

# House aide claims Nixon throttled him at the door

WASHINGTON (UPI) — "Fishbait" Miller, former doorkeeper of the U.S. House of Representatives, claims President Nixon grabbed him by the throat and choked him, in the Capitol, in 1974.

In a book of titillating recollections from his 24 years as House doorkeeper, Miller gossips on the purported sexual adventures of Sen. John Kennedy and others, says the tryst of one unnamed incumbent senator was accidentally recorded on tape and claims Eleanor Roosevelt, not Franklin, named Harry Truman as FDR's running mate.

The book is called "Fishbait." It might be called "Fishbait's Revenge."

Miller became a celebrity of sorts as the man who bawled, "Mistuh Speakah! The President of the United States!" when presidents visited Congress to deliver State of the Union messages.

He claims it was on Nixon's last such appearance in 1974 that the President assaulted him while they waited outside the doors to the House chambers.

According to Miller, the incident started with this dialogue:

"Fishbait, how's your voice today? Is your throat sore? Is it hurting any?" Nixon asked.

"I haven't had any trouble so far, Mr. President."

"Fishbait, take two steps forward."

Then, says Miller, "he grabbed me by the throat and was choking me. It was a hard grasp. I gasped for breath."

He says he broke Nixon's grip and they entered the House, where he made the usual introduction, and then: "I heard him hiss in my ear. 'Now let's get this thing over with. I want to go home.'"

Miller, christened William but known by the nickname "Fishbait" since his boyhood in Mississippi, does not say what might have motivated the behavior he attributes to Nixon. He notes only that the involved introductory ceremony always put pressure on the participants and Nixon "was not in a jovial mood."

But he makes it plain that he did not consider the President's action a joke.

Miller devotes many pages to purported Capitol Hill sex scandals and says a Senate committee planted a bug in a certain room in an effort to learn who was leaking confidential information.

The bug, Fishbait says, recorded a senator seducing his secretary. "The senator is still there, dignity and all," he says.

"Everyone around the Hill wondered how John F. Kennedy could be a swinger when he hob-



'Fishbait' Miller, getting a pat on the cheek from the man he says later choked him

UPI Photo

bled on crutches much of the time, because of an injured back, he says. "Kennedy was known to use the hard surface of the floor with just the padding of the rug under him, rather than the couch."

Turning to Truman's accession to the vice presidency in 1974,

Miller claims the late Secretary of State James Byrnes was FDR's choice, but that liberals persuaded Eleanor a southerner could not get the black vote. They suggested Truman, he says.

"Without waking up the Pres-

dent, the First Lady gave the word to the powers that be at the convention that FDR had changed his mind and wanted Harry Truman," Miller writes. "When FDR found out what his wife had done, he almost had a stroke then and there."