

March 8, 1977

RITCHIE: The last session we were talking about when you joined the Rules Committee in 1949, with Senator Hayden as chairman, and some of the functions of the Rules Committee at that time. That whole period from 1949 on through 1955 seems to have been a very unpredictable one, with a lot of change in party in the Senate, change in leadership, two Democratic leaders, Lucas and McFarland, were defeated in succession. I wondered what your feeling was, having lived through that period and seen all the change.

ST. CLAIRE: Well, I imagine the turbulence was caused by an almost equality between the parties in the United States at that time. The strength of the Democrats had deteriorated. They lost the House of Representatives and the Senate in 1947, yet reestablished

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control in 1949. After '49 and into the first two years of the Eisenhower administration there was turbulence of politics in the United States in which a good number of factors contributed to keeping the parties on a fairly even basis, so far as Congress was concerned. Also, it has to be remembered that these were the years of the outbreak of the Korean War. All this destroyed a good deal of the old political stabilities in the Republican and Democratic parties nationwide. The Democrats kept the Senate by one vote in 1955, for example.

RITCHIE: How did that affect the staff? You started out as chief clerk of the Rules Committee, and then the Republicans took over the Senate in 1953. What happens to a staff member when the parties change? Did your function change very much?

ST. CLAIRE: Yes, mine did, because I went from chief clerk to assistant chief clerk. Senator [William E.] Jenner of Indiana became Republican chairman of the Committee in the first two years of the

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first Eisenhower administration. He appointed a friend of his, a man who had been one of his campaign aides, W. F. Bookwalter, as chief clerk. In what proved to be a very favorable and amiable arrangement, Jenner had confidence in me to the effect that he wanted to keep me there to work on the committee. Without doing an injustice to Bookwalter, I continued to do the major work of the committee in his name, and I was very pleased to do it, and keep a job in those days

when there was a great turning out of Democratic appointees. Jenner also appointed a couple of people to the staff in a secretarial capacity.

We had what I thought was an exceptionally fine relationship that even lasted through the politics of the Chavez election contest, when I was suspected of having more sympathy for Mr. Chavez than I ever had in my lifetime. Essentially, Jenner's staff people worked well toward the improvement of the business of the Senate, and were able to do what we could within our limitations to keep

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the Rules and Administration Committee ahead and abreast of the demands that were made upon it, politically and administratively.

RITCHIE: Could you give some of the background of the Chavez contest?

ST. CLAIRE: From a very faulty memory, I remember that Chavez came through the 1952 election by a narrow majority and there was some question as to what the vote had been in certain counties in New Mexico, and whether the ballots had been legally and honestly counted. There was some question about the destruction of certain ballots by one of the county judges in New Mexico. I remember that since the Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections came under the Republican control, they immediately organized a group of persons, with minority representation, to go to New Mexico and look into the details of the election and make some report and determination to the full committee about Chavez' victory. Although Chavez had been seated without prejudice, which is to say the Senate

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had seated him conditionally, I believe a report was put into the system by the subcommittee in which they declared that some areas of perhaps fraud of questionable voting in New Mexico had resulted in Chavez' narrow majority. I believe it was an adverse report that reflected upon Chavez. The report was filed, but the Senate took no action and Chavez continued on without challenge after that.

New Mexico was very well known for chicanery in its election procedures. When I first came here I had as an excellent friend a man, who is still alive, who worked for Carl Hatch. Hatch was one of the finer New Mexico senators, who later became a federal judge, and was the author of the so-called Hatch Act. This friend of mine would tell me stories about one county which was thirteen miles outside of Santa Fe by concrete road, and yet was never able to get its

election results into Santa Fe under a week because of "weather conditions." There was another story, these may be all apocryphal, in which there was in a certain

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county a regular re-election of the sheriff and all the county officials, notwithstanding the national results, year after year. So they put the ballot boxes under guard and put them within the county courthouse under lock and kept them there immediately after the polls had closed. Ultimately, my friend told me, they discovered a tunnel under the street into the county courthouse that came from the cafe across the street. They would use this tunnel to get to the ballot boxes and open them up and put in the ballots that they wanted.

It was a state, in the early days, where money made a great deal of difference in the matter of what kind of votes were obtained in certain sections, I would say particularly in the Spanish-American sections of the state. They had a senator, Bronson Cutting, who came out there for his health. He had a strong Eastern, or Harvard, accent. He ran for the Senate and was successful and was a very fine senator. But he owed his principal

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strength to his family fortune and was able to use it effectively in certain space areas of New Mexico. Chavez ran against Cutting and was defeated by him. Chavez was one of the very few native New Mexicans to run for the House or Senate and make it in the early days. Chavez actually had been a clerk on the Senate staff as a patronage post and got his legal education here before he went back home to run for the Senate.

Cutting went out to New Mexico to face a challenge that Chavez had presented him, but unfortunately Cutting was involved in a commercial air accident and was killed. Chavez was then appointed by the Governor as a consequence of Cutting's death. When Chavez appeared on the floor of the Senate to take the oath, La Follette and some of the other liberals got up and left the chamber. They would not witness him taking the oath because they had been Cutting's friends.

RITCHIE: Was Chavez an effective senator?

ST. CLAIRE: He was, I thought, rather a poor senator. I believe many of his

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actions could be put to question. That still does not account for the fact that he's in the Hall of Fame and his statue stands outside of the financial offices. Well it might, because his interests personally were financial. But, I would not put him in the category of a great senator, I would not think that he would at all rank with a man like Borah, or Hi Johnson, or some of the early western senators. He was eminently successful at the polls. He had a speech which he gave to his constituents, that had to do with the "little boy from Valencia County" in which he depicted his Horatio-Alger-rise in New Mexican politics. I do not feel that he was at all worthy of his post.

RITCHIE: There was another politician about whom I was interested in your reactions, and that was Ernest McFarland.

ST. CLAIRE: Yes, who is still alive and a good friend of mine. There is a story about McFarland that he flew in from Oklahoma and alit running. Certainly the day he arrived in Arizona he put

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himself right into the political arena. He did a very effective job of pulling himself up from a small law practice in the small town of Florence, Arizona into judgeship, and running successfully against Henry Ashurst, and then to become Democratic leader in the Senate. At one time he was seriously considered as a Vice Presidential candidate. After he was defeated by Barry Goldwater he went back and became Governor and was also on the Supreme Court of our state, and I think the owner of a very prosperous radio and television station.

A man of infinite energy, but very, very close on himself. That isn't to say that he wasn't outgoing, that he didn't have an "old-shoe" personality which you need in the west, that he couldn't squat down with any cowboy group or appear before a ladies' luncheon club, because he could and did, and did it successfully. In fact, he was a man who was intensely interested in himself and what he did and how he did it. He was impatient for success

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and impatient with himself and did not spare himself in any way. He always went up the stairs outside the Senate two or three at a time. He was always in his office very early in the morning and did a prodigious amount of work. You would think that with no real early Arizona background that he could have gotten where he did, nationally, but he did.

I think it could be said that he used the Robert Byrd approach to the Majority Leadership. Under Lucas he was willing to come into the Senate chamber at five o'clock in the afternoon and

take on the cleaning-up process and adjourn the Senate. He showed himself willing to undertake the small chores. In a sense he also demonstrated a loyalty to his party and to his leader as Byrd did, and therefore, he was able to rise into the Majority Leadership. As a leader I don't think he was too articulate. Certainly, he did do his homework and I think he was master of his facts. But he didn't have that ability to dominate the

other side of the chamber and to lecture and harangue them. Maybe it was best that he didn't. He did all of his work by accommodation and conciliation.

RITCHIE: It was about that time that you got involved in the John Marshall Butler campaign hearings and became the object of Senator Joseph McCarthy's attack. I wonder if you'd like to describe some of that incident?

ST. CLAIRE: That was really what we called the Tydings Case. McCarthy, of course, was a member of our committee and I think had gone on the Rules Committee for the purpose of seeing what he could do to get Butler elected to and kept in the Senate, notwithstanding the Tydings contest. This is all on record, but there had been a great deal of odd political practices inveighed against Tydings while he was running, possibly by the people who were supporting Butler. Certainly there was a good deal of importation of political experts into Maryland to handle Butler's campaign.

He was congenial and well-liked, but strictly a light-weight, Tydings was not. Tydings had a very fine mind, he had an extraordinary war record, and I think in his time was an effective senator. The trouble with Tydings was that he was too austere. He had married money and began to lift that chin of his, and he had a very good chin, in and around the Senate and in Maryland, and they got a little tired of him. I don't think that it was as much Butler as it was that Tydings ultimately stopped being the barefoot kid that he was in Havre De Grace in his early days and had gone social.

Why McCarthy went on the Committee? I don't know. Maybe he went on to insure that Butler would remain in the Senate. Maybe he went on because there was no other post open to him. Or he wanted to intervene and interfere into the Tydings-Butler contest. Assuredly, the woman he married (Jean Kerr) had been, I think, an employee of the Republican forces in one capacity or

another, and her name did come up in the report on the case, but only incidentally. I'm not too sure that McCarthy had as much interest in it as he thought, or as it was generally supposed.

He did divide the committee quite bitterly, and I've already referred to some of the incidents of it. It divided the committee right down the line, and a great deal of the bitterness was due to McCarthy's attitudes and the way he expressed himself. Had he not been there, I think they would have arrived at a better accommodation. I can't think, though, that the Democrats were too anxious to support Tydings wholeheartedly. He was a man who did not make friends easily. He might have made them in his early days in the Senate, but he just didn't have that clubbiness about him that you get in many senators. But they had to conduct an investigation into the contest. It would have slid by, I'm sure, if it hadn't been for McCarthy's interference. It would not have attracted the historical notice that it has gotten since.

RITCHIE: Why do you suspect that McCarthy singled you out for abuse in that case?

ST. CLAIRE: Oh, I think it was directed at Hayden. I don't know if I've said this before, but I can recall that we were the managers of the Senate restaurant, which came under the Rules Committee's purview. There had been these two long outstanding bills run up by Chavez and McCarthy. I went around to Hayden and said, "Why don't we write them letters and say pay up." And he said, "Go ahead and do it." So Chavez paid up without any question, but McCarthy wrote a snide letter back and paid up. It was immediately after that, that a telegram went out from McCarthy's office to his office in Wisconsin sending out what they knew of my record and my employment in the State Department and on the committees, and all else. I was acquainted with this telegram by the fact that the man who was reading them, to see that they were official, called me up and read it to me. He was a Democrat and he was at that time working for Joe Duke and he just gave me the

benefit of what the telegram said. I can also recall seeing two people, one working for McCarthy, one working for McCarren, talking together in the corridor and stopping immediately when I happened to come upon them, and look at me, which meant that I was the subject of their conversation. At least I've always thought so.

He made an attack out in Wisconsin before a veterans' organization, or maybe another organization, on my record in the Department of State, saying that I had declared a known Communist as a non-security risk. This I think was a direct result of the fact that he couldn't attack Hayden, but he knew that he could attack Hayden's appointee on the committee. Since he was beating the anti-Communist drums in those days he just happened to include my name in on it because I happened to be on the Loyalty Security Board of the State Department and as an acting chairman had cleared this one case. It was cleared on the basis of an incomplete record, and even

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on the basis of a complete record it still resulted in no bill before a grand jury in the city of Washington.

That carried over to his membership on the committee and to me and when he was more or less harassed and harangued on the floor of the Senate about his attitude on the Tydings-Butler contest, he simply picked my name out of the air as the "leak", as he said, on the committee's staff, one who had made questionable decisions about alleged "communists" in Washington. So that's the reason for it. As I told you before, he had me confused with another attorney on the committee staff, at least he said so. We finished up friends.

RITCHIE: What type of a person was he, from your point of view?

ST. CLAIRE: You could regard him in two ways: you could regard him as a pro who had found a vehicle to get him national notoriety, and that he used it because he knew it brought publicity and newspaper people to him; or you can say that he did it from conviction. I was never satisfied

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that the man did it from conviction. I also don't think that he was a true professional. In the field of boxing, a true pro will go in to kill a guy, but he does it strictly because it's a business for him, because it's his way to make money. He has no animosity towards those whom he may beat into insensibility in the ring. That's considered professional. If you wanted to believe that in McCarthy, if you felt that he was doing a professional job for purposes of his own political advancement, well and good. But he wasn't. I think basically he was malevolent and brutal and I would say that he was a coward in the things he did.

He never really expected to be challenged physically in the arena that he selected for his

politics. In another century he would have been taken to the dueling ground and shot. He knew that the gamesmanship of the Senate was going to be his protection, and that the immunity of the Constitution would protect him. Therefore, he selected for

his accusations a number of very small people. One I can remember worked in the Government Printing Office, probably had a job that paid him \$2,000 a year, yet McCarthy denounced him because the man had been an immigrant out of Eastern Europe, and had some radical background. That put him on the front page of the *Daily News* and the man resigned. That's just like stepping on a snail. There was no reason for it.

What can you say about him? Robespierre? Ultimately he would send anybody to the guillotine just to get himself a headline. To my way of thinking, his actions disqualified him from being a pro, disqualified him from having any real patriotic intent. I think he did it out of cowardness and brutality, I really do. Again I say, if he lived in another century he would never have been able to walk off the Senate floor, safely.

RITCHIE: For such a long time the Senate gave him free reign, were other senators afraid of him?

ST. CLAIRE: Yes, there was fear of him. He had seized upon the prejudice of the moment.

I think it has been widely demonstrated that we were all involved in those days, we were all looking for more enemies than were there. We had won a war and had nowhere else to turn to find substitute enemies except internally. This happened after World War I when there was a great hubbalo all over the United States about radicals and the Wobblies. Here we were, a victorious nation after World War II, and we turned inward on ourselves, I can't explain the psychology of this to myself. We were all at fault, we were all looking for unpatriotic backgrounds, and lack of security. McCarthy had found that this was the vehicle to popularize him, which had emotional reaction.

Right after the war there was the idea to put atomic energy under civilian control. There was a great deal of questioning about the men who had given us this weapon, and what we should do about it. Every time a meeting was held having to do with atomic energy or the continued production of the atomic bomb, if it was

an open meeting, you would be appalled at the type of people that would come and listen to these hearings. They were not agitators, they were really old ladies with nothing else to do, they were literally the ones we later started to call ladies in tennis shoes. They wore hats to the meetings, and sat there, yet you could hear them tense up and murmur at the very scientists who had helped win the war for us. What it was then, I really don't know. A madness, and McCarthy exemplified it.

The senators were reluctant to press him on it at first, because he was difficult to handle. When you did go for him, he came back at you with a knee to the groin. He would not debate within the perimeter of Senate good order and procedure. It was all backroom language and backroom brawling and backroom accusations. That was why they hesitated to take him on. That was number one. Number two was that he was out in front of a very popular political attitude. He was not an intelligent man at all,

nor was he quick. I think if you dissect him you will find that again and again he used the fist in his arguments, and used common phrases over and over that denigrated the people that he was talking to. Why he wasn't taken outside, I don't know. There were one or two who chased Huey Long down a hall, but for some reason no one ever chased McCarthy down the hall. Yet, I frankly think that it was the only way with which to deal with him, that was, to haul him outside.

RITCHIE: Did the Democrats keep quiet to let the Republicans tear each other apart?

ST. CLAIRE: No, his main opponents were the Democrats. The Republicans let him go because they knew that he would help them in certain areas like Wisconsin, Massachusetts, where he had a popular response. It was only when the Republicans tired of him finally that he was brought to book.

RITCHIE: Do you think that it was the McCarthy censure that caused the Republicans to lose control after that Congress?

ST. CLAIRE: No, I don't. It was not one of their proud moments. If it hadn't been for

McCarthy's attack upon a man like [Arthur] Watkins, a fine Mormon saint and certainly somebody of no particular imagination or competency, but of vast honesty and great purpose, I think they might have let him continue to the point where he might have run for reelection and been defeated. They could not stand to him after he began to attack the "betters" among those people on his side. By then he was calling Marshall a traitor, and Eisenhower God knows what. He was maniacal in his pronouncements. There was just no more reason to them. The only way they could get to him was to censure him, but they should have expelled him.

RITCHIE: He seems to have folded very quickly once they censured him.

ST. CLAIRE: Yes, it's said that censure does destroy a man. I suppose history proves that to be the case in all instances. It destroyed [Thomas] Dodd, and there are other cases. I think, though, by this time McCarthy was drinking very heavily and if anything hastened his demise it was not the fact that he was brought

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to account by his colleagues. Whatever was getting to him, got to him, and a lot of it came out of a bottle.

RITCHIE: When a senator is censured, do the other members of the Senate react to him differently afterwards, do they shun him?

ST. CLAIRE: No, I don't think so. He might cut them dead whenever he sees them. But the principle is that after you've won, you pick up the marbles and start a new game. Historically, that is what has kept the Senate the club that it is. There has always been a good internal relationship among the senators. Though some can't abide others they know they must establish the accommodations necessary for legislation.

RITCHIE: The figure that seems to rise up about that time is Lyndon Johnson, to totally dominate the Senate for the rest of the decade. You must have seen quite a bit of him.

ST. CLAIRE: I did and I didn't. When he came over from the House, warnings had preceded

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him. They said, "Wait till he gets here." There was a man who was totally devoted to himself and to his political career and to the ensconcement of it by *any* means whatsoever. Mr. Johnson was the first one to introduce the automatic typewriters into the Senate, to get the Senate to buy the damn things. They are hideous machines that turn out thousands of form letters and destroy the personal lives of the small girls who attend them.

From the first he resolved to take over the leadership of the Senate, just as he had taken over the leadership of the secretaries association in the House when he was secretary to a Congressman. He was always right up there where he could be seen and followed and admired. He loved it and nothing else.

I didn't see too much of him. I had him on the phone several times. On one occasion he called me to tell me that the leadership was only going to allow four staff members of any one office on the floor at any one time.

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I pointed out to him that the rules didn't say that. I backed away from the phone for the next five minutes while he told me it didn't matter. He also called me one day and asked me about a job that was on the Senate roll, that paid a fancy salary, but was then vacant. I told him that it was his job to appoint, that it had been created for me by Senator Hayden, but I had never taken it up. He said, "Well, do you want it? I can use a competent man." I thanked him. I don't think I could ever have worked for him. There are people who have worked for him who say that he was the most extraordinary person they have ever known in their lives, that he had a mind that you would not believe. He had a mind that was just impossible to appreciate, and yet he had a personality and a temper to go along with it. At one time he would be loving you and the next time he would be excoriating you in front of people. He would bawl his staff out on a public elevator. Those who stayed with him would not have

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traded the experience for anything. I've talked to several of them. They said you could never know what it was to work with a person of his caliber. He must have been an appalling and amazing man to those who were close to him.

RITCHIE: Very few of them stayed the whole length of the time. Most of them seem to have served him for very short periods.

ST. CLAIRE: He had a great turnover, particularly in his female employees. That was because he drove them as he drove himself. There was no question about it, Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson ran the United States of America, when the Democrats came back into power in '55. Eisenhower let them do it. He had to. That was where Johnson got his training, his administrative and executive training that I think, except for the Vietnam War, turned him into a very responsible and a very successful President. I think one of our great ones. It just so happened that he got caught in that

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jungle trap, and it was too bad. Maybe not. We look back now on the days of the Korean War, which was highly unpopular, and yet substantially over the last twenty or twenty-five years we have taken a civilization out there, one of the oldest, and brought the Koreans into the twentieth century. And I think with good reason that it's been a success. You have to admire what we did for the Koreans and apparently if we ever get around to it we may do the same someday for the Vietnamese.

RITCHIE: Johnson seems to have had two aides who stuck to him all through his Senate years. They were Walter Jenkins and Bobby Baker.

ST. CLAIRE: Yes, that's true. In my conversations with several of his people, I think Johnson realized that Baker might have been practicing law a little on the side. Certainly Bobby ought not, if he did, have conducted a law practice while he was Majority Secretary. That was his decision, of course, and he suffered for it. But I think Johnson realized

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that Bobby Baker, whom he liked and trusted, might have been engaged in a few matters of the moment that would have to do with the advancement of Mr. Baker's career. I know that Johnson, when the thing broke, was in a position where he could say to Baker that something of this nature was going to take place, and that he was on his own. I think it's to Johnson's credit that even though he may have been aware or not aware of what Bobby was doing, Lyndon Johnson was himself apart.

He really needed Baker when he wasn't there. Bobby had enough control of the senators that he could keep the Senate in a ferment, keep it in a static condition, while Johnson was in Texas. Again and again Mike Mansfield would try austere to rise and be acting leader on something, and find he had no troops behind him because Bobby was circulating around the back

of the Democratic side saying, "Johnson wants this kept on the burner for a while." That was one reason for Mansfield's dislike

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of Baker, I'm sure, because he knew that this was going on. He had no command of the Senate even under the agreed agenda, so long as Johnson wanted to run it from Texas. Johnson would drive the Senate for six or seven days hard and then he would go off to Texas for three or four days and the Senate would do nothing. Then he would come back. That was what he wanted to do. Baker was a very useful, very bright, and a very shrewd young man. He could get those things done because he had, as he has today, a very great memory and talent.

RITCHIE: He seemed to have been able to get away with telling people off and manipulating them. I wonder why so many senators put up with him?

ST. CLAIRE: I suppose because he did represent the leadership. He spoke for the leadership. I think he did an effective job of it. He was a very effective Majority Secretary. He spoke for Johnson and had the trust of the old-timers, because they could depend upon him. They

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could call him anytime, day or night, and he knew exactly down to a half vote what the Senate was going to do. I wish he had stayed. He was a beautiful professional.

RITCHIE: He was a lot like Lyndon Johnson, wasn't he?

ST. CLAIRE: Oh yes, he put himself right into Lyndon Johnson's mold. He saw Johnson's star coming over the horizon and he tagged on to it. He saw (Robert) Kerr of Oklahoma's star going up. Kerr was more of Bobby Baker's mentor, I think, than Lyndon Johnson.

RITCHIE: All the way through, or just in the 1960's?

ST. CLAIRE: Until Kerr died.

RITCHIE: How did Kerr become so powerful?

ST. CLAIRE: Doing his homework. There again was a shrewd mind, a mastermind. He studied taxes and finance. He worked in the Committee on Finance assiduously. He knew what he was doing when he got up on his feet. His work, and his memory, and his energy put him out ahead of everybody else, with the exception of probably one or two others on the Republican

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side. He did it, I think, as a public duty. I grant you that Kerr probably knew what special taxes applied to what special interests, and how they may have had some special meaning to them. At the same time he was a very effective legislator, particularly in the field of taxation.

RITCHIE: Particularly in oil.

ST. CLAIRE: Well, that was one of the special interests, of course. But, you would expect him to be like that, coming from Oklahoma. Certainly, as they used to say, Walter George went on the Finance Committee to protect the Coca Cola Company from having a tax on their drink. That's not true, but that's what they used to say. I think you can expect anyone on Finance to bring a certain provincialism with him. Certainly, he is going to be interested in the economy of his state, insofar as it may be affected by taxation.

RITCHIE: When the Bobby Baker scandal finally broke, and the Rules Committee investigated, there was a lot of criticism of the Rules Committee for treating the case

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very gingerly, perhaps because they were afraid that other people and other reputations were involved.

ST. CLAIRE: No, I don't think so. You've heard the rumors about that, that it went into other quarters, but I don't believe it. I think that all the facts of that case were pretty generally presented to the public and to the Rules Committee. I think a good summary was done on the case, if you can call it a case. There was no "ginger" in their actions. I think they found themselves more embarrassed, possibly, by this young man than anything else. They probably might have treated him more from a senatorial standpoint than you might say from a judicious standpoint. Certainly, it might be alleged that the committee was minding its own hens, but I don't believe so in the long run. I think they did an effective job. I had no idea what their

conclusions were, all that time I wasn't going to any of the hearings, I wasn't reading any of it, and I haven't to this day. It was just something that passed by while I was too busy doing something else.

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RITCHIE: In the mid-1950's, you switched from the Rules Committee to the Foreign Relations Committee. I noticed that Theodore Green went from chairman of Rules to chairman of Foreign Relations, did you follow Green?

ST. CLAIRE: Yes, more or less. When I took the chief clerk's job I did so with the support not only of Green, but also of [J. William] Fulbright and [Bourke] Hickenlooper, and a few others like that. I went around and saw them. My name had been suggested to them by Carl Marcy. Carl and I had been good friends for years.

Green was my first chairman. You loved him, but he was a little old. There were certain meticulous things he did as chairman that annoyed Fulbright, who was the ranking Democratic member. Green was argumentative, too, about the small things, sometimes the wrong things. As he got deafer and deafer he got more difficult. At one time they said he had one of the most brilliant judicial minds in the East, and I would agree

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with that. They used to pay him thousands of dollars just to conduct a cross-examination. An extraordinary man. When he was chairman of the Rules Committee they used to call from his office and say, "He's on his way." We would look for him, especially if he didn't show up. I'm not doing an old man an injustice, but sometimes he would be thinking and would pass our door not knowing where he was going. Early in my State Department career I took him to Bermuda with a meeting with some British parliamentarians, and he was a very great, outgoing, social man, liked a good drink, told great stories. He was still wrestling for exercise in those days. He had a tremendous physique for a man of eighty. He was just all muscle, thin muscle, but still muscle.

It was on that trip that he told me a story about himself that I have not forgotten. He said that he always kept a book of his expenditures for each day, no matter what it was--one cent, two cents, three cents--he would put

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it down. He would put postage down. As a young man he was on a train coming out of Chicago and he was writing letters to people he had left behind. In those days the parlor car had desks in them where you could write on railroad stationery, they had two up against the bulkhead, and no bars then. He had finished writing his letters, sealed them, and then discovered he had no postage. He wanted to give them to the conductor, as he usually did and have them mailed at the next stop. He said, "Well, I'll put them in my pocket until tomorrow." He had stamps back in his berth. But then he said to himself, "No, don't postpone it. Do it now." He had walked out of the parlor car, and in about five minutes there was a rear-end collision and everybody in that car was killed. He said, "That's why I always do everything when I'm supposed to do it."

He was probably the world's greatest collector of Chinese art in his day. He had agents who would buy it for him all

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over the world. They would deliver the art to him and he would roll it out once, and only once, on his floor. At that time, he would turn up the lights in his office, because he always kept the lights down to save electricity. He would look at these Chinese rolls once, roll them up, and send them up to Rhode Island to be stored. I asked him why he collected them, and he said, "I'm just interested in them." I frankly don't think he really understood Chinese art. It was just a hobby, or a pretense to a hobby. I don't know who has the art collection now, perhaps some university or college.

All around his walls in his office were W.P.A. paintings that the Arts Project had given him, he must have had sixteen of the damn things. They were the worst possible paintings you could imagine. I understood the W.P.A. paid a flat hundred dollars for them. But he kept them there. One of them was the Minute Men fighting the British on the retreat from Lexington Bridge, things of that

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nature. I said, "Why do you keep them here?" He said, "I like them, I think they're good art." They were miserable art. You never saw much of his office because he always kept the lights down.

We had the tally sheet of members of the Foreign Relations Committee on which Democratic names were arranged alphabetically at the top and then Republicans were arranged alphabetically underneath. Carl Marcy said, "The old gentleman wants you to take a tally sheet and draw a line between the Democrats and Republicans, a very heavy line, and place it in front

of him." So each time that he chaired, and he was very proud of chairing meetings, I would set before him a tally sheet that would have this black line drawn between the Democrats and the Republicans. I had no idea what the old man had made the request for, until one morning we were sitting in an open hearing in the Foreign Relations Committee hearing room. The Democrats were on the right and the Republicans were on the left,

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and Green was looking at this sheet and he would call their names for questions after each witness presented a prepared statement. He would say, "Senator this" or "Senator that." Well, it so happened [Stuart] Symington, who has a short temper, came in and sat down on Green's left, in Senator [Alexander] Wiley's seat. After a witness had finished, Green looked down at the sheet and said, "Senator Wiley?" and Symington said, "My name is Senator Symington," and went on with his questions.

I think that's when the old man realized he had to go, because he was losing not only his hearing, but his sight, and memory, and it embarrassed the hell out of him. Ultimately, he told the leadership that he was going to resign the chairmanship. Lyndon Johnson came down to the committee room and took over the meeting, literally, from Fulbright who might have acted as the chairman. Lyndon sat there, with Green on his left and Fulbright on his right. He went around the table

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calling on each Committee member and they all kept saying, "Theodore, you can't do this, you just can't do this. You can't end a marvelous career like this. You've got to stay." Suddenly, he said, "Well, all right, I don't think I will resign." So Johnson had to adjourn the meeting and take him into the next room with Fulbright and a couple of others, for a talk. When Green came out he said, "I think I must stick by my resignation." They had had to retalk him back into it.

You know, he was in Paris when they were building the Eiffel Tower. I told him, "I've never seen the Eiffel Tower, Senator, but I've seen you." He could remember meeting Harrison or Cleveland as a boy, he could remember Lafayette Square when it had an iron fence around it. He was an amazing man. We invited him to a cocktail party at our home and suddenly he showed up at the door in the presence of a stranger, who turned out to be one of our neighbors who said, "I just saw

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the Senator walking down the street trying to find your house." He had ridden the bus out. He went everywhere he was invited. He never turned down anything. He was congenial, he was fun, he was a credit to the Senate, to his history, to Rhode Island, and to himself. I liked him.

RITCHIE: What were your functions as Chief Clerk?

ST. CLAIRE: That was clerical to the extreme. All I did was organize meetings, write briefs about the items on the agenda, handle nominations, handle the transcripts, run the security, help with the personnel problems, and we had a lot of them for a while, fight for "perks" like more office room. It was secretarial-clerical. I think in the whole time I was there I probably wrote four or five briefs in all. I wasn't called upon to do much of the decision-making.

RITCHIE: What is the relationship between the permanent staff of a committee and the members of that committee? Do the members deal with the staff of the committee frequently?

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ST. CLAIRE: Yes, they do. They rely a great deal upon the staff, particularly if they find an early trust in them, then they will go to them, no matter what their political affiliation is. They'll go to them for advice, for ideas, for instruction more than anything else. It's up to the permanent staff to immerse themselves in all of the committee work, in every detail, in all its aspects, so that they can carry water on both shoulders and in both hands. In this way the staff can guide legislative decisions. I'm not above saying that in my time if I had a prejudice when I was a newspaper man, I could slant a story, if I had a prejudice on the legislation before the Foreign Relations Committee and I could put that prejudice to work, I did, definitely, out of conviction. I can say frankly that so did my colleagues. We felt that we had something to give to our country and to our legislative process, so we did so, by instruction and argumentation with the members.

We didn't always win, particularly with a man like Fulbright who had his

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own mind, and an amazing mind that man had. He knew what he was about every minute of the day. But he would listen, and most of the others would listen, and this is the way you brought what you thought was good policy to bear upon these people, and ultimately upon the legislative decisions of the Senate. This is what they do. First you have to establish trust, and confidence. Senators are very bright and suspicious men, they have to be suspicious because people are

hauling at them all the time. If they felt you were giving them good advice, then they accepted it. A good committee staff, I think, is a good thing.

RITCHIE: Does the committee staff represent the chairman more than anyone else?

ST. CLAIRE: No, not necessarily; maybe in some committees they do, the chairman might bring in his own personal staff. But, under the system of the Reorganization Act of 1946, you have built up a good professionalism in the House and Senate committees. That professionalism still

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exists and I think it is to the benefit of the country. I have found that dealing with committee people in the House and Senate that they are quite honest about it. For instance, the staff of the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue and Taxation, my God, how devoted they are to the taxation structure of this country, they sit there and read all day, or they used to. You couldn't ask for better service to your country. And they could make millions outside of the Senate if they wanted to walk away from their job, but they don't. Also, there is a sense of being honest, honorable, and a sense of satisfaction of doing a job that nobody else can do, despite the fact that you're getting paid on a much lower scale than a lawyer that works down the street.

RITCHIE: What was it like to work for Fulbright?

ST. CLAIRE: Very satisfactory. He was a very fine man, amiable and sometimes irritable, but I always found him exceptionally well adjusted and easy to get to, he would always listen. If you made sense,

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he liked it; if you didn't make sense, he had the good courtesy not to say so. He'd been a good college student and athlete, a Rhodes Scholar, he kept his balance. What a lot of people didn't know about him was that he was probably one of the best law professors in the United States while he was teaching law. There wasn't much you could tell that man. He had, and still has, a very pragmatical mind, a lawyer's mind, and yet he had taken it into the field of foreign relations. He was always gentle about what he did, he might do something overwhelming suddenly, but then he would back off later on. I admired him and still do.

RITCHIE: Did he dominate the committee when he was chairman?

ST. CLAIRE: Yes, he did. He and Hickenlooper were the two dominant factors. Hickenlooper was the conservative Mid-West balance to Fulbright. Fulbright very seldom did anything without saying, "Well, Hick, what do you think about it?" He always got a good reply. They kept foreign policy in that committee, I think,

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on as fine a keel as has ever been maintained. Of course, it was the same relationship as existed between Vandenberg and Connally, except that Connally got a little irritable toward the last. Those two men never lost their balance, they also would turn to Mansfield, for a good deal of the guidance.

The thing I liked about Fulbright, I guess, was that he would suffer people like Frank Lausche. Lausche was never on time, for a hearing, always came in midway in the hearing, and asked the questions that had already been asked, asked them in a loud voice, and ultimately ended up saying something about "Red Roosia." We had a number of others like that. Fulbright would lean back in his chair and pull on his hair and let them go on and on and on. He knew that that was the process. He had to let the record run down before he could get to the vote. I never saw a man with more patience as a chairman than Fulbright. Hayden used to jolly his people: "Now, you don't want to say that the way you're

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saying it." Fulbright just let his people go on, but ultimately he got what he wanted.