

ARMY LIAISON OFFICER

Interview #2

Tuesday, February 20, 2001

KIMMITT: I mentioned to you that I had come here in 1955 as an army liaison officer from the Office of the Secretary to the Army to the Senate. There were three of us. There were ninety-six senators then. We each took thirty-two, and I picked up Mansfield and Jim Murray of Montana for parochial reasons as well as others. Early on I didn't get to know closely many of the members of the Armed Services Committee or the Appropriations Committee, because my boss, a man named Lieutenant Colonel Ed Hathaway (he was the same rank as me, but he was the head of the office) carved that domain out for himself, understandably. That's where the military action was. I told you before that we didn't have an office in the building. We came in the [Russell Senate Office Building] door nearest to the Supreme Court and would leave our hats (we wore uniforms all the time then) at the desk at the entrance at that corner with an officer who's name was Murray. Murray became our ex-officio or unseen message center. If anybody wanted to find us, they'd call Murray, he'd write it down and hold it. We'd just keep walking around the buildings and drop in on each of our senators, offices, stopping by Officer Murray at times for our messages.

In those days, President George Bush's grandfather was a senator on the Armed Services Committee. [There was also] Leverett Saltonstall, [James] Duff of Pennsylvania, Tom Kuchel of California, and a lot of the real old timers, including Lyndon Johnson and Scoop Jackson and [Stuart] Symington. Styles Bridges of New Hampshire had just finished chairing the Appropriations Committee. There was quite a group as I remember them.

Now this was an era of '55—keep in mind that World War II had ended, the Korean War had ended, and it was before Vietnam. Style, procedures, civility, if you will, comradery, dignity, were paramount in the Senate in those days. One of the men who preserved that tradition and taught others, including Robert C. Byrd and John Stennis, was Richard Brevard Russell of Georgia. Dick Russell was a bachelor, deep thinker, an avid reader, a gentleman from the tip of his toes to the top of his head. He believed in the old southern traditions. When he ran for governor of Georgia some years before that he was considered very liberal. But a liberal in the south in 1955 would be a right-wing conservative today, so you can imagine what the conservative of that day was.

Norris Cotton of New Hampshire was an interesting person. Several times a week, I would have breakfast at his table in the senators' dining room. Occasionally, [William] Hildenbrand would join us. We'd just rap around. I remember him telling me once that he had been here at that time more than twenty years—I'm switching out of the '55 era into later, but the anecdote is apropos vis a vis liberal-conservative. He said that when he was elected in New Hampshire some twenty or more years before that, he was viewed as a wild-eyed liberal. He ran on that plank. This was in the '70s. Now he was viewed in the current Senate as almost a right-wing conservative. He said, "The fact is, I didn't move. I didn't move. Everything moved to the left of me." He's an interesting person in that he was here twenty-six years in the minority. When he decided voluntarily to step down, the Republicans took the Senate in '80. He would have been chairman of the Commerce Committee, which was his dream, because [Warren] Magnuson was the defeated chairman. Although they were good friends, Maggie was a pretty heavy-handed operator.

To switch back to the Dick Russell times, Johnson was Majority Leader and he was on the Preparedness Subcommittee. As a matter of fact, he had the chair of the Preparedness Subcommittee of Armed Services. During this era, the army still had maneuvers—there were the Louisiana maneuvers in World War II—but anyway, there were still maneuvers. They required a lot of territory, because they were running tank divisions and infantry divisions. Most of these maneuvers were conducted in Texas. Before that, my memory tells me, they paid the ranchers and farmers maybe a dollar per acre per year for maneuver rights. Somebody in Texas decided they would raise the maneuver fees to three, four, five dollars. I have no idea how much, but they were raising them. Wilbur Brucker was the first Secretary of the Army after they formed the Department of Defense. [James] Forrestal was Secretary of Defense. Wilbur Brucker was a former governor of Michigan. When they came along with this raising the rates, they caused him a significant problem. The Louisiana delegation, Russell Long and [Allen] Ellender, learned of this potential impasse. They went over (I was not there, but I can believe it) and went to Brucker and said, "Look, you need maneuver rights. If you'll come to Louisiana and open Camp Polk, put more than a division in there, and make it a permanent facility, we'll give you all the maneuver rights you need at no cost. No cost at all." This was taken into consideration, obviously. It was a very attractive offer. Brucker made the decision to move to Louisiana, open Camp Polk, which later became Fort Polk (it is still there), and move a division out of Fort Hood, Texas.

Well, Lyndon heard about this. I was called to his Senate office and went into his personal office. In a minute, he came in. I was sitting in the chair and just happened to be in a corner, which is where I think he kept it most of the time for effect. I was seated and started to stand up. He said, "No, sit down." He stood about six-foot-four over the top of me and right up close, which was his style, similar to that famous picture of him with Theodore Francis Green. "What's this about moving a division out of Texas?" "Sir, I'm sorry. I'm not at liberty. I don't know all the--" "Don't give me any of that. What's this about, boy?" He was leaning on me and leaning on me, but I was under wraps not to tell him anything. So I finally said, "Mr. Leader, you're the chairman of the Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, and you've got a good staff over there. (They had Gerry Siegel.) I'd send them down to Fort Hood and let them run their own investigations." I said, "One thing I know, if they ask the right questions, no one will lie to them. They may try to evade the question, but that's what your people understand." Anyway, I got out of there. As it turned out, Brucker held his ground. He did move a division out of Texas. He opened up Camp Polk, later made it Fort Polk. Not very long after that, the maneuver concept ended. They didn't have them much after that. They run them now in very limited areas out in California.

Johnson was really a piece of work. Did I tell you last time about my conversation with Stennis about how Johnson was able to pass legislation?

RITCHIE: No.

KIMMITT: Well, I traveled with Senator Stennis. On this particular occasion, we were in Germany and in Garmisch. It was a beautiful alpine day. The snow was coming down softly. The Zugspitze was in the background. We were walking down the street and we stopped in a little konditorei to get a hot chocolate. We went in and I said, "Senator, how is it that Senator Johnson, as leader, can pass so much legislation so quickly and so effectively? I just don't understand it." (This was a common question in the news. Johnson was able to roll out legislation just like a popcorn machine.)

Stennis said, "Lord, now let me tell you. I'll be sitting at my desk and Mildred will come in and say, 'the Majority Leader is on the line.' 'Good Lord, what's the Majority Leader want? I don't have anything working with him. I wonder what he wants?' I'll pick up the phone, and he'll say, 'John, I'm coming up to see you.' 'You don't have to come up and see me. You're the

leader. I'll come down to see you.' 'No, I'm coming up.' So I hang up the phone. I'm wondering, 'Good Lord, what in the world is the leader coming to see me about? I'm not doing anything at this particular time that's come to his attention that I'm aware of.' The door opens, there he is. Well over six feet. We howdy. I say, 'Sit down, Mr. Leader.' 'No, I'm not going to sit down, John. I just want to tell you about this. We're going to have a bill this afternoon and I want to bring that bill up around two o'clock and there's immediately going to be an amendment to that bill. Then, Clinton Anderson's going to bring up an amendment in the second degree, and we're going to defeat that one, and then we're going to have another amendment, and we're going to table that one. That's going to close off all amendments.' He said, 'Then we're going to pass the bill, and I need your vote—unless you've got a better idea!' Stennis said, "Good Lord, how can I have a better idea? I never heard anything about it, didn't know what he was talking about. Out of there he goes with my vote. I go over in the afternoon and vote for his bill. He did that with everybody. That's the way he moved the legislation." I said, "Well, that's as good an explanation as any."

Johnson was tyrannical. He had techniques which used to irritate the hell out of me. For example, maybe about five thirty or five forty-five in the afternoon all the business was over, everything done. He might have a fund raiser or a reception or something downtown. He would get ready to go and go up the desk and say, "Keep a quorum going on. I'll be back." He'd keep the Senate in session, the staff at the desk, the doorkeepers and everybody else working for maybe an hour, an hour and a half until he came back up. He just couldn't let them go early or close the Senate. He just had to show that power. Of course, he had Bobby Baker as his tool to keep these things running the way they were. Johnson was a real piece of work. The only man that he always wanted on his side was Dick Russell, because Russell was the one who picked him to be majority leader. Senator Russell told me this himself. The Republicans won the majority in '52, then in '54, the Democrats got the majority back. In the election of '52, [Ernest] McFarland, the Democratic leader, lost his seat.

In those days, there was a club. It had been referred to many, many times correctly, but it was greatly misunderstood. It was not a club of partisan Democrats or partisan Republicans, it was a bipartisan group, usually committee chairmen with a few trusted additions. That club ruled the legislation. They ruled everything. All the deals, it seemed to me, were worked out in advance. Up until 1964, there were very, very few cloture votes and very few real filibusters. It was run on

an orderly, club-like basis and quite effectively. Russell was certainly one of the leaders, if not the main leader, of the club.

Carl Hayden was President Pro Tem and the senior Democrat. Senator Stennis told me that when Stennis first came here (this was back in the '40s, I think) it was then the custom to call on your peers, leave them a card, pay your respects. Hayden was the dean of the Democrats at that time. Stennis went in to see him. This was right after Stennis had been elected. Hayden said, "Sit down, John." He said, "No, I don't want to bother you. I don't want to take your time now. You're busy." "No, sit down. I want to talk to you." So he sat down. Stennis said to me, "We chatted a while, then he told me something that I've never forgotten. He said, 'John, you're going to be here a long time. I know that because I know your state. They're careful who they elect and once you're elected, short of malfeasance or fraud, which you're not going to participate in, they keep you here to maintain that seniority status. You're going to be here a long time.' He said, 'I just want you to remember and watch—when men (there were no women then), come to the Senate some swell and some grow.'"

I said there were no women. Hattie Caraway had been there before, I think. Margaret Chase Smith came soon after, along with Maureen Neuberger.

RITCHIE: Smith came two years after Stennis, yes.

KIMMITT: Those were days of thoughtful legislation. They adhered to the rules regarding how many committees they could have—two major committees and a minor committee. Nothing like the '60s and '70s when they had two or three or four. I think Javits had five of them. They didn't have the habit of my mentor, Mike Mansfield. Every idea [for a new committee] that a young senator had he'd bring it up in caucus and help pass it and then appoint that senator the chairman. That's how George McGovern became the chairman of the Hunger Committee. They started spreading out and spreading out and spreading out. Hildenbrand and I, before I left, we whittled down—he had the committee assignments for the Republicans and I had them for the Democrats. We took all those extra committees, major committees these people had, and whittled away at them by recommendation, of course, until we got it down to only three or four senators who had more committees than they deserved and we wiped the others out through our recommendations.

One of the most memorable times I remember as an army liaison officer, I would often travel as an escort with senators. I traveled with Dick Russell to Portugal, and Spain, and Greece one year. It was a delightful experience. Bill Darden was along and Charlie Kirbo was along. Russell would always go for these old style British hotels, not the new Hiltons. I carried these little ounce-and-a-quarter bottles of Jack Daniels black bourbon. He would always have two of those a night. He would just have it on ice and he would talk and tell stories and clink the ice. Then we'd go out and have dinner.

In Greece, one evening, just sitting around, I recall asking him, "Senator, you must have an awful lot of constituents call on you. It's not like being in Montana or Idaho where it's a long way to come. You're busy enough, and I know it must be trying to spend a lot of time greeting constituents." He said, "No, my staff does a very good job." Marge Warren, his secretary, took care of them. Leeman Anderson, the old man who was administrative assistant, and all his staff, would take care of them. Not too many would get in to see him. Of course, if they made an appointment and if there was a good reason—he'd see anybody if there was a good reason. But just dropping in was not his style. He said, "Now, of course, some people you just have to see. I have a man down in Georgia. He was on my first campaign for governor. He supported me all these years. He's been my main man in his area ever since before I was governor. He's comes to Washington about twice a year." He said, "Of course, I see him. But I have to tell you, he's a man who will rob you of your time and deprive you of companionship." [laughs]

Russell was a wonderful person to travel with. We went to Portugal specifically to drive down the length of Portugal to follow the route and the campaign of Lord Nelson, who fought through there. During the Peninsula campaign Russell knew about every location. He was an avid military historical reader. He knew every damn thing about it. He was great to travel with.

I traveled with old Theodore Francis Green. I went to fifteen NATO countries with him one time. He was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. I have lots of anecdotes. With a man like Green, you could have five hundred and never get caught up if you had traveled with him. We stopped in Denmark and Sweden. He had an audience with King Olaf. There were just a few of us in the room—Green, the King, the King's aide and I. They rapped back and forth. I remember King Olaf made a very sage comment. He said, "The problem of today is that communications are too good. My grandfather and his father before him had territories and lands

all over the world. They were our days of glory. We would send ambassadors out, but if a really serious problem occurred, the ambassadors would send a messenger down to a dock, and he'd get on the ship with the message for the king. It would take weeks coming across the oceans. He would get off the ship and come running up to the palace and pay his respects and give the king the message. The King would read it and he would hand it to his court to make a recommendation. 'What are we going to do about this very serious problem?' They might take two or three weeks studying this situation and finally they would develop the instructions, get the king's approval, and the messenger would race back down and get on the ship, and several weeks later, he'd get back to his post. Now in the meantime, the problem was either solved or it was worse or we lost the territory, but that's the only way that they did it. Now, today," he said, "your president," who happened to be Johnson, "can be sound asleep at three o'clock in the morning and the phone will ring right by his bed, and they'll say, 'The Chinese have invaded Korea,' and they want a decision now, right now. He can't duck it. He can't say, 'Well, I'm going back to sleep, let me think about it.' Communications are too good, and that is one of the problems today. There is no time to think. There is no time to strategize. There's no time. You have to give an answer."

On the same trip, I had one of my most pleasurable experiences. Winston Churchill had been thrown out as prime minister several years before that. But because he was Churchill and he was a former prime minister, he had an office in the Parliament building. I was in uniform. I went with Green at the appointed time down to that office. Churchill had a British major aide, also in uniform, and one secretary at the front desk. We were ushered into the great man's presence and we sat down there. It was like Elizabethan days, because Green was well into his late eighties and Churchill was Churchill, and they rapped for about fifteen or twenty minutes.

It came time to leave, and we stood up. There was only the four of us in the room. Churchill, Green, Churchill's aide, and myself. Churchill reached into his pocket and opened his cigar humidor. Now I had always assumed, not knowing anything about it, that Churchill smoked a favorite cigar. As it turned out, the humidor was four different sizes and he had four different cigars in there. He offered me a cigar. Now I knew in my heart and mind and soul that under no circumstances should I take a cigar from Winston Churchill, but being the graspy, greedy son-of-a-bitch that I was, I reached in, thanked him very much and took the biggest cigar he had in his humidor. Out the door I went in the aura of having been in the presence of Winston Churchill.

I went down in London to a tobacco shop and bought a cigar in an aluminum tube, carefully unwrapped the tube, took out the cheap cigar and very carefully put Churchill's cigar in there and sealed it up. I sent it to my brother in Montana, who was a devotee of Churchill. He was eleven years older than I. I wrote, "When you have your first grandson, smoke that cigar," and I gave him the circumstances. Well, time went on. My brother died maybe ten or fifteen years later. As they were going through his effects, this thing had never been opened, so they gave it back to me. I have it at the house now. It's still sealed. I've written out the circumstances of the cigar. I don't think there are many people in the world who have a cigar handed to them by the former prime minister of England, Winston Churchill.

RITCHIE: When you would go as an escort on these trips, what exactly were your responsibilities?

KIMMITT: Well, you handled all the logistical responsibilities. You took care of everything. Green, like Lyndon Johnson and MacArthur, would take a nap every afternoon. I'd go through all the mail. I would make all the hotel reservations. I'd handle all the transportation. I'd keep his schedule. You're just like a chief of staff for him. You just had to keep things moving whether it was an individual like Green or a North Atlantic Assembly or a NATO parliamentarians' group like Lyndon Johnson headed once with Russell and others. It's a lot of work with a lot of responsibility, but a great experience.

One time, around 1958, Lyndon Johnson headed a North Atlantic Assembly group to Paris. It was a NATO parliamentarian conference. He had a lot of heavy hitters, including Dick Russell and Kuchel and the rest of them. But I went over separately to meet Green. I flew commercially. They had their VIP plane. The Air Force was running that trip, and they didn't want me on the plane. [laughs]. Green flew over with the group. I flew commercially and met him when they got off the plane.

Two of the things I remember. The meetings were being held at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris, which is not far from the Eiffel Tower, but a good walking distance. You get out of a car and then you walk maybe half a block up to the entrance to the building with the Eiffel Tower behind you. I took him to this meeting this day, and as we were walking up the walk, Scoop Jackson was walking with him. Jackson turned around and glanced at the Eiffel Tower and said, "That's an

imposing structure. I wonder when that was built.” Green says, “1888” or something like that. Jackson said, “Theodore, how did you know that so quickly?” He said, “I was here when they dedicated it.” [laughs]

We were staying at the Hotel Continental down near the Louvre. We had a corner suite. The phone rang one day. I picked it up and said, “Senator Green’s room” He said, “Is Theodore there?” I said, “No, sir, I’m sorry. He’s resting right now. May I take a message?” He said, “This is Claiborne Pell, an old friend.” He said, “I wish you would give him the message that I would like to have him have lunch with me on Wednesday. If you would get back to me with his reply, I would appreciate it.” I said, “Well, I certainly will, sir.” I had never laid eyes on him. He was over there in Austria doing some kind of a refugee thing. I said, “I have to mention, sir, that the senator has to chair a committee meeting at the Palais de Chaillot promptly at two o’clock. Since he’s chairing, it’s important that he be back. So when you make your plans, if he accepts, I hope you will have him back.” “Oh, yes, I’ll do that.”

Green woke up and we were going through things. I said, “You had a call here from a Mr. Pell, an old friend, and he would like you to have lunch with him on Wednesday.” Green said, “Oh, yes, Claiborne. I knew his father very well. Yes, perhaps I should do it.” I said, “Fine, but remember you have to chair,” and I went through the litany. Well, on Wednesday, promptly at about 11:45, there was a knock on the door. I opened the door and here is this tall, skinny gentleman with a belt (his dad’s belt, as it turned out) going halfway around his waist. I let him in, and they gave the Rhode Island embrace. They were going out to lunch. I said again, “Mr. Pell, you recall what I said, you must be back.” “Oh, yes.”

He had him back. Everything went smoothly. Well, a number of years later, in 1964, I came back and the Army put me as chief of liaison here in the Senate. In the meantime, Pell had replaced Green. He still had most of Green’s staff, Marie Flanagan and Eddie Higgins, during that transition. He had Green’s office. I went around renewing acquaintances. I went into Pell’s office, and Marie said, “Oh, you must come in and see the senator.” I said, “No, I don’t want to bother him now. I’m going to be here for quite a while.” “No, you must come in.” She ushered me in. Here’s Pell behind Green’s old desk. I said, “Senator, I just want to pay my respects.” He said, “Oh, yes. I remember you.” I said, “Yes, we have met, and I’ll be around.” Marie had, of course, moved out. It was just the two of us in the room. He said, “I remember you in Paris. I

wanted to have lunch with Theodore Green and I had to go through you.” I said, “Yes, I remember that.” He said, “I remember you cautioning me that I must have him back at a certain time.” I said, “Yes, and I appreciated it very much that you had him back, and everything worked well.” He said, “Now isn’t it interesting?” Well, that’s kind of a hard question to answer if you don’t know what the hell is in his mind. “Isn’t it interesting?” I just stood there. “Now I’m a senator and you’re still a colonel.” [laughs] Can’t you see Claiborne Pell, that Yankee Brahmin, savoring that moment? I thought that was one of the highlights of my years in the Senate.

RITCHIE: When you’re traveling with the senators, I would assume that gives you some advantages as a liaison person. Don’t you get to build personal relationships?

KIMMITT: Oh, yes, certainly. That’s probably the only reason why Mansfield asked me about getting out of the Army. I think I told you about the Bobby Baker thing. Bobby couldn’t stand prosperity. Lyndon went to the White House and left Bobby behind. Mansfield inherited him. It got so bad that Mansfield had to get rid of him. Mansfield never had any male assistants. They were all female. Peggy deMichele and everybody in his office, they were all women. He had this one alter ego in committee staffer Frank Valeo, so he threw Frank into the breach as secretary for the majority during this turbulent period. But as I mentioned the last time, and I say this respectfully, Frank had no political common sense. He was more of a cerebral, foreign policy, writer type of person. But he put him in as Secretary for the Majority, and a young man named John Graves, who is now dead, was his assistant.

When Mansfield asked me about getting out, I know that he had been aware that I was quite close to Jackson, and Russell, and Stennis, and a lot on the other side, too, in addition to being a Montanan, and in addition to being knowledgeable from an observation standpoint of the Senate. Apparently, I had credibility with these other people, because of my travel with them, and of my legislative liaison. I don’t think he would have, in a hundred years, reached out and offered me the job if I was just in the Pentagon or somewhere else and just saw him infrequently. There’s a reason for everything. Yes, it gave me a significant advantage. The greatest advantage it gave me, and you can understand this, if you develop a rapport and a compatibility with a member, particularly a chairman, all the staff fall in line. You don’t have to fight the staff bureaucracy. You don’t have to wrestle with the staff intrigue and the turf and everything else. That is by far the greatest advantage that I had and that others in my position had.

When you travel with a large group, you spread that same compatibility over both sides of the aisle. For example, I took a group to the Soviet Union years ago, whether as a liaison officer or a secretary, I'm not sure. It was a bipartisan group and it was headed by, on one hand, [Abraham] Ribicoff and his co-chairman was Henry Bellmon. We had about twelve. It was during the Cold War. They had meetings in the Kremlin. Everything was at a fever pitch.

You asked me what the escort officer does. When a congressional group leaves a country (the United States or particularly a foreign country), you usually have a special plane and you usually have a take-off at eight or nine o'clock in the morning. In order for that to work well, all the luggage has to be outside the doors by about five-thirty in the morning. The luggage can go out and be loaded on the plane and put away and everything, so that when the delegation comes out, the official local luminaries can shake hands before the delegation gets aboard. You're never held up. Everything is loaded. You get on, you close the door, taxi out, and both sides are happy to see the back of the necks of the others. That means that whoever is running the thing, like I was doing, has to be up by about four-thirty.

I had one rule that I practiced. Before I left a country, I always wanted to clear all accounts with the State Department, the hotel, everything involved, and I'd get the receipts, so that when I came back here, there wouldn't be weeks of trying to catch up with the correspondence. I'd pay off everything and close everything out before we left the country, which caused a lot of extra work and scrambling, but I would do it.

Well, on this particular morning in Moscow, the control room (which is sort of a headquarters suite, the nerve center of the group), was bustling. I was packing stuff. Gail Martin, my administrative assistant, was along with me. There was a lot of fussing around. Suddenly in the door of the control room appears Jacob Javits, impeccably attired, as he always was, with a Burberry topcoat and a tie. He had everything on except, below the coat, was socks and garters. He had packed his trousers in the luggage and they were already on the plane. He had that fixed Javits-New York-style smile on his face, which was saying, "I got myself into this. There is no sense in blaming anybody else." He asked, "Does anyone have an extra pair of trousers?" Well, everybody had sent their luggage. A mild panic ensued. My wife was along on that trip. She was out in the hall and observed all this. The State Department had hired a translator to go with us. His name was something like Yuri. He was going to leave us in Warsaw. (We were going from

Moscow to Warsaw and then on.) He hadn't sent his bag out. He was coming down the hall, carrying his luggage. My wife stopped him and said, "Yuri, do you have an extra pair of pants in your bag?" He looked at her like, "What the hell kind of a question is that?" Anyway, Yuri gave Javits a pair of pants and we went out to the airport to board the plane.

This leads to another humorous story. We go to Warsaw. Now, Javits had a wife who was a real terror, Marian. She had never moved to Washington. She was in the society of New York City and she thought everybody in Washington was a bunch of hicks. She never liked it. One example, in the hotel in Moscow, this big hotel, she wanted to take a sauna. Before she took one, she insisted, and got away with it, that everybody else had to be cleared out of the sauna, Russians, other tourists, everybody. She had to have the sauna all to herself, which became a talking point. Anyway, we get to Warsaw, and it is a fairly nice day. Out in the ambassador's gardens, he had a little reception. The members were going to meet with the Polish counterparts for a protocol meeting. They were getting ready to go, and Marian said, "I want to go with them." The ladies were lined up to take a shopping tour. We had to tell her, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Javits." She said, "I know as much as they do. I want to go. I'm not any damn dummy." She didn't go, thank God. So they went and came back. They were having the wrap-up discussion in the garden before we took off again. It became known that the next stop was going to be Copenhagen. The Javitses were going to leave us in Copenhagen and go on to Switzerland. One of the senators brought that up. "I understand the Javitses are going to leave us in Copenhagen and go to Switzerland." Somebody said, "Yes, that's true." He said, "Well, how are they going?" (We had this special plane). Somebody spoke up and said, "Well, Jack will take a plane and Marian will ride her broom." [laughs]

Anyway, I could bring up some more incidents of the legislative liaison days.

RITCHIE: I would like to talk more about it, because that whole time period from the '50s, early '60s was a big time for the military. After World War II, Eisenhower was trying to pare down the military budget. I was wondering, is it the military liaison's job to go around the President a bit and try to get a little more money into the military than Eisenhower wanted?

KIMMITT: Let me put it this way, it was my job. I told you that I was here from '55 to '58 and then I was sent to the Naval War College in Newport with follow-on orders to go to

Europe into Heidelberg and the headquarters there. I had those orders in hand. While I was at the Naval War College in the spring, I got a call from I think it was Mike Michaelis. He said, "Would you object to coming back to Legislative Liaison this spring rather than going to Europe? We'll send you a year later." I said, "Well, I just do what I'm told." So anyway, I came back. The reason they brought me back was because of this rapport and knowledge that I'd had with particularly the Armed Services Committee people, and the Army needed, as they always do, "modernization money." I told you about the Admiral Jack McCain encounter.

You asked about the President. How did we play that? He sends up the budget. Orders are "Don't tamper with the budget." Well, you go around. Hypothetically, you know that you need more money for tanks. You use your friendship, contacts, and anything else with the member. You'd say, "Senator, they just haven't provided enough money this year for tanks for the army. Now, you're going to have a hearing next week. . . ." I'd have a couple of cards in my pocket, anonymous white cards, with questions on them. I would say, "Would you be good enough to ask these questions of the Chief of Staff of the Army or the Secretary," because they were under wraps, too. Now, keep in mind, a witness from the Pentagon cannot volunteer information which contravenes their official position, but no witness can fail to truthfully answer a question. Therefore, if you phrase a question which the witness would like to answer, and you get a senator to ask it, that permits the Army chief of staff or somebody to give the answer that contravenes the official position. He had to answer it and he wasn't volunteering and he wasn't breaking faith. Most of the time, they didn't know that I or a few others were planting the questions. We would give them a heads up. "You may get questioned on x, y, or z, so be prepared."

Well, over weeks, months, several years, the fact that you had contact with all of the members, that you had the confidence of on the Appropriations Committee would have an effect. First of all, you'd have to understand that after you'd been working that for two or three years, you almost become an adjunct to the members' staff. Every day, we would just walk around the thirty-two offices that I had.

Take Bobby Kennedy's office—I didn't have Jack Kennedy, but I handled Bobby's office. He had a young lady Margo Higdon, now deceased, back there who handled all the military cases. Mail would come in, and Kennedy being from New York, there would be a big stack of it. I'd just walk back to her desk. I knew her very well. I'd say, "Margo, can I see the Army cases today?"

She'd have a stack of army cases, letters from everything, like, "I want my son reassigned," or this or that, whatever the hell it was. In those days, I could take a dozen letters and say to her, "Tell them this." She'd take down some shorthand, and they'd immediately go back out as a reply. We'd give them very fast service. It was an answer that was probably not entirely satisfactory, but it was an answer. I'd say, "I'll take the others with me and I'll bring them back in the next couple days." She'd just give them all to me. I'd go back to the Pentagon. I had a dedicated secretary. I would separate the mail into two groups. One was direct reply, which means I would send it out on behalf of the Secretary of the Army to a subordinate commander, maybe at Fort Knox, Kentucky. "Here's the letter. Please reply directly to Senator Kennedy not later than. . ." That would be gone. When I'd go back a couple days later, I'd give her the original letter back (we made Xeroxes of the letters) and tell her that she'd be hearing directly from them, and if she didn't hear by a certain time, let me know. The others, I would call around the building or across the country or Europe and get the facts, then I'd dictate a reply and get it right back to her, sign it myself as a representative of the Secretary of the Army. It made the senator look good, the constituent got a rapid response, and it protected the Army. That was one function.

Other functions: it was not unusual to get called in by a senator. I'll give you two conditions. A good condition, Clifford Case of New Jersey. I handled his office. He sent for me one day. There were two or three New Jersey businessmen, constituents there. He started out his discussion with, "Colonel, these gentlemen are from my state and they have an issue they'd like to take up with you. But let me make clear, before we ever start discussing, I don't want any political emphasis placed on this. I want them to be able to have their story heard. I want the answer to stand on the facts." One of the nicest conditions that you could ask for. I set them up for an appointment with somebody, and they went away happy. The obverse, senators call you in (I won't name who they are in this instance, but I had two or three of them this way), and the constituents would be sitting there, and he'd say, "Colonel, you haven't kept me informed about a condition in the Army, and goddamn it I want to tell you it's got to stop." They'd rip the hell out of you and embarrass the Army, embarrass you. The constituents were really impressed. Maybe an hour later, you'd get a call to come back to see the senator. He'd say, "I know you have to understand. I had to do that. I just had to do that. You know I didn't mean a lot of that stuff." Well, there are the two sides of the spectrum.

Another man, Bourke Hickenlooper, I always admired him for many reasons, but this one

in particular. He had a son on the front lines in Korea. He had been there for ten months or more. I didn't know that. One day he called me in and he said, "Stan, is there some way to find out when a soldier is coming home? What his schedule is or when he will arrive and where?" I said, "Yes, I think we can find that out if his tour is up." "Yes, he's finished up." I said, "If your people will give me the name." He said, "I'll give you the name." He named his son. I went out, of course, and found out he was coming into San Francisco. For ten or months, here was a man who had a son in danger and never once mentioned it, never asked anything, never did a thing. I admired him so much for that.

Others. . . Margaret Chase Smith had an AA, Bill Lewis. She would just excoriate the Air Force on some matters. She finally got Lewis promoted to general. Bill had an almost Svengali control over Margaret Chase Smith. She was a great lady. The only time I ever got in a bind with her was when she discovered they were selling Idaho potatoes in the commissaries in Maine. [laughs] That caused a big fight for a while.

Most of the time, that period of legislative liaison was probably the greatest learning experience that a person can ever have. People can get master's degrees in political science in academia, and it has no resemblance to the facts. But if you're just around here, you observe the ebb and flow of personalities and attitudes and give and take. "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. You give me this, I'll give you that." You see democracy at work. I'm happy to say that democracy works well ninety-eight percent of the time, but the two percent is a pain in the ass. [laughs]

RITCHIE: Did it ever work that the White House liaison, someone like Bryce Harlow or Larry O'Brien, did they ever call on the military liaison people to help out with what the White House was trying to get through?

KIMMITT. Yes, when it was necessary. For example, Mike Manatos was Lyndon's legislative liaison. He used to be a staffer up here. He worked for a Wyoming senator named [Lester] Hunt. Hunt committed suicide in the Russell Office Building. As I understand it, I can't verify this, Hunt and his wife (who was very ill at that time, cancer, I believe) had a son. It turned out the son was gay, which in those days was a serious no-no. It was a significant political liability. Out in Wyoming, they ginned up an opponent to run against Hunt. They had the coach of the

University of Wyoming football team, the name escapes me now, but he was a highly respected man—they gave him the mission of telling Hunt that if he ran, they were going to expose his son. It was the California Senator Clair Engle who chaired the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee at that time. He started to put the squeeze on. This so disturbed Hunt, not so much from the political standpoint, not so much for himself, but he knew what it would do to his wife if she learned that her son was gay. Now we're talking the late fifties. He apparently put a .22 rifle under his coat one day and came into the office and killed himself. Mike was there at that time. Well, Mike later went down to the White House. He was a great legislative liaison person.

I knew Bryce Harlow very well. Bryce tried to hire me away once to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs under [Henry] Kissinger, which in itself, is an interesting story. I was then Secretary for the Majority, been working for Mansfield for five or six years, maybe more. I was there eleven years in all as Secretary for the Majority. One day, Bryce called and said, "Come down and have lunch. I want to talk to you about something." Well, I knew Bryce from the Pentagon, so I went down. He said that Kissinger was moving to be Secretary of the State and he was looking for a good legislative liaison person. He, Harlow, had recommended me and what did I think about it? About that time, Kissinger, himself, opened the door and comes walking in. He sits down. We rapped a little bit there and he as much offered me the job. I said, "Well, let me think about, but I'll be back to you tomorrow with a final answer."

I came back up here. Mansfield knew nothing about this. I went to see him. I told him about the call and the lunch and the offer. I said, "I really like to know, what do you think about it?" Mansfield said, "Well, do what you want." Typical Mansfield. I said, "No, Senator, that isn't what I asked you." I said, "What do you think about it?" "You can do whatever you want. It's your life." I said, "Senator, please, help me out on this. I just want to know how you feel about it." He said, "Well, I'd like you stay, but that's up to you." Well, that made up my mind. I called back down and told Bryce and he told Kissinger that I deeply appreciated being considered but I was going to pass up that opportunity.

Now, about a year later, the International Monetary Fund was having a big reception at the Smithsonian. Kissinger was in the receiving line. As I went through, I shook hands with him. Kissinger had become Secretary of State. He had the usual honeymoon, but by then they were shooting at him from every direction on the Hill and in the media. He was having a hell of time

up here. He looked at me and he said in that signature guttural voice of his, “You knew something.” [laughs]

Your question was about the White House liaison. They would use, understandably, anything they could to further their aims. Manatos called me one day. You remember from a historical standpoint that Russell and Johnson were very close until the Vietnam War and, particularly when civil rights came along, they drifted apart. Johnson had his Great Society and Russell was the patrician from Georgia. Manatos came to me and said, “The President is really bothered. I need your help on something. He doesn’t think that he is communicating well with Dick Russell. It bugs him. If you get any ideas, I’ll let him know.”

Well, not long after that, Hayden stepped down. He didn’t die in office, he went voluntarily. Russell had been Chairman of the Armed Services Committee for sixteen years. Hayden had been Chairman of Appropriations. With Hayden gone, Russell would take the chairmanship of Appropriations and Stennis would take the chairmanship of the Armed Services. Carl Hayden had, as the staff director of the Appropriations Committee, probably one of the finest staffers the Senate has ever had in Tom Scott. Tom came up from the FBI very early and stayed. He was just the epitome of professional staff. Some things really impressed me. For example, in today’s world, I don’t give a damn whom you call, eighty percent of the time, you’re going to get an answering machine. In those days, Tom, as the top man on the Appropriations Committee, would answer his own phone. No secretaries or anything else. It was so refreshing. If he was not at his desk, of course, it would just ring and maybe kick over to his secretary, but if he was there, he’d answer his own phone. He was very highly respected. Well, Russell also had a man equally highly respected in Bill Darden. Darden had been Russell’s staff director of the Armed Services Committee for years. Tom Scott had Appropriations. I could see a very awkward situation developing during this transition, because I knew that Russell was not going to leave Darden behind, because he was his right-hand man. And I knew that Russell was not going to force Tom Scott out, but they would do some shuffling around. Anyway, it had an awkward potential.

So I called Manatos and I said, “Mike, I’ve got an idea. It may not work. I don’t know. But there is an opening on the U.S. Court of Military Appeals. Now, when Dick Russell goes to Appropriations, it’s going to provide this awkward situation.” I said, “There is one way out, if the president would consider appointing Bill Darden to the U.S. Court of Military Appeals, I know that

would please Russell. It would solve a potential problem for him. I think it would please Bill Darden and it would certainly protect Tom Scott.” He went back down and put this thing in motion.

Later I was traveling with Senator Stennis, and we were in Wiesbaden, Germany one night with the commander in chief, air force command in Europe. We were at dinner and the phone rang. They took me away from the table. It was Bill Darden. He said, “Stan, would you be good enough to give Senator Stennis a message for me, please. President Johnson called me and offered me a place on the U.S. Court of Military Appeals and I intend to accept it, but I want Senator Stennis,” who was the potential chairman, “to know about it first.” I went back in and at the appropriate time, I told Stennis about this. Stennis said, “Oh, my Lord, what am I going to do without Bill Darden? He’s a mighty, mighty fine man. Good Lord, what am I going do?” Well, anyway, Bill went to the U.S. Court of Military Appeals. Tom stayed where he was. Everything went smoothly. Except that eventually Bill became somewhat dissatisfied with the court, for whatever reasons, and stepped down, and I think went with Reynolds Aluminum or somebody. He’s still around. He’s a good man. But that was an example of White House liaison working with staff on the Hill.

Bryce Harlow had been in Army legislative liaison. When he went down to the White House, he had Ken BeLieu there with him. BeLieu just died the other day. I told you I went out to his services. It was very nice out there at a place called Falcon’s Rest, which I had never heard of. It’s a new Air Force retirement home, a beautiful place.

I’ve told you about taking over as secretary for the majority and sticking with it until the election to Secretary of the Senate. We haven’t talked much during that period or the Secretary of the Senate years before as I have said “the government fell,” and I had to leave. We can continue it for a while or do it another time.

RITCHIE: You’ve been here for an hour and a half, maybe I should give you a break. This is really what we’re looking for, especially the vignettes of the individuals. It makes them come alive.

KIMMITT: Oh, yes, there are vignettes and vignettes, many stories. Some of the

greatest stories are [James] Eastland and Stennis stories. I'm sure that I've told you or you've heard—[Tom] Korologos probably told you himself about the visits to Nixon during the impeachment time when Jim Eastland kept interrupting the President and Stennis reached across and said, “Jeem, Jeem, let the boy talk.” [laughs]

I'm sure this is apocryphal, but it may not be. A delegation came up from Mississippi and they went by to see Senator Stennis. They were good, solid, successful Mississippi constituents. C.P.H. Cresswell [Stennis' administrative assistant] was there. They ushered them right into Stennis' office and they sat down, and he was just so pleasant and helpful, chatted, got up when they left, walked out, told his people, “Now, you take my friends out, anything they want, you take them over to the dining room, and they can have lunch. Be sure you take care of these people. These are my friends from down in Mississippi.” Their next call was over at Eastland's office. Courtney Pace was at the desk. They said “We don't want to bother the chairman. We know how busy he is. We just want to pay our respects.” They sat down for about ten minutes. Courtney just kept working. Finally, he gets up and goes into the office, closes the door, and a minute later, opens the door. “Come on in.” Eastland was sitting back there, a cigar in his mouth, his feet up on the desk. The spokesman said, “Mr. Chairman, we know how busy you are. We don't want to bother you, because we know how important it is up here.” They went through that routine for about two minutes. Eastland never said anything, he just mumbled replies. “Well, we don't want to take your time. We're going to move along now, Mr. Chairman.” He never got up. He never did anything but nod and mumble. They went out the door. They were walking down the hall. One turned to the other and said, “Wasn't that Senator Stennis just the absolute greatest southern gentleman you ever saw, how he took care of us and how they greeted us? He was just the finest southern gentleman I guess there is in the world—but that Jim Eastland, he's our kind of guy.” [laughs]

Eastland and [John] Pastore were very close friends, but they could never vote together, and really if either constituency knew about their comradery, it would cost them votes every time. They'd be on the floor (I was up where the Secretary for the Majority is now, in S-309) and one of them would look over at the other one, and one would go out one door, and the other. They'd come out, and I had a little bar set up, and they'd have a drink. (Not just those two, but a number of senators, bipartisan.) They'd come in and go out. They were just the greatest of friends, but nobody ever knew that. Just like Eastland and Gaylord Nelson were very close friends. One ultra

liberal, the other conservative. Very close friends.

RITCHIE: How do you explain a friendship like that?

KIMMITT: Well, I'll give an example. There was a man named Glenn Davis in Wisconsin, a former member of Congress, who, I think, ran against Nelson for governor or something very early. But anyway, it was not a happy relationship. During, I think, Nixon's tenure, three of us were in my office, Eastland, Nelson, and myself. Gaylord Nelson said, "Jim, I just hate to ask a favor of any of my colleagues, but I'm going to." Eastland said, "Awright." Nelson said, "The President is going to nominate a man for a judgeship, and he shouldn't be a judge." Eastland said, "Well, just don't send his card back." If the senator from the state [of the nominee] doesn't return the card, it just stayed in limbo. He said, "I know, Jim, that's the procedure. But I can't, not in Wisconsin, that will never fly. I'll have to answer the question, 'Why didn't the senator-?' That's not going to do any good. But he just shouldn't be a federal judge." Eastland said, "Why?" Nelson said, "Let me tell you. Labor is opposed to him. B'nai B'rith is opposed to him. The NAACP is opposed to him. All the environmentalists are opposed to him." Eastland interrupted and said, "Gaylord, you're giving me all the reasons I should vote for him." [laughs] "Now, what do you want?" He said, "I don't want the nomination to come to the Senate, then there won't be any question raised." Understandably, the nomination never came up.

I think there is not the appreciation of the bond between senators now that there should be. They can disagree violently on the floor. They can vote against each other. Well, take [Edward] Kennedy and [Orrin] Hatch. How do you justify their relationship? There is an anointing, if you will, once you become a senator, which is recognized by every other senator. I think they work hard (or did work hard) at developing friendships which superimposed over philosophy. Keep in mind, there is only a hundred of them in the world. I don't know how many of them are still alive, a hundred and fifty or sixty still alive. That's a pretty damn exclusive group. There are some, even yet, who won't speak to each other, but that's rare.

And there are little activities that go on that people never know anything about. For example, when I was here, it was normal for senators to entertain other senators in their homes. They would rotate among various homes. I don't know if that is still going on or not, but probably not as much as it used to. The bond between senators was stronger than partisanship and

ideology. It's really hard to explain. I guess a family is about as close as you can come to it. If you belong to a family and you are an ethical, honorable member of that family, there is a close bond. I think that's the way with senators, too.

For instance, Roman Hruska would come up to my office. He was about as thick as they come—but a decent guy. He'd come up with these other members. Some never came up, but only because they didn't drink. I don't think I ever had Scoop Jackson in the office, but I had just about everybody else. One night, Tom Foley was then the House Democratic whip, and we were having an evening session, and I was then secretary of the Senate. I walked out of the room and walked down the hall, and saw Foley coming in from some sort of the meeting in the Senate, and I knew that there were five or six senators in my office having a drink. There were two chairs that other senators wouldn't take. One was Eastland's chair and the other was [Warren] Magnuson's chair. They had a little coffee table between. They always sat there. So I saw Foley, who I knew was staffer for Jackson long before he ran for office. I said, "Tom, why don't you come into the office and have a drink. There are some senators here." He said, "I'd like to. I appreciate the invitation." He came in, and they "howdied" around. Foley was having a drink, and Eastland was sitting in his chair. After about fifteen minutes, Tom said, "Mr. Chairman, I didn't expect to be in here tonight. Stan asked me to come in and share a drink. I really appreciate it, but I didn't expect to be running in to you, but now that you're here, I'm going to ask a favor." Eastland said, "All right." Foley said, "I've been trying to get a judge out in the Spokane area for two years, and Manny Celler keeps brushing me off, and I'm just not getting anywhere." (Emanuel Celler was Eastland's counterpart on the House side. He was not directly in on the nomination process, but he was a big player in the judicial area.) He said, "It's very important to me. I just need some help getting that judge through." Eastland said, "All right." Foley continued, "Would you consider, if I got the information to you, possibly taking a favorable look at this and helping me out? And who on your staff should I get in touch with?" Eastland said, "Why?" "Well, I thought I better get you the information." He said, "I told you 'all right,' didn't I?" That was the end of that. The judge moved through. [laughs]

There are so many of those little incidents. Russell Long was almost a raconteur at those meetings. He had stories after stories after stories after stories. Uncle Earl stories particularly were absolutely hysterical. [Senator John] Culver had a prankster streak—I think I told you the last time about he and [Jennings] Randolph, didn't I?

RITCHIE: I don't think so.

KIMMITT: Well, at one of those rare, all-night sessions we had (they had them very rarely), in the Democratic cloakroom, the lights are all dimmed. Randolph was lying out on one of the couches. He had a newspaper over his face. It's about two o'clock in the morning. His shoes are off, the coat is off. He's sound asleep. Culver was in his playful mood. He came in and saw him. He went over and shook him and said, "Jennings! Jennings! There's a high school group from West Virginia out on the steps, waiting to have their picture taken with you!" Randolph jumped up, no shoes, no coat, went out through the Senate chamber, crossed the Senate chamber, and headed for the steps. That can be verified by a number of people.

RITCHIE: This has been outstanding. We can get together next time and start to talk about when you were the Democratic Secretary.

KIMMITT: Those days, when I was Democratic Secretary, were some of the most turbulent, philosophical times in this Senate. There was Vietnam. I watched Stuart Symington go from an avowed hawk to a supreme dove, almost. I watched the personalities play so much. I'll tell you one very quickly and then I'm getting out of here.

Coinciding with Russell going to Appropriations and Stennis going to Armed Services—I mentioned that Lyndon Johnson had been chairman of the Preparedness Subcommittee, and I think Harry Truman had been back in his day, too. But anyway, prior to that change, Stennis and Symington started drifting apart. Symington was a pretty acerbic individual. Symington became less and less a supporter of the defense plans. It worried some of the old timers. It was noticeable by his statements, and in caucuses, he was hammering heads with the hawks. He didn't take on Dick Russell much—very few people did—but he used to like to mimic Stennis. Stennis succeeded to be chairman of Armed Services. He also was holding the chairmanship of the Preparedness Subcommittee, and Symington was right behind him. It was probable that Stu Symington was going to become the chairman of the Preparedness Subcommittee of Armed Services. That bugged Stennis. The end result, without going through all the machinations, Stennis kept that subcommittee in addition to the full committee chairmanship, which blocked Symington. Symington went to Fulbright because he was on Foreign Relations, too, and had [J. William] Fulbright form a subcommittee of Foreign Relations to get into more and more defense business. We jokingly

referred to it as a subcommittee on Foreign Relations to Oversee the Armed Services Committee.

Symington was in many ways a tragic story because he was also number three just behind Clint Anderson, when Johnson was the first chairman of the Space Committee. Then, he left. Symington was in line to succeed to the space chair since Anderson already had Interior as a full committee chairman. Anyway, Symington was due to take over the Space Committee until they, the “club,” prevailed on Anderson, who had the seniority, to give up Interior to take the Space Committee, which blocked Symington and coincidentally, promoted Jackson to chairman of Interior. Here he had lost, not necessarily in this order, but he had lost the chairmanship of the Preparedness Subcommittee, he was blocked from the chairmanship of the Space Committee, and he was here all those years, and he never had a chairmanship. Even when he left, he had never been a chairman, because of his fractiousness with the other members.

RITCHIE: He was sort of hot tempered?

KIMMITT: Yes. He had a hot temper and he would blurt out things. He had a bit of [Ernest] Hollings in him. Remember when Hollings referred to Senator Howard Metzenbaum as the senator from B’nai B’rith? But Symington just had a rasping attitude. It was like fingernails on a blackboard with the other members. That blocked him and blocked him. When he left, he had never had a chairmanship.

RITCHIE: He was almost the vice presidential candidate in 1960. Kennedy was considering him seriously.

KIMMITT: Oh, yes, very seriously considering him. He was reaching his apogee at that time. He was a great friend of the Secretary of Defense, James Forrester. He was Mr. Air Force and he was leader of the hawks early on, but then he started changing. People started rethinking. Some never changed, but he did. It was interesting. Of course, as you looked around that caucus—they used to have some spirited debates which are not releasable until, as you say, forty years or something. How many years did you say?

RITCHIE: Well, right now, they’re open through 1964, so we’re running about forty years behind.

KIMMITT: '64, that's right in the Vietnam era.

RITCHIE: In a few years we'll get them open.

KIMMITT: Something else when I was Secretary for the Majority. When I took the job over, you just scratched down a few minutes in your longhand and filed them. Gail [Martin] would write them up. It became apparent to me that I was not doing justice, from a historical standpoint, so I finally got Mansfield's permission to bring in one of the official reporters. I started that process. Now, from that time on, you have a verbatim. You start reading those and you'll see the [James] Abourezks of the world and the Symingtons, Phil Hart, and all who participated.

You'll get to a point where you'll probably read one of the most poignant episodes that I can recall when [John] McClellan died, and Eastland was in line to become President Pro Tempore. It was more or less a pro forma election. But when Eastland was nominated to be President Pro Tem, Phil Hart stood up and said that he couldn't in good conscience vote for Jim Eastland to be President Pro Tempore. He gave a fairly lengthy speech on the premise that he was in line for the presidency. Eastland would have been in the line for the presidency and Hart just couldn't abide that based on civil rights. Eastland just sat there stoic just like, as Lyndon Johnson used to say, a jackass in a hail storm, just hunker down and take it. He never said a word. Nobody else said a word. Of course, they voted him in, and he became the President Pro Tem. It was a "profile in courage" on Hart's part to do that in front of all those people, as he felt it deeply. But some of those debates in caucus on issues are going to become significant in history much more than what happened on the floor of the Senate.

RITCHIE: You're probably right. With the minutes, you have to read between the lines to figure out what is going on.

KIMMITT: Sure you do. Thank God I started recording the caucuses verbatim, just like I started another practice, what I hope has become a tradition. I had been here during a number of State of the Union addresses. They always occurred at eight or nine o'clock at night. The senators' wives always come down. I noticed that between five o'clock and nine o'clock, there was no place for senators and their wives to go. Some would go in the senators' dining room, but that is pretty bland or they would just wait in their offices. They go to restaurants. So right after

I became Secretary of the Senate, I initiated the Secretary's reception (I think it's now called a dinner) at the State of the Union for all the members and their wives. I was pleased later when Joe Stewart and [William] Hildenbrand followed through in different forms. Somebody asked Joe where he got the idea of doing that. He said, "My staff came up with it. They did a great job." Well, Jim Ketchum and I put that one on, the very first one, and started the tradition. It's been a very, very worthwhile thing for the Secretary to do every year. Do you ever hear from Jim?

RITCHIE: I saw Jim not too long ago. He's retired in Gettysburg now.

KIMMITT: Well, if you're ever talking to him, just don't just take my word for it, regarding the event. Please check, because it's important, for historical purposes, how the Secretary's dinner got started. Jim was the chef. You can't do it anymore—but I would ask a few lobbyists for contributions for refreshments and food, since the Secretary had no funds provided for that purpose. That has been changed now. My wife would fix a roast, and Jim would do the other things. One time, I remember, [John] Warner when he was married to Elizabeth Taylor and she showed up. That really caused a stir in the place. He was just like a puppy dog around her. She called him, "the Senator" in a humorous sort of way.

Well, I'm out of here. We'll do it again whenever you say.

End of the Second Interview