

March 24, 1977
Interview with Bob Owen,
Los Angeles, Times, Vice Presidency
(Mondale-Humphrey roles) -
Senate Restaurant

. . . Carter had were unusual. I mean that they had a chance from the July Convention to work together, to plan together, not any hurry. It wasn't a shot-gun wedding. No hurried marriage. They had time to get used to each other.

And then they came through the election and down here to Washington. And all this time, remember they had six months before they ever went into government, to really get together, to work together, to talk together, to talk together, to plan together.

Bob Owen: Did you when you were Vice President?

HHH: No, we didn't have any such time like that --

Betty South: It's unusual.

HHH: It's unusual.

Bob Owen: Not from the Convention time on . . .

HHH: What do you mean?

Bob Owen: Oh, there were those two months difference. . .

HHH: I'll say, very important, and also, you had a sitting President and you don't have much time with him.

Bob Owen: That's the important part.

HHH: See, you had Truman that was a sitting President, there've been sitting Presidents for all these Vice Presidents.

Partner: Those all sound unusual, an unusually formal transition in the sense that money was appropriated, new offices set up, it was more of a business like you have in a corporation . . . where they'd have a change of . . .

HHH: Yes, not the hassel. Now, I also think that, as time goes on, with the President getting businer than we ever contemplated (because there are lots of things happening that nobody can ever envision,) that he'll have to call on; not only have to, he'll want to call on the Vice President. The Vice President's got a good welcome up here in Congress. He's very well liked. He has good rapport with the press. And it's my judgment that Carter sees in him a positive asset. And I really believe that unless there's an unusual development or something that I can't foresee, that

that will last.

Partner: You don't see that he poses a political challenge?

HHH: No, no, because he isn't a _____.

Fritz is too smart for that. Now if Carter runs and is re-elected in 1980 and Fritz has done a good job, he'll be his partner. Fritz will be still a young man. He is going to go around breaking his pick.

Bob Owen: How old he is?

HHH: He's forty-seven, I think. He isn't going to break his pick on some little battle as Vice President when can look down the road to be the nominee of his party. You know, he's too smart.

Bob Owen: Well, I really appreciate your taking the time to talk with us.

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