's almost impossible to hold even a football game there, anymore, if you have any kind of a crowd, because you've got to plan on walking a mile and a half, two miles from your automobile to get to the stadium. I was never in favor of having anything where you haven't got parking in close proximity, I don't remember what actually happened in that, that Truman talked at Golden

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Gate Park.

There was never any information sent out to the county chairman and the leaders, that we were going to hold this meeting. I remember some talk about attempting to hold a meeting at Kezar. It wouldn't be a good place to hold a political meeting. You just couldn't get a crowd there, and naturally the Elks have a good crowd on Flag Day at all their ceremonies. It's one day of the year that the Elks usually put on a pretty good affair and they used to have parades in every town. I imagine there was a built-in crowd right there at the Golden Gate Park. At the bandstand, I think, is where he talked. But I don't think there could have been any significance to the fact that the thing didn't materialize at Kezar Stadium. I don't believe it was thought too strongly of by those that had to put on the meeting; but you'll have to ask somebody else about that, I'm not too familiar with what

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happened.

FUCHS: There wasn't great concern about the debacle in Omaha where he had spoken at the Ak-Sar-Ben Auditorium and only to a crowd of about 2,000 at this big place, because it had not been publicized it was open to the public and the public thought it was only open to the 35th Division reunioneers.

MCENERY: No. I don't remember that episode ever happening. If it happened it wasn't given too much significance out here on the coast. I don't remember hearing about it until now.

FUCHS: What about the speech in L.A. at the Gilmore Stadium, in the campaign in September, where he was followed by Dewey at the Los Angeles Bowl the next night? Do you have any memories about that?

MCENERY: No, I didn't go down there. I didn't

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go down to southern California at all. After Ollie Carter became the chairman of the committee I just assumed that I wouldn't see Los Angeles again or think about Democratic politics down there.

FUCHS: McGrath and Humphrey went to North Beach for some kind of a dinner, and you told me a story about that that I thought was very interesting.

MCENERY: I think you ought to get that from McGrath, but the way it was repeated to me, I couldn't...

FUCHS: Was this Harold McGrath or J. Howard McGrath?

MCENERY: No, this was Harold McGrath, who was my executive secretary in the office. Humphrey came to San Francisco and I was supposed to go to dinner with him. He was then the

Mayor of Minneapolis? McGrath, and I don't know who else -- there were a few others that went with McGrath -- and they went to North Beach

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to dinner. I remember McGrath telling me the outstanding remark that was made was that when Harold McGrath wanted to know how things were getting along with the Democratic Party back in Minnesota, and particularly in Minneapolis, and he asked Humphrey, Humphrey said, "There's no Democratic Party in Minneapolis it's the Humphrey Party."

Here's the fellow that later on becomes the nominee of the Democratic Party for President after all of his bobbling around.

FUCHS: This probably is pretty well-known, but your insights on it might be of aid to some scholar. And that's why Reagan, who was a strong supporter, at least with other entertainers, of HST at one time, ends up as a Republican Governor of California.

MCENERY: Well, all you've got to do is listen to Reagan's speech. I'm sure that he felt that

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his patriotic duty in preserving constitutional government and so forth, would be better aided by the Republican Party than it would be staying in the Democratic Party. I'm sure that when he was president of the motion picture actors and so forth -- which would be considered a union -- that he was very influenced by the other union people that he came in contact with.

Later on he went on the speaking tour for General Electric, and all of his speeches were on the idea of preserving our way of life and the Constitution and so forth. I think that the Republicans put a lot more emphasis on that than the Democrats, and I think that it was a gradual drifting over to the Republican Party. It was the people he met and that he came in contact with, they were all Republicans; so I guess he got sold on the idea that that was the path that would take him where he wanted to go. I never thought about him

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when I first saw him as a potential candidate for anything, any. public office although he did get wonderful audiences.

I remember one time when I was visiting my son in the Air Force back in Omaha, I noticed in the paper that he was speaking and I went down to the Civic Auditorium which was just a few blocks from the hotel where I was staying, and I think I paid a dollar and a half to hear him speak, it wasn't a free lecture. There must have been two or three thousand people, paid a dollar or a dollar and a half to hear him talk, and I was very impressed by the speech that he gave. Naturally, being an actor, he was very dramatic and he was a very good speaker. But how he got into the Republican Party after his support of Truman, I don't know. It would seem to be a gradual thing.

FUCHS: On June 13, 1948, in the Venetian Room of

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the Fairmont, the President sat between you and William Malone who introduced the gathering to the President, and you introduced the President to the gathering. Have you any memories about that particular occasion?

MCENERY: Yes, the only thing was the introduction. I'd say there was about eleven or twelve hundred at that gathering. It was a noon meeting, a noon dinner, or luncheon meeting, and we had a nice conversation at the table. There was only the three of us, I think, sitting at the head table. But I got up and I very simply said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, the President of the United States."

As I sat down he said, "You sure did that right," he said, "there's not many people that present the President without making some kind of a remark." He said, "That's the way it ought to be done."

A little later on we were talking and

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that's where he was kidding me about making a mistake, that some place along the line I would make a mistake and I would say the wrong thing. He bet me five dollars and I told him I wouldn't. And that was the famous boo-boo I made in San Jose when I told him that the people down the line, down the side of the train here "want to see you Harry." That's where he turned around to me and said, "Give me the five bucks."

FUCHS: Nothing else of your conversation on that occasion remains with you?

MCENERY: No, nothing of any significance. He was constantly -- sitting at the table there asking who various people were, when he would recognize somebody down the hall not too far away. He wore these real heavy glasses that he wore; and he'd ask you who certain people were at the table, and he was so friendly. I mean

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he was always waving at somebody or calling them by name, or -- he'd lean over to Malone or I, and ask who so and so was that waved at him or something like that.

He was in tremendously good humor at the luncheon that day. There was no prepared speech, he just got up and spoke extemporaneously. He had nothing but compliments for everybody. There was a tremendously good feeling created by that luncheon on the part of a lot of Democrats who were maybe feeling that it was all over for the Democratic Party. He had a way of instilling confidence in the people that listened to him. As I say, that whistlestop that he made through California was tremendous, that was a real pickup in the campaign. Ollie who was with him every inch of the way there, will tell you how the response grew. I believe that he went down the coast and came back the San Joaquin Valley and the crowds grew all

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the time as he went through the state.

FUCHS: That night, then, in the Garden Room of the Fairmont he spoke to a gathering of Democratic leaders and so forth. Do you have any recollections of that?

MCENERY: I believe that was the night that Jack Shelley presented him to the audience, the little group. I think there were only fifty or sixty in that room. They were mostly the money people or the people that had contributed large amounts to the Democratic Party, and a few of the leaders from across the Bay.

Jack Shelley's wife had been sick for some time and was in her last sickness, and was very seriously ill at the time. I believe that there was only one or two women, or three, attended this dinner. Later on in the evening, Jack Shelley's daughter came in and was presented to the President by Jack.

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She came up to the head table there and shook hands with the President. And sometime during the course of the evening a large bouquet of two or three dozen roses, I believe, were presented to the President, or maybe to -- Margaret Truman was there, I think.

And the President sat down, and on a piece of paper wrote a note and handed the bouquet to Miss Shelley and asked if she wouldn't please take those out to her mother and say that they were sent by the President of the United States. It was the biggest bouquet of long-stem roses you ever saw.

This was so spontaneous like, you'd think it was just someone doing something for a part of the family. He had the greatest feeling for everyone. He seemed to be a very considerate individual. I don't think he liked the idea of hurting anybody's feelings; and this was just a wonderful gesture, it just

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made everybody feel so good. It was, after you think about it a little bit, a natural thing for him to do, but I don't think anybody else thought it was going to happen. He just sat right down, and Miss Shelley was in front of him, and he wrote this letter, I don't know how many lines. I imagine it has been preserved by Miss Shelley, and you ought to find out from Jack if that little note is still available. It ought to definitely go to the Truman Library. It gives a little insight as to the....

FUCHS: Certainly does.

MCENERY: He was just a family man, the President, I'm talking about.

FUCHS: Yes. Were you acquainted with Bartley Crum?

MCENERY: Yes, only casually. He had a lot to say, but I can't say anything about him. I wasn't

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familiar with him at all.

When you say the name Bartley, I think of Tom Barclay, professor of political science at Stanford University, who was always a great friend of the President and who had done considerable research, working during the summers on several occasions for the Democratic National Committee. Tom Barclay was a great loyal Democrat and a good friend of the President's. He has passed away, he's no longer here. But he was quite enthused over everything that Truman did. He went to the '48 convention, I think, as an alternate. No, he didn't, he wasn't a member of the delegation. He was there, however, as an observer in his role of -- I think he was head of the political science department of Stanford University for a number of years. He was a great help to us all over northern

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California. He'd come at a drop of a hat to make a speech anyplace for us, and he was a good talker.

FUCHS: Was there anyone of significance that you know that became a strong supporter of the ADA in the '48 campaign, Eleanor Roosevelt's ADA?

MCENERY: No, I can't. There were a number of them. I often wonder whether Congressman Outland became a strong booster for ADA. I think he did. I think Outland became very active in it, but I stayed away from them.

There was a brother of Herb Erskine who was active in the ADA, and he asked me at one time, as northern California chairman, to attend a meeting. I wasn't impressed by the type of people, they were mostly the intellectuals, they wouldn't go out and push a door bell or try to get a vote. They may

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contribute their money; and, again, they like to make these intellectual statements and all on policy and so forth without any feeling as to what it's going to do with the voter.

FUCHS: Were you confident on election eve of the outcome?

MCENERY: No, I was not. I felt that we would do all right in northern California; mainly, I didn't feel too confident about San Francisco. It seemed like we had a good campaign going in Alameda County, and I made a survey on my own of the San Joaquin County and I felt that he was going to do well there; but it doesn't make any difference what northern California does, if there's a switch of one or two percent of the votes in Los Angeles, or southern California area, it practically swings the election whoever gets the majority there. I couldn't feel confident about what was going to happen in southern California because

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I knew what a mess they were in all the time and what a lack of campaign there was down there. I can't say that I was confident. In fact, I didn't run into any Democrats that were very confident, but it didn't stop them from doing their little bit.

FUCHS: I thought I might run down the itinerary and if there is anything about the names of these towns that ekes you think of an anecdote or something I'd be happy to put it in the record, He came in on September 22nd in '48 to Truckee?

MCENERY: Yes, Nevada. Came down through the Central Valley. I think I've already got it on the record about the committee, with Ollie Carter, going up and meeting him practically when he came across the border into California, and the changes that were made in his speech which made it a lot better

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talk. That was the one that he gave at Sacramento.

FUCHS: Well, he came on down through Roseville and then into Sacramento.

MCENERY: Yes. The idea was to arrive at noon-time, I believe, in Sacramento, because most of the employees there are state employees and there was a good crowd out to see him. He made that strong pitch for development of natural resources and public utilities in California. I give an awful lot of credit to Ollie Carter for convincing the President and the speechwriters that that speech should have been a lot stronger. I'm sure the speech was changed a good deal between the time Ollie Carter got on the train and the time they arrived in Sacramento. I don't think it was the same speech. They said that the typewriters were really going to work and people were changing things around. That was the

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one key thing that I felt won the election for him, that speech that was made there in Sacramento and convinced the *Bee* that they had to come out strong for him.

FUCHS: Of course, he then came on into San Francisco where I suppose you joined him, and then he made a major speech at Lakeside Park in Oakland.

MCENERY: That was the one that I was talking about on the banks of Lake Merritt, where he made the speech. I may have said that he made it earlier, I thought it was on the non-political trip in June that he made that talk but you've got the record there where it was made in Oakland at that time.

The Alameda boys over there were very disappointed that they hadn't seen more of him over there. This speech that he gave there in Oakland, that wasn't planned a long

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time ahead of time. It was kind of something that came up maybe in a week before the President came that he was to make the speech over there. But he had a good audience though, an enthusiastic audience, let's put it that way. I don't think the crowd was real big as I remember it,

but the President gave a good talk and the audience was very enthusiastic. And it was very well-received by the Oakland *Tribune*, which is a Knowland paper over there. They gave him some good space and handled the thing pretty well, as I remember it. People in Oakland were always complaining they couldn't get anything into the Oakland *Tribune* about the Democrats, but he got a good press when he made the talk.

FUCHS: Then on the 23rd he went on down and made these so called whistlestop talks, in Merced, Fresno, and Tulare?

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MCENERY: I thought he was going the other way on that trip, but that's right. I wasn't on that trip. Let's see, didn't he stop at Modesto? Yes, he did, he stopped. Wasn't there a stop at Modesto?

FUCHS: I just have the ones where they recorded the speeches, the whistlestop speeches in the *Public Papers*.

MCENERY: Well, he made a lot of little stops in between that. He stopped at every town of any size at all down through the San Joaquin Valley. I think his biggest meeting was at Fresno. The chairman of that was a fellow by the name of Lopez, a lawyer from Fresno, I think. He was chairman down there of Truman's campaign. But they had a good turnout at Fresno, I heard. I'm not familiar with that, I didn't go on that trip. Ollie

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Carter was with him, he was the chairman of the party then. When you get into anything after the end of June there, I wasn't too much in the picture, although I was available, and I raised considerable money for the party, because I knew the people that had contributed in the past and that seemed to be where I was needed the most. It was kind of like pulling teeth to get money out of some of these people.

FUCHS: Mr. Malone (this was in '49), visited the President and had some friends with him, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Sullivan. Do you know who they were?

MCENERY: Yes, Ray Sullivan, he is now a member of the State Court of Appeals, he's a prominent lawyer in San Francisco. He was appointed by Brown to the Court of Appeals here. And by the way, they tell me he's a very fine judge,

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makes a wonderful judge. He was quite a working lawyer, he was a lawyer's lawyer.

FUCHS: There was a gathering of the Democrats on the coast, in September of 1949. I believe Brannan was out here, and Judge Carter was involved in this, and George Luckey as vice-chairman; and Charles Sawyer came, and Julius Krug, Oscar Chapman, Assistant Secretary C. Girard Davidson, and Bill Boyle. And then, of course, the labor leaders, some of them were here. Do you have any recollections of that?

MCENERY: No, but it had something to do with the problems that California was having with the Department. Was Oscar Chapman Secretary of Interior then?

FUCHS: Krug was then Secretary and Chapman was along as Under Secretary.

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MCENERY: Under Secretary, he later on became Secretary of Interior. We had some troubles in California here with the Department of Interior that needed some straightening out. Sheridan Downey as I told you, was very much against Interior. He didn't think that they were doing their job in California here and Sheridan Downey was always very friendly with the Corps of Army Engineers. The Army Engineers were always happy to get in on some of these projects if Interior wasn't there to take them over. I'm sure that Sheridan Downey played the Army Engineers against Interior to get some of these projects started.

I think that there was some attempt at that meeting to try to get some of these patronage things straightened out, too, by the tenor of who attended the meetings. California has never been very successful in getting people appointed to -- for the

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size of the state and everything -- has never been very successful in getting anybody of importance appointed to national office, except in the last -- well, it started with the Kennedy people. There were a few appointments made but -- such as Assistant Secretary of Labor [John F.] Henning, was appointed by Kennedy -- California never got by the Democratic Party the recognition that they were entitled to with the size of this state. We did pretty good in the early days of FDR, but I always felt it was due to Jim Farley's influence. He had visited California many times and knew many of the leaders out here.

We used to have the most awful time getting the right people appointed postmaster's jobs in large cities. Sheridan Downey, the United States Senator, would recommend one person and the Democratic National Committee, with their fundraising and so forth, would

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have somebody else in mind. The best thing a politician can do is to get two groups fighting when there's an appointment to be made, and then just don't do anything about it; just sit back and let them fight for awhile and if you don't get the two groups together, eventually somebody will be appointed that neither one of them will like.

We had great success with McGrath and with Gael Sullivan. That was a real fine period of our relationships with the Democratic National Committee in regard to patronage. I'm talking about the small appointments that had to be made. McGrath was always on the side of the northern California committee whenever anything came up. He stayed with us on that appointment of Herb Erskine which was to the Federal bench in San Francisco. We thought for a long time that McCarran would be able to get Ed Murphy

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appointed at that time and he didn't. But he was successful in getting him appointed in '49, as I told you, when they made the extra judgeship.

FUCHS: This had been billed as the Western States Democratic Conference with jobs, land and water subjects on the agenda.

MCENERY: Oh, yes, I attended that meeting in San Francisco. They came from, I guess, as far as Utah to that meeting. I remember national committeeman Rawlings, who I knew, from Utah I believe, he made a good talk there; but this was, again, the part of politics that I wasn't interested in. I was interested in organization and in getting them to vote Democratic, and here we are with all of the intellectuals assembled at the Fairmont Hotel in a big banquet room and having discussions about national policy on water, and Congress.

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I remember attending a meeting that afternoon with the Congressman who's chairman of the congressional committee on banking? We hear his name mentioned so prominently all the time. I can't think what his name is. But that was a good meeting, that was very well-attended.

FUCHS: Well, the press pointed out that besides getting the western Democrats' point of view across to party leaders elsewhere, that they were also focusing attention on the important election in California next year, in which they hoped to unseat either Warren or whoever the Republicans nominated. This gets us into the '50 campaign, and which -- has some national importance because of other people who were involved such as Helen Gahagan Douglas and [Richard M.] Nixon, and so forth. Have you any thoughts about that, or anecdotes?

I have a letter here from George Davis

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to Matt Connelly in April 1950, in which he said that things had reached such a point in California that it was unwise, he and Ollie Carter and Bill Malone had decided, to continue to ignore Roosevelt's potential as the next Governor of the State of California.

MCENERY: Well, that would be George Davis' idea, I'm sure Malone didn't feel that way. I don't know what Ollie Carter felt. Maybe Ollie Carter felt he was the only guy on the horizon that was going to run, anyhow, so he might as well go along with it. I don't think Ollie Carter was very infatuated with Jim Roosevelt. Of course, he didn't have the problems that I had with him, so it seemed to be almost desperation in trying to do anything other than to promote Jim Roosevelt.

Coming into the '50 campaign, I, too, felt that it was going to be nothing but Roosevelt. I felt that Roosevelt would get the

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Democratic nomination. There was no doubt about that, but I didn't think that it would go any further and it didn't. He was beat so soundly in the election by Warren, I didn't see any activity around Santa Clara County. They ran a campaign. Of course, they had their congressional

candidates, and their assembly candidates in '50, but here you've got to have the campaign for the whole ticket or you don't have any campaign at all.

FUCHS: Do you think there was some distortion in the newspaper reports that you had switched and was supporting Warren?

MCENERY: I never supported Warren at all for anything. I wrote a letter. George Luckey wrote me and asked me just as a friend -- we had correspondence with. each other -- what I was going to do about Roosevelt . I wrote him back. I'm sorry I haven't got the letter, maybe

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I'll find it; if I can ever find it I'll send it to you. The actual letter I wrote was that there was no use in doing anything about him as he was going to be so soundly beaten. And I had a few other things to say which were nothing more than history; what I had found out by dealing with the guy. You couldn't trust him, you couldn't believe him, he was only interested in Roosevelt and no one else. I wrote this letter to Luckey, and three or four days later I got a call from Manchester Boddy, who was the publisher of the Los Angeles News, which was the only Democratic newspaper in southern California, and I might say in California, for that matter. The only large paper that gave the Democrats any kind of a break at all. He told me that he had this letter he wanted to know if he could print it, and I told him that I didn't want it printed.

I had written it to George Luckey, and when he called me on the phone I wasn't

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in a position where I had the letter to look at again, and I had almost forgotten what I had said. I wasn't too careful about what I had said. I had some doubts as to whether or not the thing might be libelous if it was published. The next thing I knew other people were on the phone to me, I don't remember who they were, and said that it was a good letter, particularly in light of the fact that I had been vice-chairman with Roosevelt.

Well, everybody knew how I felt about Roosevelt. I had made it plain, nationally, when we went to the convention and I hadn't got into the campaign at all. This was right at the end of the campaign, maybe two weeks before the end of the campaign, and I was more surprised than anybody else when the letter with a couple of sentences left out appeared in practically every paper in northern California. They hooked it up, for

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instance, in our hometown, with a statement of Pat Peabody's, who had been my friend, and they published both of our pictures in the paper with a caption over the top that McEnery and Peabody endorse Earl Warren for Governor. And they published the entire letter.

If anybody read the entire letter, I made the statement to George Luckey that there was no use doing anything about him, that he was going to get beat by seven hundred thousand or a million votes, so there was no use us getting involved in it.

I never thought that the letter would get as much publicity -- or I never thought I would ever see the letter again when I wrote it to George Luckey. The letter has come up many times since 1950 to haunt me, because everybody got the idea from the caption on the top of the paper that I had endorsed Earl Warren. I never intended anything to be made

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public. I just felt there was just no use in me getting involved in it. He didn't have a chance of winning and that was all there was to it. God help California if he had won.

FUCHS: What about the Helen Gahagan Douglas-Nixon contest?

MCENERY: That was a terrible thing that happened to the Democratic Party. We held many meetings, and we held some good meetings in San Francisco, and we knew that Sheridan Downey was getting a little tired, he wasn't too young. I didn't know, I thought he was feeling all right. He kept himself in pretty good shape, but worked like a dog. I guess he got a little tired with all of this constant jabbing that was being made at him, mainly by Roosevelt and his cohorts in southern California. And I'm sure they were instigated, a great deal of them, by Roosevelt again. They had to get

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rid of everybody in the Democratic Party to get their own people in. Sheridan Downey met with us in San Francisco and everybody strained themselves to make commitments as to how much money they'd raise and so forth for the Downey campaign. I'd say that there was maybe 20 at a luncheon we held in the city, and we all pledged our loyalty to him, and he got up and made a wonderful talk thanking us for the past and present support. Sheridan got up and told us how much he appreciated all of the support and that he would run again and, oh, I don't know, maybe it was a month afterwards, just out of a clear sky he announced that he was no longer going to run. This was just a month or so before the primaries, as I remember. Many of Downey's supporters, one of which was -- I imagine Pauley had something to do with it, and they convinced -- at that time Manchester Boddy, I think, was selling his newspaper -- Manchester

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Boddy, a fine Democrat and a wonderful gentleman, and he said that he would run.

Well, Helen Gahagan Douglas had already, I think, announced that she was going to run against Sheridan Downey. I don't think there would have been a chance in the world that she would defeat Sheridan Downey. I felt all Sheridan Downey had to do was to put his name on the ballot and come out here and make a few speeches and let the Democratic organization do the job. I guess he had some doubts as to what would happen in southern California, but I think it was mostly due to the fact that he just got worn out. I don't think he felt well and that was the reason, and at that time his wife didn't feel well, too. So, I imagine that he thought that he had served long enough; but he surprised even his closest friends in making the announcement. He just floored everybody in California.

Well, we all pulled together as best we

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could and we ran Manchester Boddy. We had him in northern California, I think, for only a couple of days, and we had a meeting at Stanford and we had one in San Jose, Santa Clara County, a dinner meeting. I presented him to the audience. But the Helen Gahagan Douglas campaign started to roll then. I didn't feel too enthused about Helen Gahagan Douglas. She was very liberal, but the idea of Communists, and communism and everything else that they used against her later on, nothing was farther from the truth. I think she was for every liberal movement that came along, and she was a good spokesman for most of them. But anyhow, she beat Manchester Boddy in a walk. I mean it wasn't even close. I'm pretty sure that's the campaign of '50 that I'm talking about.

And then Nixon went on to defeat her, simply on the -- the whole campaign was communism,

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communism leanings, and so forth. I never felt that there was anything communistic about Helen Gahagan Douglas. She was way ahead of her time in a lot of things that she was promulgating, but today, like many of the rest of us, she might be considered a conservative if she was promoting these same things. Shortly after this she left politics altogether, and went back on the stage, I guess. I haven't seen her in some years.

FUCHS: Downey's resignation was simply to give Nixon seniority?

MCENERY: Yes. That was all. Downey was a real Californian. He was fighting for California causes all the time, and I still think that Downey wasn't feeling good. I think he just wanted to get back here. When he got back to California, after he moved back here, he lived in an apartment in San Francisco and

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you couldn't even see him. He just didn't want to see anybody.

He lived on Post Street in an apartment, and I tried several times to see him when he came back, and it was a year or a year and a half later, I think, he died. I don't remember exactly the date of his death, but it wasn't very long after he came back to California that he died. As I told you, there was no funeral services for him at all. He gave his body to the medical department at the University of California. There was no services held for him, nothing, just an announcement in the paper that he had died; which, to a person like myself that has always felt that there should be some kind of a burial (and I don't think that Downey was an atheist or anything like that) -- but he just felt again that, I guess, he was doing something for the human race by turning his body over to the

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University of California.

FUCHS: We talked, but not on tape, a bit about the 1944 campaign and convention, about which you had some remarks. Just what was your position in politics in 1944?

MCENERY: I was very busy trying to make some money. I was in the hotel business, in the hardware business, and I very probably could have gone to the convention. I was chairman of the county committee of Santa Clara County. We were getting to be quite a good sized county. I did meet with the delegates -- they met here in Monterey -- I did meet with the delegates before they went to the convention. There was quite a fight here between former Governor Culbert Olson, quite a fight over who was heading up the delegation and so forth.

I wasn't a part of it and I don't remember too much of it, only what I heard indirectly

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from those who attended and the maneuvering that went on in the nomination of Harry Truman for Vice President. Everybody from here thought that it was going to be Byrnes or someone of that type and there were other names that were considered, but Byrnes was the most prominent and Justice William Douglas.

FUCHS: Was Douglas popular here?

MCENERY: No, not at all. Douglas never was popular in California. He has a few strange bedfellows around here, but to tell you the truth, to my way of looking at it, most of them are screw-boxes. I don't know where they came from. They crawl out from under the rocks every once in awhile, but you don't see anything of them, and he's nothing around here anymore; a lot of people that are interested in preserving nature, and trees, and so forth. He comes to Monterey once in awhile, but I never thought that he figured in the picture at all here in California.

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He never was thought of by anybody until Roosevelt started to mention him again, and some of the people in southern California.

But I didn't think that the politicians or the Democratic party leaders would pick anybody like Douglas. I felt that it was going to be Byrnes. Pat McDonough was chairman, I believe, of the California delegation in '44. He ended up as chairman I think -- I'm not too positive about that, you've got to check it -- but I talked to Pat McDonough, and Malone, and Ed Heller and any number of the Democrats and they thought that they did quite a job with the California delegation. They were working very close with Hannegan. The Byrnes people thought that they had the California people lined up, but there didn't seem to be any doubt, but what Truman and Hannegan didn't feel that they had the California people lined up. They did have some awful battles, I heard, in caucuses and so forth.

I imagine that Culbert Olson and some of the people from the south might have been in favor of Douglas; but I felt, being at home, that it was going to be Byrnes that was going to be the vice-presidential candidate.

FUCHS: What about the renomination of Henry Wallace?

MCENERY: Henry Wallace, I thought that someplace along the line that he was going to be dumped, I had that feeling.

FUCHS: What about the feeling of Californians? Were there some who were strong for Henry Wallace before they got to the convention?

MCENERY: Again you have that feeling of loyalty I always keep talking about in northern California. If the President had made it clear that he wanted Wallace, the same ticket again, I'm sure that the northern California people would have gone along, but some place

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along the line they got the word that Wallace was not going to be the man. I am sure that that came mostly with the friendship of Hannegan with many of the leaders. Hannegan made many trips to California. In fact, he was out here a week or two after he became chairman of the party. Made a wonderful impression on everybody. He was a great friend of our family doctor, Doctor Eddie Amaral. They had played football together at St. Louis University. I took Doc Amaral to a meeting that was held at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco, where all of the Democrats got together for lunch. Hannegan and Amaral hadn't seen each other in years, and when I looked up, I sat down at the table looking around for Doc Amaral, and he was sitting up next to Hannegan at the head table. He never had anything to do with Democratic or Republican politics either,

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and here he was sitting at the head table with -- just old college friends.

MCENERY: I've always had a feeling that the leaders of the party organization should not be either candidates, or potential candidates, for public office. If they don't have that kind of a feeling about it, people right away get thinking, like I do about Roosevelt, that he was promoting himself all the time. And I'm not the only one that felt that way. I'm sure that Shelley, Brown and Rogers felt that way, from the '46 campaign. I think that the Democratic Party is making an awful mistake in California right now in having so many elective officeholders holding positions in the party organization. The only time that we've ever had any success in the Democratic Party in California was when we had people who were just interested in organization and not interested in running for public office.

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You become prominent when you're in connection with party organization, and if you have the ability eventually people start thinking about you in terms of running for public office and they will sometimes convince you that you ought to run. But I feel that it would be a lot better if people that were in party organization would stay away from running for public office. This is what's happening all over in California today. I almost get a thrill when I see the things that are happening to the Republicans, but it's kind of disgusting to me when it happens to the Democrats. You can see a breakdown in an attempt to get some party organization when these people get to thinking in terms of being a candidate for public office.

FUCHS: One more question about '44. Hannegan came out here and met with Malone and Robert Kenny

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at the Palace Hotel late in May of that year, and then they went over to Alameda County -- I guess the Leamington Hotel's probably in Oakland?

MCENERY: Yes.

FUCHS:.....and had a public reception.

MCENERY: I attended both of them.

FUCHS: Do you recall anything of what these conferences were about, or any anecdotes in connection with that?

MCENERY: No. The only thing that I remember is Hannegan made a tremendous impression. He made a fine speech in San Francisco and I went over and I think there was a dinner meeting held at the Leamington and I was there. I think the same old tried and true leaders were there; Pat McDonough, and I think Monroe Friedman chaired the meeting

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over there for Hannegan. We always, when we went to any other town, just let the chairman of the county committee or their own leaders take over and we kind of sat in the background. But Hannegan had made a wonderful talk in San Francisco and made a wonderful talk that night, an altogether different speech than he had made in San Francisco. But he really did a great job at stirring up enthusiasm with his talk. He inspired leadership, there's no doubt about it; he must have been a wonderful organizer in Missouri where he was. Was it Kansas City or where?

FUCHS: St. Louis.

MCENERY: St. Louis, Missouri. I'd forgotten.

FUCHS: Well, what direct contact had you had with Senator Truman prior to '44, either in connection with the Truman Committee or other activities, and do you recall any anecdotes?

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MCENERY: No, I wasn't in a position of prominence. I don't think it was '44, but it might have been, the time that the Truman committee came. I had met Truman on a couple of occasions. I remember being in a reception line, I think this was at the Palace Hotel, too, where we all went up to shake hands with the President. I don't think that was in '44, I think it was later. I think it was in '46.

FUCHS: Of course, if it was after he was President it was after April '45.

MCENERY: It was, so I'm not talking about '44. I'm talking about '45, as President; and I remember coming up and shaking hands with him and saying, "This is my wife Margaret; I'd like to have you meet my Margaret."

My daughter was in line, she was then taking a nursing course at San Francisco and she wanted to meet the President. And the President

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turns around and he yells, "Hey, Margaret, come here and meet John's Margaret." It shocked me, it was just like myself being around the house yelling for one of my kids. He just turned around, and the hall was full of people and he just said, "Hey, Margaret, come here, I want you to meet John's Margaret."

Well, to tell you the truth, Margaret Truman and my daughter were the only two young people in the place. So, they went off in a corner and started to talk about, oh, I don't know, the usual things young girls talk about, I guess. But they were the only young people in that reception. This was the reception before dinner.

FUCHS: Do you have any vivid memories of him coming into town as a Senator, then, with the Truman Committee and your conversations with him?

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MCENERY: Yes. I hadn't talked with him so much, but when his committee came I had the hardware store in San Jose and we did a lot of business with Hendys. It wasn't the Senator that talked to me, but one of the members of his committee, asking me if I knew anything about the lathe room. We were selling Atlas lathes for Hendys and I told him no, I didn't know particularly about it, I had a man that contacted them.

I went down there, I don't know what, I checked up on the number of lathes that were in the room and the number of men that were working them and so forth. I gave that information to one of the secretaries that were working with the committee. I heard the next day (I wasn't down there) but the next day the whole committee went down there and they went through this lathe room. I never did find out what the Truman Committee

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had to say about Hendys or anything of that type.

I was invited up -- this could have been '44 -- I was invited up to his room. He stayed at the Palace Hotel, and this was before he was President, and there was about eight or ten of us in there and Mrs. Truman was there, practically all. men in there, with the exception of Mrs. Truman. Somebody was with her, some friend of hers. I don't know who it was, maybe they were traveling with them or maybe it was one of the other Senator's wives. They had put a piano in the Truman parlor and they were always kidding Truman, you know, about playing the piano, and they asked him if he wouldn't play something on the piano.

Well, he sat down and he played a couple of things on the piano and he hit a couple of chords on the piano like he was going to start

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singing some little funny ditties or something like that. Mrs. Truman turned around to this friend of hers and she says, "That means that we leave now."

There was nothing shady about any of the little ditties that he sang, but it was most likely something that he would have, little joke songs, maybe given with his whole Army group or something if they were having a meeting.

I believe that was when he was on that Truman Committee. That was my first contact with him where I hadn't just seen him, and where I got into the same room with him, and after I had met him a few times.

I can say this that -- not because he became President or because he was United States Senator -- he was so easy to become friendly with. I don't know, I just kind of felt that he kind of liked me, too. Maybe everybody

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got that feeling, I don't know, but I felt that I was kind of close to him. Maybe when you go through a few of these battles for a fellow, or with him, maybe you get that feeling, anyhow; but I always thought that the President like to come to San Francisco. He really enjoyed San Francisco; he felt that he was always among friends up there.

I remember that he was great on Chinese food and he used to like to go down to Chinatown after we'd get through in the evening and eat Chinese food. When he became President and he came to San Francisco, we had it all fixed up at one of the older Chinese restaurants to have dinner down there. Alben Barkley was with him on this trip. I don't exactly remember the date, but he was President, and I think it was on this non-political trip in early '48. We arranged for this dinner down at this Chinese restaurant and, gee, we were all going to be

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down there at ten-thirty, all the little group that had known him for some time. Maybe there were forty or forty-five of us going to be down there. And, gee, at the last minute, I was the one that got the word first, but I don't know how it happened, whether one of the security men got ahold of me, or something, and said that they had been down to look at the restaurant and the President couldn't go in that building. There was no security, and it was an old rattletrap of a building. It had never occurred to me. The front of the building looked good, I didn't know what it looked like behind. But they went around looking at the building and they said the President couldn't go. But Alben Barkley didn't miss. He was there and he was around shaking hands with all the little Chinese girls and the people and everything else. We had quite a pleasant evening of it.

But I remember that Truman came in '55 to San Francisco after he had been President.

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This was the tenth anniversary of the formation of the United Nations and we still went to Chinatown, again; after the President's security people didn't have anything to say about it.

And I remember walking in this room, and there wasn't very good lights -- took me a little longer to get there than the President did because he came down with the limousine and the officers from the auditorium next to the Opera House where the United Nations Charter was signed in '45. He got down to Chinatown in a hurry, and I remember coming into this Chinese restaurant where a group of us were going to get together and it was rather a little dark. I was checking my coat and I turned around, I couldn't quite see who was at the bar, and I heard Mr. Truman's voice say, "Come on, sit down here on the stool." He was already sitting down at

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the stool and he was waiting, I guess, to have a little nourishment. We sat down and one at a time as the people came in, the President shook hands with all his old friends. I don't imagine that there was more than twenty or twenty-five came to this and we had a Chinese dinner after we had a few drinks.

Albert Chow and Jack Chow were alive, I think, at the time, and they took care of it. I think that they had something to do with the ownership of the restaurant. I don't remember its name now, but it's in existence there now. But we had a lot of good times out in Chinatown together. I'm not much of a Chinese food eater, but we had some pretty long dinners out there, many courses.

FUCHS: Do you have any other post-presidential recollections? Did you see him on other occasions?

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MCENERY: Yes, any time he came to California I was there. I don't know what trip this was. This wasn't the '55 trip. This must have been later, in '58, or '59, that we had a dinner in San Francisco that he came to. I hadn't been anything in Democratic politics for quite some time, and I got a phone call one day from some of the people that were running the dinner and said that I was going to introduce the President. This was held at the Fairmont. I think I gave you a newspaper clipping. It must have been '58 or '59. I was rather surprised, because I hadn't been active in Democratic politics there for some years in the state organization. After all, Pat Brown was there; I thought the Governor should have introduced him, but they evidently had Pat Brown to make some remarks. I ended up being toastmaster that night and introducing the President. I had a little more fun that night, I had an opportunity to say something

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about him. I wasn't presenting the President of the United States that night.

We had a little banter at the head table, I don't remember what it was, but the audience got quite a kick out of it. That was where he said in his talk that Pat Brown had something that he never had. I don't know what he mentioned, it's in the newspaper clipping there. He was kidding Pat Brown about something .

I'm awful sorry that the President isn't feeling up to it to make another visit to the coast, he still would get a tremendous reception. A lot of his old friends are still around here and they never quit talking about him. They all have their own little episodes, many of which would parallel

mine, and I don't want to have it thought that these things -- you're just asking me about, what happened to me. I don't want to have it seem that I was anything in particular; but I kind

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of got the feeling that we really struck it off pretty good together.

FUCHS: I'm sure you did. What was your reaction when, I believe it was in March, 1952, he announced that he was not going to run again?

MCENERY: I thought it was coming. I didn't think that he would run again. I thought that you were going to say something else, not about '52, then.

FUCHS: What was that?

MCENERY: Oh, I thought you were going to ask me something about the Kennedy remark that he made, that he thought that Kennedy couldn't win, or shouldn't have been nominated in '60. I thought you were going to ask me about that.

FUCHS: Well, I'd like to have your comment on that. Of course, I could ask a great many more questions, but I know you are busy.

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MCENERY: Well, I think Truman was just for someone else for President. I don't think he was for Johnson, or at least he didn't leave me to believe. I think that he was for Symington in the early part. I don't know whether there were any statements made, I can't remember whether there were any statements made on that; but I didn't think that he had said anything to help Johnson. Senator Symington would have made a wonderful candidate. I thought that we were oversupplied with good candidates, as the years went on there, for President. We had men that had been connected with Government and had been through a lot of the things that happened in the legislative branch, and they were thoroughly familiar with what was going on in the executive branch of the Government. Symington, particularly, with his background in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and then as Secretary of the Air Force, wasn't

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it? I thought that he would have been a tremendous candidate for President; but he made trips to San Francisco, but he never took like Harry Truman did. He never got on with the leaders, and there was nothing that he did -- he was a pleasant fellow and I liked him very much. In fact, they didn't have a head table this particular day at the Fairmont when they had a reception for Symington and they asked me to sit with him.

I had met him on a couple of occasions. Once at a hearing in Washington I was invited by Harley Hise to come over and listen to a hearing on the Pennsylvania Railroad, which owed the RFC a lot of money. This was a hearing where several of the Senators were in attendance, and one of them was Symington. I met him there and talked to him. I'm sure Symington didn't remember ever meeting me, but I remembered being in his presence a few times and they asked me to sit with him. We had a very pleasant

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conversation at lunch.

Kennedy had so many connections in California it was kind of hard for anybody to catch up with him here. I was surprised that he didn't win by a bigger margin than he did in California, both in the primary and in the final election. But it was a real battle royal. I was only around the verge of the campaign, I didn't hold any official office. But I was friendly with some of Kennedy's father's friends in Nevada, Bill [William] Woodburn, who was national committeeman. He invited me up there to a dinner and a luncheon, in '59 I believe it was, maybe it was early '60, that they gave, and there was no doubt in my mind that Kennedy had sewed up the eight Nevada votes, I believe it was eight votes, at the convention. And Bill Woodburn was very friendly with him

I talked with him. I made a survey on the east and west side of the San Joaquin Valley,

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just a little survey on my own going into each little town starting at Manteca and going down below Fresno and coming back on the west around by Sonora and so forth, for John Kennedy, He asked me to do it, and I was to report to one of his secretaries. I went to a cocktail party at Carson City four or five days later and gave them the report on what I had found out. I was surprised that the reception was so good for Kennedy in these small towns. They evidently knew and had made some surveys down through the center of the San Joaquin Valley, all the way down from Stockton to Fresno, but they didn't know what was happening in the little towns off to the east and west. I always like to study the final tallies that came in from some of these small towns. In the San Joaquin Valley, for instance, you'll find out that, taking all the bigger cities down along through

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the San Joaquin Valley, that they go about fifty-fifty for every candidate that runs, whether he is a Republican or Democrat, when they have an election. It seems like the balance of power is held by the direction that these small towns go in, and I'm sure the Kennedy people knew it.

Of course, we're getting away from getting something about Truman on the record; we're getting too far away from that when you get to 1960.

FUCHS: I believe this is good about Kennedy. I think you had a short, vivid account of the actual request by Kennedy.

MCENERY: Oh. That was very interesting. Kennedy had his room at the Fairmont Hotel and he wanted to see me, and I didn't have any idea what he wanted to see me about. I had been very friendly, I had worked for him at the '56 convention. In fact, I stayed up all

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night talking to delegates and so forth, and sometime around one or two o'clock in the morning, I introduced him to the whole Rhode Island delegation. They were down in the lobby, or in one of

the bars, in one of the hotels in Philadelphia. I had got acquainted with him and I was asking them about Kennedy and they hadn't met him. I saw Kennedy go down the hall and I ran over by the elevator and told him that there were a bunch of fellows here from the Rhode Island delegation that would like to see him. He walked in there and he was introduced to all the fellows around, and it turned out that if you will look at the record of the '56 convention, there was one vote in the Rhode Island delegation, that, Howard McGrath I believe, voted for Kefauver, and practically everybody else in the delegation voted for Kennedy. It might be good to check those figures and see if I'm right

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or if I've got it a little bit mixed up.

However, as I say, I had been friendly with Kennedy at least from the '56 convention on. I had known him, had seen him before this and had listened to him speak at a few affairs. He wasn't anything of national importance, or we didn't think so at the time, although he had a very pleasing personality. He asked to see me, and I went up to his parlor and there were about six or eight people in there. He wanted to ask me something, but he couldn't do it, there was just too many people around shaking hands and pushing in on him all the time, and he asked me to go in the bedroom.

I walked into the bedroom and turned around and here was John Perchio and Mr. Deeden, who are both superior court judges in Alameda County and who were very strong for Kennedy, Perchio had originally come from New York. Kennedy again wanted to say something to me, but he

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didn't seem to want to say it in front of Perchio and Deeden. He was going to go to Oakland that night to make a talk, and Perchio and Deeden were there to take him over to Oakland. He told them that his back was giving him a lot of trouble and that he'd like to get under the shower for awhile.

He started in stripping down in the room and he walked into the shower room, and we were still there in the room and he said, "I've got to let that hot water play on my back for awhile," or something to that effect and he got into the tub. He said, "Come here, I want to talk to you." I ended up in the bathroom, and he kicked down the toilet seat and he said, "Sit down, I want to ask you something."

And that's where he asked me if I could find out -- and it seemed to him like San Joaquin Valley was just like going over here across town

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and checking up on something -- he asked me if I could go down in the San Joaquin Valley and make a little check for him in these small localities there on both sides of the valley and give him a report. I said, "Well, where will I give it?"

He says, "Well, Saturday night we're going to be in Carson City, could you get ahold of us by phone or something like that?"

I told him it would take a couple of days, this was very probably a Wednesday, and he wanted the report on Saturday. He asked me if I'd give it to O'Donnell, and he told me about this reception that was being held at the Governor's mansion at Carson City. It was for Kennedy. I came back -- I don't know whether it was on Friday -- and I got ahold of Bill Woodburn in Nevada and he says, "Well, gee, if you're coming up, come to the reception at Carson City, you're invited." He said,

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"The Democratic Party is giving it for Kennedy."

Well, I went up. I drove up, and the next night I went to the reception there at Carson City, and when I started to talk to Kennedy and told him I had made the trip, he was surprised to see me, because I was just supposed to make a phone call.

Well, O'Donnell, the secretary that was there with him, asked me if I wouldn't give the information that I had, and I had all the little towns, how many I stopped and talked to and so forth, and I was surprised that there was such a large percentage of the people in favor of Kennedy. And to be a little on the conservative side, which has happened to me in the last twenty years, I cut the percentage of lead down about to half of what I had actually recorded in the various people that I talked to.

I didn't get a very good reception in the building and loans and the banks that I went into. Depending on the size of the town, I'd walk down the street and ask ten or fifteen people, and go into a few business places.

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what they thought about Kennedy's chances for getting the nomination, and being elected President. And, gee, the reception was wonderful, nobody told me it was none of my business or anything else. They all seemed to say that they either didn't like him or they thought he was too young or something to that effect, but I'd say it was easy ten or fifteen percent, the majority of them were for Kennedy.

But I attended all the Kennedy gatherings when he came out to California. I was only an alternate to the convention in 1960; but I was happy to go, at least you got a reserved seat out of it anyhow.

FUCHS: Did you have a final percentage figure?

MCENERY: I did have a percentage figure. Afterwards I was told that it was within two tenths of a point of what the vote actually came out.

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I was complimented by O'Donnell, and I met Salinger afterwards, and they told me it was the best report that they had got anyplace. I must have been too optimistic in writing down the Kennedy votes, because I had cut it in half when I told them what the percentage was going to be. As it turned out later on, those little towns all along the San Joaquin were the ones that helped decide the election. You know how close it was.

FUCHS: This was in the primary?

MCENERY: Yes, in the primary. It was quite a battle. I thought that Humphrey hurt himself a lot in that Kennedy campaign. But as we said before, the Democrats can have a lot of trouble, but they always seem to get together on election day somehow or other, I don't know. They may be mad at some Democrats, but they still go in and check the man that has D-e-m-o

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behind his name, so it's all right.

FUCHS: Did you have any feelings about Stevenson's displacing national chairman McKinney, with his own chairman, [Stephen A.] Mitchell and rather disassociating himself from Mr. Truman's record in the 1952 campaign.

MCENERY: I felt very bad about, and I think he would have done a lot better had he stayed on the Truman line, better than he would going off on his intellectual discourses. He received great receptions, though, in San Francisco. But it was altogether a new type of Democrat that came into the Stevenson campaign than were in the Truman campaign.

I got to know Stevenson when he was Governor of Illinois through the Peabodys. I had met him in Senator [Scott] Lucas' campaign. Senator Lucas had been head of the Senate and was defeated in Illinois by Senator Dirksen,

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wasn't it?

FUCHS: Yes.

MCENERY: Well, we went to that reception, and I met Stevenson; and we had Stevenson to California when he was still Governor of Illinois. We had him out here for a reception at Saratoga, at a private home, it was a private party, there was only ten or fifteen. I always felt that I knew him. I think Stevenson was used later on in the '60 campaign. I don't think that he felt that strong about getting the nomination, and I don't think he should have got into it down there in Los Angeles; but again you had Mrs. Roosevelt being so strong for him, and coming to the convention hall and practically disrupting the convention. And I thought that Stevenson made a mistake in coming to the convention hall, too, but I think it was in desperation that

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he came there. John Kennedy had the thing. He had done so much spade work for two years before, that these guys just couldn't catch him, any of them. He was so far ahead.

FUCHS: Well, in '56 did you prefer Stevenson again?

MCENERY: Yes, I did. I preferred Stevenson. I didn't have the same enthusiasm about his nomination that we had in '52, but he made a good campaign out of it; I was quite surprised. I didn't think he'd make as good a campaign out of it as he did.

FUCHS: Do you think Mitchell did better than McKinney might have done?

MCENERY: I thought that Mitchell was nothing I never got enthused about Mitchell. I don't know why Stevenson was so impressed with him. I never got any feeling about him at all. I never thought he was good or bad. I sure

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as heck didn't feel the same way about him that we all felt about Hannegan, or in the old days about Jim Farley, or even about Howard McGrath, or any of these people that were connected with the party. He struck me as kind of a haughty businessman or something. The several times that I saw him I didn't care whether I met him, or shook hands with him or anything else. It wasn't me, I just felt that he was the wrong man in the job; but he was evidently the kind of a guy that impressed Stevenson. He was Stevenson's man, and I guess he was entitled to whoever he wanted in the national committee at the time, but I think he'd have done a lot better if he had kept McKinney in there. I think McKinney knew where the money was, too; he was able to raise money better than Mitchell was.

FUCHS: You felt he was capable?

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MCENERY: Uh, McKinney? Well, from everything I heard about the man -- I didn't come too much in contact with him -- but from everything I heard, everybody seemed to like him and he seemed to be a real worker and he seemed to accomplish something.

FUCHS: Would you recount your story about becoming director of the Mint in San Francisco?

MCENERY: Well, after the '48 campaign, I went back home to try to pick up the loose ends of my business. I had spent too much time in politics, and I was involved in the hotel business and the hardware business. Sheridan Downey just, almost in a kidding way, said to me one day, "You know, you ought to be Superintendent of the Mint, businessman and so forth." I didn't even know anything about the Mint. I wasn't interested in the Mint, I wasn't interested in

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any political appointment.

Gee, the next thing I knew -- I don't know how it all happened, whether Sheridan Downey got ahold of the White House or what -- I heard that Sheridan Downey had recommended me to the President for Superintendent of the Mint.

Well, I didn't pay a lot of attention to it. In fact, it came out in the paper, went to the Senate, and it was all confirmed like it was all set up. I picked up the paper, one morning -- the Senate had confirmed me on a Thursday or something like that -- and Notre Dame was playing USC and I went down to the football game down south. My wife didn't go with me; I went with a bunch of fellows down there and I called home in the evening and my wife said, "My God, the phone's been ringing all day, newspapermen and everything else."

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I said, "Well, you must have told them I'd gone down here because the phone's been ringing all day here at the hotel, too. And poor old Luke Kelly, who was my roommate, said he was my secretary down there. I waited until I got home; I didn't do anything about this appointment until I got home a couple of days later. And I called up Sheridan Downey and I said that, "Gee, I don't want to be Superintendent of the Mint."

"Well," he says, "you're confirmed now."

"Well," I said, "I appreciate it and everything else, and," I said, "I'm not going to take the job."

Well, he laughed about it and said, "Well, you're confirmed. I don't know what you can do about it..."

So, I sent a telegram to the President of the United States thanking him for recommending me, and I sent another telegram to

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Downey thanking them for the Senate for confirming me and everything else, but I don't want the job. I couldn't take it if I wanted to. I mean there's too many things involved.

Well, I didn't know it, but, boy, there had been an investigation going on by security people and so forth checking up on me for a week or two before and I didn't know anything about it. Somebody had asked me some questions and a fellow came to interview me, he had an office at MacAllister Street there in the same building the Internal Revenue was in, and he asked me some questions about my background and myself. But, anyhow, the President sent me a letter thanking me and was sorry that I couldn't serve and so forth. I've got those telegrams and letters someplace, I don't know where they are; but this is '48.

Well, in 1951 when everybody was talking

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about dishonesty in Government, whether it was fur coats or refrigerators, and we were having all the investigation of the Internal Revenue, I got a call one day from Jack Shelley, wanting to know if I could come up and see him.

Well, I didn't know what the world Jack Shelley wanted to see me about. We were always very good friends, but I hadn't seen him, he was a Congressman, and he asked me if I could come up to his place. He said, "Be sure and be there not any later than two o'clock."

Well, it didn't occur to me that there was anything involved in it more than something personal. He wanted to ask me some questions or something or he had some other appointments. Well, what happened was that when I got there George Miller, Frank Havenner, and Jack Shelley were there; and they said, "We got you up here, you've got to take the job of Superintendent of the Mint. We're

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being criticized, the Democrats can't find anybody to even head up the Mint. In view of all these problems that they're having over dishonesty and everything else, they can't clear anybody for the Mint."

FUCHS: Who had been directing it when you refused the job?

MCENERY: He's in politics in San Francisco today, George Gillin.

FUCHS: What had happened to him?

MCENERY: He had some problems in regard to -- and it's not a matter of record, and it never got out in the press -- but he had been in the insurance business, and he had made sure that his company sold insurance policies and so forth to the employees at the Mint. There was just a little, I guess, investigation, and he just resigned.

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But the job was open there for a month or two, and the criticism kept mounting. They couldn't find anybody to even fill in in the Mint. Well, I didn't give it a lot of thought, and I guess I let my better judgment get away with me. When Shelley, and George Miller, particularly, the Congressman, asked me if I wouldn't consider it or take it, I said, "Well, gee, if it's that bad I'll take it for a few months until you get somebody else." I was thinking just till after the primary election, that's all I was thinking about.

Well, with that, Jack Shelley picks up the phone and phones Clair Engle who is in Washington, then Congressman, and says, "McEnery will take the job."

He says, "Great, let me talk to him."

So Clair Engle said hello to me, and I said, "Gee, I don't know, it looks to me like I've been boxed in in this thing. I don't want

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the job now."

The job didn't pay an awful lot, I think it only paid eleven thousand a year or something like that; and when you get through adding that to your other income you only have about two-thirds of it left anyhow. So, I was figuring, "Well, I'm not going to move to San Francisco or anything like that." My home was fifty miles away.

Before another week was up I got a phone call from Mrs. Ross, who was Treasurer of the United States, and a phone call from Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Foley and it got out into the paper that I was going to take the job as Superintendent of the Mint, and the thing was confirmed and I was in up there.

I've been told that I have an all time record of getting out of a political appointed job the day after election. I had given two letters to Matt Connelly when they were in

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San Francisco, one that says that, "Now that we have won the election I would like to resign as Superintendent of the Mint," and the other one says that, "Now that the Republicans have won the election I want to get out and let's turn the running of the Mint over to them."

The night of the election I sent a wire to the White House telling them to use letter number two. The next morning I got back up to the Mint, the day after election, and I had a telegram from the White House -- because they had opened up three hours before we had -- I had a telegram at the San Francisco Mint telling them to turn all values over to the Assistant Superintendent, that I was relieved of my job. I don't think anybody ever got out of a job that quick. I think everybody knew that I just took the thing for a few months; and it was frightening the amount of money that

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was in there.

The other thing that happened, after I was confirmed I didn't actually take the job for two weeks, because some of the vaults in this Mint had been locked up since they had moved over there to this new Mint in 1933. These vaults had been sealed up for all of these years and I didn't believe the seal and the figures that were on the outside. So they had to send somebody from the Philadelphia Mint, somebody from the General Accounting Office, and somebody from the Denver Mint to supervise a complete inventory of all the coins that were in there -- call it a settlement. I guess I was in there two weeks before I signed a piece of paper saying that I was accountable for the money. But the inventory had come out all right, there was nothing wrong.

We had a good time up at the Mint, everybody

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working for us was very loyal, I invited everybody to the swearing-in ceremonies, which was just held in a large office. I didn't think any of the employees would come, but I invited them all; and when a few friends and Judge Harris were in there, swore me in as Superintendent of the Mint, and a few newspaper people around, taking pictures and so forth, you couldn't get the employees in there.

So, after it was over, I went out and the employees were all lined up on the steps going down and I made a talk to them and said that I would be around to see the ones that I hadn't met; I would be around and get acquainted with all of them, and I was happy they came. It got me off on the right

foot, because the employees at the Mint (the old timers that had been there) they had never been invited by a Superintendent of the Mint to the swearing-in ceremony, I didn't

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think very many of them would come, we had about two hundred employees in there.

But we had a very successful operation of the Mint. We were in third place as far as production was concerned, and I told these people at the Mint that production had to be brought up, that we were behind the Denver Mint. The Philadelphia Mint had, of course, by far the most employees and the most production. But I told them that they had to get their production up. That if there would be some kind of survey made, and we weren't getting the production out, that if one of the mints was going to be closed, it would be this one.

And we did, we brought the production up, and we passed the Denver Mint easily. Denver was having some trouble. I went up there at the request of Mr. Foley, the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. Mrs. Ross, I guess,

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agreed with it, I don't know whether she had the thought or who. The thought, anyhow, first was broached to me by Secretary Foley in a phone call asking me if I would go up there.

There was a schoolteacher that was Superintendent of the Mint up there, and evidently the Denver Mint was in an awful mess. I mean it was just a mess of a building, it wasn't a practical operation. It wasn't a conveyor line operation. In fact we didn't have one in San Francisco. There are a lot of things that could be done, and some of them have been done, to improve the mint field. But in spite of the mess that the Denver Mint was in, I did go up there and helped out our schoolteacher friend, who was a Democrat. It consisted mainly of taking a few of the newspaper people and letting them hold a gold ingot that weighed about forty pounds, and letting them have their pictures taken. And buying

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a couple of bottles of bourbon and a bottle of scotch and going over to the American Legion Hall, which was two or three blocks away from the Mint, and buying a few drinks. We convinced them, after we showed them through the Mint, that everything was in good shape, there was nothing wrong with the Mint. We got some good write-ups.

I've got clippings of it and so forth afterwards. It was just another one of these attempts on the part of politicians to convince the people that things weren't being handled right, you know, and criticizing the Superintendent and so forth at Denver. But it was a terrible disappointment to me, after I left the Mint, and after the men had worked so hard, and we had got things rolling pretty good that Eisenhower, when elected President, without even a decent survey being made, decided that the San Francisco Mint was supposed to be closed.

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Naturally you wouldn't expect him to close the Denver Mint, having his wife's folks and everything coming from there. I wrote a letter at the time about it to the Senate committee and

also sent copies of it to the Treasury Department, and I made a prediction which has come true. I said it would cost more for freight to ship the money from Denver down, you know, with insurance and everything, than it would to keep the Mint operating.

Well, they found out that in no time at all that they had to open up the San Francisco Mint on a limited basis to manufacture dimes and nickels and quarters and pennies because it was costing so damn much to ship them in from Denver and from Philadelphia.

I think that that gives you the story, unless you can think of some other question, in regard to the Mint.

FUCHS: That's about all I have. I certainly do thank

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you. I appreciate your patience and cooperation.

MCENERY: Well, I don't know how much of it is of any value; it just gives a little insight as to how we felt, particularly in northern California. I'm sorry there had to be so much said about the animosities and the problems we have had with some of our friends in other parts of the state because, I again come back to the fact that if we had a decent political organization in California, the Democratic Party, there'd be no reason why we shouldn't hold every elective office, and at no time should there have been two United States Senators from California that were Republican.

We at least have one Democrat in there now, and I think that with any kind of a campaign, there very probably could be the election of one in the coming election.

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FUCHS: Thank you very much.

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