William F. Hildenbrand

Secretary of the Senate, 1981-1985
Secretary to the Minority, 1974-1981
Administrative Assistant to Senator Hugh Scott, 1969-1974
Assistant to Senator J. Caleb Boggs, 1961-1969

Interview #1: From Broadcasting to Congress
(Wednesday, March 20, 1985)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: We're interested in all of your experiences and observations. We're collecting the institutional memory of the Senate, except that we're looking at it from each individual's unique....

Hildenbrand: Perspective.

Ritchie: Yes, and we're interested in the whole person, so I usually begin by asking a little about your background.

Hildenbrand: I don't have a background.

Ritchie: I looked over your staff biography and saw that you came from Pottstown, Pennsylvania. I was going to ask if your family was traditionally from that area of Pennsylvania.

Hildenbrand: Yes. As far as I know everybody was born in and around that area of Pottstown, Stowe, funny little places like that.

Ritchie: What did your family do?

Hildenbrand: Mother was just a housewife. My father worked for the Philadelphia Electric Company for about thirty-five years, or thereabouts, most of the time. He started out as a lineman, climbing

---

poles and doing things like that, but he fell out and broke his leg and his arm, and that was the end of things like that, so then he went into the office and spent the rest of most of his adult life with the Philadelphia Electric Company.

Ritchie: My family came out of Con Edison in New York.

Hildenbrand: Oh, same background.

Ritchie: Yes. Did you attend local schools?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. I went to high school in Pottstown -- I guess I didn't -- we moved away during the Depression years. Daddy lost his job, so we moved away and went to Trenton, New Jersey, and I spent one year in Junior 3 in Trenton, New Jersey, and then we moved to Prospect Park, outside of Philadelphia, and I went to Prospect Park High School, which is no longer. They mixed it up with some other school and it's now called Interborough High School. Then I went in the war.

Ritchie: That was '41?

Hildenbrand: '42. August of '42.

Ritchie: It was right after you graduated from high school?

Hildenbrand: I graduated high school in '40, and I worked during '41 at Westinghouse, and then I went in the military service.

Ritchie: Did you enlist?

Hildenbrand: No, I went to enlist, but I was color-blind. I tried to go in the Navy, the Coast Guard, but they found I was color-blind, so I couldn't do that. Then I went to the Army and tried to enlist there. They gave me some song and dance about some high arch on my left foot, or some dumb thing like that, and said that I couldn't walk very far. Five months later they drafted me and I walked all over Europe, which shows how much they know.

Ritchie: You were stationed in Europe throughout the war?

Hildenbrand: Yes. I went over in 44 and came back in '46. I was over there a little less than two years.

Ritchie: I saw in your biography that you received a Bronze Star, was that from World War II or Korea?

Hildenbrand: That's from World War II.

Ritchie: How did you get that?

Hildenbrand: Just because I was there. At one point they made a decision that anybody who came under enemy fire and was in the front lines -- about 1947 or '48 they decided that if you had been in that situation you were entitled to a Bronze Star, so they gave everybody a Bronze Star like Crackerjack boxes. Some got them for doing heroics, but at the end they gave everybody a Bronze Star.

Ritchie: But you had to be at the frontlines at some time.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. I was in an infantry unit. We were in the Bulge, but that was about all.

Ritchie: That was probably enough.

Hildenbrand: Yes, that was an indoctrination, as far as we were concerned. Our first combat was in the Bulge. We thought, if this is the way it is, we ain't got no business being here. It was not that much fun. It was winter time, it was cold, it was snowy, it was a mess.

Ritchie: Did you find that being in Europe was an education in itself, coming out of Pennsylvania.

Hildenbrand: Well, in the early days, until the war was over, you weren't concerned about where you were. You were looking for existence more than anything else. You didn't care where it was that you existed. Then after it, I stayed over for about a year. The war was over in May of '45, I guess, and I stayed until June of 46. And I got into the radio business while I was over there, with AFN. I worked in AFN-Kassel, and AFN-Berlin. Then they decided to send me home. So I came home.

Ritchie: How did you get into the radio business?

Hildenbrand: I was running a prisoner-of-war camp in Kassel, Germany. We were building a hospital after the war, and we were using prisoners to build this hospital. The radio station manager came to us at one time and wanted to know if he could borrow some prisoners for something. We allowed as how we had some to spare, if they wanted to do something. We got to talking. I'd always wanted to be in the sports broadcasting business. Most people want to be firemen or cops or something like that. I always wanted to be a sports broadcaster. He said, "Come on over." So I started hanging around the station, and they put me on the air a couple of times, until finally they got me transferred from the P.O.W. camp that I was running over to AFN-Kassel. Then they closed AFN-Kassel and they transferred us up to AFN-Berlin.

Ritchie: What types of things did you do?

Hildenbrand: Disc jockey, news, stuff like that. Mostly disc jockeyed, because AFN did a lot of recorded music, so you did a lot of disc jockey work.

Ritchie: So you really learned on the job.

Hildenbrand: Yes. It was a good place for experience. I was home just one month and I went to work for a radio station in Philadelphia, so it was obviously good training.

Ritchie: You just naturally decided to follow-up on the radio experience?

Hildenbrand: Yes, that's what I wanted to do, and since I had that experience in the Army, why I decided that that was what I really wanted to do. And so I did. I was lucky enough, they were looking for a newscaster at that radio station in Philadelphia.

Ritchie: What station was that?

Hildenbrand: WDAS. I don't even know if it's still there. Some independent station. So I went to work there, and then I got called back in the Korean War in '50. But Mrs. Rosenberg, who was then -- was she Secretary of Defense?

Ritchie: Anna Rosenberg was Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Hildenbrand: Whatever she was, she made an edict that if you had been overseas in the Second World War you were not to be sent overseas in Korea. I had been under orders to go to Fort Bliss, Texas. They changed the orders and said "No, you can't go there, because they're going to Korea and you're not supposed to go to Korea." So they sent me to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Sandia Base, which was an armed forces special weapons project base. I was Sergeant Major of Intelligence there for about nine months, until they counted up all the points that I had and said "What the hell are

---

you doing here?" said, "I don't know, you guys sent for me, so here I am." They said, "Well, go home." So I did.

Ritchie: What did being a Sergeant Major in Intelligence entail?

Hildenbrand: Mostly administrative work. You had responsibility of the base, and the buildings on the base, in terms of not necessarily the security of the base itself, but the papers and things like that that might be around the rooms and areas. It wasn't a very hard job, I can tell you that.

Ritchie: Albuquerque didn't have anything to do with nuclear weapons, did it?

Hildenbrand: Oh, that's what it was. That's all they did down there. Most of our places that were connected with Sandia base were nuclear bases.

Ritchie: Did you feel that being called up again was double jeopardy?

Hildenbrand: It didn't really bother me at that time. I had a choice of getting out entirely or staying in the inactive reserve. I stayed in the inactive reserve -- I don't even know why I did, it just seemed to be the thing to do. It didn't bother me too much one way or the other.

Ritchie: Going back to when you were in the radio station in Philadelphia, you said you were news director?

Hildenbrand: Newscaster.

Ritchie: So you basically wrote and read the news?

Hildenbrand: Yes, we had wire service tickers, AP, and UPI (or UP in those days, because they hadn't merged with International, INS, at that point). I had five minutes every hour on the hour from 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon till 11:00 o'clock, something like that. I just did news every hour on the hour for five minutes. It's a pretty good job. Then I did a ten to eleven disc jockey show of classical music, of which I knew absolutely nothing about. I had an engineer who was a classical music buff, so he would tell me how to pronounce Shostakovich and all those funny people's names, otherwise I had no idea what I was doing. I don't like it any better now than I did then, even after listening to it for weeks on end.

Ritchie: You must have done some interviewing as well, because you were telling me the other day about interviewing Strom Thurmond.

Hildenbrand: I did some interviews when celebrities or somebody would come into town and they were going to play in one of the local theaters. And then I covered the political convention in 48, because the owners of the station were from South Carolina and they

---

wanted to have the Democrat convention covered. So I went and covered that and then when Alabama and that crowd walked out of the convention, why I went back to the hotel and interviewed Strom Thurmond, who then was the governor and was the States Rights candidate, I guess, in '48 after the walkout.

Ritchie: Would you say that was your first introduction to politics?

Hildenbrand: It was. Yes, exactly. And then I covered mostly local elections after that, in Trenton, New Jersey, which is a nice place to cover elections. They're high spirited elections there.

Ritchie: That sounds like a euphemism! Did you find that you were growing interested in politics while you were covering it?

Hildenbrand: I enjoyed politics. I enjoyed covering politics. I enjoyed what politics was all about. I wasn't sure that I knew what it was all about, but it was interesting, and it was fascinating, and I liked the campaigns and things like that.

Ritchie: Did you ever think while you were covering it that you would get involved in it?

Hildenbrand: No, never even dawned on me that I would get involved in it. I never looked at it from a standpoint of "Geez, I'd like to do this someday." I looked at it as "This is fun," but I was on the outside looking in.

Ritchie: After the Korean War, when you came back, did you do the same kind of work?

Hildenbrand: I went back as the same thing, I was a program director, but it wasn't the same because I'd been away for almost a year, and it's always hard to go back. They've made other arrangements and they've got other people. They bring you back because that's the right thing to do, but they've sort of made other arrangements and other plans. So it's never quite as comfortable the second time. And it wasn't in this case. So I began to look around to go on to someplace else. I had a number of jobs, and wound up in Wilmington, Delaware, with an NBC outlet, as a matter of fact.

Ritchie: I was wondering, since so many of your connections have been with Delaware, how you made that connection.

Hildenbrand: I was working in Frederick, Maryland, as a program director and I had an agent up in New York. Got a call that said there was an opening for a program director at a station in Dover, Delaware, and would I be interested. I said "Well, you know, I'm not too happy where I am. Sure, I'll go talk to them." So I went

and talked to them, and decided that it was closer to home -- I was from Prospect Park, which wasn't very far. So I made the change, and then I wasn't there very long before there was an opening up in Wilmington, which was a much bigger market. I went up and auditioned for that, and they said "We'd like to hire you." So I wound up in Wilmington. I covered the '56 election, and then the congressman who got elected called me. Well, the newscaster on the television side of our operation became the administrative assistant to our mayor. When the congressman got elected, he asked this guy to go down and be his AA in Washington. He and I had been good friends from our days in the radio and television stations, so when they had an opening, he suggested to the congressman that he talk to me, which he did. And they said they'd like to have me come down there, so I decided, "What the hell, I ain't got nothing else to do." I wasn't getting any place in the radio business. The radio business is the kind of a business that you either struggle all of your life for enough pay to pay the rent but never buy a swimming pool. Or you hit it big and buy two swimming pools. And I wasn't going to get no swimming pool! So I decided I'd go do this.

Ritchie: The 1950s was a period when radio was really losing the war with television. Did you feel that kind of pressure? And did you ever think of going into television?

Hildenbrand: No, never did. It was still in its infancy even then, in '55, '56. We had it, but it was new. I don't think anybody -- well, maybe somebody thought how much a part of our life it eventually would become. It was a new toy and everybody enjoyed it, but I had never thought very much about going into it.

Ritchie: Considering that your foundation was in radio, do you think that it was a good training ground for what you did later on in terms of your dealings with politics and the Senate?

Hildenbrand: I don't think so. I don't see a relationship between the two. I don't see the things that I did through the years that I was here that my work as a radio broadcaster contributed anything to it. I think that the military side of the operation, the administration, the discipline probably was more of a contributing factor to the things I did in politics, more so than the radio.

Ritchie: I was wondering if you felt you had a feel or understanding for the media, what they needed and how they operated?

Hildenbrand: Oh, maybe to that degree, that's a possibility. But if I were going to be a press secretary then the background that I had would have been much

more advantageous. You have more of a feel, I think, for things that make news from a political standpoint. My guess is that I was helpful to a member in writing press releases, in getting things into the media because I understood what

---

it is they liked and what they didn't like, what they'd use and what they wouldn't use. But that was a small part of all the things that I did in Congress.

Ritchie: I was wondering if Congressman Haskell's interest in hiring you at that time might have been shaped by your experience in the radio?

Hildenbrand: Oh, partly. He hired me as a legislative person, however. He was working on a single issue, and that of near-misses in the air. Never before had there been any indication that there were a lot of near-misses that were going on in the air corridors of the country, and he became interested in this and decided to pursue it, and needed somebody to come down and help on that particular issue. He was on the Education and Labor Committee, and so the AA was working that side of it, but they needed somebody to do this, which was really why he hired me. So I came down to do most of the work on near-miss legislation and those kinds of things within air transportation.

Ritchie: Did you feel you knew about the field?

Hildenbrand: Hell no! I didn't know the first thing about what I was doing! I didn't even know why I came to Washington. I hadn't been there except on a high school trip. I had no more idea about what government was all about than flying. Government I didn't

---

understand except ninth grade civics. But it was a job, and the money was good -- better than what I was making. It was interesting, and it was a totally new life.

Ritchie: What did you think about the House of Representatives, when you arrived?

Hildenbrand: Well, I didn't know about the Senate in those days, so I thought the House was sort of neat. In those days it was, and it may still be, because it's been twenty-seven or twenty-eight years since I've been over there. But when I came over to the Senate I found the relationship between the two was that the House was a much more friendly place. The doors of the offices are always open, and the staff has a tendency to mingle much more so than they do in the Senate. So from that standpoint there was a vast difference. But in terms of getting things done, in terms of a member, the Senate was obviously the place to be. That's

where the action was, unless you happened to be a Sam Rayburn or somebody like that. You're one of 435 as opposed to one of a hundred, and that's a big difference.

Ritchie: And you were working for a freshman member of the minority party, which makes it even more difficulty to get heard.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. If it hadn't been for the near-miss business that he was involved in, nobody would have ever known who he was, or how he got there, or that he'd left.

Ritchie: How far along did that near-miss legislation get?

Hildenbrand: Not very far. They formed the Airways Modernization Board and Elwood "Pete" Quesada became the chairman of the Airways Modernization Board. Out of that grew a lot of the kinds of things they researched in, the radar particularly. The Canadians were, I think, messing around in radar-kind of hings. They used to do strips and they'd pass it along from one controller to the next, and that's how they controlled things. Christ, you'd go blind looking at those goddamn strips! It called attention to a problem, and of course the Air Transport Association went bonkers because they didn't want anybody to know about all these goddamn near-misses. But it called attention to the problem and I think it made it easier to get air surveillance equipment at airports, and things like that. Eventually it would have happened, but I think it happened a little earlier because of the interest that he showed, and also how much he tried to bring it to the attention of everybody.

Ritchie: Could you tell me a little bit about Harry Haskell? I know he became Mayor of Wilmington later on, but who was he?

Hildenbrand: Well, his father was the treasurer of the DuPont Company, back in the days when the DuPont Company went from munitions to whatever it was they went to. There was a period of time in there that they didn't know what they were going to do, because there was

---

no longer a war and they weren't making gun powder, and they didn't know what the hell they were going to do. Then they decided that they would get into some other things, and finally some guy found nylon for them, and they went off from there. But he was treasurer, so Hal inherited a lot of his money and was quite well off. I think they owned a piece of Honeywell in Minneapolis. And of course Chrysler in those days was owned by DuPont until the courts made them divest.

So he had money. He had served in the Eisenhower administration with Nelson Rockefeller, when Rockefeller was Under Secretary of HEW, when Oveta Culp Hobby was there. So he had been down there, and Eliot Richardson was down there, and a guy from the DuPont Company by the name of Harlan Wendell was down there. They were all part of that Rockefeller crowd. So Haskell just decided he would run for public office in that '56 campaign, Eisenhower's second term. He ran and won, and then ran into that terrible '58 election when all Republicans went down the tubes. He lost by 680 votes, something like that.

Ritchie: Having gone to work for a Republican congressman, had you identified yourself as a Republican at that time?

Hildenbrand: No, I had no idea what I was. It never dawned on me to be one thing or another. I had never registered. I had never voted. So I didn't have any idea what I was. My tendencies were certainly moderate, liberal to moderate, moderate to liberal,

---

whatever it is. I think I was entranced by a statement that Eisenhower had made, relative to what he thought a Republican was, or at least his kind of Republican. He said that "I'm someone who is liberal to their needs and conservative with their money." That sort of stuck with me. I was attracted to that kind of phraseology. I never got to the point 'where I was a Javits liberal -- Javits really wasn't that liberal, as a matter of fact, Cliff Case was much more liberal than Jack Javits was -- but I never got to that. Coming through the Depression I was trained and raised that money was important and you didn't give it away. You earned whatever it was that you got. So I had trouble with some of the New Deal philosophies, you know: if you don't want to work we'll give you the money to do whatever it is you do. I always had problems with that. But in the areas of civil rights and things like that, I was much more liberal than some of my friends would have liked me to be. My father always used to say, "Always be nice to the people on your way up because you meet the same people on the way down." I always remembered that.

Ritchie: So politics was something you really did come upon accidentally.

Hildenbrand: Yes, I had no idea. It just was a job and I was ready to make a change. In fact, I really did not make the decision. It was made for me. By the time I had the interview and got back to the radio station, the congressman had already called the station

manager and said "I want to hire him. When can he come to work?" I'd never told him I'd come to work, but when I got back they told me that I was going to Washington. I said, "Thank you very much for letting me know." So I did.

Ritchie: In addition to the near-miss legislation, what kind of jobs did you do for the congressman?

Hildenbrand: Oh, just press statements, and any kind of research that he wanted. Because it was in Congress you also have a tendency to run from the day you get elected, because the next election is right around the corner. So we did a lot of political things. We did radio broadcasts. Delaware had no television station and only had a few 24-hour radio stations, but an awful lot of dawn-to-dusk radio stations, and only had about two major newspapers, but an awful lot of weeklies. So we did a lot of preparing stuff we could send out to be in those weeklies, once a week, and to go on the radio stations. We did a lot of that kind of stuff.

Ritchie: Probably a pretty small office, I would guess.

Hildenbrand: Yes, five people in those days.

Ritchie: So everybody had to throw in together.

Hildenbrand: Yes, everybody did everything. In those days it was easy because we quit the beginning of August. We didn't have long sessions like they do now. I didn't realize that they stayed here till Christmas time till I got over in the Senate, because we had left in August in '57 and again in '58.

Ritchie: Did you find that the people that you met in that period, 1957 to 1958, were people you continued to see? Did that begin a nucleus of contacts for you?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. A lot of the people that I know now are people that I knew then. Two of the girls that worked for me in '57 and '58 are still around. One works for the Doorkeeper of the House and one works for Bill Roth. So that's what, twenty-seven years in both of their instances. We hired both of those girls. And the AA who was there lasted through John Williams before he retired. A lot of them are still around. Bob Michel, who was right across the hall from us, now the Minority Leader, who I became quite close to in those days, is still around. We belong to the same country club and see each other quite a lot.

Ritchie: In your file of letters of congratulations, I saw a letter from Jeannette Smith, who was later on Jeannette Williams, saying that she remembered working with you over in the House.

Hildenbrand: Yes, Cornie Gallagher had gotten elected in 1958 -- who eventually went to jail for something, I can't remember, income tax evasion or something -- but anyway he was elected to Congress from New Jersey in 1958, and she and the sister of the personal secretary to Warren Magnuson, Alma Hostadtler, were staff people for Gallagher, and they came and looked at the office that we had in the Cannon Building, and eventually took that office, which was 233 Cannon. And that's how I got to know Jeannette. Then she came over from Cornie to work with Pete Williams on the Aging Subcommittee, and then eventually became Jeannette Williams.

Ritchie: It struck me when I saw that letter that you really do build a network of acquaintances on the Hill.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. I think that's true.

Ritchie: You mentioned getting to meet Bob Michel. I guess it was easier as a staff member to deal with the other members of Congress in the House than perhaps in the Senate. Did you find it that way?

Hildenbrand: No, I don't think that's true. I think you dealt with the staff much more so on the House side -- maybe that's not quite accurate. I don't know how it is now, but in those days, we used to have what we called "hall parties" every Friday afternoon. One office in the hall would take turns and have a party. So every

---

Friday afternoon we had a hall party, and you got to know not only the staff in the hall but you got to know the members. You knew the members within your own hall, and you knew the members that served on the committee that your boss served on. But beyond that you didn't have that many contacts with other members. I guess the members of the House are more accessible than senators, certainly today. I think most senators now are very, very hard to get to see. That's not because that's the way they are, that's just because the staff make up is such that they're protected much more so than they were then. I don't know how it was back in those days so far as the Senate was concerned. My guess is that it was pretty much the same as it was on the House side, because staffs were smaller, and it was easier to get in to see a member. And he had more time than they have now. They don't have time now to see anybody.

Ritchie: Did you have much dealings with the House Repub- lican leadership in those days? Was that Halleck?

Hildenbrand: No. Joe Martin, I think was leader in those days, and probably Charlie Halleck was whip.

Ritchie: But they were pretty far removed?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. You knew who they were, and they might call from time to time if they needed the congressman for something, but you didn't mess with them. You knew who they were, but beyond that, that was all.

Ritchie: Well, Haskell was defeated after his first term . . .

Hildenbrand: '58, yes.

Ritchie: What did you think you were going to do at that stage?

Hildenbrand: I didn't know what I was going to do at that stage. He had his own idea of what he wanted me to do. He just said, I don't want you right now to come back to Delaware. I want you to stay down here and get some more experience." I said, "Well, that's fine, except who pays the rent and all that kind of jazz?" I had just moved into a new apartment and furnished it. I had been living in a furnished apartment up until that time. He said, "Don't worry about it. I'll keep you on my payroll until you find something." He said, "I just don't want you to take anything. You let me know what it is you're taking and I'll decide whether I think that's what I want you to do." I said, "Gee, that's great." So he used to send me a check every month for my salary, while I kept looking for a job. I think I called him one time, when I think the

---

Labor Department or somebody had a possibility. He said, "No, I don't want you to go there. That's not what I had in mind." I said, "Well, you're paying my salary, so whatever the hell you want I guess is fine."

Then I had a chance to go to the White House Conference on Aging. We had passed in the late days of 1958 a bill to create a White House Conference on Aging to try to do something for elder citizens, older Americans, because nobody had anything for them. They were looking for somebody, and I was interviewed. They said they'd like to hire me, so I called him and said "What do you think?" He said well, he was familiar with HEW because he'd worked there and was close to it, so he said "That's a good idea. Take that job." I guess I worked there for about six

months. I got close to the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, who in those days was Bob Forsythe, who had been the AA to a senator from Minnesota.

HEW, just before Thanksgiving, took cranberries off the market because of a drug called aminotryzol, which had been sprayed on cranberry bogs all over the East coast at times when it shouldn't have been sprayed. So they said, "OK, that's it, cranberries off the market." And we're two weeks away from Thanksgiving. It hit the fan. And Margaret Chase Smith came screaming in. And Hasty Keith, and the New Jersey delegation, and everybody else. Forsythe got in touch with my boss and said "Can I borrow him? We've got so many

---

people screaming at us, we need some help in the congressional liaison area." So they loaned me to Bob, and I worked that. Then about three weeks before Christmas they got cute and they found that diaethelstilbestoral pellets, which cause capons to get big breasted in a very short period of time, was also a carcinogen. So then they took those off the market just before Christmas, and that started another furor. He kept me there, and then by that time it was into the beginning of the year, and he conned them into letting me stay up there.

I stayed up and worked in the congressional liaison office until about the middle of August. Then Haskell called me and said, "Governor's going to run for the Senate. I want you to come back and run the campaign." I said, "That's all well and good again, but who in the hell's going to pay all this jazz. I can't very well be on this payroll. I've got to quit." He said, "Don't worry about it, just quit." He said, "How much are you making?" I said whatever I was making, it wasn't very much, ten, eleven thousand dollars, something like that. He said, "Don't worry about it." So I left in August and went to Wilmington and ran the campaign. He paid my salary while I was up there, and my expenses. AndCale was fortunate enough to get elected. We ran against J. Allen Frear, who was a twelve year veteran, and with some covert labor help, why we managed to get elected.

Ritchie: What do you mean covert labor help?

Hildenbrand: The labor unions didn't like Allen Frear. He was a conservative. He hadn't voted along some of the lines that they wanted. But they thought if they came out overtly to support Boggs that it would hurt him, because in those days labor unions supporting Republicans was even more of an anathema than it is today. So they had a guy by the name of Jim Lepenta, who was the shop steward, or some dumb thing, in the Delaware AFL-CIO, and he figured out a way to send out ballots to all of the labor members in the state. He made three mailings. On the ballot were Boggs and Frear and everybody else. They checked everybody that

they wanted their members to vote for. Initially very vaguely, when they got to the Boggs-Frear thing, you could just see for Boggs a very light check-mark. It was hardly discernable. But each mailing they sent it became more and more obvious, so that they last one they sent out obviously had Boggs checked. We got a lot of labor vote, and I think we won by 2,800 votes. I've always contended -- Cale may not contend, but I've contended -- that really was the difference, because other than that there wasn't that much difference between Boggs and Frear. Also Boggs had been governor. He was there all the time. They have a tendency, even though Boggs always contended that every time you make a decision you make fifty percent of the people happy and fifty percent unhappy, nevertheless everyday he was there and he was in the

---

papers. So they knew who he was. And he'd been a three-term congressman and eight years governor, so he was not just somebody who just cropped up.

We won, and then Haskell went to Boggs the night of the election and said, "I want Hildenbrand to go to work for you." Boggs said, "That's fine." So back down I came. He wasn't very happy that they were going to pay me eleven thousand dollars, and he as governor only made twelve. He really wasn't very happy with that, he just couldn't understand how somebody like me could make eleven thousand dollars when he only made twelve as governor. But he managed to get over that.

Ritchie: Did Haskell have ambitions to come back to Washington? Was that one of the reasons why he wanted you to stay here?

Hildenbrand: Yes. He wanted to come back. But circumstances worked against him. Delawarians are funny. They don't like to have things necessarily controlled. They like to make up their own minds. DuPont had always been something that was something that -- you know, you talk about Delaware you talk about DuPont, and there was some resentment among the people of anybody that was tied to the DuPont Company. So Hal had a tough row to hoe. He didn't know what he really wanted to do, and then he ran for Mayor. My guess is that at some point he would have run for the Senate, but by the time the

---

opening came, by the time John Williams decided to step down, it was too late politically. He was dead then.

Ritchie: Just in general, what type of a person was Haskell?

Hildenbrand: Very, very nice person. Very compassionate, very understanding. He had no conception, however, of your own individual life. If you told him you had to go do something, he would completely understand that, but it never dawned on him that you might have anything to do. He'd call at 7:00 o'clock on a Sunday morning and say "There's a staff meeting at 11:00 o'clock in Wilmington." You're sitting in Southeast or someplace, but you're supposed to be there, that's fine. But he'd do anything in the world for you.

I did a speech for him one time on the Older Americans Act, or the White House Conference on Aging, and he was due to give it on Monday, and it was during the summer time, and his family was at Rehobeth Beach. On Friday afternoon he was going to Rehobeth. By the time he got back to the office it was like 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, and he hadn't begun to look at the speech. We knew he was going to testify on Monday morning, and I didn't have an idea when he was going to look at it, make the corrections, and we had to go ahead and get it ready. I had a date, as a matter of fact, that night at 7:00 o'clock. He said, "I've got to go to Rehobeth, so why don't you fly over with me and then I'll have the pilot bring you back. I'll

---

do the speech on the way over and you can bring it back." So I get on the plane and we fly to Rehobeth, and he does the speech, says "Thank you very much, see you next week," and they fly me back. I brought the speech back and kept the date. But that's the way he operated. That's the only way he knew how to operate.

Eisenhower wanted him to play golf one day, or the next day, and he didn't have any idea where his golf clubs were. He had a place down in Florida, a place in South Carolina, and a place in Maine, as well as the place in Pennsylvania, outside of Delaware. Didn't know where they were. Anybody with his kind of money would have gone out and bought another set of golf clubs and not worried about it, but not him. He found them in Florida, so he got a plane to fly down to Florida, pick them up, and fly them back. Which made no sense at all, none at all, but that was Hal. That's just the way he was. It never occurred to him that that was a strange thing to do. He liked those golf clubs and those were the ones he wanted. We're still good friends. He still calls. He's very much involved with Laurance Rockefeller, one of those Rockefellers that does a lot in the conservation area, parks and things like that. He's big in that area, and he's doing a lot. He bought Abercrombie and Fitch at one time, but I don't know what that deal is now, whether they're still alive or not. But he's still around.

Ritchie: Your descriptions of working for him remind me of reading some of the descriptions of people who work for Rockefellers.

Hildenbrand: Yes. They all have pretty much the same kind of attitude. He used to fly back and forth from Delaware. Friday we'd give him a ticket to fly down Monday morning. So we gave him his ticket, and he went out there this one Monday morning and it was socked in. It was foggy and there was no way he was going to get down here, and he had a meeting of the Education and Labor Committee. So he went to the train station, and typical of people who have all that money, he didn't have any money. So he couldn't buy a ticket. But he saw one of his drivers, one of the Greenleaf Dairy Drivers, and he hailed him down and wanted to borrow the money from him. But he had just started out on his collection route, and he didn't have the money. So Hal gets in the truck and he rides with this guy till the guy collects enough to give him the money so he can buy a ticket to come back to Washington. Then he gets down here and has no idea who the driver was, or what his name was, or anything like that, so we had to call the Dairy and say "There's some driver there that's going to be short twelve or fourteen dollars. Find out who it is and we'll send you the check." But that's the way he operated. It never dawned on him that this was something people didn't do as a rule. Eliot Richardson was the same way. He got on a train from Boston and rode down. They asked him for his ticket, and he didn't have a

---

ticket. He tried to tell them who he was, but that didn't make any difference to them, they wanted his ticket. Well, he didn't have one. He had a terrible time.

Ritchie: The Kennedys apparently were the same way, never carried any cash.

Hildenbrand: Yes, I don't know what it is about those people who have that kind of money, but Hal never had any. He was always borrowing money from somebody. He came down one time, the cab brought him to the office building. He ran in and had a meeting upstairs in the Education and Labor Committee. About two hours later he called down and said, "Oh, I forgot to pay the cab driver. Of course, by that time the cab driver figured he got beat for the fare, so we had to find the cab company and go all over the place trying to find this poor man to come back and get his money. Hal hadn't had it, and forgot when he ran in to tell somebody to go out and pay the cab driver. But we were used to those kinds of things.

Ritchie: To back up a little bit, you mentioned you were on the staff of the White House Conference on Aging for about six months. Did you work with the White House staff in the Eisenhower administration?

Hildenbrand: No, it was just called the White House Conference on Aging because the President called the conference. The HEW

Department was the action agency, they're the ones that set it up and did all of the things that needed to be done. I think the first conference was held in 1960. But the White House wasn't that much involved.

Ritchie: What was your reaction to HEW in those days?

Hildenbrand: It was as bad as it is now. It's got now twice as many people, more than that I guess. And a much bigger budget. But in those days it was the biggest department, an awful lot of people. It was a nice experience, and I'm glad that I did it, but I would not necessarily want to go and do it again. The bureaucracy is a totally different world.

Ritchie: What about working as a congressional liaison? What does that entail?

Hildenbrand: Well, that was the best part. The fact is, working as a congressional liaison officer meant that I was back up on the Hill most of the time, walking the halls and making sure that if anybody had any troubles, what they were and if we could help them -- Social Security problems and things like that. That got us out of the regimen of going in at 9:00 o'clock and sitting at a desk until 5:00 o'clock. We'd go in at 9:00 and have a meeting and about 10:00 or 10:30 we'd go up on the Hill and then not come back till about 3:00 o'clock or 3:30 in the afternoon. So it broke up the day.

It was a good job. If I were going to go back into government in some capacity, that's the kind of thing I would like to go back and do, because that's what I've done all my life anyway.

Ritchie: Did you find that part of it was explaining to the agency what the congressman wanted? Or were you explaining the agency to the congressman?

Hildenbrand: It was a combination of both, because you'd be surprised how little the bureaucracy understands about Congress. And Congress feels it doesn't have to understand the agency. To some degree they're probably right. The agency is much more dependent upon Congress than Congress is upon the agency. Trying to explain to members about bureaucracy is sometimes a very difficult thing to do, because they don't understand it. Although Congresses are now getting more bureaucratic each day, and pretty soon it's going to be easy to explain it to them, because they'll be living with it.

Ritchie: Is there a certain constituency that an agency like HEW has on the Hill?

Hildenbrand: Well, yes, your education people and your health people, and Social Security, and those things which they are responsible for as an agency becomes their constituency. Then you help anybody else that has problems with an agency. The biggest problem we had was in making grants. We had Prescott Bush from Connecticut

---

Tom Dodd, Chris' father. It was a continual war because we would give to Pres Bush maybe an hour or a half an hour's notice on the announcement of some sort of a grant before we'd ever called Tom Dodd. And he would always call up the Secretary and just bitch that we were treating Pres Bush differently than we were treating him. Then we'd get called in the Secretary's office and he'd chide us about doing what we were doing, which we just continued to do. We always had that problem, but we were politically oriented and we were not about to change. If they wanted to bitch, let 'em bitch.

Ritchie: So you felt you were working for the Eisenhower administration.

Hildenbrand: Sure. There was no reason to give Tom Dodd anything before we gave it to Pres Bush. And if we had Democrat senators, we'd give it to some congressman first. Except that we would give it to Democrat senators who controlled our budget or our programs, like Lister Hill, for example. Whatever Lister Hill wanted, Lister Hill would get. And some of the others were the same way. Otherwise, we went to some congressman if we didn't have a Republican senator. We also used to get into problems that way cause we'd give it to a Republican senator and they'd have Republican congressman in the District, and then he'd bitch, because a senator got it before he got it. But you learned to live with those things.

Ritchie: Did you see much of Lister Hill at that time?

Hildenbrand: No, we'd go to see him once in a while, when we had a bill or something that the administration wanted him to introduce by request, or something. I saw more of Lister Hill, of course, when I came on the Senate side than I did during that period of time. He was a fine gentleman, absolutely.

Ritchie: When it came to health issues, he was really a power.

Hildenbrand: Yes, he was the Hill of Hill-Burton. He really was the hospital boy in the Congress, the health person.

Ritchie: Would you feel pressure from a Lister Hill to kowtow to things he was interested in?

Hildenbrand: No, they didn't do that in those days. They didn't feel that they had to. There was never the pressure that there is now. They were much more gentlemanly in those days than they are now. We never had the pressures that you have now.

Ritchie: It was more an agency like HEW wanting to keep the chairman happy.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes.

Ritchie: Keep him informed.

Hildenbrand: And you know, your fights were fights of substance. You wanted this and they wanted that. Sometimes they had the votes and they won, sometimes you could convince them and you won.

Ritchie: It was in '58 that they finally passed the big education bill.

Hildenbrand: That's right, the National Defense Education Act. That came up after Sputnik went up in '57. Then we had another big elementary and secondary leducationl bill in '59 or into '60, I guess. Of course, Eisenhower was at the end of his term, and the heir apparent was Nixon. I can remember sitting in [Leslie] Arends' office, with Bryce Harlow, who was liaison at the White House, and working with Frank Thompson from New Jersey, who was a Democrat on the Education and Labor Committee, trying to work out a compromise with Charlie Halleck on an education bill. They contacted Nixon and said, "Can you live with this?" And Nixon said no. So we never did a bill. My guess is if he had said "Yeah, that's all right," we would have had a bill long before we did in the areas of elementary and secondary education.

Ritchie: It was too hot for him to handle?

Hildenbrand: Yes. He didn't want to do it at that time. Whatever it was, he didn't want to be involved in it, so we didn't do it.

Ritchie: Did HEW get you involved in civil rights disputes at that time?

Hildenbrand: No, they were not involved in civil rights. The only civil rights that anybody ever got involved in there was what was on the floor. When

Thurmond filibustered I sat up in the gallery with Jean, which was his first wife, at 2:00, 2:30, or 3:00 o'clock in the morning, in '57, when he set the record for filibustering. I was over on the House side and I came over to watch it. But that was the only thing about civil rights that we knew anything about. Civil rights had not become anywhere near the issue that it became in the '60s with Martin Luther King and the Voting Rights Act.

Ritchie: The educational side was still moving with "deliberate speed."

Hildenbrand: Yes, under the '54 decision. And of course, Boggs had been very much involved, because he was governor and he enforced the '54 decision in Delaware, and people just were apoplectic about that. In fact, there was a party started in Delaware, called the NAAWP: The National Association for the Advancement of White People. It was started by a guy out of Texas, whose name escapes me, who was eventually killed in a domestic brawl. But he started it in Delaware, and they used to have rallies and all this kind of jazz. There

---

was a lot that went on from the educational standpoint, but really the Voting Rights Act and stuff like that wasn't until Martin Luther King got involved in the '60s.

Ritchie: In 1960 you went back to Delaware to run Boggs' campaign.

Hildenbrand: Or at least help run it.

Ritchie: What is it like to be suddenly in charge of, or be a major part of a political campaign like that?

Hildenbrand: Well, it wasn't too much, because in '58 I had done Hal's campaign. I had at least one campaign. And when you work from a state that has one congressman, it's the same thing. It wasn't that much different from what we did in '58. The same people that worked for us in '58 were working for us in '60. The nucleus of Hal's campaign group was now Boggs' campaign group. There wasn't that much that had to be done. Nixon, we thought, was going to run strong. It turned out he didn't. He lost Delaware. We were the only ones to carry it. We lost the governorship. We lost lieutenant governor. We lost the presidency. We were the only ones to win, of all the people that were running. Bill Roth ran for lieutenant governor that year with somebody, I don't remember who -- it doesn't matter -- but he only got beat by 1,800 votes.

Ritchie: Was Kennedy particularly popular in Delaware? Do you think that had some influence?

Hildenbrand: Kennedy was particularly popular, and they brought out a heavy labor vote -- which also helped us, because they split the ticket and voted for us and also voted very strong for Kennedy. But, as it turned out, Kennedy lost three of the four jurisdictions, but won the fourth one so big that he was able to counterbalance it. We did exactly the opposite. We won three and lost the fourth.

Ritchie: Well, as you said, Frear was pretty conservative. He really wasn't a Kennedy-type Democrat.

Hildenbrand: Yes. See, South of Canal, which is what we call the lower part of the state, he was very, very popular. We won in the city and lost everything else. But that was enough to carry us through.

Ritchie: Frear was the kind of person who really didn't stand out in a crowd, either, was he?

Hildenbrand: No, he was very, very nice. He was an extreme gentleman, but he never did anything in the twelve years he was in the Senate. He was always in John Williams' shadow, because John had found that income tax thing in the early '5Os and he just rode that to a fare-thee-well. And Allen had no place to go, nothing to do. He was just a journeyman senator.

Ritchie: He apparently was under the thumb of Lyndon Johnson, too.

Hildenbrand: Well, there were stories that he went over and shook his finger in Allen Frear's face on some vote in '60, which we used, of course, in the campaign. Whether there was that much truth to it or not, I don't know, but the story persists.

Ritchie: Johnson supposedly yelled: "Change your vote!"

Hildenbrand: Exactly, and he did.

Ritchie: Well, can you tell me a little bit about Caleb Boggs? He was a person who seemed to be very popular in the Senate, but it's hard to find out a lot about him.

Hildenbrand: Yes, we ran a campaign on the basis that there isn't anybody in the state that doesn't call Cale by his first name. He just knew everybody and everybody knew Cale. He was the kind of person that you called him Cale. I didn't, simply because I'd come out of the military, and there were certain disciplines that you understand. You don't call officers by their first names, so you don't call people that you work for. But everybody else called Cale "Cale." Everybody in the state knew him and liked him. There probably wasn't anybody in the state that really didn't like Cale, including the people that ran against him. He had been a three-term congressman, and been eight years as governor. He was just committed

---

to public service. Had no money. To this day he doesn't have any money. They didn't have a mansion in those days -- I don't know whether they do now. He lived in an apartment, a one-bedroom apartment in Wilmington. But everybody liked him. He didn't have any more substance, I think, probably than Allen Frear had. He had a better personality than Allen Frear, at least it came across better.

Senator James Caleb Boggs (R, Delaware)
Senate Historical Office

He was strong in constituent services. Everybody knew if you needed something you could talk to Cale and Cale would get it done for you. And they didn't give a goddamn whether Cale voted for labor unions or voted for this bill or that bill. It didn't make any difference to them. Cale was there if they needed help. They knew who to go to. That was his strength. Through all the years that he was an elected official, it was simply based on the fact that he was so good at constituent services. It was almost twelve years before he got on the Appropriations Committee. He wanted to get on Appropria- tions and never could, then got beat.

He got on the committee and he got a hideaway office in the Capitoll. They blew up the hideaway the day he got it. He got it Saturday and they blew it up on Sunday. He'd been waiting twelve years to get a hideaway, and they blew it up the next day! Then he got on Appropriations Committee and then got beat. So he didn't have a very good career towards the end.

Ritchie: How would you describe his political standing?

Hildenbrand: He was a moderate, along the lines of Haskell. Much more moderate certainly than John Williams. His voting record and John's would not be that akin, except in terms of Delaware issues where of course they would be together. He was more moderate. In fact, he was the campaign manager for Hugh Scott, when Hugh Scott ran against Roman Hruska to be Whip in 1969. Boggs was his campaign manager. So he came out of the Scott and the Hatfield, and Ed Brooke, and Javits, and Keating, and that wing of our party.

Left to Right: Roman Hruska (R-NE), Hugh Scott (R-PA), Thruston Morton (R-KY), and Kenneth Keating (R-NY)
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: So after the election was over you pretty naturally went to work for Boggs.

Hildenbrand: Nobody ever asked me. He didn't ever ask me. I'm not ever sure he wanted me. Haskell just said, "Your legislative assistant is Hildenbrand." And Boggs said, "Thank you very much," because Hal had done so much for him, to get him into the Senate seat, that I guess he thought he owed it to Hal, that whatever Hal wanted he was going to let him have it. And what Hal wanted was for me to come to work for him, and so I did. Hal's AA by that time had gone to

work for John Williams, the one that we had when we were in the House, so we were both down here by that time.

Ritchie: But it sounds like you were able to establish a pretty good relationship with Boggs.

Hildenbrand: Yes. Through the years it got better and better. I think everybody has problems from time to time when you work very closely with someone from a personality standpoint. But Cale never said a cross word to anybody, never had a fight with anybody. I think in all the years I worked for him he only really had a flash of temper one time. That was at a time when there was a big fight over whether we were going to seat Pierre Salinger, out of California, which would have been 1964. As a typical staff person, I wanted to listen to what was going on, because it was interesting and it was fascinating. So I was on the floor, and Boggs wanted me to go and meet with some constituents down in the dining room. In my brashness I said I was listening to this, and I thought it would be better if he went and did it. He said, "Well, unless you're going to vote for me when my name is called, you better go." So it suddenly dawned on me that "Hey, man, I may have overstepped myself a little bit. Maybe I better go." I realized at that time that I was a little much. I really wasn't the senator, like I thought I might be. But that was the only time that we ever had any words.

He loaned me to the Committee of Nine, which was created in 1966, to go out and help some lieutenant governor by the name of Ed Fike to run against Alan Bible. To tell you the kind of guy that Cale Boggs was, he and Alan Bible had gone to school together at Georgetown Law School, had been classmates, and they were both staff up here when they went to night school, or whatever they went to.

And Bible found out that I was out there, as only the Nevada senators can. They know everybody that comes into that town. When I registered at a hotel, Bible found out that I was registered, and called Cale. He was just terribly hurt to think that Cale would send someone from his staff out there to work against Alan in his campaign. Cale was so mortified at that time, he called me on the phone and said, "I want you to come home right away." To this day, I could not explain to those people in Nevada why I had to come back here. They didn't understand that. He called me on a Friday. Sunday I left and came on back. But that was the kind of a person that Cale was. He never wanted to say anything bad about anybody. Never did say anything bad about anybody.

Ritchie: How did you find his office worked, by comparison to the House office? Was it pretty much the same?

Hildenbrand: Yes, because being the congressman-at-large, the mail and everything is pretty much the same. It doesn't increase. You don't get added constituencies. And in addition, now you have two people, because there's another senator, whereas when you're in the Congress it's just you. So the workload was no different. I could do the legislative mail by 10:30 in the morning. I had lunch with a guy yesterday from Gordon Allott's Colorado office, and we were reminiscing about the days in the '60s when they'd get a hundred letters a day and I'd get twenty a week. But we just did not get

---

very much mail. It would take something like a Right-to-Work bill, or something like that, to generate mail. And then, for us, a thousand letters in a whole year would be a big generation. There was not that much difference. We went from five people to ten, but that's about all.

Ritchie: So you had one congressman with five staff people, and two senators each with ten people.

Hildenbrand: Yes, because John never had many more than that, if he had that many. He had a small staff too. Both of us had very small staffs.

Ritchie: Well, what was the United States Senate like in 1961 when you first came here?

Hildenbrand: It was a great deal different then than it is now. It was a thinking Senate. It was a Senate that deliberated, as its name implied years ago, when it was called the "world's greatest deliberative body." In those days it lived up to that name. It would deliberate over a piece of legislation for weeks on end before it would finally act. It was a debating legislature in those days. We spent maybe three hours a day -- they'd start debating about 2:00 o'clock and a 5:00 o'clock they'd quit. But they'd debate the issue, whatever the issue was. There were no unanimous consent agreements, or time limits, nothing like that, to vote at this time, or vote at

---

that time. Everybody knew that the work week was Monday through Friday and votes could come at any time. Nobody ever would think of coming on the floor and saying "Can I ask you not to have any votes tomorrow because I've got to go to wherever the hell it is I've got to go." Nobody ever thought of doing that.

We didn't work very long hours, didn't pass a lot of legis- lation, didn't have a lot of roll calls. If we had a hundred and some roll calls it would be a lot in a given session. We were beginning then to get into civil rights. Vietnam had begun to

heat up. We were just a short year and a short year and a half away from the Cuban Missile Crisis. So things were beginning to change. Some of the old bulls were beginning to die off, the Bob Kerrs, and the Denny Chavezs, and the Lister Hills, and the Dick Russells, and the people that had been around a long, long time. I guess that was the beginning of the younger movement, with Kennedy coming. Quentin Burdick came in '60. There was only four that came in: Jack Miller, Cale Boggs, Quentin Burdick, and one other.

Ritchie: Was Metcalf elected in 1960?

Hildenbrand: Maybe Lee Metcalf was the other one. Those were the four that came in at that time. No, wasn't Keith Thomson elected and then got killed in that airplane crash in December? And J.J. Hickey, the governor, appointed himself. He got beat; Milward Simpson beat him. That was also the time when we got the first

---

Republican senator from Texas, when John Tower came in in May of that year, '61. He got Lyndon Johnson's seat. They had appointed a guy by the name of Bill Blakely to be senator, big, tall Texan. And then Tower beat him.

Ritchie: Do you think the Senate was a clubbier institution in those days?

Hildenbrand: Yes, very much so. I think it was partisan clubby. I think the Democrats were clubby and the Republicans were clubby. I don't think there was as much cross-fertilization, politically, as there is now. I think that members today have a tendency to have friendships outside of this place that cross party lines. Back in those days, I think that everybody was friendly but you stayed pretty much with your own group. You didn't run around with the opposition in those days. And the Republicans didn't provide much opposition, because their numbers were pretty small.

Ritchie: Once again you were working for a freshman member of the minority party. What was it like to work under those circumstances?

Hildenbrand: It was easy. You didn't have nearly anything to do. You couldn't impact on anything. All you had to was worry about the votes, and we didn't have that many votes. So you really confined yourself a great deal to constituent services, which was

---

Boggs' strong suit anyway, so it was easy from our standpoint. But in terms of getting into deep issues of the world, we didn't get that involved.

Ritchie: Did you spend much time on the Senate floor?

Hildenbrand: I spent more than Boggs wanted me to spend, because I liked it. I enjoyed the floor. Having only about five or six letters a day to worry about, why I had nothing else to do, so I spent a lot of time over there. Boggs on occasion would get a little upset, because he knew I was spending a lot of time over there, couldn't understand why, because I couldn't do anything. And he was right. So I would go through periods of time when I would decide not to go over there as much. But it would always like a magnet draw me back, and I would wander back over there, until he'd get mad again, and then I'd lay off for a while. But I always was fascinated by what went on on the floor.

Ritchie: I've heard from some others that the best learning experience was sitting on those big couches . . .

Hildenbrand: In the back, yes. We spent a lot of time back on those couches. And I think that's true, I don't think there's any question that you can learn more sitting back there in one day than you can learn in six months not being there.

Ritchie: How did Boggs fit into the Republican network. He was a moderate. Did he fit in easily?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes, Boggs would fit in anyplace easily. He was like an old shoe, he was just comfortable. He was comfortable with most people. There wasn't hardly anybody he didn't like. You had to really be bad for him to not like you. So he fitted with everyone. And after the beginning of his first term, Mark Hatfield came in, and they had been governors together. Fritz Hollings came in in the middle, and they had been governors, and some of the others who were governors he knew. So that gave him a feeling of having some comrades that he knew and could relate to. He ran with the Hugh Scotts of the world, and the Jack Javits, and the Ken Keatings, and the Cliff Cases, and people like that in the early days. Although he was very friendly with the Francis Cases and the Roman Hruskas, and the others of a more conservative persuasion.

Ritchie: And Dirksen, did he get along with him?

Hildenbrand: Well, everybody got along with Dirksen. But here again, Dirksen was the Leader, and he didn't ever let anyone forget that he was the Leader. He would call you, don't call him, that kind of thing. So we didn't really have that much involvement in those days with the leadership. Boggs was a party person. They didn't have any trouble with him in terms of votes. He was going to vote pretty much the way the party wanted him to, unless he really had

some strong feelings. Then of course, he would leave the party on occasion, but most of the time he would stay pretty much with the party. And he tried to stay with John Williams as much as he could. He and John got along quite well. There was no animosity between the two of them, or between the offices.

Ritchie: They had very different interests, though.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. John was very big on the Finance Committee and very big on taxes. Boggs became an environmentalist, simply because we created the Air and Water Pollution Subcommittee in '62, and his ranking on the committee by that time -- [John Sherman] Cooper, for whatever reasons, gave the ranking minority membership to Cale. Ed Muskie was the chairman. So we became air and water pollution environmentalists. It gave us something to do other than just whatever we were doing.

Ritchie: I wanted to ask you about committee work. The reforms that allowed members to have staff on committees came along in the '70s. In the '60s, did the senator's own staff serve as his committee staff?

Hildenbrand: Yes. Unless you were chairman, you didn't have committee staff as they have it now. You didn't have a legislative assistant for every committee you served on. We were on Agriculture and Public Works in those days. I did both of those, knowing nothing

about either one. But there was only one legislative assistant. So you did that and you did the floor work. But even then, you weren't overtaxed doing that. Now you couldn't even begin to do it, but in those days it wasn't that hard.

Ritchie: Nowadays you go to a committee meeting and you see more staff than you see senators. The senators are all absent, and sitting behind their empty chairs are the staff. I gather that wasn't the way it was back then.

Hildenbrand: Not as much as now, although we did sit behind members, on Public Works as well as in the Agriculture Committee. The numbers were smaller, in terms of committee sizes. Now you're looking at eighteen to twenty members, and everyone's got a staff, plus the committee staff, you've got thirty people. But in those days we had a couple of people on the committee, and members would bring staff from time to time. Most members didn't bring staff. Members did not rely on staff as much then as they do now, because they had the time to study the

issues on their own. Now they either don't have the time or don't take the time, or a combination of both.

Ritchie: Committee staffs in those days were ostensibly non-partisan, professional. In some committees they claimed that it worked, and on other committees it clearly didn't. Did you find that committee staffs were helpful to the minority?

Hildenbrand: Yes. The Agriculture Committee was really a bipartisan committee. Agriculture is not necessarily a partisan issue, and so it was sort of easy for them to be that. Because of the relationship that Muskie and Boggs had, having both again been governors at the same time (Muskie was governor of Maine when Cale was governor), they knew each other and respected each other. So that staff had a tendency also to be sort of bipartisan in its application of things. But there were some other committees, you know, Foreign Relations for example, were there was no such thing as bipartisanship, even though the policy, foreign policy was supposedly bipartisan, the committee was not. Commerce was another one that was very partisan. And there were others like that. Labor was very partisan. Goldwater was ranking in those days, and that was a very, very partisan committee.

Ritchie: The Public Works Committee was chaired by Pat McNamara . . .

Hildenbrand: No, Dennis Chavez in the early days, and then Chavez died maybe in '63, and then Pat McNamara, and then he died.

Ritchie: Both of them I think of as partisan figures.

Hildenbrand: Chavez not as much as McNamara. McNamara coming out of Michigan was more used to partisanship than Chavez was coming out of New Mexico. There wasn't as strong Democrat feelings

---

politically in New Mexico as there was in Michigan. McNamara had been a plumber, steamfitter, something like that, and came out of the union movement, and was very partisan. But he only was there for two years, I guess, before he died. Then, I guess, Jennings Randolph became chairman, after Pat McNamara, and was chairman until 1981 when the majority changed.

Ritchie: But the subcommittee was independent, had its own staff?

Hildenbrand: Yes. [Ralph] Nader forced the creation of the committee, screaming about air pollution. He had been on seat belts, and he got tired of that and went into air pollution. So they decided, what the hell, maybe we ought to do something about it. So they decided they'd form a committee, and they made Muskie the chairman of it and called it the Subcommittee on Air and Water Pollution. It took off from there. We put the Clean Air Act together in '63, and then in '65 the Clean Water Act.

Ritchie: We're almost at 11:00 o'clock, and I want to ask more questions about those bills. So I think the best thing would be to stop now.

Hildenbrand: Yea!

Ritchie: But I'm having a great time. I'm really enjoying listening to this.

Hildenbrand: I'm delighted that you are. I'm glad somebody's having a good time.

[End of Interview #1]

Interview #2: With Caleb Boggs
(Thursday, March 28, 1985)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: I wanted to go back and talk about the Clean Air Act, which you mentioned before. That was the first big piece of legislation that you worked on, or at least Boggs was associated with it. I wondered if you could tell me about the type of work you did on that legislation, how you got started in the whole process.

Hildenbrand: Well, since he was ranking on the committee, and in those days, in the early '60s -- what was it? '63 maybe? I guess it was -- we did not have the legislative assistant support that members have now, where they have a legislative assistant separate for each committee on which they serve, plus a legislative shop that does all their other legislation. In those days, in small states like Delaware, we had a legislative assistant period. We were on three committees: Agriculture, Environment and Public Works, and Post Office and Civil Service. I did all three of those committees. Agriculture I didn't know anything about at all, and the other two I learned. When he became ranking on that subcommittee, I took on the full responsibility of doing whatever had to be done in terms of the legislation.

I did all of the Clean Air Act legislation along with the Democrats, in formulating it, in getting his positions, whatever they were, pretty well known within the committee. He and Muskie had been former governors at the same time, came from primarily the same size states, small states. While the air in Maine might have been a little better than it was in Delaware, we had portions of Delaware which also had pretty good air. So they thought pretty much alike in terms of what it was they wanted to do in terms of Clean Air legislation.

Ritchie: That was a pretty uncharted course. There really wasn't very much in the way of legislation before that. What did you do?

Hildenbrand: They had a lot of hearings, and brought in all of the groups that wanted to testify, and brought in all of the industries that would be affected, and tried to get some sort of a determination as to what impact it would have, and how would it affect them. How do we proceed? What do we cover? Do we do it at the smokestack? We talked about ambient air quality standards and air quality standards. Because we were not sophisticated at that time and because it was a new field, we went to sort of single air quality standards that were easily definable. We did not worry too much about the so-called ambient air, as to what total affect it would have in the atmosphere, because we really didn't know. We knew that

certain pollutants in parts per million would be dangerous either to somebody's health, or would soil clothes and do stuff like that.

We looked at it more in the situation of doing air quality standards rather than trying to do ambient air quality standards, because the air throughout the United States was different. What you might need as a standard in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, for example, which is heavy with oil refineries, in order to clean that up, you would need a totally different standard than you'd need in Vail, Colorado, for example, or even Denver. So to affix a national standard would have been totally unfair to the people in Maine, and Minnesota, and places like that that do not have the concentration of industry that a Marcus Hook had. We had to look at it in terms of devising standards that could be applied all over the country without causing problems. So we stayed away pretty much from a national standard for pollutants, because it just didn't make any sense.

Then, in addition to that, we began to fool around in the automobile exhaust areas, with carbon monoxide and those hydrocarbons, and here again we ran into the same kind of a situation, because in Los Angeles, because it's inverted, because it sits in a valley heavy with automobile pollution, whereas some other

places that had good circulation of air would not be faced with the same kind of problems, or did not have the amount of traffic. That was another problem that we had to look at in terms of establishing standards that would not

again be unrealistic in some areas, and would cost an awful lot of money to solve a problem that wasn't a problem. We made trips into Detroit and went through the plants to see the kind of things that they were working on to hold down pollution from their exhausts, and things like that.

Ritchie: Did you find it an educational experience?

Hildenbrand: In terms of environment I learned an awful lot about air and water pollution that I certainly didn't know before. I can't say that it stood me in good stead since that time, but it's a knowledge that I now have, even if I never use it.

Ritchie: Well, did you find that your views changed as you studied the issue?

Hildenbrand: No, not really. Basically my views were conservative in terms of applying government controls. I guess my political philosophy was based on Eisenhower's idea that government should only do for people what they cannot do for themselves. That's the way we sort of looked at this pollution thing: that we ought to involve ourselves in it, but at the same time we should not just try to take it over. Because we also realized that we could conceivably shut down plants, which would have cost countless jobs in given territories. In those days, a device which was called an electrostatic precipitator, which you put on the top of a smokestack in order to

control the pollutants coming out of a smokestack, cost a million dollars. They were made in Germany. So, if you sit there with a steel industry burning coke or soft coal, and you have eight or ten smokestacks, you've got ten million dollars invested which you can't get back. You're not going to make anything from it. We always tried to look and see whether there wasn't some way of taking the potash, or whatever it was that we were collecting in those electrostatic precipitators and reselling them into something else, but that was hard to do.

Ritchie: There was a lot of industry opposition, and I wondered, with Delaware being a state identified with the chemical industry, if you or Senator Boggs felt pressure from that industry?

Hildenbrand: Well, I think that they -- and maybe I'm treating them unfairly -- but I think that they believed that they could bring pressure to bear on Cale because the DuPont Company was a member of what was then called the Manufacturing Chemists Association. They sent to testify a DuPont employee, William Conners. He was the witness who came in on behalf of the chemical industry to testify. But he was a DuPont employee; he was a solid, rock-ribbed Republican; his wife was big in Republican state circles; he eventually became New Castle county executive. I never thought about it before, but in retrospect, looking back on it, maybe they thought that that was one way, if they brought in somebody from Delaware, to make the

---

presentation. But it was a very bad presentation, and as I indicated in a book that the Library of Congress wrote on the Clean Air Act, it was a very bad presentation, and I told the chemical industry in no uncertain terms how bad I thought it was. But, maybe they did; I don't know.

Ritchie: But Boggs wasn't the type of senator to bend to pressure?

Hildenbrand: No. Boggs had been under more pressure than they could conceivably think about bringing. The National Association for the Advancement of White People had its seeds in lower Delaware, and they fought him on the court order for desegregation of the school system. So he was used to pressures. And by that time he'd been governor for eight years and in the House for six. That's fourteen years. He knew all about pressure. It didn't bother him.

Senator Caleb Boggs (R-DE)
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: The interesting thing to me about the Clean Air Act was that in the House there was a lot of debate over it when it got to the floor, and a majority of Republicans in the House voted against it. In the Senate there was practically no debate. When it got to the floor they all stood up and said what a wonderful bill it was, and they adopted it by voice vote. Why was there such a difference?

Hildenbrand: I think that's a basic difference between the House and the Senate anyway. With a small number of people you have a tendency to trust your committee system, and trust the people that are on the committee. And you take a broader view of an issue. It's not quite as parochial, as it is if you're sitting, for example, as the congressman from Chester, Pennsylvania, and you've got nothing but that Marcus Hook staring you in the face, with all of that pollution -- and there's an awful lot of it in Marcus Hook. It's much harder to get 219 votes than it is 51. I think, if I remember, we went first with that bill. I think we passed it before the House passed it. Muskie was well respected; Boggs was well respected; the members of the committee were well respected. It was a reasonable approach for the first step in attempting to control air pollution, and I think that's why the Senate just decided it was a good piece of legislation.

Ritchie: I wondered if some of it had to do with Boggs' and Cooper's persuasion among Republican members of the Senate, since there was no Republican opposition, while it was strong in the House?

Hildenbrand: That may have been part of it. Both Cooper and Boggs were extremely well respected within party circles. But I just think it was a good piece of legislation. You couldn't find very much fault with it.

Ritchie: It was fairly impressive for Boggs as a freshman member, who had been in the Senate only two years, to be so involved in passing a major piece of legislation.

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: You mentioned Muskie briefly, as a well-respected man. What was your impression of him, working with him as a staff member?

Hildenbrand: Well, I became fairly close to Senator Muskie in those days. We worked together quite a lot. And still to this day we are good friends. We see each other on the golf course from time to time. He's always been one of my favorite people. I liked his staff, I was close to his staff. George Mitchell, who is now a senator from Maine, was his AA, so I knew George in those days. He was up-

front. You knew where you stood with Muskie at all times. There was nothing behind the back, or anything like that. You may not agree sometimes with him, but at least you knew where he was coming from. He'd listen to your side of the argument, and he'd just tell you it was the dumbest thing he ever heard, but at least you knew where he was. I enjoyed our relationship. And as I said, Cale and he had been governors together and they had a lot of respect for each other.

Ritchie: He also had a reputation for having a monumental temper.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and that grew as he became older. He became more and more frustrated, and was more apt to fly into temper tantrums than he did originally. I've seen him scream and holler, but not any more so than any number of other people. He did have a temper, but it didn't last very long.

Ritchie: All of this was taking place in the context of the Kennedy administration . . . .

Hildenbrand: The closing days of the Kennedy administration, that's right.

Ritchie: Although they didn't have a bill on Clean Air, they had endorsed Clean Air, and were interested in what was going on. But I wondered, from your perspective as a Republican staff member at that time, what you thought about the Kennedy administration's congressional relations?

Hildenbrand: Well, I thought then -- although I must admit, I did not know how to evaluate congressional relations. I had only been with Cale for three years in the Senate, and while I had been a congressional liaison officer, I didn't necessarily know that the way I acted was the way you were supposed to act. And I certainly didn't know about White House liaison. So I'm not sure that at that time I

---

thought very much about the administration and its relationships with the Congress. Since I now have twenty-seven years or so to look back on, they probably, along with Lyndon Johnson, had the most expertise in dealing with the Congress. But there is one other factor, I think, that has to be put into that in order that it doesn't sound as if everybody that came after that were dodos, because that's not the case. There was not the animosity and the adversarial atmosphere between the Congress and the White House that exists today, and that began to exist from the days of the Haldemans and the Ehrlichmans of the early Nixon days. That presented a totally different atmosphere in dealing with Congress.

While in looking back, the Kennedy and Johnson people I thought were outstanding, there were others in later years who were also outstanding in the job, but the atmosphere had changed by that time. Dan Tate from the Carter administration was one of the better ones. Max Friedersdorf was outstanding. But they were dealing from a different deck than the Bryce Harlows of the Eisenhower days, Kenny O'Donnell, Mike Manatos in the Johnson days. It was a different atmosphere. Lyndon Johnson would call up Everett Dirksen and say, "Ev, I'm coming up." And he'd show up in Dirksen's back room and sit down and have a drink, with that big, ugly dog that he had, and the Secret Service people. Well, Nixon never thought of doing anything like that. So the atmosphere changed.

Ritchie: Both Kennedy and Johnson came out of the Senate . . . .

Hildenbrand: So did Nixon.

Ritchie: But Kennedy was so frustrated in his dealings with Congress. He wanted to move, and as you said the Congress was deliberative, slow, took its time. He just couldn't get it to start.

Hildenbrand: A lot of that was youth. With youth there's always an impatience, and I think that this was Jack's. He was young, and he had such great ideas for moving this country, and he just became very impatient. The Old Bulls up here could not see what it was he wanted to do. They weren't used to that kind of pace. They weren't used to having somebody move that fast. He was younger than most of them, and so they just wanted to take their time to make sure that whatever he was doing it was the right thing to do.

Ritchie: Do you think that members of the Senate have difficulty in adjusting to one of their colleagues becoming president? Is it harder for them to accept another senator as president than a general or a governor?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I don't think so. Those who liked him still like him. Those who didn't like him don't like him anymore because he's president than if he was just a senator. I don't think it has any impact one way or the other.

Ritchie: Things after 1963 changed very quickly. A lot of legislation that had been bottled up for two or three years was passed in a huge rush in '64 and '65.

Hildenbrand: The early days of the Johnson presidency.

Ritchie: Did it seem like an avalanche from your view?

Hildenbrand: No, not really. Of course it began to change with Johnson's going into the presidency, with Barry Goldwater running, and what became a strong conservative-liberal fight. That permeated into the activities on the floor. What really got the legislation moving as fast as it did was the fact that we lost so very many members. If I remember, I'm going to have to look this up, but I think we were down to like 32 senators in '65. You look at 68-32, we couldn't even stop cloture! I mean, if 68 Democrats wanted to stop a filibuster, they could do it. They moved it because they had the votes to move it. There was no way we could stop it. It wasn't until the election of '66 we picked up four or five more seats and got to at least a point where we could wage a filibuster and they couldn't stop it. But in those days, that's what happened more than anything else. Also there was a feeling that this man has taken over in such tragic times, and in such tragic circumstances, we don't really want to add to his burden by not trying to help him with his legislative program.

Ritchie: You mentioned when Johnson would come to Dirksen's office. Did you or Boggs ever get to see or feel the "Johnson treatment?"

Hildenbrand: No. You know, there are all sorts of stories and rumors about Johnson, and about how Johnson treated people when he was majority leader as well as when he was president. But I don't ever remember us being involved in anything. By that time we were small potatoes. They didn't bother with Republicans, and certainly not first-term Republicans.

Ritchie: You mentioned earlier that you were involved in the Civil Rights Act of '64, and Boggs came out in support of it.

Hildenbrand: '65.

Ritchie: Well, the Voting Rights Act was in '65.

Hildenbrand: Or whenever it was. I wasn't involved in the ones in '64 and '65 as much as I was in the one of '70, which was when I was in the leader's office with Scott. He was on Judiciary, and he and Phil Hart had the counter bill to John Mitchell's bill. I was much more involved in that.

Our involvement -- Cale Boggs' position on civil rights was well known because he was governor, as I said, at the time of the Supreme Court decision in 1954, when they desegregated schools, and he

applied that throughout the state of Delaware. So his views were well known in terms of civil rights, and he did not take a very active part. He just voted whenever the bill came up for passage.

Ritchie: Republican support was really critical for the '64 act. Dirksen swung over behind it, and William McCullough in the House, and Thomas Kuchel was a major force behind it.

Hildenbrand: Who was the Whip at that time.

Ritchie: Yes. And yet Goldwater voted against the bill in '64. Since he was going to be the party's presidential candidate, did that undermine the Republicans' identification with the passing of that bill?

Hildenbrand: No, because the ones that we've mentioned, the Kuchels and the Boggs' of the world, and the Jack Javits' and the Ken Keatings, were people that were going to stand for civil rights. Goldwater was not their leader, and so it didn't make any difference to them what he did, or what his position was. They realized that the conservatives had taken over the party and were trying to establish their own programs, and it certainly wasn't their program. It was a wedge that was driven into the party, in so far as the Senate was concerned that lasted for a long, long time, until the [Louis] Wyman-[John] Durkin debates of 1974 before it finally healed. But it was there a long time.

Ritchie: Why do you think the Wyman-Durkin debate healed it?

Hildenbrand: Mainly because it was so outlandish that they [the Democrats] would not seat this guy, it went on for three months, that the Republicans stood together as a party and as a group of senators in opposition to cloture, so that they [the Democrats] could not get a vote. Cliff Case and Jack Javits, who had never in their lives voted against cloture, stood there time after time after time and voted against cloture. The Democrats kept going back with cloture because they believed that sooner or later Javits and Case would just decide they could not vote against cloture any longer, but it never happened. I think that when they did that, they stayed together so long and the Democrats could not do anything, that they realized that if they stayed together as a party that they became a very vital force within the Senate.

From that time on, if you look at the effectiveness of the minority, you will find that it was effective. [Howard] Baker gets a great deal of credit for that, as he should, but also he traded on the seeds that had been generated in '74 when the

Republicans suddenly figured out that "Hey, we stay together we can do a lot of things." So they did. But from '64 until that time there were almost two wings of our party every time there was a vote, and the Democrats could always count on that. The Democrats would lose a lot

---

of their Southern Democrats, but they could always pick up a block of seven to ten Republicans, always.

Ritchie: Even the Republican leadership was divided, in the sense that Dirksen represented the conservative side and Kuchel represented the liberal wing.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and was defeated by a conservative, as a matter of fact.

Ritchie: Rafferty.

Hildenbrand: Max Rafferty, exactly.

Ritchie: Could you tell me about your observations of Dirksen and Kuchel as leaders?

Hildenbrand: Dirksen was -- I did not know him too well. I knew him the last nine months of his life more than I did in any other time, because by that time we had become Whip. He wasn't very happy that we had become Whip, but he at least recognized who we were. He never knew who we were before, but at least he could say hello to you. He didn't do that too often, but he could if he wanted to. Prior to that time, he was the silver-throated orator of that body and I can remember anytime we knew that Everett Dirksen was going to make a speech, why those couches in the back of the chamber were always filled. In those days they allowed you to sit on the floor,

---

so we used to come over and sit on the floor and listen to him. It was a great thing to hear him speak. He was probably the last of the orators that we'll see -- in that chamber, certainly -- with the kind of style that he had. There may be people that are very good at public speaking, but there's never going to be anybody that's going to come close to the theater that Dirksen brought to that chamber whenever he made his speeches.

He was conservative, but at the same time he wanted to do what was right for the country. His Civil Rights vote, I think, proved that. That was not a popular, conservative position that he took. But nevertheless he felt that it was right. If I remember, he said that it was an idea whose time has come. He believed it. Then

his son-in-law got elected in 1966. The first crack out of the box, the first thing that came down the track, his son-in-law went against him on "One Man One Vote." You know, Dirksen lived and died against "One Man One Vote," and Howard Baker just came out flat on the opposite side of that issue. But it never bothered Dirksen. He understood those kinds of things.

Kuchel always was in the shadow of Dirksen. Kuchel was a nice guy. Always liked to tell funny stories, and always was telling jokes. He was a little bit like John Pastore from Rhode Island, in that he always wanted to get the vote over with. He could not put up with all these long-winded speeches. He'd sit there and under his

---

breath you could hear him mumble: "Vote! Vote!" It was quite a loss when he was defeated by Rafferty. From the liberal to moderate wing of the party, they lost a good champion.

Ritchie: How would you define the Whip's role, and the way Kuchel and others filled it?

Hildenbrand: The Whip's role is whatever the leader wants it to be. The Republican Conference rules do not spell out any defined role for the Whip, other than to say it's whatever the leader wants it to be. You've had different types of Whips. Dirksen liked the floor, liked to spend time on the floor, but at the same time gave a lot of it over to Kuchel. Scott, when he became leader, didn't really like the floor. He liked legislation and those kinds of things, but he didn't like the nitty-gritty of floor business, so Bob Griffin spent a lot of time on the floor and did a lot of the floor activities for the leadership: the nitty-gritty things, the consent agreements, open the session and close it, all those kinds of things. Scott didn't like it. He just liked to go down to his office and page through his catalog of Chinese art, jade and stuff like that.

Senators Hugh Scott (R-PA) and Everett Dirksen (R-IL)
Senate Historical Office

When Baker came along, he was somewhat like Dirksen: he liked the floor and he wanted to spend a lot of time there. And he did, so Ted Stevens was relegated to a role of not having much to do. Then when Baker became majority leader he really spent a lot of time on the floor because while he had learned how to be the minority leader,

now he had to learn all over again how to be majority leader. So there again he took over a great deal of time on the floor, and Stevens again was relegated to being somebody who would close or open, whenever Baker couldn't be here. It won't go down in history: "He was a great Whip." I don't know what a great Whip is. And the Democrats changed theirs periodically. [Edward] Kennedy took it away from [Russell] Long, and then two years later [Robert] Byrd took it away from him. So there was no rhyme or reason for the Whip. Whip was just something that if you had a conservative leader, and if you had enough votes, you got yourself a moderate Whip. It didn't make any difference because he didn't have any impact on the leader anyway.

Ritchie: I wondered how much grumbling there was in the party ranks when someone like Kuchel would fairly consistently take positions that were against the majority of members of his party?

Hildenbrand: Oh, the conservatives would grumble. They thought that you ought to vote the way the leadership wanted you to vote. But they didn't have the votes to do anything about it. They didn't have anybody else. [Roman] Hruska was Dirksen's hand-picked successor as Whip, but if Kuchel had not lost they

would never have tried to challenge Kuchel, because they could not have won. Kuchel was doing a good job. The fact that he voted on positions -- nobody said that you have to take a vow of absolute party loyalty when you

---

become Whip. They understood that he represented California and that he couldn't very well vote the same way you voted in Nebraska or in the Dakotas.

Ritchie: Is the position of leader as flexible as the position of Whip? Does the personality make the job, or does the job carry definitions with it?

Hildenbrand: I think the job carries definitions with it. I think that you have a responsibility in the leader's role that you don't have, certainly, in the Whip role. You have first a responsibility to your president, if he happens to be of your same party. That causes some problems from a leadership standpoint, because many times your own personal political philosophies are in contradiction to the policies of the president. But as Dirksen would say, and as Baker after him would say: you go in there understanding that, and you're a good soldier. When you find yourself in a situation where you just cannot be the leader under those circumstances, you do what Baker did in the Panama Canal debate, you just step down and let Paul Laxalt carry the debate in opposition to the treaties, and work behind the scenes with Bob Byrd to fashion a compromise that could be passed.

Hugh Scott, when he was minority leader, voted against [Clement] Haynsworth, when Haynsworth first came up. He made a commitment to the president that whoever the next one was, he'd vote for him. It

---

turned out the next one was even worse than Haynsworth. We found out about it, and Don Riegel and Paul McCloskey came over to see me from the House. They said: "You have got to get him to change. We've got to beat this guy. You cannot let Scott out there saying he's in favor of this guy." I told them what Scott told me to tell them, and that was "Look, he made a commitment to the president of the United States, to his face, that he would support the nominee. And he's going to do it. I don't care if he raped his grandmother, he's going to support him." And he did. So there is that kind of thing.

And if you are the majority leader, in Baker's case, you now have even added burdens, because in addition to the White House you've got all of the committee

chairmen who are yours and who want their bills scheduled today -- or yesterday, if you could get it done. You don't have much of a life of your own in that leadership role. You have so many people pulling at you to do so many things, and you're responsible to so many people.

Ritchie: How much does the leader actually exert leadership, in the sense of trying to shape the Conference?

Hildenbrand: Well, that depends on who the leader is. Scott, because he came from a wing of the party that was minority, did not have as much of an impact in shaping things as say maybe Dirksen did. It would be unfair to try to class Baker with any of them, because they were never majority leader. So it's unfair -- I don't

---

know what kind of a majority leader Hugh Scott would have been. My guess is he'd have been pretty much the same kind of a leader as Howard Baker, because for all of his liberal tendencies, he was greatly respected. He was a gentleman to the very end. Everybody respected him, although they may not have liked his views.

He gave Dick Russell a pair when Russell was sick or something, on a Civil Rights issue. John Stennis, who had been a roommate of his at Virginia Law School, came to him and asked him if he could give Dick Russell a pair, and he did. It was 1960, I guess. Was there a Civil Rights Act in '60? On some issue he gave Dick Russell the pair, and the conservative Southern senators, Democrats, never forgot that Hugh Scott had done that for one of their own -- particularly their guru, as Dick Russell was in those days. They always remembered that, and he got a lot of things down the line, as he became more and more prominent, from the Southern Democrats that he might not have gotten, just from the fact that he had done that for Dick Russell, which they knew was against everything that he stood for, because of his own views. So he might have been a good majority leader, but since none of them ever served in the majority it's hard to classify them. You have to take Baker out of that mix because he was majority leader.

Ritchie: It sounds like you are saying that the personal qualities outweigh the ideological factors.

Hildenbrand: Oh yes. I don't think you can be a very strong ideologue and be a good leader. Your own views are going to get all mixed up in all of these things that you have to involve yourself in. That would tear the party apart, and you apart, and everybody else apart. I don't know if there is any way you can do that.

Ritchie: How much more difficult is the party leader's job now when party loyalty doesn't seem to be a strong as it once was?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I think it's much more difficult now than it was in those days. In the first instance, you have individuals now, more than party loyalists. In the days of the late '50s and the '60s it was a party-oriented group of members, except for a couple of members. They had party positions, and they took those party positions. Now, on any given piece of legislation, it fragments itself. One day you may have a guy who's your party loyalists, and the next day he may be totally off the reservation.

Baker, probably more so than anybody -- well, as I say, it's probably unfair to classify the rest of them, because they didn't have the same problem -- but he managed to keep that group together. He did it mainly on trying to get them to do it for the party or for the president. And also he was the kind of a person that they respected and that they would do things like that for. But now it's difficult to be a leader, because you don't have any control. There's nothing you can do to anybody. If they tell you to go to hell, what are you

---

going to do to them? Take away their committee assignments? Of course you can't. You have nothing to do to them. Only thing you can do is persuade them that they ought to do what you think is the right thing. That's where Baker was very, very good. His powers of persuasion were absolutely excellent.

Ritchie: We've been talking about the Republican leaders all this time. I wondered if you could give me an evaluation of Mike Mansfield as the Democratic leader?

Hildenbrand: Mike was so much different than Lyndon Johnson in every respect. He came from a different part of the country. He was mild-mannered. His background -- he'd been a history professor. He just treated people totally different than Lyndon Johnson did. He was a strong leader. My guess is he was as strong as Lyndon Johnson, but he wasn't as flamboyant as Lyndon Johnson. What he got done, he got done in a different way, but he got it done. I think he was greatly respected on both sides of the aisle. His word was his bond, and he would never go out and try to do something to you for a political gain. He might do something because he believed in it, or because his party wanted him to do it, but you always knew where he was coming from. He had great respect for the institution and for every member of the institution, even though I'm sure there were some he didn't like at all. He said it so many times on the floor, he said:

3 "I'm just one of a hundred senators, and everybody here has the same rights I have." He used to say that all the time -- he believed it.

Ritchie: You mentioned that he was respected on both sides of the aisle. I gather that he had close friends among Republicans. He and George Aiken used to be very close. Apparently he was able to persuade a lot of Republicans to vote with him. Do you think by comparison with other Democratic leaders, would you say that he more respect from the Republican side, or was it about the same?

Hildenbrand: Yes, I guess that he would, but then here again you must remember the times were beginning to change in the closing days of Mansfield's tenure. When Byrd became leader it was a different Senate than when Mansfield left. The membership was different, the leadership was different. Mansfield and Scott got along exceptionally well, as did Mansfield and Dirksen. It was a different atmosphere; Watergate was behind us, and all of that business. But he knew where the votes on our side were. From a philosophical standpoint, he knew exactly where our people were on given issues. He would play upon those.

He was, as you said, a good friend of George Aiken's. They had breakfast in the Senate cafeteria. When I was with Caleb Boggs, they used to sit at the next table. They sat there for years, until it got written up in the papers. It got to the point where lobbyists and people like that would go down there, because they knew the two

of them would be there, with Lola [Aiken]. So they got smart and started to meet then in the Senators' Dining Room in the Capitol. For the last seven or eight years, I guess, they had breakfast every morning in the Senators' Dining Room, and that stopped the business of people bothering them. But that was worth your weight -- you could have sold that to almost anybody if you were able to sit next to the two and hear what was going on at breakfast. Lobbyists would have been quite surprised to find out it had not a damn thing to do about legislation most of the time. But he and George were very, very close, as he was with some of the others on our side of the aisle.

Ritchie: That certainly doesn't stand with the stereotypes that many people have of political leaders fighting against each other all of the time.

Hildenbrand: Mansfield was a partisan, but he wasn't reared in politics. It wasn't his life. He didn't live and die in the political arena. He had those basic Democratic tenants, but beyond that why he was just like everybody else. In terms of getting things done, he was an institutional man. And he also had a deep

feeling for his country. He was in a safe seat. Nobody was ever going to beat him in Montana, so it didn't make a damn bit of difference what he did.

Ritchie: From '61 to '64 the Democratic Whip was Hubert Humphrey. He was the Democratic floor leader for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and took the lead in a lot of issues . . . .

Hildenbrand: And that was also Mansfield's decision. He stepped aside to let Humphrey do that, because he was not totally comfortable, I think, with leading that kind of a fight. And I think he also recognized that Humphrey, who had lived and died Civil Rights from the time he was mayor, would do a much better job.

Ritchie: What was your evaluation of Humphrey, as a senator and as Whip?

Hildenbrand: Well, he had the flamboyance of an Everett Dirksen. If the two of them had been leader at the same time it would have been something to behold, because he was every bit as vocal and every bit as good on his feet as Everett Dirksen was. Their philosophies were May and December. He was "hale fellow well met." He had an exuberance about him at all times. We went to Russia one time on a trip in '75, I guess, when he had come back to the Senate. About thirteen members went over to meet with the Russians. We went to the Hall of the People, or whatever it was, in Russia where they hold all these things. When we came out from a morning meeting -- we had about two meetings a day, a morning meeting and then we'd break for lunch -- when we came out there were a whole raft of people on the sidewalk across the street from where we came

---

out of the Kremlin. Hubert went right across the street and started to shake hands with every one of them as if they were going to vote for him the next time he ran for reelection. He always was campaigning, no matter where he went. He never stopped campaigning.

Ritchie: Does that tend to diminish a senator, in the eyes of his fellow senators, if he seems to be campaigning constantly?

Hildenbrand: He did it in such good grace that nobody ever got mad at him. You know, there were cat calls and jeers from the other members: "There he is out campaigning." "Hubert, they can't vote for you!" Hubert just laughed and they all laughed. They had a good time. It didn't bother anybody. He really was extremely well liked in the Senate, if you get beyond the views which he espoused, which were pretty liberal, certainly for most Republicans.

Ritchie: Humphrey had a much more ideological image than Mansfield did. Did that create more of a barrier between him and the minority?

Hildenbrand: No. Here again, everybody knew where Hubert Humphrey was coming from. He made no bones about where he was. He had a long track record, so everybody knew where Hubert would be on almost every given issue. Again, he was well liked. Where members have a tendency to get in trouble along those lines is that if their personalities are such that they're not well liked by other members,

---

then they run into trouble when they begin to espouse views and pass legislation. Members just sort of take them on simply because they don't like them. Whereas, with Hubert Humphrey, everybody liked Hubert Humphrey. If you opposed him, you didn't do it with a great deal of fervor. You just voted no and that was the end of it. You didn't really get up there and try to embarrass him, or anything like that.

Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) shares a laugh with Kenneth Keating (R-NY)
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: Can you give me an example of the type of senator who is ideological but unliked?

Hildenbrand: I don't know that I want to. I won't name any names, but there are some senators -- on both sides of the aisle, as a matter of fact -- who will lose

votes simply because they offer an amendment. I don't care what the amendment does. When I was on the floor, and was in the leadership, and somebody would come on the floor and ask what was going on, I merely had to say "It's so-andso's amendment," and some of the members would never ask any more than that. They'd just say no. They didn't have to know anything beyond that. On the Republican side there are people that are in that same kind of a category. Whether it's personality, whether it's because they think they want to be something that they're not, or are only doing this to embarrass somebody, or whatever the reasons, there just are some members that other members will just not support

---

anything they introduce. They could put up the Ten Commandments and they'd vote against them if it was somebody's amendment.

Ritchie: But Humphrey's endorsement of a bill wasn't enough to convince somebody to vote against it.

Hildenbrand: No. But Humphrey was so strong from a philosophy standpoint, and everybody knew his philosophy so well, that if you voted against it because it was Hubert Humphrey's, you voted against it not because it was Hubert but because you knew damn well that if Humphrey put it up it was a bad amendment from your philosophical standpoint. As far as Hubert himself, they liked him. It was just his philosophy they didn't like.

Ritchie: I was thinking again of the Civil Rights Act, and the fact that he was able to work so closely with Dirksen on that. He must have learned how to bend at some point, or at least make some people think he was bending.

Hildenbrand: And the same was true of Dirksen. Here again, when Dirksen made the decision, Humphrey was the consummate politician and he knew exactly how to take advantage of Everett's decision to go ahead and support Civil Rights. He also knew that it would be very difficult for some Republicans to now take a different position than their leader had taken. That's the way that worked.

Ritchie: In a book on the Civil Rights Act I came across a statement that Boggs made that the fact that Dirksen supported the bill made it a lot easier for him and other Republicans to cast their votes for it.

Hildenbrand: Oh, I don't think there's any question about that. In those days, Goldwater had just been defeated . . . .

Ritchie: No, the campaign was just getting started.

Hildenbrand: It was just getting started. But Dirksen was the darling of the conservatives within the Senate, so when he took that kind of position it made it extremely hard for the others to take a different position. For somebody like a Boggs, who wanted to be there anyway, it got the conservatives off his back. They couldn't be screaming at him for voting for Civil Rights. He'd say: "Well, Dirksen did it, what do you want to do about that?" And Cale was also looking in two years when he was going to have to run for reelection. He had had opposition in the '56 campaign from the conservative side of his party, when he ran for a second term for governor. I think that in a way he was looking at that possibility and he realized that while he would never have not voted for the Civil Rights bill, he realized that this sure made it a lot easier for him from that standpoint.

Ritchie: Delaware went big, as everybody else did, for Johnson in '64. Did Boggs begin to worry that that was going to carry over into '66?

Hildenbrand: No, because they went for Kennedy in '60 and he won in '60 when Kennedy carried the state. That was the first time a Democrat had carried it since the turn of the century. He withstood that, so he wasn't concerned. He was running at a time when there was no president to have to worry about. Cale always worried. Cale was a born worrier. His approval rating was 82 percent and he figured he was in trouble. He just ran scared all the time, which is good. That's why he won as big as he won.

Ritchie: Did you work in his '66 campaign?

Hildenbrand: Yes. I spent three months I guess in Delaware during that time. It was a much easier campaign than the '60 campaign. In the '60 campaign we spent $18,000 to get elected. In the '66 campaign we spent $30,000 to get reelected. And I paid off every debt the morning after the election. We did not owe a cent the morning after the election. But it only cost us $30,000. I think in the losing effort that he ran in '72 against Joe Biden, he spent over $100,000. So the cost of campaigning had gone up that much.

Ritchie: Mostly television costs?

Hildenbrand: No, because we don't have any television, unless you buy Philadelphia or Salisbury, Maryland. We bought some of that, but not a great deal. The most effective thing that we did in that '66 campaign was the *Life* magazine ad. *Life* magazine, which was very popular in those days, came up with

-- somebody in their advertising department figured out a way that they could sell *Life* magazine regionally. What they did then was they sold advertisements that were aimed at just this. I don't remember how we found out about it, but somebody came to us and for $500 we got a full page in *Life* magazine that looked like a story that they were doing on Caleb Boggs. You had to go way down to the bottom to find: "This is a paid political advertisement." We had more people commenting about this: "Did you see Boggs? He's in *Life* magazine." Well, you know, it was a paid ad. He won by 32,000 votes, something like that. He had no trouble in that '66 campaign at all.

Ritchie: When you came back you were still working for Boggs. Did you expect that you would stay with him in his second term? There was never any question . . . .

Hildenbrand: There was never any question that I would not stay with him. I had not begun to look around for possibilities. He had not made a decision about what he was going to do in '72. We had just gotten out of the reelection campaign and were beginning to put things together. He wanted to get on the Appropriations Committee.

He had some things that he now wanted to do. I had no thoughts about leaving him at that particular point. Then he made a decision, maybe in '68 or somewhere in there that he wasn't going to run. He decided he didn't want to run again.

About that same time he became the campaign manager for Hugh Scott to run for Whip. So when Scott got elected, I happened to be in the Dirksen Building in a line waiting to sign the register and go in to a reception for Mac Mathias, who had just been elected in that '68 election from Maryland. Mac and I had been friends since 1954 when he was the district attorney up in Frederick, Maryland, and I was a program director of the radio station up there, so we knew each other from that period of time. I went to the reception, and I was standing behind Gene Cowan, who was Scott's AA. Cowan said: "You know, we're looking for somebody to head up the Whip office." I said: "How about me?" He said: "You're kidding, of course."

I said: "No. I'm thinking of making a change, and I would be interested in doing something like that." He said: "Well, Scott would never go for that. Christ, Boggs was his campaign manager." He said: "If Boggs will call Scott and tell him it's OK, we'd like to talk to you." So I went back and told Cale. Cale said: "Sure." He picked up the phone right away and called Scott and said he had no problems. They interviewed me, and decided they wanted me to come with the Whip. So that's how I got over to the Capitol.

Ritchie: I wondered how you made the change.

Hildenbrand: If I hadn't stood in that line, I don't know what I'd be doing now. I'd probably be unemployed.

Ritchie: It pays to go to receptions.

Hildenbrand: I guess so. But that's how I got there.

Ritchie: Had you worked at all in Scott's campaign?

Hildenbrand: Yes, because Boggs was so involved. Why, then I got involved too.

Ritchie: I was going to ask you how that campaign worked. It's sort of surprising even looking back on it now that Scott won. I would think that the numbers would have favored the conservative candidate.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but here again, as we found in later races, you get into a situation where personalities play a very major part in some of those things. You're never going to be able to make your philosophy the philosophy of the members, or vice versa, and they know that. So whatever you are philosophically, they're not that concerned that you're going to bastardize them, or anything like that. But Dirksen had made such a point of hand-picking Hruska that everybody recognized that he was being picked to be Dirksen's successor. Dirksen was sick and everybody knew that Dirksen was sick.

We had no idea that he would die in nine months, but we knew that he was not well. He made no bones that he wanted Hruska to be the next minority leader. Some of the members said, you know, he ain't pickin' his successor. We're going to vote whenever that time comes, but he's not going to tell us that we've got to make Hruska Whip so that Hruska automatically becomes leader. So they voted against him. I think Dirksen was more surprised than almost anybody else that it turned out that way. But that basically was the problem. It wasn't a philosophical one so much as it was that the ties were so close that they just wanted some independence. The way to do that was to vote for Scott. They figured what the hell, if we don't like it we can vote him out in two more years, no big deal.

Ritchie: I wondered how much the party image entered into it? The leader was going to be the spokesman on television and things like that.

Hildenbrand: Well, maybe to some degree. But television wasn't even as big in '69 as it is now in terms of image. Image wasn't as great then as it is now. But that might have been some of it. And it might have been some that we needed some balance within the party. Nixon had just been elected. He was not certainly a Goldwater conservative, so members thought that maybe we ought to get some balance. Scott presented that kind of balance.

Ritchie: Did Hruska rub some people wrong as well?

Hildenbrand: I don't really know that much about his part of it. We were just involved in our own side of it. I could see where Roman might do that, but I don't know that he did.

Ritchie: What does it entail, being a campaign manager or floor manager for a candidate in a party caucus? What types of things would Boggs do to try to promote Scott's candidacy?

Hildenbrand: Talk to members, spend a lot of time talking to members. Of course, we talked to staff and things like that, and he talked to members. He'd talk to a member and the member would say, "Well, you know, I'm thinking about it." Maybe I can do that." Then he'd send Scott to talk to him. Scott always took the position when we ran -- we ran against Baker twice, we ran '69 the first time and beat him and then again in '71 -- both times when we took out our list and started to go down it, unless Scott had talked to that senator and that senator had said "Scott, I'll vote for you," we would not put him down. So we went in to both of those meetings we knew exactly how many votes we had. As it turned out, we had one more in both instances. Somebody lied to somebody, I don't know who it was, but we got one more vote than we'd ever counted for in both cases. But we knew exactly where those votes were. He had all the faith in the world that if a guy looked at him in the face and said "I'm going to vote for you," he had no problems with putting him down on the list. That's pretty much the way he ran his own races, so he knew

---

pretty much before they had that vote that he had the votes to beat Hruska. Hruska didn't know it, but he did.

Ritchie: You can't always count on that, though, because Teddy Kennedy walked into the Democratic Conference thinking he had enough votes.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but you don't know how Teddy Kennedy got those votes. Unless you tell me that Teddy Kennedy spoke to every one of those people, then

I'll say that something's up. But if Teddy Kennedy just let his staff, or let some friends or something like that say "Oh, I think he's going to be with you," that doesn't do it. Baker thought he had the votes too, but he did exactly the same thing. He had staff running around, and other members running around, and that don't do it. It's easy to lie to a staff person. It's hard to lie to another member.

Ritchie: Is it that it's hard to lie, or that you lose some of your credibility in the institution if you go against your word?

Hildenbrand: Well, in a secret ballot you couldn't ever tell who it was anyway. It wouldn't make that much difference, but I guess if you had a friend who had been a friend all of your life, and you didn't want him to be leader, you're not going to sit there and tell him you're going to vote against him. Most people aren't, I guess. Some people would. You say, "Oh, yeah, you're a good buddy,

---

and I'd be happy to support you." But in that secret ballot you're never going to know who it was. Griffin always felt that he was lied to, when Baker beat him by one vote, but he'll never prove it.

Ritchie: There's not very much a candidate can offer in return, is there, running for Whip?

Hildenbrand: You can't promise anything, there's nothing. Even in the case of the leader, in our particular case, simply because of the way our rules are written. Except for the select committees and the boards and the commissions, you can't promise them anything. Byrd, in his situation, can say to you: "I'm going to put you on the Finance Committee." And he can do it, because he holds the Steering Committee in the palms of his hands: it's his Steering Committee. Baker can't do that. We've got a Committee on Committees, and we go by seniority, and we can't give you a damn thing.

Ritchie: Is that just a historical development, or does the party very consciously keep power divided?

Hildenbrand: It's been that way as long as I can remember. In looking back through the minutes that I looked through, back when they began to keep minutes, it's always been based on seniority. Until Scott became leader we never had what I called "shared leadership." Dirksen was the leader, and that was it. But when Scott came in, because he was a minority leader, because philosophically his

party was not the same as he was, so he was leading a group of people who did not agree with him philosophically, he went out of his way to share that leadership and to bring people into the councils, to make the decisions so that they became a part of it. He put that kind of leadership group together, and then Baker just continued it. Dirksen made his own decisions, he didn't worry about anybody else. There wasn't any leadership, so far as he was concerned, except him.

Ritchie: You wound up working for a senator from your home state . . . .

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: Having started out with a Delaware senator, you came back to Pennsylvania. Had you known Scott very well? He was on the Public Works Committee, wasn't he?

Hildenbrand: Yes, back in the early days. I got to know Hugh Scott, and the reasons I think that we became friends -- two reasons: one, he knew I was from Pennsylvania, and he knew Cale Boggs, of course. Many times on the floor, if his LA wasn't around or anything on a given issue, he would talk with me, because I knew enough about Pennsylvania that I knew the impact of whatever it was on Pennsylvania. He always used to call me his unpaid legislative assistant. Then in 1964, before he got ready to run, he was being torn apart by Medicare -- medical care for the aged. It was a big issue.

He was sympathetic to it, but he didn't particularly like the bills that were coming over from the House, or the proposals of Lyndon Johnson's. I had been at HEW, and I had been involved in Eisenhower's proposal for medicare for the aged in the late '50s. So I took a part of that, with somebody else's help, and we put together a bill which he introduced and which he used throughout his campaign as his answer to medicare for the aged. So he sent me a set of glasses with a note to thank me for doing that. We knew each other, to that degree.

Ritchie: He was obviously someone that you felt comfortable working for.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes, because philosophically Boggs may have been a little more conservative than Scott, but that's because Scott came from Philadelphia and Boggs came from Delaware. But their voting records would not be that far apart. Boggs may vote for a few less spending things than Scott, but otherwise they would be pretty much together.

Ritchie: Could you give me a general characterization of Hugh Scott?

Hildenbrand: Affable. Somebody called him urbane. Witty. Tremendous mind. Very, very articulate. Very much a gentleman. Live and died with positions that he had to take; anguished over

---

things which had a bearing on the country or on people in the country. Word was his bond; if he made it he stayed with it, and it made no difference what the situation was. It was a fascinating period in my life, working with him. He had such great respect among both Democrats as well as Republicans. He took an awful beating around the head and shoulders over Vietnam, and over the Nixon Watergate thing. It was a terrible time for him, a terrible part of his life during that period of time, because his sympathies were maybe other than the positions that he took relative to Vietnam, Cambodia, but he stayed there like a good soldier and fought those fights, and did the same in Watergate till they lied to him. Then it sort of came apart. And he never knew that they lied to him. When they went out that December afternoon and gave him those transcripts, he did not know that there was a piece of that transcript missing. He went on the basis of what they gave him, and he made all of his statements on that basis. It turned out, he was lied to. As Goldwater stood up in the policy luncheon one day and said, "Nixon has lied to me for the last time," just before he went down and told him to get out.

Ritchie: I'd like to spend the next time talking about the Hugh Scott period, but I have one last question, not to forget about Caleb Boggs even after you left his office. How in the world did Caleb Boggs manage to get defeated in 1972?

Hildenbrand: Cale made a decision not to run. The powers in the state -- the governor and the mayor (who was Hal Haskell, my first boss) -- got together and said: look, we can keep the governorship, you can get reelected, but we have to have you at the top of the ticket. He'd already said he wasn't going to run. He changed his mind and said OK, I'll run. His heart wasn't in it. In July of the election year, he did not have one billboard up in that state. So the Democrats let it be known that Cale Boggs was only running so that he could keep the seat. Then he was going to resign, and the governor was going to appoint Haskell. That's all they needed to hear. That, plus Cale's reluctance to do any campaigning, since his heart wasn't in it. He didn't want to come back down here. Those things, plus Joe, who was young, had a beautiful wife and kids, was articulate, was a fresh face on the horizon. Cale had been before the electorate for what, seven times statewide. He was old hat. All of those factors played into the ultimate defeat of Cale.

And also Nixon never did one thing to help him. There was Jack Miller, Margaret Chase Smith, Gordon Allott, and Caleb Boggs. He was asked repeatedly to go and help them. He would not do it. He flew over Delaware on his way from Rhode Island, where he was helping Chafee, to North Carolina where he was going down to help Jesse [Helms], and wouldn't even sit down for an airport stop for Caleb Boggs. He did the same thing to Jack Miller. He flew from wherever he was out to New Mexico for Pete Domenici and wouldn't stop for Jack

---

in Iowa. And that didn't help, because Cale didn't lose by that many votes -- I don't remember how many it was, but it wasn't that many.

Ritchie: Why such a cavalier attitude toward somebody like Boggs?

Hildenbrand: Nixon? Oh, that was Nixon's style. Nixon didn't believe he needed anybody really but himself. He certainly didn't think he needed anybody in the Congress. That was just their attitude.

Ritchie: Could you repeat that story about Lee Metcalf calling you aside one day in the Senate chamber, about Boggs?

Hildenbrand: Oh, we were in that little lobby off the floor, and he wanted to know how I thought Boggs was doing -- this was in '66, I guess. He wanted to know who his opponent was and how he was doing. I said, "Oh, I think he's doing fine. The fellow has a name in Delaware that's well known, so he's going to be formidable to that degree, but Cale's going to be all right." Lee said, "I'll tell you, if they were going to vote in the Senate for Cale Boggs, he'd get 99 votes. And if he voted for himself he'd get 100."

[End of Interview #2]

Interview #3: With Hugh Scott
(Monday, April 8, 1985)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: You said there was an incident relating to the 1966 campaign relating to Bobby Kennedy and Caleb Boggs.

Hildenbrand: Yes. Cale was on the floor one day, sitting in his seat, and Bobby Kennedy came over and sat down next to him. They talked for a while, and after it was over, Cale came back and said that it seemed that the Democrats in Delaware were trying to get Bobby Kennedy to come up to Delaware to do a fund raiser for

Cale's opponent. Cale said that Bobby came over to him and said: "Cale, I'm under a lot of pressure to go to Delaware and raise some money for your opponent." He said, "I don't know what I should do. What do you think I ought to do?" Cale said: "Well, Bobby, it's really up to you. If you go there, I hope you won't say too many bad things about me. But you have to do whatever you think you need to do." He said that Bobby thought a minute and then said, "Oh, hell, Cale, I'm too busy. I don't think I have time to go to Delaware." And he did not go. At that time, in those days, the biggest draw that the Democrats had was Bobby Kennedy, but he did not go in. He made some excuse and they never were able to get him into Delaware.

Senators Caleb Boggs (R-DE) and Robert Kennedy (D-NY) greet visitors
on the steps of the U.S. Capitol
Senate Historical Office
page 98

Ritchie: Do you think a lot of senators feel uncomfortable about going into other states to campaign against colleagues, even though they're of a different party?

Hildenbrand: A lot depends on the relationship between the members. I think where there isn't a good relationship, then I think that either side of the aisle doesn't care about going in and campaigning. Some members, the ones that I've worked for -- Scott, Baker, Boggs -- always took a position that it's very hard to say no to a colleague to go in and campaign, but they've always taken a position that they've never said anything bad about one of their colleagues. They might go in and say good things about whoever is running, but they would not go in and

say bad things about a sitting colleague of theirs. That's the way they campaigned. But it's hard if you want the seat, you hate to see somebody defeated, but that's what the game of politics is all about, so you go ahead and do that.

Ritchie: I guess it would make for difficult relations if you campaigned against a colleague and the colleague was reelected. You still have to try to get that person's vote after the election. And I suppose that's the hardest thing for somebody to forgive.

Hildenbrand: Yes. Some people don't care. Some members don't like somebody, and it just doesn't matter to them. They're never going to get their vote anyway, on anything, so they might as well go campaign against them. They have nothing to lose. But where you've

---

got a good relationship, it's something else again. Alan Bible and Cale Boggs, I don't know whether I've told this story or not, but in 1968, I guess it was, when Alan Bible was running, we had a Committee of Nine in which we had a bunch of staff people that went to various states to help out candidates who were running against sitting members. They sent me to Nevada, where Lieutenant Governor Ed Fike was running against Alan Bible. Of course, both [Howard] Cannon and Bible, and everybody else that came out of Nevada, their relationships with the hotels were so good that as soon as you check in they know exactly who's in Las Vegas or Reno. They knew that I was there. It turned out that Alan Bible and Cale had gone to law school together when they both were here, working on the Hill, and went to Georgetown Law School at night. They had been good friends since the '30s. When Bible found out, he was very, very upset, and he called Caleb and said, "I just can't understand why. We've been such good friends. Why would you allow your AA to come out here and campaign." Cale felt so bad that he called me on the phone and said, "You'd better come home right away." So I came back. But it's hard for them to campaign against friends, yet that's the name of the game.

Ritchie: Is it more difficult if a state is represented by a Democrat and a Republican -- they've got to work together for the state -- but do they have some hesitation against campaigning against each other?

Hildenbrand: No, within bounds I think you can do it, and do it well. I think that the other member knows that this is going to be part and parcel of it. He also knows that he's going to go to campaign against the other member in two years, or four years, or whenever it is. It's just something that they put up with, and they understand. Members just hope that the other member will do it in good taste, but he understands it.

Ritchie: Can you remember any times when there was bad blood over an election? When a senator felt that someone had crossed the line, gone too far?

Hildenbrand: No, I can't remember any. There are those situations in every election, where members will go in and say some bad things about another member. It just happens. I don't know any specifics. But I'm pretty sure that it happens, because there have been those members through the years who have not been well liked by their colleagues as individuals. My guess is that it's easy to go in and campaign against somebody like that. You're not going to get his vote anyway, so it doesn't make any difference.

Ritchie: Well, we left off last time at the point when you had accepted the post as administrative assistant to Hugh Scott, when Scott became the Republican whip at the beginning of 1969. I wondered if you could give me some description of what the responsibilities of the M for the Republican whip were.

Hildenbrand: Well, as it turned out, at that particular time, because Scott was not Everett Dirksen's chosen successor, or even chosen whip, there was a very cold relationship between Dirksen and Scott, and a cold relationship pretty much between the staffs. We talked, but there wasn't any exchange of what's going to happen on the floor, or what are we doing this week. Scott was pretty well kept out of the circle of leadership. I think that maybe Gordon Allott was the Policy Committee chairman, and Margaret Chase Smith was Conference chairman. But Scott was an outsider. So we really didn't have a lot to do because Dirksen would not let Scott do anything. Our Conference rules simply says that the assistant leader will do those things designated to him by the majority or minority leader. And Dirksen didn't designate Scott to do anything! So we didn't have anything to do. When we tried to get into it, we were told in no uncertain terms to stay the hell out of it, it wasn't none of our business. Dirksen was leader, and we had nothing to do.

For nine months -- well, I guess Dirksen got sick in the late spring, early summer, and went into the hospital for a period of time. Again under our Conference rules, the assistant leader became the acting leader when the leader wasn't able to do what he wanted to do. Scott took over and began to act as leader as much as he could, under the circumstances. Scott wanted to go and do "assistant regional whips," that concept. He was going to put it into place, and Mark Trice, who was then the secretary of the minority, called

---

Dirksen in the hospital and told him about it. Dirksen called Scott and said, "You ain't going to do that. Forget that." So we didn't do that. Then, while Dirksen was

still in the hospital, we had a military bill on the floor, I don't know if it was procurement or what it was, but Scott had talked to somebody, I don't know who it was, and went on the floor and said that the administration's position was whatever it was. And John Tower got up right behind him and said, "That's not right," that he had just talked to the administration and their position was blah-blah-blah-blah-blah, whatever it was. So it was an uncomfortable time for us to be acting leader, while all of the people who were close to Dirksen were still taking all of their orders from Dirksen. Anytime they didn't like anything that Scott was doing, they'd call Dirksen on the phone, and Dirksen would call and say "You can't do that," or "Stop this," or whatever it was.

We really didn't have anything to do. That was the first year that we put in the August recess. At the end of July we went into recess, and then Dirksen never came back. We were due back in Wednesday following Labor Day, and the day before Labor Day he died. We only had eight months to be whip, before Dirksen died.

Ritchie: Why did Scott want to do regional whips?

Hildenbrand: We just thought it was a good idea. And subsequently, when he became leader and [Robert] Griffin became whip, Griffin established sectional whips, or regional whips, or whatever it is. Scott had a concept of what he called "shared leadership," in which he thought the more people you can involve in what's going to happen on the floor the better it is to hold that group together. If you're going to be effective, you've got to have as many members as you can in support of whatever your position is. He just felt that a way to do that was in shared leadership. Baker continued that and refined it even, with committee chairman meetings, when we became majority. Then it really was shared leadership. And he's being criticized for it, as a matter of fact, now. They think that's not the way to be, they think that Lyndon Johnson was the way to be leader. Well, history is going to record whether or not Baker is right or [Robert] Dole's right. Or Dole changes and finds out you can't be what he'd like to be.

Ritchie: It's interesting that Scott, who was so shut out of the leadership, would advocate sharing the leadership.

Hildenbrand: That was just Hugh Scott. He'd been around so long. He'd been in Congress, and he was in the Senate, and he was such a pro. He believed this is the way it ought to be. He had no problems with it.

Ritchie: Well, during this seven month period when you were sort of in limbo, what did you do?

Hildenbrand: Not very much. Because our whole activity was based on the floor, and they wouldn't tell you what was going to happen, or what was going on, so I spent most of my time on the floor just letting Scott know what was going on -- because they weren't about to tell you. The secretary of the minority, Mark Trice, and Billy Brownrigg, who was assistant secretary of the minority, they were all very close to Dirksen. They weren't going to help you. I had been good friends with Brownrigg and with Trice when I was with Boggs, but when I went with Scott I became the enemy. They didn't want to tell me what was going on anymore than anything else. It was a difficult period of time for us, from that standpoint. We just went ahead and did the best that we could.

Ritchie: Usually the whip's position is to keep people informed as to what the calendar is. I know everyone reads the whip notices.

Hildenbrand: We didn't have whip notices in those days.

Ritchie: I guess it's become a lot more routinized since then.

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm. Griffin started the whip notices, and then everybody since then has continued them.

Ritchie: Dirksen died just before the session came back, but it wasn't at all automatic that Scott would become leader. There was a rather intense campaign. How did you go about campaigning to get Hugh Scott elected leader?

Hildenbrand: Scott waited until he came back from the funeral, which was Thursday in Pekin, and announced then that he would seek the post of minority leader. In the meantime, and unbeknownst to us, at the time at least, the M to Baker had gotten ahold of Bob Packwood the day after Dirksen died -- the morning after he died -- and had gone to Packwood and said: "The boss said we're going to go for leader, and wants you to be his campaign manager," or whatever he wanted him to be. Packwood, for whatever reasons, told a reporter of one of the Oregon papers, and so during the campaign somebody got a copy of a story that had been written which indicated that the morning after Dirksen died, they had begun to politick for his job. And it offended some members. Len Jordan of Idaho carried the article around in his pocket during that three week period and showed it to everybody that he talked to, because he thought this was

so terrible that before this man was even cold they would be out there campaigning to take his place. While philosophically Len Jordan was far removed from Hugh Scott, he supported Scott and actively campaigned for him because of what had happened. To Howard Baker's credit it wasn't necessarily Baker that did it -- it was staff who got exuberant and got themselves into this thing, and it turned out it was in the paper.

Then Hruska announced shortly after the funeral that he was in it. So it was Hruska, Scott and Baker. Well, everybody knew that Baker and Hruska were going for the same votes, so if the three people stayed in, there wasn't anything they could do about it. They finally prevailed, on the Saturday before the election, on Hruska to get out. So Hruska announced at a press conference on Saturday that he was withdrawing from the race, and he threw his support to Baker. In the meantime, Scott, who had been in politics for all of his life, and was involved with Meade Alcorn in the take-over of Eisenhower against Taft in '52, and knew how to campaign, just went about his business of contacting each member personally, and trying to gain their support. He always used to say to me, when we had our little card with all the members we had checked off, we knew where everybody was, he said: "We don't put anybody down until they look me in the eye and say, 'I'm going to vote for you, Hugh.'" So that's the way he ran it. When we went into the race that morning, we knew exactly how many votes we had. As it turned out, we had one more than we had counted on. Somebody obviously voted for us that we didn't count, because we got one more. If I remember it was 23 to 20, I think. Or 23 to 19 maybe. [Karl] Mundt was in at that time, so I think it was around 23 to 20. Well, anyway, it was within four votes.

We won that morning, and that took most of the morning. We came over and opened the session, and the Caucus said we'll go back at 2:00 o'clock and elect a whip. All of the Scott supporters -- Mark Hatfield, and Boggs, and Jim Pearson, and [Jack] Miller, and Griffin and a whole bunch of them -- met in Scott's office. Scott said, "Look, I've been elected leader. I'm out of it. I'm not going to get involved in the whip race. How ever it goes, it goes." So we had Griffin and Miller and Pearson and Tower and Baker all in the whip race. I think there were five of them, it seems to me there were six, but I can't remember who the sixth one was, but they all got into the race. And it's low man out. So they started to vote, and it got down finally to Griffin and Baker, and Griffin beat him about by the same margin that we beat Baker in the morning. Baker lost two races in the same day: one for leader and one for whip. Then Griffin became whip.

The first thing that Hugh Scott did, to show you the kind of a politician that Scott was, and the kind of a person he was in terms of trying to smooth over ruffled

feathers and hold a group together, he made an appointment to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, and he gave Howard Baker that appointment, with of course the heavy nuclear stuff that they have down in Tennessee at Oak Ridge. He gave that to Baker. They had a good relationship, even though they had opposed one another. They had great respect for each other. Then two years later he ran against us again. Scott decided the nicest

---

thing he could do for him after he did it the second time was he made him vice chairman of the Watergate Committee. Baker said, "I can't afford to run against you again. Lord knows what you'll make me the next time!"

Ritchie: Baker had only been in the Senate for two years when he ran for leader.

Hildenbrand: He was elected in '66 and came in in '67, so he had been there a little over two years.

Ritchie: It was a pretty ambitious jump to run for leader.

Hildenbrand: But I think that everybody, because he was the son-in-law, they thought that it was the logical thing for him to do. You'd have to talk to some of the senior members to determine whether or not the brashness of someone running for leader after being here two and a half years may have impacted on them, I don't know. My guess is that in some cases that probably was true, but in other cases they wanted to make sure that Hugh Scott was not the leader, so whoever they could get the votes for they didn't care if he'd been there three years or three days. They were going to try to get him, and Baker's very attractive, very articulate, and they were just looking for somebody to take over so that they could be in charge. That's why they went for Baker.

Ritchie: While Baker was appealing to the conservatives, he really was something of a moderate himself, wasn't he?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. You know the first vote that he ever cast, the first thing that he did on the floor when he got elected, within three months of his election, was to take his father-in-law on in open debate on "One Man One Vote." They went at it pretty hard. But compared to Scott he was an arch-conservative, from the conservative standpoint.

Ritchie: Was there any sense that the Nixon administration was in favor of any candidate? Did they try to campaign for Baker?

Hildenbrand: We could not see any. They were so new in their term, they'd only been in power for seven months, or eight months at that time. We don't think that they had gotten into it. We think the second time he ran that they were involved, for Baker against Scott, but the first time we didn't see any. It might have been there, but we didn't see it.

Ritchie: That's kind of a tricky business. If an administration comes out in front and indicates support for a candidate, wouldn't that automatically have some reaction in Congress on account of separation of powers?

Hildenbrand: It's not the thing to do. Because of the separation you have the possibility of losing more votes than you win by

---

getting involved. We had heard rumors in the second go-round that in the '70 race members who were running had been offered campaign contributions if they would pledge their support to Howard Baker when he ran against Scott the second time. We've had nothing but denials from everybody that's been involved, but the people that we talked to said: "They offered me the money, what can I tell you?" But everybody denies that that was the case. We do believe there was more involvement the second time than the first.

Ritchie: The conservatives lost in both races.

Hildenbrand: Yes, because Griffin was a moderate. Not maybe quite as liberal as Hugh Scott, but certainly he was much more moderate than the Hruskas and the Hickenloopers and Gordon Allotts of the world.

Ritchie: Did that create any problems for Scott during that first term?

Hildenbrand: No, because once again he went out of his way to bring into the leadership those people who were in the leadership. He didn't run it as Dirksen ran it: a one-man show. When he had some tough decisions, and he was going to make some decisions, he got Gordon Allott, and Margaret Chase Smith, and Norris Cotton I guess was secretary . . . .

Ritchie: Wasn't Milton Young secretary?

Hildenbrand: Well, yes, Milton Young maybe in those days. Then Milt stepped down and Norris became secretary, because we backed Norris for that. Yes, Milton Young, I guess, and Griffin, and they would meet in the back room and make the decisions: this is what we were going to do, which was part of what we

called the shared leadership concept. So it was hard for them, having been involved in the process, to go out and challenge the process. Scott was smart enough to have figured that out. He figured out: If I go this alone, they're going to hand me my head, but if I get them into this, they're going to be with me, because they can't afford not to. He worked on that basis. And events began to catch up, also. [Spiro] Agnew came along, resigning, the Vietnam War was heating up. Scott, being a former Navy lieutenant, having been in the war, trained in that fashion, believed that if you commit the flag then you've got to go down the road with whatever is going to happen. He stood with the president time and time again on Vietnam, Cambodia, and the bombings, all those kinds of things. The dissidents were sitting in his office in the Capitol and being arrested. I think he agonized, but he never once deviated from his support of Nixon's policies in relation to Vietnam. But they were troubled times for him.

And then along came the Agnew resignation. We were led to believe that the morning that Nixon appointed Ford, that it had come down to Ford and Scott. The choice was down to those two, and Nixon decided that for whatever Nixon's purposes it would be Ford. Ford

---

was closer to what Nixon would be than Hugh Scott was, and my guess was that that was an easy decision for them to make. That's where they had finally arrived at that point. Then they made Gerry Ford vice president.

Ritchie: You mentioned the other leaders in the party. The Republican party and the Democratic party in the Senate have a different leadership structure. The Democrats concentrate more power in their leader, but the Republicans have got a Conference chairman and a Policy Committee chairman. How does all that work? Are they really leaders of the party? Do they determine policy and try to lead the rest of the party?

Hildenbrand: Well, the ones that I've been associated with through the years have not. The Policy Committee chairman hasn't really a set policy, as you would think a Policy Committee by its name would have. But it's never worked out that way. The Conference chairman is the same thing. He just calls the Conference together, and the Conference is all of the people. They make a decision, but he doesn't have that much to say. The Policy Committee chairman, the Conference Committee chairman have as a rule never tried to take on the leadership. The Conference rules are pretty explicit in terms of the minority and majority leader being responsible for everything that happens on the floor. Tower, when he was Policy Committee chairman, from time to time would have small groups get together and

issue papers, for example. But no one sets policy but the Conference itself, which is comprised of all the Republicans. They get together and they decide what their policy's going to be. There's never been a problem with those committee chairmen attempting to take over and become leaders.

Ritchie: But Scott wanted to make sure they were lined up behind him before he went out on the floor.

Hildenbrand: Yes, exactly.

Ritchie: In the party, do certain people rise to positions of personal influence and have to be contended with when a decision comes along? Do you have people who are identified as the leader of one bloc or another?

Hildenbrand: Yes, it's a little different under the minority than it is under the majority. In the majority a chairman is much stronger than a ranking member. But, by and large, you deal with ranking minority members of key committees who have been there for a long time. Like in the civil rights and voting rights areas we dealt with Hruska most of the time, simply because we had to. Or we ignored him, because philosophically our positions were so dichotomous. He didn't have a great civil rights record, the way Scott did, so there was no way that our party position was going to be anything near what Scott wanted it to be. But Hickenlooper was somebody that

we always dealt with in terms of foreign relations, and these were people that had been around a long time -- even longer than Scott. They were elder statesmen, more or less, so you had to deal with them. You knew who they were. We didn't have the structures that they have now, the Wednesday Club, and the Steering Committee. We didn't have any of that in those days. You didn't have to contend with a whole bloc of people who were looking over your shoulder every time you made a decision.

Ritchie: Did you find that within the party there were people who had better contacts with the White House? You mentioned Senator Tower standing up and saying "I just talked to somebody in the administration and this is what their policy really is." Was that a problem?

Hildenbrand: To some degree. There were those who had much closer relationships with Richard Nixon than Hugh Scott had. Of course, they had access to the White House. Again, the White House had a tendency to be much more conservative than Hugh Scott was, philosophically. They dealt with Scott

because he was leader. They didn't really have a choice. My guess is they would have loved to have had somebody else as leader, but there wasn't very much they could do about. [Charles] Colson was down there, and some tough guys were down in that staffing area in the White House. You never knew who was talking to them, so you had to be awfully careful when you

---

went on the floor and said something that somebody didn't jump up and say: "That's ridiculous!" But after the Tower thing, and after Dirksen died and Scott became leader, there wasn't that much fear of that happening, because the members did not want to destroy the party in order to destroy Hugh Scott. They were putting party above everything else. Nixon was in the White House, and it was their administration, so everybody was sort of pulling together.

Ritchie: Nixon was the first president I think in this century not to have a majority of his own party in Congress during his first term. What was it like to work for the minority leader who was supposed to be supporting the president and introducing the president's program?

Hildenbrand: We had never been in the majority, so we didn't have anything on which to compare. So as far we were concerned, it created no problems for us. We just went ahead and did whatever we had to do. We just thought this is the way it's always been, so we did the best we could. If I remember, we were at one point down to something like 38, in maybe the two years at the end of Nixon's first term, '71 to '72. We may have been down to around 38 members. We didn't have very many. But you did the best that you could and you introduced whatever the White House wanted you to do, and you carried the White House's water. The votes weren't there, but you did whatever you could.

Ritchie: How did the liaison operation work between the White House and the Congress in those early Nixon years?

Hildenbrand: Originally they brought Bryce Harlow in, and Clark MacGregor. Bryce had been Eisenhower's liaison. MacGregor had come over from the House, had been a House member. They worked fairly closely with Hugh Scott, in letting him know what the positions were and things like that. But there were times when they would go to their friends, the Hruskas of the world, and deal with them instead of dealing with Scott. It did not happen that often, but it was something that we always had to deal with. We were aware of it. We knew that Scott wasn't the favorite son of the White House.

Haldeman and Ehrlichman, the so-called Katzenjammer Kids, or whatever people liked to call them, came into the White House in an adversarial relationship as far as the Congress was concerned. My guess is that that's really the beginning of strict adversarial relationships. As tough as Johnson was as a leader, nevertheless he did not have the disrespect for the Congress that Nixon and his people seemed to have. They would have been great if they could have been a monarchy. But that wasn't the way it was going to be, so they made life miserable for just about everybody. They had very little understanding of what the leadership up here said was going to happen. They didn't want to hear that. This was what was going to happen.

I remember sitting in Gerry Ford's office, when he was minority leader, with John Connally, who was Treasury Secretary in those days (which must have been, I guess, towards the end of the first term of Nixon's, getting close to the '72 elections I guess, as a matter of fact), John Connally, John Ehrlichman, Scott, and Ford, and somebody from the liaison, Timmons or Friedersdorf or somebody like that. They wanted Ford and Scott to do something, some bill that they were very strong for. There wasn't any way that that thing was ever going to pass. There was nothing they could do about it. We had as many defections on our side as the Democrats had. Both Ford and Scott told Ehrlichman and John Connally in no uncertain terms that: you can't have it that way, because our people are not going to support it. Connally understood it, but Ehrlichman had no concept of what was going on. I remember him saying: "OK, you can tell everybody that's going to vote against us that we're going in to their state or their district and campaign against them." Ford just looked at Ehrlichman like this guy's got to be bonkers. Does he think for one minute that the President of the United States is going to go into some Republican state and campaign against some Republican that's running? That's crazy! Does he think also that that's going to make a difference? That we're going to support it? They just looked at him and thought this was crazy. Whatever it was -- I think it was a public works bill of some kind -- they got soundly trounced. But that's the way they thought. That was their thinking process. You

---

were with them or you were against them, there was no in-between. They didn't understand your position. You didn't have a position. Your position was the administration's position, or you were a turncoat.

Ritchie: Very early on, in '69, Hugh Scott gave the administration a tongue-lashing after a tax bill. Nixon threatened to veto the bill, but the Senate ignored him and passed its own bill. Scott said, "The problem is you don't listen to us."

Hildenbrand: That was the '69 tax bill that took six weeks in the Senate. It was in November, if I remember, over Thanksgiving. It started early in November. We had the Internal Revenue Service and the Treasury people in our office for six weeks, from 10:00 o'clock in the morning to 11:00 o'clock at night, everyday including Saturdays. That was our baptism under fire, as a matter of fact, since we had only been in office for about two months when this tax bill came along. We continually went round and round with the tax people as to what they could or could not support. I remember members coming in to see the representatives of Treasury or IRS with amendments and saying, "Can you support this?" They'd get an answer back as to whether they could or could not. But we were new, the administration was fairly new, and they came in with a set of values as to what the relationship was between the Congress and the White House that were different than ours. What Scott was saying was: you

---

may think that that's what the founding fathers meant when they said executive and legislative, but it doesn't work that way. If you want to get something done, you'd better listen to us, otherwise it ain't going to get done.

Ritchie: Apparently they didn't hear that.

Hildenbrand: They never learned that for the whole time they were there until he resigned. I think they were lulled into false security by winning some things which they won because that's the way members believed. But they thought it was because they'd proposed it. Or they were riding high because they were getting Vietnam pretty much the way they wanted it, and getting support even though the people out in the street were screaming bloody murder. The Congress was standing with them, and I think they just thought that because the administration was putting it forth that it was going to win. Throughout all that period of time they really never listened to the Congress. You couldn't really talk to them.

Ritchie: Did Nixon himself get involved? Was he effectively used in congressional liaison?

Hildenbrand: No, I don't think Nixon ever came up on the Hill the whole time he was President of the United States, except for some official function. He stayed pretty much out of it. The Haldemans and the Ehrlichmans and the Clark MacGregors and the people that

---

followed were the ones that were involved. As a matter of fact, Scott's AA, Gene Cowan, left just before we got to be leader, I guess, and went to the White House in a liaison post, but that didn't help us any. It was just the way they looked at

things so much differently than anybody else looked at it. There was no attempt to try to fashion representative government, or government by cooperation or accommodation. They would much rather take you head-on. If they won, fine. If they didn't win, then they's say, "Well, it's the Congress' fault."

Ritchie: Did they use Agnew at all in terms of congressional liaison?

Hildenbrand: They used him once. Somebody told him to get off the floor and quit lobbying, and that was the last time that they ever used him. He got involved in some issue, shortly after they became the administration. And he got on the floor and lobbied, and some member just flat resented it and just gave him a tongue lashing and told him never to get on that floor again and lobby these members, that was not his role. That was the end of that. As a result, I think we have always cautioned new vice presidents. We've always cited that as an example of what not to do when you become the vice president. Don't let yourself get in the position that Agnew got into. If you want to call them up at home, or if you want to talk to them in their office, or if you want to call them off the floor and

---

talk in your office, all those things are permitted. But not on the floor. That floor belongs to the Senate, and you're just a functionary. So vice presidents from that time on have sort of lobbied someplace other than on that floor. That's the only time they tried to use Agnew, and it turned out to be a disaster.

Ritchie: Was Agnew popular with the members?

Hildenbrand: Well, Agnew was a nice enough person and had a good personality. Members got along with him. He never had the credentials that they would consider that might have been required or necessary to be vice president. Being governor of the state of Maryland didn't really do very much for some of the Old Bulls of the party. But he was vice president; he was president of the Senate; they had a respect for him; they got along with him. But I don't think they really thought that he was a very strong individual, from the standpoint of doing anything but telling them whatever Nixon wanted them to hear. Then, of course, he made that "nabobs of negativism" speech out in the West some place. That didn't go over too well with a lot of people. Then he resigned.

Ritchie: Did you get a sense in Scott's office that Scott was trying to work to educate the White House? Or did he throw up his arms in dispair?

Hildenbrand: Well, no. He continually kept after them to try to get them to listen. I think eventually what he did was, he realized he wasn't going to be able to

do it. He never stopped trying, but he accepted that he was going to fail. He just went ahead and began to be as good a leader as he could be, without getting the White House involved. He talked to the people up here, and they decided what kind of a position they were going to take, what they could get done, and what they couldn't get done. If the White House didn't like it, so be it.

Ritchie: Scott's affinity to other politicians would probably have been closer to Mike Mansfield in many ways, and yet at that time, because the Republicans were in the minority, the efforts at building coalitions seemed to be with the Southern conservatives -- the "Southern Strategy." How did he fit into that? Was he able to build bridges to the Southern Democrats?

Hildenbrand: Yes, and it's a very strange reason why. The Southern Democrat conservatives had a great deal of respect for Hugh Scott, despite the fact that he stood for everything that they opposed in the areas of civil rights and voting rights. Two things were responsible for that. One, he had been a roommate with John Stennis at the University of Virginia Law School, so they had been friends for a long time. But more importantly, back in 1960, the Civil Rights Act of '60, Dick Russell for some reason was not well,

---

was not able to be here on a key civil rights vote, and Hugh Scott gave Dick Russell a pair on whatever that vote was. The Southern Democrats never forgot that Hugh Scott had done this for Dick Russell. From their standpoint, Dick Russell was their god. He stood for everything that Southern Democrats stood for. It was epitomized by Dick Russell. And to think that a Northern liberal such as Hugh Scott would do this for somebody like Dick Russell, they never forgot that. His relationship with them was good, even though there was no way they could ever get in bed together in terms of civil rights or voting rights. But on other things . . . .

And Stennis became very, very strong with him because of his stands on the military. Stennis and I, along with [J. Stanley] Kimmitt, who was then secretary of the majority, we would have breakfast in the mornings, almost every morning, and we would talk about the military situation, and about the defense bill. Stennis was then the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, so we had good relations with Stennis, as did Scott.

Ritchie: I was wondering how you'd go about lobbying members of the other party. Was it mostly the White House liaison people who did that, or the people out of the Republican leader's office who make the contacts?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I think both. You use all of the things that are available to you. You don't just say, "OK, you do this." If

you've got the capacity, as you do in a White House liaison, as you do in leadership, as you do in relationships between members, you use all of those things. That's like letting a man build a house but you don't give him the tools. If you've got all the tools, you use them. And we did. We didn't worry too much about what the White House was going to do from a lobbying standpoint. They had their thing to do and we had ours.

I had always acted as a liaison between the Democratic side of the aisle and the Republican side. That was a role Scott wanted me to fill, and which I did. I got along famously with Mike Mansfield, very good with Bob Byrd, because Mansfield had given Bob Byrd (after he had defeated Ted Kennedy) the responsibility of the calendar of business, in formulating what we were going to take up, and under what kind of restrictions and time limits and all those things. Prior to that time, unanimous consent agreements were almost unheard of. We didn't have things like that. But with Byrd coming in they began more and more to get to the point of unanimous consent agreements and working out an orchestrated schedule, so that you knew ahead of time what was going to be coming up. I worked closely with Byrd. Scott gave me that role, and Byrd knew that that was my role, so we did an awful lot of that. I had good acceptance on the Democratic side from that standpoint.

Ritchie: You had a good reputation of being a head counter. How did you go about it, finding out how people were going to vote on an issue?

Hildenbrand: Oh, a lot of that I gained from Scott's ability to be able to win his own races for leader. There are so many things that enter into a member making up his mind on how he's going to vote, that you have to take all of those factors into consideration. You can't just say because Barry Goldwater is a conservative therefore he will vote for a conservative position. There may be a personality problem. There may be something that somebody did for him and he's going to pay a favor back. I spent a lot of time on the floor. I knew these members. I knew their voting records pretty well. I watched them for so many years.

Cliff Case, for example, who I considered to be the really true liberal in the Republican party because he never deviated. A lot of people said Javits was the liberal, but if you look at Javits' voting record you'll find that a lot of time he would vote a very conservative line, particularly economically, on money matters. Case that wasn't the case. Cliff would just go ahead and consistently vote the liberal line. But you knew that. If you watched him and studied it, you knew exactly where he was going to be. If you understand how that place works, and if

you watch it in action and watch members in action, you can pretty well know exactly where the votes are coming

---

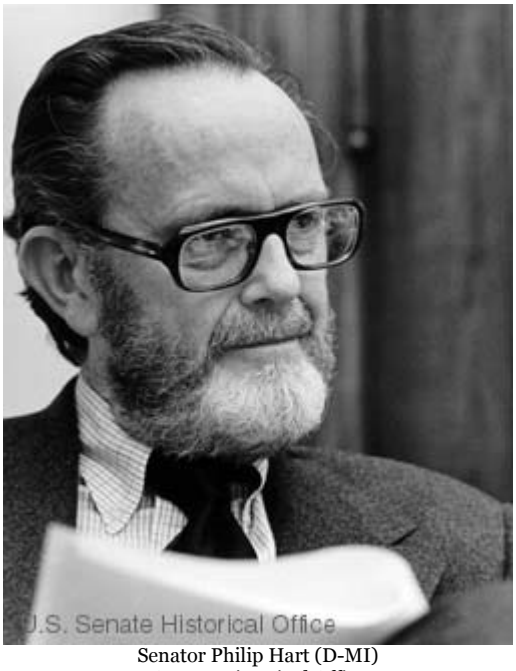
from, and where they're going to be. I was fortunate in that I spent all of my waking hours, almost, on that floor. So I knew the interplay between members, and I knew the kind of things that were going on. We rarely got surprised.

Senators Hugh Scott (R-PA) and Clifford Case (R-NJ)
Senate Historical Office

Roman Hruska, in 1970 when the extention of the Voting Rights Act came along, when John Mitchell was Attorney General, the administration had a proposal. Phil Hart was alive then, and Hugh Scott and Hart had a proposal, both of them were on Judiciary. They had a different Voting Rights Act than did John Mitchell and the administration. Hruska was the administration spokesman and leading the fight for this thing. They reported out of the Judiciary Committee Roman Hruska's bill -- the administration's bill -- and at some point Scott and Hart offered theirs as a substitute. The debate went on for some days. Finally, one afternoon, Roman Hruska came into the back office where Scott was and said, "Hugh, I'm going to move at 4:00 o'clock to table your substitute." Scott said, "That's fine, Roman, whatever you want to do, that's fine." We had counted our votes and we knew that we had the votes to stop a tabling motion.

What Hruska did not know, and which we knew but weren't sure of is that a couple of days before that I had talked with Barry Goldwater and Barry Goldwater had a pet project of allowing Americans overseas easy registration, registration cards, or some way that they could easily register. He had an amendment, and I went to Phil

Hart's people and I said, "Scott would like to take this amendment. It's not a bad idea. It doesn't do any damage to the voting rights at all, it just makes it possible for people not to get disenfranchised because they're serving some place overseas." Hart said, "Hell, that's no problem. Sure, we'll take it." I went back to Goldwater and said, "If you want to offer that, we'll accept it." So he offered it, we accepted it, and it became a part of the bill. Either Hruska didn't know it, or didn't think it would make any difference. The motion came to table Scott's bill. They called Goldwater's name, and he voted no. I thought Hruska was going to have a heart attack. He rushed over to Goldwater and they got into a heated conversation, the net result of which was Goldwater said, "That's the way I'm going to vote. I've got an amendment in that bill and I'm not going to vote against my own amendment." There wasn't anything Hruska could do about it. So of course they failed in the tabling motion, and we eventually passed the Hart-Scott Voting Rights Act.



Senator Philip Hart (D-MI)
Senate Historical Office

But they should have known that. They should not have ever have allowed themselves to think that simply because Barry Goldwater is an arch-conservative that he's going to be there forever. They should have figured that if he's got an amendment and it's in the bill, he's not going to vote to table his own amendment. He didn't. B ut that's the kind of thing that goes into being able to determine how the votes are going to come out. It's personalities. I think I said

earlier that there are some members on that floor today who will have fifteen votes against them simply because they offered it. I don't care what the amendment does. But you have to know that. You really have to know who these people are and what their personalities are, what their relationships are, who they're close to, who they listen to. All of those things make up a part of being able to count votes.

Ritchie: Is there a good time to approach a senator to find out how they're going to vote? Or is there an inopportune time? Do you get the sense of when is the right or the wrong time to try to find out how a person is going to vote?

Hildenbrand: No, you sort of sense that. Some people are almost totally unapproachable. Margaret Chase Smith. I would never approach Margaret Chase Smith. She was very close to Mark Trice, and I would never go to her to determine where she was. I'd go to Mark and he would determine for us, but I would never do that. You know the ones that you can approach, and you know the ones that you can't. When I became secretary of the minority, when Mark resigned, then I took over the role of making whip counts for the leadership, Margaret Chase Smith was gone by that time.

Senators Hugh Scott (R-PA), Karl Mundt (R-SD), and Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME)
Senate Historical Office

We didn't do it that often -- nowadays they do it almost every time they turn around -- but in those days we didn't do it that often. You called a member, and here again I followed the Scott line, I would not talk to staff. I would always talk to the member. If he

told me he was going to vote yes, then I would put it down. If the staff person said, "Well, I think he's going to do this," when you're counting votes that's not good enough. Unless you know the staff person and you know that without any questions this is exactly what will happen, because he's so close to the member that he reflects exactly the member's position, and he would know if there was any deviation from that position. It worked out pretty good from that standpoint.
Ritchie: You were on the floor a lot, did you speak to the senators mostly there?

Hildenbrand: Yes, and if I couldn't get them on the floor, I would call them in their offices. Or the Tuesday lunch, when we had policy lunch, was a good time to do a whip check, because then you had everybody there together and it was easy to go around and talk to them. That way you didn't discombobulate them from doing something they were going to do. They were there anyway, so it was easy. We didn't do very many whip checks in those days, as they do now. They do an awful lot.

Ritchie: Could you approach Democrats as well?

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm. I had some that I would not necessarily approach. [Alan] Cranston, when he became whip, which was '77 I guess, after Mansfield left, he and I had a good relationship. There

are those that have written stories that he probably is the best Democratic vote counter -- or was the best Democratic vote counter, whether he still is or not I haven't followed it that closely. But he and I have a good relationship and still do. If Scott would allow me, we would exchange information about how things were going and where the votes were. We would pretty much know. Military things, I worked pretty closely with Stennis. Stennis would know exactly where his Democrats were. Then I would let him know where our people were. Because in those days we were looking for the same thing: we wanted the administration to win, because it was our administration. I worked very closely with Stennis.

Ritchie: But there were some people you found unapproach able?

Hildenbrand: Russell Long, for example, rarely would I ever approach Russell to find out what he was going to do. Some people I knew better than I knew others. Fritz Hollings I knew quite well. [Hubert] Humphrey, Cranston, some of those that I had traveled with. I had no problems with going to them, but some of the others I left up to somebody else.

Ritchie: Were there certain senators--you mentioned the chairmen of the committees--who had a good feel for how people were going to vote, who could tip you off?

Hildenbrand: No, because as a rule that's not a roll of the senator, unless it happens to be his own pet bill, or he's involved in it. There weren't that many good vote counters in those days. They just didn't count votes that much, it wasn't that necessary. The Armed Services people had a tendency to pretty much know where their votes were, more so than almost any other committee that we had. The Towers and the Stennises pretty much knew where their people were. And they lobbied on the floor a lot. Tower was always talking to members, trying to get them to support positions, as was John Stennis. B ut some of the others didn't bother.

Ritchie: I have a stack of the Republican annual reports at the end of each session of Congress, and in every one of them when Hugh Scott was Republican leader there was a glowing tribute to Mike Mansfield. It's very striking to find one party paying such tribute to the leader of the opposition. Could you describe the relationship between Mansfield and Scott, and yourself and Mansfield?

Hildenbrand: I think Mansfield's and Scott's relationship really came together when they went to China in early 1972. Dirksen and Mansfield had gotten along famously -- everybody got along with Mike Mansfield anyway. Then when Dirksen died, we had only been two and a half years as leader when they went to China together. I think that there was a mutual respect, certainly, between the two of them. Their personalities were fairly close. They were both very low key.

They were both Asian experts. They both liked the same kind of things. Mansfield had been a Marine, Scott had been a Navy lieutenant. They just got along from a personality standpoint. They were both genteel men. They were perfect for their time, that they should both be leaders at that time. It stood the country in very good stead.

They were honorable men. Scott had never any problem in knowing that Mike Mansfield would ever try to do anything which would hurt either the Republican party or Hugh Scott. I remember one instance when Kennedy was the whip. He came up on the floor one morning, we were in session in the morning for some reason, and they passed some amendment which Mansfield had told the Republicans, or told somebody, they would either not pass or would not bring it up until whatever it was that happened. And they brought it up and passed it. Mansfield found out about it and came in from his office and called it back up

and defeated it, because he said, "the commitment was made that this would not happen." I don't think he defeated it, he just called it up and by unanimous consent had it withdrawn, but he said, "this is a commitment that Hugh Scott and I made and it will be honored." That was the kind of a person that Mike Mansfield was. And he knew that Scott was exactly the same kind of man.

To the degree that they could control their own people, they did. They were both about the same age group. Scott now will be 85

---

in November, Mansfield's very close to that, so they were of the same age group. They had a lot of things going for them that made it easy for them to be compatible.

Ritchie: The whole use of unanimous consent really requires the two parties to sit down and argue out things behind the scenes, not on the Senate floor. Was there a procedure for operating this way, when a bill came along that the Democrats wanted to pass by unanimous consent?

Hildenbrand: Yes, in those days when Bob Byrd was whip, he would get together with me and say this is what they would like to do, and would I go ahead and try to sell it on our side of the aisle. I'd go back to Scott and say, "They want to do this, and here's what it is." We'd get a hold of the manager of the bill on our side, whoever was going to handle it and see whether or not it was acceptable. Then we'd just go on the floor and make the consent agreement. Scott, as a rule, would contact the ranking member of the committee, the leadership, and if somebody had notified us, when I was secretary of the minority, that they had a problem with the bill, we noted that on the calendar of business. We'd look at that, and then we would contact them and say, "We'd like to enter into this kind of an agreement. Do you have a problem with it?" They'd say, "Yeah," and we'd say, "Well you'd better come over on the floor because they're going to make that consent agreement, and if you want to object to it you'd

---

better be there to do it." We began to enter into those things from time to time, not very often, but then like Topsey it just grew. Now they do almost everything by unanimous consent, which was really not the way that the Senate was designed. But that's the way it's working out.

Ritchie: Does that sort of enforce a bipartisanship on members?

Hildenbrand: Well, yes, it makes everything cut and dried, because if everybody enters into a consent agreement then you know that's what's going to happen. It's taken away the deliberation of members getting up and trying to make arguments and persuade people. There isn't very much of that anymore. Members are no longer persuaded by arguments on the floor. The orators of the old days are gone, when you could win votes by getting up and making a passionate plea for your position. Nobody does that anymore. They may make passionate pleas, but it's for press back home and it's not for swaying anybody on the floor.

Ritchie: Did you have troubles with any members who just wouldn't go along? You only need one to object to a unanimous consent request.

Hildenbrand: Oh, you would get from time to time members that would not go along. Both Mansfield and Scott were fatalists in that regard. They'd say, "If we can't do it, we can't do it." And they'd go call it up and do whatever they wanted to do. We had problems on our own side because we had a small core of members of the liberal wing of our party, the Cases and the Javits, Mark Hatfield, Margaret Chase Smith to some degree, Jim Pearson, John Sherman Cooper, who were liberal. It was hard for the Republicans to have a single position in those days.

And if the Democrats had not made such an issue about Wyman-Durkin in 1975, if they hadn't made such an issue about that, Baker would never have been as successful as a minority leader, or Scott in his last two years, as they were, because when they fought that issue for three months they solidified the Republican side of the aisle, who consistently voted together as a bloc of 42 or 43 members, whatever number they had. They just consistently voted that way. They finally realized, after having done it for three months, that, hey, if we stay together as a group, we can do almost anything we want to do, or at least the Democrats can't do anything to us. I'm sure there are people who will argue with me, but I really believe that the effectiveness of the Republican party in the Senate grew out of the fact that the Democrats made such a big issue of that Wyman-Durkin and forced the Republicans to stay together. Because if you look at the history of the Republican party after that in the Senate, you'll

---

find that they began to do an awful lot of things as a party, which they had never done before. They put Jack Javits in charge of an economic program, and they fashioned an economic program for Republicans in the Carter days, which never would have happened before -- it's ridiculous to even think about it.

Ritchie: On the other hand, when Nixon was president they really needed to get beyond party lines, since they had to pass the president's program, or try to pass it.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but we didn't worry too much about it. When you had as few votes as we had, unless you got Democratic support you couldn't do anything -- and that's where, you mentioned earlier, the coalition came in. That's where we got that bloc of Southern Democrats that would join with the Republicans. But we stood to lose four to eight members, so we had to pick up a like number on the other side, because of the Javitses and the Cases of the world. In those days you couldn't count on them, in most instances.

Ritchie: I wanted to ask about some specific legislative events of that period, particularly the Haynsworth and Carswell nominations. Early on in the first few months of Scott's term as Republican leader . . . .

Hildenbrand: 1969 was Haynsworth.

Ritchie: He broke with the president on this Supreme Court nomination, which was a pretty rare event. He must have felt an incredible amount of pressure from the White House.

Hildenbrand: Well, he made his decision early on. He was a lawyer. His philosophy was such that he just did not believe that this man would make a good Supreme Court judge. As it turned out, he supported Carswell, and if he had his druthers he would have supported Haynsworth over Carswell, but he didn't have that. He'd made a decision, he stood with it, and he made a commitment to the president that whoever he sent up the next time he would support. So he voted against Haynsworth and then supported Carswell.

Ritchie: Did he restore himself in good graces by supporting the Carswell nomination?

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm, even though Carswell lost. The conservative wing of the party would never accept Hugh Scott, so it really didn't make any difference. There was no way that he could do enough for them, before they would take him into their bosom. Philosophically there was no way that that would ever happen. But they understood what he had done and they understood from the standpoint of Haynsworth, and then of course he got back in their good graces by supporting Carswell, much to the chagrin of the liberal wing of the party, in both sides of the Capitol. I remember Don Riegel, who was then a Republican, and Pete McCloskey came over to

see me and pleaded with me to try to get Scott to change his mind and not vote for Carswell. Scott had given the president his word, and it wouldn't have made any difference what Carswell did, or what they found out about him. If they voted, he was going to vote for him. And he did.

Ritchie: One of the places where Scott had the most trouble with the Nixon administration seemed to have to deal with the Justice Department, judicial nominations and civil rights bills and the rest. What was Scott's relationship with John Mitchell?

Hildenbrand: Not very good. They had nothing in common. Mitchell was a hard-line conservative in terms of judicial things. Scott was a lawyer and a liberal. He always felt that they were trampling on the Constitution and on the rights of individuals in some of the proposals that they made. So they went to Hruska much more than they ever went to Hugh Scott in dealing with things, because Hruska was ranking on the Judiciary Committee. John Dean was the liaison for Mitchell, and they worked very closely together. We barely saw them. Maybe they'd pay a courtesy call or something like that. They were friendly, but they weren't close.

Ritchie: It didn't do John Mitchell very much good. He lost more often than he won.

Hildenbrand: Well, you know the makeup of the Senate was such that there was no way that John Mitchell and Nixon could have won on those judicial kind of things. The strong coalition was no longer there, and the Senate was changing. The country was changing. They weren't about to win.

Ritchie: The same thing was true on the extension of the Voting Rights Act in 1970, a major confrontation with the Senate. You were pretty much involved in that. Could you give me some of the background of your role in that?

Hildenbrand: That was the one that I talked about Barry Goldwater and the business of the registration of people overseas. We worked with Clarence Mitchell, who was then with the NAACP out of Baltimore, and was a good, close friend of Scott's and of Phil Hart's. They just put together what they considered to be a sound extension of the Voting Rights Act as a substitute to the administration's, John Mitchell's proposal, which the House had passed. We really did not do very much in terms of the administration, we let Hruska handle it. He was the floor leader as far as the bill was concerned. We knew where the votes were, and we knew that anytime we wanted to do whatever it was we could

do it. We had the votes. We knew that the things we had in the bill were the things that should be there.

There was no attempt, that I recall, by the administration to try to change Hugh Scott. They knew where he was. He made it very plain when he offered the bill with Phil Hart that that was his position. Scott had a tendency that whenever he could not support the administration's position, whatever it was, that he would not involve himself in leading the fight on that floor against the administration. He would let somebody else take that role, as Hruska did in that case fighting for the administration's position. But Scott did not go on the floor and harrangue the administration. He was a part of the thing, and when it was time to vote he made a speech and they voted. That was all that there was to that.

Ritchie: When there's such a divisive issue among members of the same party, what does that do in the Conference? Did you have a great amount of tension?

Hildenbrand: Well, you try to stay away from having Conferences when you have that kind of a situation, because that's a no-win situation. You're not going to get a party position, so there's no sense in having a Conference so people can scream at one another. That's about all that would have ever happened in that kind of a Conference. You would never have come out of there with any position. There's no way that you could resolve that issue to the satisfaction of everybody, so you just didn't have Conferences.

Scott didn't like to call Conferences for that reason. In fact, most leaders from that time have not liked to call Conferences. It just evolves into something you don't need it evolving into. It gets into screaming matches and personalities get involved, and it's a mess.

Ritchie: So when do you call a Conference?

Hildenbrand: Most of the time you do it from an informational standpoint. You call Conferences so that the members know exactly what it is that's going to happen. Then, if you can get a consensus, you do. But we found out through the years that those Conferences are not the way to get something. It just doesn't work out too well. Members just have their own positions, and you just have to go along with whatever those positions are.

Ritchie: Well, I have a series of questions about foreign policy and your trip to China, but we've been here for an hour and a half and I think this is good point to stop now, since we've been discussing mostly domestic issues today.

Hildenbrand: All right, suits me.

End of Interview #3

Interview #4: Vietnam and China
(Monday, April 15, 1985)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: After we talked last week about your relations with the Nixon White House, and with Haldeman and Ehrlichman, I went back to reread some of the memoirs of the participants to see their points of view, and it sounded exactly like what you were saying. Ehrlichman's tone, in particular -- he had no use for either Gerald Ford or Hugh Scott, and let it be known as such. I think he dismisses Scott as a machine politician.

Hildenbrand: Exactly. While Haldeman had the reputation initially, and everybody thought he was more rigid, more Teutonic, Ehrlichman, as it turned out, really was more adament in his opposition to Congress as a branch of government than even Haldeman was. I think part of that comes out of the fact that Haldeman did mostly administrative, advising types of things, whereas Erhlichman, as chief of the Domestic Council, got involved in the legislative thing, trying to make things happen, and ran into all sorts of trouble with the likes of Hugh Scott and Gerry Ford. But I'm sure that Hugh Scott would be very happy to have that kind of thing said about him, because there's no question he was a consummate politician. Despite everything else that he was he also was a consummate politician.

Ritchie: Erhlichman describes a scene in his book [*Witness to Power*], he says it's the only time he ever saw Nixon dress anyone down. A bill had passed the House and been defeated by the Senate. Nixon called in Ford and Scott and praised Ford for his leadership and then dressed Scott down. Ehrlichman said it was the only time he saw Nixon perform that way as president. Did you ever hear that story?

Hildenbrand: No. Scott was not the kind of a person that would have come back and made a big to-do about it. Although he was the type of a person who had very good connections with the media, and I think if they had wanted something like that known it would have gotten out. It never did, that I know of. It well could have happened. Scott was not their chosen person. If they had had their druthers they would rather have had someone else as leader. He never was very close to them in any way, shape or form.

Ritchie: I got the feeling from these readings that the only use they saw for the leadership in Congress was to carry out orders.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes, they very much felt that way. That was part of the Nixon White House. And that was true in both the Senate as well as the House. They had very little use for the Congress. It was there because the Constitution required that they have that branch of government, but they did not want it. They wanted to just

---

give the orders. Don't think; you just do whatever we tell you to do. Ford and certainly Scott were far cries from being yes-men. Both of them had had so much service in the Congress of the United States that there was no way that these up-starts were going to come in and tell them what to do and what not to do. But until Watergate, they persisted in trying to run the legislative branch of the government as well as the executive branch.

Ritchie: Evans and Novak have an account, in *Nixon in the White House* of the ABM fight. They pose the difference between Nixon's "Hill Staff" and his "Downtown Staff." Bryce Harlow versus Haldeman and Erhlichman. They said that the Downtown Staff were constantly making wrong decisions and going around the Hill Staff.

Hildenbrand: There was no love lost between the so-called Hill Staff and the Erhlichmans and the Haldemans, simply because -- and I've said publicly that the problem with both Erhlichman and Haldeman was that they probably flunked ninth grade civics. They didn't understand government and how it operates. When they took over it was almost as if it was de novo. They were going to start from scratch.

Ritchie: It seems so strange, because Nixon of all people ought to have known how it worked. Or do you think they were really a reflection of his views?

Hildenbrand: I think so. You know, his term in the Congress was not that long. He was there, four years maybe?

Ritchie: Four in the House and two in the Senate.

Hildenbrand: He couldn't have been there much longer than that before he became vice president. He really didn't have the time to become inculcated with the Congress of the United States, or indoctrinated into the ways of the Congress of the United States. He was certainly not a traditionalist. I guess that's part of

the problem. They reflected his views, because those were his views, I think. I don't think he had much more use for Scott and Ford, even though he picked Ford as the vice president. My guess is, if the truth be known, and he may at some time say it, he probably chose Ford because it was simple to get him confirmed, without any big problem. Because there must have been somewhere in the United States someone who would have been more eminently qualified to be Vice President of the United States, and possible President of the United States, than Gerry Ford.

Ritchie: What was your opinion of Ford when he was Republican leader in the House? You had to work with him on a number of occasions.

Hildenbrand: Yes, he was a little more conservative, of course, than we were, coming from Grand Rapids and that part of the country. His views were much more conservative than were Hugh Scott's, but

---

they got along quite well. And I got along with him, and we became pretty good friends during those years when we was leader, and then when he was vice president, until he became president. I enjoyed him. I think he did a better job as vice president than a lot of people really thought that he would do, and certainly did a much better job as president than an awful lot of people thought that he would do. He had the maturity and he had whatever it took to grow into the job. And he was such a different type of a personality than Nixon, particularly in his treatment with the Congress, which is again one of the reasons why it made it easy for him to quiet down this country after Watergate, because he had the respect of the Tip O'Neills of the world, and the Carl Alberts and Mike Mansfields and the Democrats. They helped a great deal in making his path that much easier to calm the fears of this country after Watergate. This country survives simply because the right people happen to be in given positions at the right time. Through no fault of anybody, they just happen. You could not have found a better person to be president in those traumatic days than a Gerry Ford. He was very down home, very quiet, not flamboyant, was exactly what the country needed.

Ritchie: But you would never have picked him as a president when you were working with him?

Hildenbrand: No, anymore than I would have picked Hugh Scott, although he had a flair that Ford did not have. But I'm not so sure that from a substance standpoint that there would have been that much difference. Policywise, of course, Scott would have done things differently than Gerry Ford would, simply because philosophically they were different. I don't know that Hugh Scott, had he

been picked as vice president when Ford was picked would have been able to bring to the country the same calming effect that a Gerry Ford did. I don't know.

Ritchie: How closely does the Republican leadership in the House and the Senate work together?

Hildenbrand: It's all up, really, to the two leaders. We made a calculated decision when we became leader that we would open up the lines of communication between Ford and Scott. Dirksen and Halleck had the "Ev and Charlie Show." Then when Ford became leader why they stopped that -- I don't know whether they had an "Ev and Jerry Show."

Ritchie: For a little while.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but it wasn't the same. That sort of dwindled to nothing. Then when we became leader, Scott said we ought to meet once a week with the House leader. We set it up on a regular basis: we went to Ford's office one Monday and the next Monday he would come to our office, just to exchange things. How things were

---

going, what was happening, and get some advance notice of things to look for. We thought it worked out exceptionally well. When Baker became leader, I recommended that he do the same thing with [Robert] Michel. They did that for a while, and then both of them became so busy that they stopped the regular meetings and only met when they thought they had something that they could contribute to each other. Although they did talk a lot on the phone. When Baker became majority leader they even talked more, almost daily when we were in session.

Ritchie: When Scott and Ford met together, was there a sense of "us against them" with regard to the White House?

Hildenbrand: Yes, to some degree, after we really figured out that these people were serious about trying to do away with the Congress, we developed a siege mentality. It was an "us against them" kind of a thing. They didn't have that problem with Dirksen, for example, even though he was only there nine months of their term. They treated him differently than they treated certainly Scott, and my guess is that had Dirksen stayed that he would not have put up with what eventually began to transpire. I think Nixon would have quieted down the Haldemans and the Erhlichmans. Because Dirksen would have just gone to him and raised hell and that would have been the end of it. But Scott and Ford were different people.

Ritchie: Even Dirksen differed from Nixon. He led the opposition to John Knowles as the health chief, which in some respects was comparabie to Scott's defection on Haynsworth.

Hildenbrand: Yes, although they never did much about Dirksen's opposition to Knowles.

Ritchie: Dirksen was just too established in the party, I guess.

Hildenbrand: I think that's right. And he was the darling of the conservatives. They weren't about to take him on. They needed him desperately.

Left to Right: Kenneth Keating (R-NY), Hubert Humphrey (D-MN), Jacob Javits (R-NY), Everett Dirksen (R-IL), Thomas Kuchel (R-CA), Warren Magnuson (D-WA), and Philip Hart (D-MI)
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: You indicated at one time that you thought that the White House probably played a role in 1971, when Howard Baker made his second run against Scott. Why did they think that Senator Baker would have been a more acceptable leader?

Hildenbrand: Well, he was the son-in-law of Dirksen. He had conservative credentials. Scott was not one of them. They were not about to make him one of them. I think they might have thought that Howard Baker was something that they could have molded to do whatever it is they wanted him to do. As they found out in the Watergate hearings, that would not have been the case, had they been able to get him to successfully defeat Hugh Scott. He probably was and is as independent as Hugh Scott ever was. They would not have had a great

choice. And if they had looked back further to the first days, as I pointed out, that he became a senator, the first thing he did was take on his father-in-law. So they should have known right then and there that this isn't somebody for them to mess with. But they didn't like Scott. They weren't comfortable with him, and they wanted somebody that they thought they could be comfortable with. Baker fitted that. Plus the fact that he was a new face.

Ritchie: Well, I wanted to ask a couple of questions about foreign policy at that time, and Vietnam was the foreign policy question of the period. Just about the time that Scott became the Republican leader, the moratorium took place. I wondered if you recall your reaction to the moratorium, and what its impact was on Capitol Hill?

Hildenbrand: Those were difficult days for everybody. The position that Hugh Scott had taken was that he was going with the president. The flag had been committed and we were going to do whatever it was. He supported the president. It was difficult for members. At one time a group of these moratorium people came in and laid down between the Ohio Clock and the entrance to the Chamber. It wasn't just ten or fifteen, it was maybe seventy-five or a hundred of them all laid prone on that marble floor, so that it was almost impossible to get from our office to the Chamber. You had to step over bodies in order to get there. Then they were all over the

place. They sat in in our own office, about six or eight of them I guess, sat in the little tiny reception room that's part of S-230. Finally, about 7:00 o'clock in the evening I was forced to call the police and have them evicted, because we were trying to close and there was no way that we could close while they were there. But they were orderly and they created no problems other than the inconvenience of having them in your office. There was no way in talking to them that I could convince them that their position was not a proper one, anymore than they could convince me that our position was not proper. So it was a stalemate.

It was difficult times for members, many who were not quite as strong at that particular time as Scott was, or were in the position that Scott was, were really torn between what was right and what wasn't right. I remember when we were selected to go to China, as the opening group that went into the People's Republic of China in 1972, two months after Nixon had been there, Mansfield and Scott were the only two members that went. We were on our way, and we got to Honolulu, and they had just bombed Haiphong Harbor. Congressman John McCain's father, at that time Admiral McCain, came out to meet us at Hickham Field, and told us of the bombing. Mansfield was convinced that the Chinese

would withdraw their invitation, and almost turned us around and brought us back. But as it turned out they welcomed us with open arms and treated us exceptionally well. While we talked about Vietnam, they sort of understood our position as well.

But it was a difficult time for everybody. It was unlike anything that this country was used to, waging a war which we weren't trying to win. For those people with military backgrounds, it was very difficult to understand how this could go on. Then throughout that whole period, Wayne Morse and Ernest Gruening and George McGovern, from '64, '65, '66, kept up a daily, steady drumbeat on the floor of anti-Vietnam speeches. Morse loved to call it "McNamara's War," Bob McNamara was then Secretary of Defense, and he continually referred to it as "McNamara's War." In fact, one of the funny stories of the Senate took place when Morse was making one of his daily speeches, which he made at night. He never made them during the day. We have since changed the method of operation, because every night we had to keep everybody there while Wayne Morse made his speech on Vietnam.

Danny Brewster, who was then the senator from Maryland, junior senator, I guess [Joseph] Tydings was senior senator, was in the chair. Morse was making his speech, and it got to be 7:00 o'clock, and Brewster had a very important meeting downtown, and there was nobody to relieve him. The Democrats, who had control of the chair, had failed to find somebody to take his place, and he had to go. He caught Morse between paragraphs, or sentences, or taking a drink of water, or something, but Morse had stopped talking, and Danny Brewster just banged the gavel and said "The Senate stands in recess till noon tomorrow," and walked out the door. Here was Wayne Morse,

---

sputtering on the floor, trying to get the Senate back in session so he could finish his speech. Of course, having adjourned it, there was no way you could get it back.

When we met at noon the next day, why Mansfield cleared the galleries and they had a knock-down-drag-out on the floor, among themselves, about what had happened, and how it had happened, and senatorial courtesy, and all those other things. Then we changed over to the point that we created Special Orders in the beginning of the day. We just felt it was easier to come in at 8:00 o'clock in the morning to do two hours of Special Orders than it was to stay till 10:00 o'clock at night. So Mansfield and Scott changed the practice, and it's still in effect now. But that's why they did it.

Ritchie: That's a classic story.

Hildenbrand: Yes. But it was difficult times. I wondered how much that steady drumbeat of anti-Vietnam really led to the situation that we found ourselves in. I wonder whether the people of the United States would have reacted as they did if respected members of the Senate, such as the three that we've mentioned, and certainly some others, had not taken the position that they took and really continued day after day after day to call it a war without honor, and any number of things. Maybe somebody will determine at some point what impact that had on people. But it was unlike anything that we had ever been through. It was unlike Americans. Once you committed

---

the flag, America always did whatever was necessary to do to go ahead and win a conflict, but this was not the case in this situation.

Ritchie: Scott supported Nixon right down the wire on foreign policy and Vietnam, but did he have any private anguish over this? Or was it largely because of his position as leader . . . .

Hildenbrand: Well, it was that, as well as the fact that he had also been steeped in military, he had been a Naval Commander, Navy Lieutenant, whatever his rank was, during the Second World War. He had that on which to base a decision relative to this. But also because he was leader. I guess you'd have to ask him, but during the days that I worked with him, I believe that he certainly had some mental anguish over the situation that we found ourselves in. But he was a good soldier, and it never came out. He was pulled by a lot of his advisors, his personal staff of his Pennsylvania office desperately wanted him to break with Nixon and go on his own and castigate the war. But he never did. He used to get extremely angry with them for continuing to try to push him into that kind of a situation, because he had made a decision: he was going to stay with the president, and he did.

Ritchie: Did the fact that certain members of the party took very strong opposite positions, like Mark Hatfield, and Charles Goodell, and John Sherman Cooper, did that create any personal problems?

Hildenbrand: No. No. No. We were sort of used to that. We were a fragmented party anyway, and there was always a group of senators who were on the other side of some issue that was a party issue. This was just another one of those issues that split the party. The Javits, and the Cases, and the Brookes, and the

Sherman Coopers were always at loggerheads most of the time with the mainstream of the Republican party. This was just another case of that

Ritchie: On foreign policy and defense issues, did Scott's office work with people from the State Department and Defense Department?

Hildenbrand: Yes, although the Defense worked very, very closely with the Armed Services Committee. Whenever major legislation of a defense category came up, we had a room set aside where the people from the Defense Department would be holed up, to give advice, to be available for members who needed to talk to them about weapons systems or whatever it was. They dealt with the John Towers and the Strom Thurmonds and the Barry Goldwaters more so than the State Department. The State Department did not deal that much with the Foreign Relations Committee. They dealt a lot with the leadership.

Ritchie: Why was that?

Hildenbrand: The issues were just different. It's easy to look at a weapons system and make a decision whether you want to build it

---

or not build it. Foreign policy issues were different. They were more difficult, and I think they felt that the leadership needed to be much more involved. While they dealt with the Foreign Relations Committee, they sort of dealt with them in conjunction with the leadership. Whereas, with the Armed Services Committee pretty much our mandate came from them, which was not the case in foreign policy. That was a case where the leadership in conjunction with the Foreign Relations Committee made decisions from a policy standpoint. And also the president is more directly involved, really with the foreign policy of the country. Even though he's Commander in Chief of the armies, nevertheless you think of him in terms of setting the foreign policy, and Defense sort of carries out that policy, whatever it happens to be.

Ritchie: I came across a very critical statement Scott made about the Foreign Relations Committee, about 1970, about the hearings they were holding on Vietnam.

Hildenbrand: That was Fulbright's era, who was of course a dove, and certainly anti-Vietnam. That again was consistent with Scott's position as it related to Vietnam and as it related to the president, and our involvement in Vietnam. He was not necessarily always happy with the Foreign Relations Committee and the positions that it took. He would have been the kind of a person who would have supported the position that partisanship stops at the water's edge.

I don't think that he felt that they were being in the public interest, or the public good was being served by the kind of hearings that Bill Fulbright and the committee were undertaking. Mansfield was there, Muskie was there, there was a lot of anti-Vietnam sentiment on that committee.

Ritchie: Did he see it as a partisan issue?

Hildenbrand: Yes, we always looked at it -- even though we had guys of our own that were out there -- we always felt that it was a party issue. The Democrats were a lot more dovish than certainly we were, as regards to Vietnam. And I think he also felt that if there had been somebody else in the White House it might have been different. Because Johnson didn't have the problems, although he had some from some very vocal members, and to some degree he decided not to run because of Vietnam, but it gave the Democrats as much problem as Nixon's role in Vietnam gave us on the Republican side. It's very hard to be against your president, as they found out. Each party looked at it as a party issue, even though I'm not so sure that by that time it was. I think the country by that time was determining that it was a country issue, and it didn't make any difference what party was there. They just had to get out. You know, Aiken's line that's been quoted over and over again: Tell them we won, and leave. Maybe we should have done that.

Ritchie: It was about that time, around '70 or '71, that Robert Griffin got on the Foreign Relations Committee and made a concerted effort to establish a minority staff. Up to that point the staff was supposedly serving both sides of the aisle. Was that an outgrowth of the Republican dissatisfaction with the committee?

Hildenbrand: No, I don't think so. I think what Bob was trying to do really was to establish minority representation on committees as a whole. While we had some in all instances, they were sort of token. I think that he was trying to do that, and in the back of his mind, as you pointed out, was the fact that he did not feel that the committee was being bipartisan in its feelings toward the Vietnam War, and therefore Republicans such as himself and others had no place to go to get help, to take the other positions, which was in support of the Vietnam War. So he went out and tried to get some minority staffing to do that.

Ritchie: That set in motion the whole movement to establish minority staffs across the board.

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: How do you think that's worked out?

Hildenbrand: Well, it's better than it was. In some cases it worked out exceptionally well. In some others it didn't work out as well. A lot depended on the relationship between the chairman and

---

the ranking member. But then when Adlai Stevenson and Bill Brock came along with the Stevenson-Brock things then they decided that in addition to the minority staffing they would also provide for a legislative assistant for each committee on which you served. So they added to that. I think, with that in place, the committees now have a tendency to become a little more professional. Rather than having it so split as it was in those days, there are splitting at the top, but the others are professional and they serve both Democrats and Republicans.

Ritchie: You mentioned the trip to China, which really was an important one for Mansfield and for Scott. By coincidence, in reading through your records of that trip, I realized that today is the thirteenth anniversary of the day you left on that trip.

Hildenbrand: April 15, 1972.

Ritchie: Could you tell me about the background about how that trip came about?

Hildenbrand: It came about, I think, because Nixon when he went over there indicated his desire to open up avenues. One of the easiest ways would be of course for another branch of government, the legislative branch, to also go to China and to meet with the People's Congress and representatives of the People's Congress. I think he also, in the back of his mind, realized that he himself needed help

---

if he were going to open up the lines of communication between these two countries after twenty-five years of having no communication. The way to do that was to get the leaders of the House and Senate involved, and get them to China, and let them see these people and talk to these people and understand what these people were all about. Because, you must remember, for twenty-five years we didn't have any idea, these people could have had two heads and we'd have no idea who they were or what they were. We didn't know. They'd been cut off from us. It was with a lot of trepidation that we went to China, in terms of not knowing exactly where we were going or what we were getting ourselves into. We had no idea.

It was a very small group. It was Mansfield and Scott and the two wives, and eight staff. Mansfield took Frank Valeo, who was then the Secretary of the Senate, and a fellow who now works for Chris Dodd, who was on the Foreign Relations Committee staff [Robert Dockery], and Salpee Sahagian, who was Mansfield's personal secretary. Scott took myself and Martin Hamburger, his administrative assistant in the Pennsylvania office. We took an interpreter, and a friend of Mansfield's who was the manager of the whole trip. That was pretty much the staff, and pretty much the size of the delegation.

We went to Hawaii and overnighted there, and then went into Guam and overnighted in Guam. Mansfield did that because he wanted to be

---

completely rested when he first went into China. We got into Shanghai about 3:00 o'clock, the 18th I guess it would have been by that time. We were met in Shanghai by members of the People's Republic, and were transported then in an airplane, which stayed with us, a Chinese, People's Republic airplane. It stayed with us the entire time of our trip, the same crew, and the same people were with us the whole time that we were there. Our plane went someplace, and we never saw it again until Hong Kong.

Ritchie: So the basic purpose of the trip was just to get acquainted and to talk, rather than any agenda?

Hildenbrand: We had no agenda. We were totally at the mercy of the People's Republic. We had no idea what we were going to do. We had no idea where we were going to go. We had no idea who we were going to see. We just got off the airplane and they took over and we went wherever they told us to go. We went into the airport and had tea, which was standard. They have that all the time. And soft drinks, and hot towels -- in this case we had cold towels because it was the beginning of the warm season. Then the Revolutionary Committee member of Shanghai told us it was time to get on the plane and go to Beijing. So we went to Beijing, and were met in Beijing again by the Revolutionary Committee members. It was then, oh, 6:00 o'clock maybe, 6:15. We were transported in town into a compound, which had been the residency of the East German delegation, when they were

---

there. They had moved out. It was a walled area, with a number of buildings. Mansfield and Scott were in one building where we had the dining facilities, and the rest of us were scattered in some of the other buildings.

As I pointed out in the memoirs that I wrote relative to the trip, we had our first meal in China alone, with no Chinese in attendance. They wanted it that way. They felt that we should be by ourselves the first night. So they fed us whatever it was they fed us, we had no idea what it was we were eating, but they gave us a meal. Then Scott decided that we ought to take a walk. We walked down to the gates, only to find that they were locked and that there were guards on duty. At that particular time, we really were very much concerned. We really didn't know what we had gotten ourselves into. We realized that we were in this foreign country that no one had been in twenty-five years, and that we were locked in a compound and had no way of knowing what to do, or anything else. We were just sort of alone.

Ritchie: There was no American embassy to call.

Hildenbrand: No, there was no one. I don't know that we were exactly frightened, but I think we were a little concerned about what this was all about. We went back to our respective places and went to bed. The Chinese have so many fine customs. They wake you up at 6:00 o'clock. In this particular instance, the Chinese people are

---

all awakened at 6:00 o'clock anyway, because they have martial music that's played in the streets on those big speakers. So everybody gets up anyway. But they come and wake you up. They have an orange drink, and hot tea, and hot coffee when you get up. When you leave, you leave your dirty clothes on the bed, and when you come back at night your laundry has been done and it's laid back on the bed for you.

We went to breakfast, and then they tell you: this morning we're going to do this. They only do it in blocks of time, they don't go the whole day. They came to us and said that the deputy foreign minister, Chiao Kuan-hua, was going to meet with us that morning. Frank and Bob Dockery, Hugh Scott, Mansfield and myself were the ones who met with Chiao Kuan-hua. The rest of the delegation went to a hospital and some arts and crafts stores and some things like that. We met with them, and then we came back at noontime and had lunch, and then went to another arts and crafts factory or visited -- let me see, that would have been Wednesday -- we might have done the Summer Palace or something like that. Then Thursday we went back and had meetings again. By that time we'd met for five hours, I guess.

That late afternoon they came to us and said that the Premier wishes to meet with you after the state dinner. So that was the first time we knew that we were going to get a chance to meet with

Chou En-lai. We all went to the Great Hall. We were ushered into this corridor and down the corridor came this very imposing figure of Chou En-lai. Not imposing in terms of stature, because he wasn't a very big person, but certainly by reputation he was imposing. Everybody had their picture taken, and a group photograph, and then we went into dinner. First we went -- they always meet ahead of time before dinner and have conversation with everybody, and during that conversation he said that he wished to meet with the same group that had been meeting with the deputy foreign minister.

After the dinner, the rest of the people went back and we stayed until about a quarter of ten. I guess we were there for an hour and a half almost. Then he said that he understood that we were going the next day to the Great Wall and that we needed to get home and get some sleep because it was an hour's drive or so to the Great Wall. However, he said, you have met for five hours with the deputy foreign minister and he said "I do not want you to meet less with me than with him, so we will meet again." We had no more idea when that was going to be or not. So we went to the Great Wall and the Summer Palace. That night we went to the opera. They only had two in those days. One was the one that Nixon saw, and we went to one called "The White Haired Girl." Then Saturday we went and did something else, and Saturday afternoon we were informed that we were to stand by, that the Premier may wish to see us again. About 6:00 o'clock, I guess, they came to us and said to us that we were to get in the

cars. You could always tell when you were going to go someplace, because the cars would suddenly show up. We got in the cars and went to the Great Hall, and we met for another two and a half hours, until about 8:30 or so on Saturday night. Then we did some more sightseeing on Sunday, and I think Monday we left Beijing. We were there for five days.

Then we visited four more cities in China. We were there sixteen days, and wound up in Canton. We took the train from Canton to the border and then walked across the border through that gate that had been created. That, I think, was probably one of the most moving things that I had done, I don't know about some of the others. Having been in that country, my first time in a Communist country, and in a country that for twenty-five years we had not had any relations with, and then to be able to walk across that bridge and into Hong Kong, and to be met by the American ambassador and all the other Americans was quite a touching time for us. Then we stayed in Hong Kong for about two days and got adjusted to being back in free society again, and then came home.

Ritchie: Were you surprised at the reception, the way they addressed issues? Was there anything about the trip that was unanticipated?

Hildenbrand: We didn't know what to anticipate, so it's hard to say we didn't think it would be like this, because we didn't know

---

what it was going to be like. We had no idea what to expect. We had nothing on which we could compare or relate it to. You know, people now who talk to the Russians say they've softened their position or they've harden their position. We didn't have any of that on which to base anything. We were the first ones, and we didn't know what to expect.

Ritchie: For twenty-five years it had been the "yellow peril"' and the "Red Chinese menace." The Chinese were conceived of as the world villains.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and another reason I think Nixon selected these two people to go is that both of them were Chinese experts. Mansfield had been there during the Second World War, as had Valeo. They had served in China during the Second World War. Scott was a student of Chinese art. It's interesting that when we went to the Great Hall the first time, and met with Chou En-lai, when we sat down just before dinner, one of the first things that he said to Scott was: "Did you bring me a copy of your book?" Because he had written a book called *The Golden Age of Chinese Art*, which was the Tang Dynasty as far as he was concerned. They knew that he had written that book, and the first thing Chou En-lai asked was: "Did you bring me a copy of your book?" As it turned out, Scott had not. It had never dawned on him that they would even know that he had written the book. But when we got into Hong Kong, he went to a bookstore,

---

and God, there on the shelf was the book, *The Golden Age of Chinese Art*, which he bought and had immediately sent back to China to Chou En-lai.

Their grasp of America was so complete, compared to our total lack of knowledge of China. They knew so much about us, and about Mansfield and about Scott, from a personal standpoint. They knew that Mansfield had served in China, and they knew that Scott had written this book. They didn't understand our system, but they knew about it. They knew how it worked, but they didn't quite understand how it worked. We had the same people with us the whole time, we had a cadre of Chinese who were our hosts from the Foreign Policy Institute. They stayed with us for the whole sixteen days, until we got to Canton. It was interesting, there were a lot of tears that were shed when we boarded that train in Canton, particularly the women who had had lovely Chinese girls as their

interpretors and as their guides. There was a lot of exchanging of gifts and a lot of crying among the ladies, who had gotten very deep feelings in that brief period of time for each other.

Ritchie: I was interested that the Chinese had deliberately invited both the Republican and the Democratic leader at the same time, knowing it was an election year. That showed a certain amount of political finesse on their part.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. They knew much more about our methods of politics than we knew about theirs.

Ritchie: And there was a note from Hugh Scott in your report that Americans ought to be trained before they go to China on how to behave, and what the customs are.

Hildenbrand: In those days, here again, we were total neophytes. We had not been there in twenty-five years. We had no idea how to act. We were awfully, awfully cautious. We didn't know what to say. We knew little things about how to say "Hello, how are you?" and "Thank you" and "Good-bye," and "Till we meet again."

Ritchie: And "Enough, enough!"

Hildenbrand: Well, I didn't know about that until I had been there sixteen days. I should have known it when I first got there. It would have been much more of help to me than it was sixteen days later. We really didn't know what to expect. We had some briefings from the people who had been on the trip with Nixon, about taking toilet paper and not drinking the water, and about "Gombai," which is a down-the-hatch saying like we have in the United States. The Chinese love to catch you with a drink that they call Mai-Tai, which is 130 proof alcohol. It's served at every meal except breakfast. They love to catch you with a glass in your hand, because then they'll say "Gombai," and then it's impolite if you don't drink it

---

all down and turn your glass up. So we were very, very careful. And also, you cannot take a drink alone. You can't just reach over and pick up your glass and take it. You must toast someone at the table. You must always propose a toast. You can't just sip a drink, you're not permitted to do that. Those are little things which we had to learn which were not easy.

Of course, we were eating food that we had no idea what it was, and we were afraid to ask. I spent sixteen days there and never saw a dog the whole time I was there, or a cat. I've been there five times since, and I've never seen one yet. So we probably had a pretty good idea what some of the things we were eating were. But there was never any sickness. Oh, Salpee felt bad one time, and Mrs. Scott I think felt bad one time, but by and large no one got sick the entire time of the trip. I became, and some of the others, terribly sick on the trip home. I think a lot of it was that we flew direct in from Hong Kong without stopping, and the other part of it was that we had suddenly just totally relaxed. We had been under such pressure while we had been in China that our systems just relaxed and with it came all sorts of problems.

But it was an experience that you'll never live through again. Nothing will ever be like it. And I was fortunate in that having been there, I was there before I ever went to Russia. In '75 when I made my first trip to Russia it was so obvious for me to see the

---

difference in the societies. Even though they are both Communist societies, the difference in those two societies is almost as much as our society and their society is different.

Ritchie: In what ways could you see the differences?

Hildenbrand: Well, the people, fundamentally. The Chinese are a happy people. Their lot in life, which is less than what the Russians have, they were happy with it. Maybe they didn't know any better and that's fine, but regardless they were happy, smiling. Children were laughing and playing. They really enjoy life. The Russians on the other hand are very dour, like a Russian winter. Their faces reflect the hard times of that kind of thing. They don't speak. They hardly talk to you. They won't talk to you on the street. They're just not very friendly. It's a vast difference in those two societies.

Ritchie: What impact do you think that the trip had on Mansfield and Scott?

Hildenbrand: I think that they were greatly taken by the Chinese. I think they thought that what a tragedy it is that this society has been cut off from the rest of the world for this period of time. They evidenced concern over what do we do with them now that we've become friendly with them? How far do we go? What do we do about our friends on Taiwan, who have been loyal friends for so

long? But they both believed that it was certainly in the best interest of the United States that we had opened the dialogue that Nixon did, and that it certainly should continue. Two months after we went, Hale Boggs and Gerry Ford went, representing the House. Then the visits became more and more frequent. The White House took a number, Tom Korologos took a number of members over.

Part of the problem with the Chinese was that they were simply not geared up to have wholesale people descend on them like locusts. They weren't used to tourists. The only tourists that ever showed up were the people who came from the Eastern bloc countries, and they showed up in relatively small numbers. They had no other doors open to anybody on the outside world. They had no hotels of any consequence. They had no place to put people. Now Beijing has four new modern hotels. A lot of them are joint venture hotels with the Sheraton Corporation. I. M. Pei has just designed one that is just being completed, the Great Wall. So they're getting more and more used to having tourists, and there are now periodic trips. You read in the travel magazines where people in San Francisco are getting a trip up that's going to China for eight days or ten days or whatever it is.

They have a lot of guest houses. The Chinese are big for guest houses. The times that we've been there we've stayed mostly in hotels, except on the Howard Baker trip. Because of who he was,

majority leader, they put him in a guest house. And in that compound we saw buses of American tourists who were visiting in China.

Ritchie: Since you've made five or six trips altogether, how much has China changed?

Hildenbrand: It's like day and night, from now and the way it was then. That was a very structured society that was controlled strictly by Mao and by Cho En-lai. As I pointed out in the documents that I wrote, I believed at the time that they were going to run into some difficulty within their own society, because in discussing China with the people that were there as our guides and our hosts, they always kept referring back to how bad things were prior to the Revolution, which would have been the late '40s, when they threw Chiang Kai-shek out.

Speaking of Chiang Kai-shek, and I'll deviate for just a moment, we went to Chang-sha, which was a place where he had a summer home, and they had salt baths. That was where the Communists caught up with Chiang Kai-shek in 1936

and ran him out of the house and up into the hills. He escaped, but they preserved the house, and the bullet holes are there, and his false teeth, which were in a glass, are still in the glass. Or they were then, I don't know whether they still are now.

Anyway, because they had built the society on remembering when, I believed that when they reached a certain point where the age of the people at thirty did not remember when, they were then going to have a problem, because then they could no longer say "Look how good you have it, considering how you have had it." And the guy would say, "I don't remember how bad I had it." That's eventually what happened. After Chou died and Mao died, they no longer could present to the people the business of "look how good it is now compared to what it was." People would say, "it's bad now and we better do something about it." That's when they began to change.

They became Westernized. In the days when we first went in '72, everybody wore the same clothes. You had a choice of blue or gray, but you wore the same clothes. Women, children, everybody wore Mao suits. There was no other dress. When the counter-revolution came in, now you go over and they wear mini-skirts and halter-tops and are completely Western. In the days of Mao and Chou En-lai you were not permitted to show any affection in public. Kissing, holding hands were taboo, you were not permitted. Now they're just like Americans, they sit in the park and neck. It's been a drastic change in their society, and it will continue, I think, to change. They have now recently inaugurated private enterprise, such as you'll have private enterprise in a Communist country, but they've permitted someone to have a business of their own and do things on their own.

When we were there, there were two automobiles, both made in the China: the Shanghai and the Red Flag. Red Flag was a large, black touring sedan, and the Shanghai was a small car, somewhat like an MG. Now they have Hondas and Toyotas and all sorts of imports from all over the world. So the whole society is changing. They're getting more imports. Before they did nothing but export, now they're getting imports into the country. Of course, their balance of trade is still way out of whack, and they're getting much more out than they're getting in. But as delegations go over and talk to them, they create -- there are so many companies that now have offices in Shanghai or Beijing. They come in from Hong Kong on a daily basis.

They've just opened up the China Sea for oil exploration, and our own companies were the major bidders. Huan Su, who is going to be the ambassador at the end of this month -- he had been here as deputy chief of mission when they first opened

relations -- but he went back in the Foreign Affairs Department turned out to be the determining person as to who would get the contracts. He told me at a dinner over there one time before they awarded them, there were forty-eight companies bidding on off-shore leases, and I think forty-five of the forty-eight were American companies. And an American company got it. But they're really opening up their country. It may create more problems for them when they begin to get toasters and see what people do. It'll be quite a cultural shock.

Ritchie: I thought it was very telling that when Mansfield and Scott were arranging for other senators to go to China, the first they wanted to be invited were the chairman and ranking member of the Commerce Committee.

Hildenbrand: Yes, that was really to open up their markets. They had so much to offer us that we could see, and they were very proud of the things that they do. They did so much by hand. We sat and watched a man carve an elephant from a piece of ivory. It was almost primitive. He held the block of ivory by a strap, which came from the table around the piece of ivory down under his chair leg, and he held it by sitting on that chair. That's how he held that piece of ivory as he worked on its with his own hands. They did not have things very mechanical, but they're getting more and more mechanical now. But their work was just exquisite in its detail. It was obvious, what Mansfield was saying was: they've got a market here, once you open it up. So he was looking for that trading.

Ritchie: It must have been an incredible trip for Hugh Scott, who was a connoisseur of Chinese art.

Hildenbrand: One of the things that was good about having Scott was that we went to a lot of places to buy things. Friendship store was the only place you could go in those days, that was all they had were Friendship Stores. But they had a lot of antique jade. Of course, he knew jade backwards and forwards, so if you saw something

---

you liked, he immediately could tell you whether you were buying yourself a $15,000 piece of jade for $400, or whether you were buying a piece of $10 jade for $400. He knew exactly what the jade was all about, and we managed to bring nice pieces of jade back, because he was there. He couldn't wait to go shopping so that he could see all of these things that they had manufactured.

Ritchie: You've traveled extensively with members of the Senate over the years, and there is a sort of stereotype of congressional traveling as junketing, but I get

the sense that most people who go on them see them as worthwhile trips. What's your sense about the purpose and results of overseas traveling?

Hildenbrand: I think they got a bad name early on, and I think that there was back twenty years ago a lot of travel that should not have been, and a lot of "junketing." But I think that the Panama Canal treaty would not have been adopted by the Congress had members not been permitted to visit in Panama and talk to Torrijos and talk to the Americans down there, and understand that issue. I do not think that the relationships between the People's Republic of China and this country would be as solid as they are now, had it not been possible for members of Congress to visit, and members of the executive branch. I think that's true in any country.

We went to Australia in 1976. We had been the first delegation in ten years to have visited Australia -- and this is a keystone of our

---

defense in that part of the world, and yet nobody had ever been down there in ten years. That's sad, in a way, that we would permit ourselves to be pushed into a corner where we would not visit foreign lands because we'd get bad stories in the papers of junkets and whatever it is. The Indians have an old saying that you never know a person until you've walked a thousand miles in his shoes. That's the way this is. You don't know what these people are like until you've had a chance to visit with them in their country. I could not say enough about foreign travel in terms of members going on these things. Oh, sure, there may be some junkets still, but fundamentally, basically they're good for members of Congress to go to these places and visit. The moneys that are spent come back more than double in the value to this country that those trips have, both from their standpoint as well as from ours.

Ritchie: You've been along on the International Parliamentary Union trips and on other trips as well, is there any type of traveling that you find works better than others?

Hildenbrand: Well, I never did the IPU trips.

Ritchie: Oh, you didn't?

Hildenbrand: That was of my own choosing, because I don't think that that's a worthwhile organization. I've never thought that it is. It's made up of all of the countries of the world, none of whom

have a government that's anywhere close to ours. So what we ever expect to gain in going to those things for two weeks has always been beyond me. So I never went. I have no problems with them wanting to continue them, but I don't see any value that can be served by those particular trips. Now the Canadians and the Mexicans are the only two that we have bilateral visits with, we don't have any other countries. All of the countries of the world, almost, have asked us to enter into those kinds of things. We have resisted it. Mansfield resisted it, Scott, Baker. What the new leadership will do, I don't have any idea. But if you do as many as they want you to do -- Japan has always wanted us to do one, as has Germany -- you'll have one with every country, and the members will be someplace everyday. That's very difficult to do.

Small groups, six members at the most, are about all that I would want to take, and about all that I did take. The Russian trip in '75, we had thirteen members, that's the biggest trip that I ever went on. It's difficult to handle that many. You're looking at a plane load of forty-eight or forty-nine people; logistically it's hard to move that many people around in a foreign country. So the smaller the group is, the more you get out of those kind of trips. I would not take -- unless I was forced to -- more than twenty-one or twenty-two people total in a group, because then it becomes very difficult to manage.

But I'm a firm believer in travel. I think we have learned so much that it's stood us in such good stead by being able to visit Anwar Sadat, for example. A fantastic person, but you don't know that until you've been able to sit across the table or in a meeting room with him and listen to him, and realize that his views are not necessarily that much different than your own. He's got a different problem, he's in a different part of the world, but he's as rational as you are, and he wants the same things that you do -- and that's peace in the world. Anybody who doesn't go on a trip loses something. We've had some members who have said, "No, I don't want to go," who have gone, and have been amazed at what they have learned, and then can't wait to go again.

Ritchie: Just recently a delegation of senators pulled out of going to the Soviet Union because the Soviets wouldn't allow one of the Senate staff members to go.

Hildenbrand: John Ritch.

Ritchie: Did you ever have any troubles like that?

Hildenbrand: No.

Ritchie: That's a really rare occasion.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and Russia would be the only country by and large that would do something like that. We've had a few experiences

---

within countries. Mrs. Boren ran into some trouble in Saudi Arabia, in Jedda, because they have some strange customs relative to women, and women's dress. Bare legs are a no-no, and she tried to go into a store in Jedda with bare legs, and the shopkeeper would not allow her. There was nothing that the embassy people could do. It was their custom. But by and large you do not have difficulty in foreign lands. We've never had incidents such as John not being permitted to go on a delegation. It's a little unusual for any country to impose that kind of a restriction, but the Russians are a kind of a people that would do something like that. Most of the others would ignore it and not worry about it.

Ritchie: Well, at least now he knows they've been reading his reports.

Hildenbrand: That's right. That's exactly right. He'll be glad of that!

Ritchie: Do you generally have briefings for the members and their families about what kinds of cultural experiences to expect?

Hildenbrand: Yes, we prepare -- or I did prepare, I should say, when I was with the Secretary's office, my Office of Interparliamentary Services prepares papers, which we get from the State Department, and which we also prepare on our own, of temperatures and

---

weather conditions and any customs that there might be that they need to know. Things to wear and not to wear. Things to say and not to say. Places to shop and places to visit, things like that. The State Department's very good about that. They have a booklet for every country in the world which tells you pretty much about the country and its history, and who its government is, and things like that. Then we also have briefings for the members with the State Department before they go, and then we also have a briefing of the delegation itself, with the wives and everybody, so they know who's all going, and get familiar. Then the staff of my Interparliamentary Services and myself and the military that's going to be the guides on the trip, we get together and plan the agenda, and plan the places the timetables and the menus and things like that.

Ritchie: Did you ever worry that something could go wrong?

Hildenbrand: No. I've never had one go wrong. I guess maybe if I had, I'd worry. But I never had one go wrong. Most people are very, very good about things. The people on the Interparliamentary Services staff are experienced, and the military escorts are experienced. My predecessor trained me very well on trips that I took with him -- Stan Kimmitt. Most of the problems that we have really are with our own embassy people, because each delegation that comes in is a different delegation, and they act differently. Sometimes we came in and wanted certain things done a certain way and they were just

---

amazed that that's what we wanted, when somebody else had come in and wanted all sorts of things. We never permitted automobiles to be rented, for example, for members. Other delegations, every member had his own car. We many years ago said that's not the way we're going to do things, we're not going to be criticized anymore than we already are by helping them. So we always drove in minibuses and things like that. The embassy usually would provide a car for the chairman, but we didn't have one for every member, because it cost money to rent those cars and we just didn't do it.

Ritchie: Gave you a little more control over the circumstances if you had them all in the same bus.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes, exactly. And, if you needed to tell them tomorrow morning's schedule had changed, it was any easy place to have them under one roof, to be able to tell them that.

Ritchie: Well, I'm amazed that we've spent an hour and a half already, and I haven't asked about half the questions that I planned.

Hildenbrand: Well, I'll come back.

Ritchie: I think this would be a good stop. By the way, I looked through your files on the Chinese trip and I really enjoyed reading them.

Hildenbrand: Oh, that's right, I sent them over, didn't I? I forgot that I had sent them over. I guess I sent over the day-by-day thing, and then I sent a report over that we did. I remember I had them and I didn't know what to do with them, so Dick Baker said he'd like to have them. He said they sort of partly belonged to the Senate, and I guess they really do in a way.

Ritchie: You had a comment in there that if it had crawled, walked, or flown that you had eaten it while you were in China.

Hildenbrand: I think that's probably right. I'm almost convinced that that's an accurate statement. We ate bird's nest soup -- we ate about everything there was to eat.

End of Interview #4

Interview #5: Watergate
(Monday, April 22, 1985)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: I wanted to ask a few questions about the 1972 campaign. I noticed that Hugh Scott played an active role in the '72 presidential campaign. The report that he put out for the Senate Republicans that year was very critical of [George] McGovern, and Scott spoke out a lot during the campaign. Was that usual for the Republican leader? Or was he trying to get back into the good graces of the Nixon administration?

Hildenbrand: No, and I don't know that he was that much involved in the presidential campaign. He was involved certainly in a lot of the campaigns of his colleagues who were running. But as a former National Chairman of his party, and someone who had written a book -- if you recall, he wrote a book called *Come to the Party*, which was around '64 or thereabouts, about the time of the Goldwater campaign -- he was a political animal and was well respected in that field.

I had gone down to the Nixon reelection headquarters, and was working down there, so I wasn't really that well versed on what he was doing. But I know that he spent a lot of time helping out his colleagues who were running for reelection. I would hesitate to

---

think that he was that much involved in the Nixon campaign, as much as I think your questions implies. He would never have gotten into the good graces of those people in the first instance, and in the second instance, he would have never campaigned for that reason. I don't think he cared whether he was in their good graces or not. He had a job to do, and he was going to do that job. His relationship with Nixon was as good as it was ever going to be, and I don't think he cared much about what the rest of those people thought.

Ritchie: The reason I asked that question was because I looked through several sources and they all quoted the same line he used during that campaign, that

McGovern's campaign stood for "acid, amnesty, and abortion." That was pretty tough language.

Hildenbrand: Well, he was a very tough, pragmatic politician. And very partisan. He was very, very much a Republican. He never drew the line in regard to the kind of Republican it was. He was just as comfortable going out and taking on somebody who was opposing somebody like a Jesse Helms as he would a Jack Javits or a Ken Keating. He was really a very partisan politician.

Ritchie: Did he have much use for Senator McGovern at all, or was it just McGovern as a presidential candidate?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I think it was just McGovern as a presidential candidate. There was hardly anybody in the Senate that he didn't get

---

along with. I just think that he thought McGovern's ideas were for the birds, and he was just going to make sure that everybody in the country knew it. He was never hesitant about saying what he thought, and about taking on Democratic colleagues, and it had nothing to do with personalities.

Ritchie: There sometimes seems to be a different persona when someone runs for office -- campaigning for office sometimes makes people take on a more strident tone and lose some of their collegiality. Is that true?

Hildenbrand: I think that's true. And I think the closer the races are, that is, the closer the individual is in his race, the more the tendency is to become strident. There's a certain fear syndrome that sets in that maybe you're going to lose, so you have a tendency to become an attacker. The same is true, I guess, if you're running against somebody and you're down in the polls and you don't have really anything to lose, and so you go ahead and say whatever comes to your mind, and maybe you get lucky. I guess you take on a different personality. Only those individuals who have comfortable seats can afford to not change in their personality. Somebody said: "Show me a good loser and I'll show you a loser." That's the way I think politics are. If you're going to be genteel in a campaign, you can have your head handed to you.

Ritchie: I was interested that you said you went to work for the Committee to Reelect the President in '72. What did you do for them?

Hildenbrand: We broke the country down into regions, and there were I don't know how many of us, maybe six of us, and we had operatives in each of the

states. Our job was to just continually stay in touch with them. They continued to feed us information about what the papers were saying, how things were playing, how they weren't playing, what the polls were saying, what was going good, what was going bad. Then we would consolidate that, and then they would present that to the president. At the end of each week they'd give him an update on how it was going around the country, from his own people.

Ritchie: Did you have a particular part of the country that you covered?

Hildenbrand: I did the Northeast: Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, those states.

Ritchie: So you constantly got in touch with people there.

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm.

Ritchie: And who did you work for in the Committee to Reelect the President?

Hildenbrand: Bob Mardian, who became famous in Watergate, was down there, Kleindinst, that whole Nixon crowd that was around in those days, that all became part of Watergate, as it turned out.

Ritchie: That campaign was a strange one, in the sense that the White House really played its own campaign.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes.

Ritchie: Did you feel the division between the two, or that there was good communication or poor communication between the two?

Hildenbrand: Between what two?

Ritchie: Between the White House and the . . . .

Hildenbrand: It was the same thing. It was the Republican National Committee that didn't have any contact with the Reelection Committee.

Ritchie: Well, you had old-time connections with others in the party outside the White House, did people on the Republican National Committee ever get in touch with you about what was going on down there?

Hildenbrand: No. That's a decision the president makes. That wasn't the first time that somebody made that decision, to go out on

their own and form their own committee. The whole make-up of that White House, there was no doubt in anybody's mind that they would go their own way. They really didn't have any trust in anybody else, and any faith in anybody else to know as much or be able to do as good a job as they did.

Ritchie: Did you have any inkling while you working there that things were going wrong? That there was any problem?

Hildenbrand: No. The Watergate break-in had occurred, and then it sort of died down pretty much. People began to focus on the campaign. There wasn't that much involved. We just treated it as something that was a stupid thing for somebody to do, but we had no idea that there was as much behind it as it turned out that there was.

Ritchie: Why did you go down there, considering you had responsibilities with the Senate, and Congress was still in session?

Hildenbrand: We went down about the time the session was over, about the last five or six weeks of the campaign. Those of us that are political animals, we're like fire horses -- when the bell rings you want to get hitched up and go. I'd been involved in campaigns since '56. This was a campaign, and I didn't want to sit on the sidelines. They always ask for volunteers, for people to go down and help out, so I was very happy to do that.

Ritchie: You had the one state in your region that they didn't carry.

Hildenbrand: Massachusetts.

Ritchie: Did you suspect that?

Hildenbrand: We knew that all along. We did not believe that it would be of the landslide proportion that it was. We knew that he was doing exceptionally well throughout the country. I don't think we thought the day before that he would in fact carry all the states but Massachusetts and the District of Columbia. Minnesota, it seems to me, was fairly close in those late days, and some others that we thought would eventually because of their history of Democratic politics would go Democratic. But, as it turned out, the whole thing went Republican.

Ritchie: Then, when the election was over, you came back to the Senate?

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm.

Ritchie: I was reading Dan Rather's book, *The Palace Guard*, on Haldeman and Ehrlichman, and he has a story in it that shortly after the election Haldeman called Hugh Scott and said that the president wanted another Republican leader of the Senate. Scott said he

---

wouldn't believe that unless he heard it directly from Nixon, and Nixon never called him back. Is that story accurate?

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: I find that an unbelievable story, but it's amazing that it's true.

Hildenbrand: They couldn't find anybody to run against him. Howard Baker had already run twice, and wasn't about to go the third time. They couldn't scare anybody up to take Scott on. By that time, Watergate was still there, and members were beginning to look at that. Also, it was Nixon's last term. So that was just something that Haldeman would like to say.

Ritchie: I can't imagine that he would have thought he could have succeeded in talking Scott into stepping down.

Hildenbrand: They had no conception of Congress as a body or the individuals that made up that body. They figured you call up a guy and tell him the president doesn't want you, he'll quit. Well, the president could call up and sometimes that wouldn't have made any difference. If the president had called Hugh Scott and said, "Hugh Scott, I don't want you to be leader," he might just as well have told the president to go to hell. Presidents don't dictate to the Congress, as a rule, as to who's in the leadership. Scott would just

---

as soon have told the president, "I don't like Haldeman. I want you to get another chief of staff." Made as much sense.

Ritchie: That was the period when Nixon went up to Camp David and was making decisions on everyone in his administration.

Hildenbrand: He had asked for resignations from everybody. I guess Haldeman thought that that included the people up on the Hill. He thought they

were part of the administration, I guess. But, I remember that they had asked for everybody's resignation, and they were going to decide whether they should stay or go.

Ritchie: Were they losing touch with reality?

Hildenbrand: I don't think they ever had any touch with reality. I don't think they ever understood. I think I said earlier, they needed a lesson in ninth grade civics. I've contended that for as long as I can remember in dealing with them, that they just never understood the Founding Fathers and how they put this government together, and how it was supposed to operate. From their standpoint, they didn't want checks and balances. They were the administration, he was the president, and everybody was supposed to do their bidding. As I say, they would have been great in a monarchy. They didn't do so good in a democracy.

Ritchie: It was in '72 and early '73 that Nixon was following the policy of impounding funds that Congress had appropriated. Was there any concern in the Republican ranks over that kind of presidential power?

Hildenbrand: No. That wasn't new. Lyndon Johnson did that, and ran into a hailstorm of opposition on the Hill when he tried to impound funds. They had a big meeting of the Appropriations Committee. Alan Boyd, I think was then head of Transportation, and they were impounding highway funds. That's how they got in trouble, because highway funds are trust fund money. They tried to impound moneys they didn't even have -- it wasn't even theirs in the first place. It was in a trust fund that was designed strictly for highways. So they ran into a big firestorm over that. But impoundment is something that has been on the books for a long time and presidents have used it from time to time, so it's nothing that members get excited about. They just make sure they don't get it done.

Ritchie: I got the feeling that there was a sense of helplessness in some respects. Congress would appropriate money and the president would impound it, and there seemed to be no congressional response to a situation like that.

Hildenbrand: Well, Congress always managed to respond to those kind of things. I don't remember anybody impounding moneys in which the Congress sooner or later were not able to have that money spent. They have so many weapons at their disposal against a president that he's got to be foolish to go ahead, for the little that he was going to gain by that impoundment, to suffer what he could suffer in the long run. Because they control all of the purse strings.

If I remember, back in those days somebody even offered an amendment to cut out the moneys for the salaries of the people at the White House, which is a way that they get everybody's attention. So I would not feel sorry for the Congress against any president on a one on one. The only real power he has is veto, and even that two-thirds of the Congress can shove it right down his throat. So I would not feel sorry for Congress.

Ritchie: So Nixon was really stirring up a hornet's nest in trying to impound, if ultimately he wasn't going to be able to get his way.

Hildenbrand: But here again, that was the way they thought. It wasn't a question of whether they would get their way or not get their way. It was a question, from their perspective, of what's right. This is what we want to do. And they never understood that just because they wanted to do it doesn't necessarily make it so. They did those things that they wanted to do, and Congress, whenever

---

they wanted to, didn't let them. Then they'd rail at the Congress. But the bottom line was always that Congress would let them do whatever Congress wanted them to do, but was not going to give them a blank check.

And you were still dealing with a Democrat-controlled House and Senate, which is tough for any president, let alone one that wants to engage in confrontational politics -- which was another thing those people never understood. It's one thing if you want to get into a battle that you can win, but to get into a battle like that that you haven't got a prayer of winning, it never dawned on them that the votes were sitting up here and they were all Democratic votes. I don't know how they expected to win anything. In fact, they had some defectors on the Republican side in most instances. They decided that they were going to run against the Congress consistently, and that's what they did.

Ritchie: The same thing was true in foreign policy, in the sense that they believed they could operate independently.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but they were much closer to being right in foreign policy that the Congress has been right in getting involved to the degree that it has gotten involved. Were it not for the Vietnam war, and were it not for the War Powers Act of Jack Javits', we would be about where we've always been in terms of foreign policy. The Congress would allow the president to go ahead and set that

---

foreign policy. But it's like sharks in the water: the more blood there is, the more sharks. They got a taste of blood during Vietnam and decided that they could

begin to set foreign policy. And I really don't think that it has stood the country in good stead because they're as much involved in foreign policy as they are. It has tied, I think, the president's hands in going ahead and trying to do the kind of things he would like to do in the rest of the world.

Ritchie: The War Powers Act, even before it was passed, must have been a divisive issue in the Republican ranks.

Hildenbrand: Well, the conservatives, of course, believed then and now that the president has the right to establish the foreign policy of the United States, and commit the military might of this country, and that Congress has only the power the Constitution gives it to declare war. It doesn't have the power, according to them, to decide where and when that flag will be committed. But they took a different view, and with the War Powers Act they became a party to this so that if you send troops in someplace, if you don't get the approval within thirty days you've got to get them out. That, by its very nature, has restricted, I'm sure, presidents from moving along those lines. Unless you can move into a campaign and settle it, within that thirty day period, so that when the thirty days are up there aren't any troops there to withdraw -- as was the case in Grenada. By the time they notified this body up here that they were

---

there, they were gone. It was over. So you have to prepare for those kind of things, but it's very restrictive on a president, in his ability to do what he thinks is best. The unfortunate part about it is that the Congress never has all of the facts, or the details, as a president does. He makes his decisions based on those facts, and Congress just throws up its hands and screams bloody murder, but really doesn't have the facts to back it up.

Ritchie: Did Scott work in any way to dissuade Javits?

Hildenbrand: No. I'm not so sure that Scott, being a creature of the Congress as he was, and having gone through that terrible, brutal effect of Vietnam, did not go along with Javits and say we've got to do something and this maybe is the most sensible thing to do. It would have been consistent, I think, with Scott's feelings.

Ritchie: In the spring of '73 the Watergate story began to dominate everything. The Senate appointed the special committee to investigate the presidential campaign. Can you tell me a little about the background of that, from the Republican point of of view, and particularly on the decisions on how to appoint the Republican members of the Watergate Committee?

Hildenbrand: Scott made the decision who to put on there. He was under some pressure from the White House. They wanted to be a party to it, they wanted to make the selections, and Scott wasn't

---

about to let them do that. Scott would listen to whatever they had to say, but he wasn't about to let them tell him who was going to be on there. He went ahead and made the selections. He talked with Mansfield and the two of them talked and exchanged views as to who ought to be on, and who ought to be chairman.

Scott decided that he wanted Howard Baker to be the ranking member of that committee. He believed that he would get along exceptionally well with Sam Ervin, which as it turned out he did. He didn't get along too well with Sam Dash, but he got along with Sam Ervin. Then, Scott had campaigned for Lowell Weicker in 1970, and had a lot of respect for Lowell and decided that he would bring some semblance of balance so that the people would not say: this is going to be a whitewash, they're putting all Nixon supporters on it. Lowell Weicker could never have been called a Nixon supporter. Then they put Ed Gurney, who definitely was a Nixon supporter on there. So what he had was somebody that the anti-Nixons would be happy with, in Lowell Weicker; somebody that the pro-Nixon people would be happy with, in Ed Gurney; and then somebody that neither side could complain about, who was a very fair individual, in Howard Baker -- and who was very articulate.

Ritchie: Did you work with the committee after it got started?

Hildenbrand: No. It had its own staff. Howard Liebengood, the former Sergeant-at-Arms, was a member of that Watergate staff, as a matter of fact. He came up here from Tennessee to be on that staff. But we had very little to do with it. We did from time to time have meetings in which they would brief the leader on how it was going, and what was happening, and what to expect.

Ritchie: Scott stayed a loyalist, despite all he had to put up with. It's rather amazing that he stayed as loyal to the president as long as he did.

Hildenbrand: Yes. You know, the president flat out told him that he had not been involved in anything, and sent Alexander Haig up from time to time to buttress those feelings, that he didn't have any idea what this was all about, and had no part in it. In fact, and Scott has said this many times, in early December, about the last time that Scott made some very strong pleas on behalf of the president, they brought transcripts -- the tapes had broken by that time, Alex Butterfield had told them about the taping system. They went out to Scott's house

and gave him a transcript, and he read the transcript and then afterwards once again stated emphatically his support of the President of the United States; that he had done nothing; that he had read the transcripts and that there was nothing at all to them. What he did not know at that time, and what he

---

learned later was that they did not show him all of the transcript. That's when the whole thing came apart, when that came out.

Ritchie: From your position, in the Republican leader's office, did you feel that the Nixon White House handled things well on their end or were you frustrated by what they were doing? Do you think they were lobbying effectively at that time?

Hildenbrand: Well, no. They carried that pretty much on their own. We were really not that much involved. The Watergate Committee was involved, but no one else really was involved. It was strictly the White House and what they were doing with the Justice Department. It became almost ludicrous, because every time something would happen it would get worse. You know, there was the [L. Patrick] Grey situation -- you remember, he said he threw papers in the Potomac River.

Ritchie: "Deep-sixed" them.

Hildenbrand: Yes. And everybody just got to the point where they just shook their head and wondered what the hell was going to be next. They could not believe that people as steeped in politics, as Nixon certainly was, could resort to the kind of things that they resorted to. There was no damage control that anybody could find.

Ritchie: Did the administration lose control of other legislation as well at that time?

Hildenbrand: No, not that was noticeable. Nobody ever voted against anything because of Nixon and Watergate and things like that. Nixon was not that well thought of on the Hill in the first instance, so my guess is that with or without Watergate he would not have been any more or less successful than he was, in terms of legislation.

Ritchie: I wondered in the sense that they didn't have very much time to devote to other issues.

Hildenbrand: As long as the Watergate Committee was meeting we didn't have anything on the floor. It was taking a lot of time of members because anytime you went anywhere near a press person they didn't care about anything except talking to you about Watergate. So members did devote a lot of time to Watergate, although we were not involved in it.

Ritchie: Was there any sense of strategy on the part of the party on how to deal with the problems being created by Watergate?

Hildenbrand: We had no problems with anything until it got to the point where the House decided that impeachment proceedings were in order. Then we suddenly realized that, hey, if that happens, we become the court of last resort, and it's coming over here, and we better decided now how are we going to handle it, what are we going to do? We met with the Sergeant-at-Arms and began to talk about lighting in the Chamber. We studied previous impeachment trials in

---

the Senate to see how they conducted them. We got the language that was necessary, the procedures that would be required when the House brought over its article of impeachment. We did all that. We were ready to go. If the House had impeached him and he had not resigned, we were ready to conduct the trial. We had met with [Warren] Burger, and we were ready to go. We didn't want to, but we were ready to do it as the duty of the Senate. But we were sure hoping it went away someplace.

Ritchie: As a head counter, what was your feeling about how it would have turned out if there had been a vote in the Senate?

Hildenbrand: Oh, he would have lost. I don't know whether anybody's written it, but when Goldwater -- when Scott went down to the White House, whether Barry went with him or not, I'm not sure, initially he didn't -- but Scott went down and told them that he couldn't see any more than ten to twelve votes in the Senate against impeachment. That was when, on that Tuesday afternoon when the vice president was there, Ford was there, they began to talk about going down and telling the president to resign. Ford, as soon as the discussion started, got up and said, "Gentleman, I must leave." He said, "I do not want to be a party to whatever it is you're going to decide in this body at this time."

Ritchie: This was the Republican Conference?

Hildenbrand: Yes. So he left, and they went back at it, and that's when they commissioned Scott and Goldwater to go down to the president and tell him

exactly what the situation was. That's also the time that Goldwater got up and made an impassioned plea, and then said, "He has lied to me for the last time." So they went down and told him what was what. And he resigned the next day.

Ritchie: Did Alexander Haig have anything to do with that conference?

Hildenbrand: He was not there. Haig had made many, many visits to Scott. In fact, it got to the point where we used to sneak him in the old Law [Library] Door and take him up that back elevator in the Capitol up to the secure rooms on the fourth floor. Then Scott would meet him up there, so that people would not know that Haig was up there. Because, if you remember, in the late, late days of that there was some talk that Haig had become president, because of how things were going he was the only one that was functioning down there. So he used to sneak in and talk with Scott from time to time, without the press knowing he was even there.

Ritchie: Did you ever sit in on any of those meetings?

Hildenbrand: I did not.

Ritchie: It was just the two of them?

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: And it was just to keep Scott informed on what was happening?

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm. And with just the two of them it made it possible there wouldn't be any leaks as to what was happening. Haig knew the situation, and knew the support -- or lack of support -- that there was in the Senate. He could not bring himself to be the one to tell the president, hey, you know, you've got to go. Because he wouldn't do that, why that's when they decided that somebody had to go do it. So they picked Scott and Goldwater.

Ritchie: Did Haig suggest that a delegation should go down there.

Hildenbrand: No.

Ritchie: And there was an actual vote of the conference?

Hildenbrand: They didn't need a vote. They just all said that's a good idea, why don't Barry and Scott go do it. They didn't need to vote on it. Even the most dyed Nixon supporters at that time could read the handwriting that was on the wall.

Ritchie: It's still hard for me to figure Scott out. The Nixon administration and the conservatives seemed to be so against him, and yet he's still obviously very influential. He's the man delegated to go down for this very delicate situation.

Hildenbrand: That's because the people at the White House did not think about Hugh Scott the way his colleagues did. If the people at the White House had thought that here's man who got elected twice leader and once whip, against the strongest of opposition, Everett Dirksen and Howard Baker, with all of the conservative ties that they had, and still managed to win three races like that, they should have realized that he had a great deal of respect among his colleagues. But they always felt that they could do whatever they wanted to do.

Ritchie: Well, it was in the midst of all of this, in January of 1974, that you became the Republican secretary. That was quite a time to step into that job.

Hildenbrand: Yes, because six months later Nixon resigned. I had been involved in most of it, and then I had my own campaign to wage when Mark Trice notified Norris Cotton in New Hampshire that he was going to resign. Cotton called Hugh Scott to tell Scott, and Scott was in Japan, I think, at the time. I called him and told him, and then told him at the same time that I felt that I had no choice but to try to seek that post, since it was open, and since I was the highest ranking staff person, that I thought I just had to go for

that. Whether I won it or not, I felt that I had to do it. So I began to call the leadership and let them know that I was interested in this, and that I wanted to do that.

Howard Greene was the only other one who would have been under consideration, because he had been deputy to Mark. He on his own made a decision, came to see me, and said that he would just as soon stay deputy and had no intentions of running against me, or letting them talk him into it. Hruska, and Oliver Dompierre, the Dirksen people, wanted him very much to do that. But he said no, that he was going to stay deputy if I would have him, and I said, "Of course. I have no problems with that."

So they put my name up at one of the Tuesday luncheons. Jim Pearson, the senator from Kansas, still loves to tell the story that I'm the only person he knows who lost a one man race. They put my name up, and yet I was not elected that time, because the conservatives still did not want me to be secretary and still hoped that they could find somebody to run against me. They talked about people like Gordon Allott, the ex-senator from Colorado.

Senator Gordon Allott (R-CO)
Senate Historical Office

You know, they were grasping at straws to find anybody that would run against me. So the caucus broke up and they had made no decision. In those days, we had a personnel committee, which was comprised of Hruska and of Baker. They came into the back room, in our leader office, to tell Scott what had happened. Baker, at that time, said to Hruska, ""Look,

---

I don't know what it is you're trying to do, but I don't want any part of this, and if you continue I'm going to resign from this personnel committee." He said, "Hildenbrand is eminently qualified to be the secretary of the minority, and I don't see any reason why we're going through this exercise. I think we ought to have another meeting and get it done." So they called a caucus for Thursday morning at 9:00 o'clock in the Russell Building, and elected me then secretary of the minority.

Ritchie: Was Hruska still smarting, perhaps, from 1969?

Hildenbrand: Of course. I was a Scott person, and certainly not a conservative. *Human Events* had called me an "evil genius." They thought of me as a liberal and had no use for liberals being in powerful party positions of any kind.

Ritchie: I saw those references to the "evil genius." They somehow thought that you were persuading Scott to change his mind on things?

Hildenbrand: Well, no, it came about as a result of the Voting Rights Act, which I have talked about, Hruska and the administration's proposal, and the Hart-Scott proposal. They accused me of being the person behind the Hart-Scott that managed to get Hart-Scott passed and defeat Hruska and the administration, which was very far from the truth, because I wasn't that much involved in it. I

---

certainly was not the one that caused it to be defeated. It sort of fell of its own weight. It wasn't a very good bill in the first place. But they nevertheless labeled me as such. Then about three years or four years later they made their peace with me. They did that before I became secretary, and then after I was secretary for a while they made a statement that I had made my peace with the conservatives. I didn't know that I was at war with them; I thought they were at war with me.

Ritchie: Maybe it was because you were such a good head counter, and always seemed to know a little bit more than they did.

Hildenbrand: I don't have any idea why they said what they said.

Ritchie: I had always thought that the majority and minority secretaries were pretty much the choice of the majority and minority leaders. But this was a case where Scott presumably wanted you, but there was still opposition.

Hildenbrand: Well, Scott was never that strong as a leader. He was not a Dirksen. Dirksen said this is what we're going to do, and everybody said fine. That was never the case. Scott never reached that point where he could make those kinds of decisions and the party would just blindly say that's fine. There was always that conservative element that never really liked him, and never thought that he

---

ought to be leader. They did not want him to continue to put his people in spots, particularly spots in which you had to serve the entire membership. Because then they thought that I would simply be doing Scott's bidding and they would not have a voice, or they wouldn't have any place to go.

Ritchie: Was there anything significant in Mark Trice's notifying Norris Cotton rather than Hugh Scott?

Hildenbrand: No, Norris Cotton was chairman of the conference, and that's the proper thing to do, to notify the conference chairman. My guess is that Trice would have notified Cotton even if that hadn't been the situation, because he and Scott did not get along.

Ritchie: That was going to be my next question. He had worked very closely with Dirksen, was he able to work closely with Scott at all?

Hildenbrand: Mark was a professional. Mark did as much as he could for the members of the Republican side of the Senate, but he never was very close to Hugh Scott.

Ritchie: Did that pose any problems?

Hildenbrand: No, not really. As I say, he was enough of a professional that he was never going to let the party get into trouble because of how he might have felt about the leader. As a

---

matter of fact, when Scott was elected leader the first time, there were members on our side of the aisle, the first thing they wanted Scott to do was to fire Trice, but Scott would not do that.

Ritchie: What type of a person was Mark Trice, from your dealings with him?

Hildenbrand: Well, as I said, he was a professional. He knew that Senate as well as anybody, I think, that I've ever run into. He knew the membership. He may have had more of a political philosophy of his own than is good for somebody to have in that job, if you're going to serve the likes of a Jack Javits and a Bill Scott, for example. I'm not so sure -- you're much better off to be a political neuter and sit in that job; I think it's easier for you to do that job. But he had some very, very strong political feelings on conservative issues. That was reflected not in the party that now was in control of the party, the Scotts and the Javitses and the Hatfields of the world, but in fact in the Hruskas and the Goldwaters and the [Paul] Fannins and the [Carl] Curtises and the people like that.

Ritchie: What exactly does a party secretary do in the Senate?

Hildenbrand: He's responsible for keeping the minutes of all of the Policy Committee luncheons, keeping the minutes of the conferences. He tells the leadership everyday where every member is. He

---

knows where all the people are, all the time. He knows when they are leaving and when they are coming back. He keeps track of that for the leadership. He's responsible for controlling the calendar of business on the floor, and he's responsible for liaison with the leadership in knowing how all the other members feel about legislation. Those who support and those who oppose it, they go

through him, and he tells the leadership who's opposed and who's for. He has control of the floor in terms of keeping the leadership advised as to what's coming up, and members who want to speak, when they want to speak. He has the responsibility of recording the absent members who are not there for record votes. It's his responsibility to get positions, if members wish to leave a position, and it's his responsibility to write up the voting at the end of the day to reflect that they were absent and not voting. He does patronage for the members, he's in control of that. He's got control of the pages, they work directly for the secretary of the majority or the minority. Then whatever else the majority leader wants him to do.

Ritchie: Did you find that you did things differently than Mark Trice did?

Hildenbrand: Yes, because of my relationship with Scott. It was a different relationship. I was much more involved in the legislative side of the floor operation than Mark was, because that's what Scott wanted me to be. I was more involved in the day-to-day

---

operation of the Senate as to what came up, and under what kind of a consent agreement it came to the floor. I dealt very closely with Bob Byrd, when he was the majority whip, in scheduling and things of that kind. But that again was something that Scott wanted me to do, which Mark Trice did not do, which I did from my position in the office of the leader. I just continued it when I became secretary.

Ritchie: So you expanded the role that you had and merged the two positions?

Hildenbrand: Yes, I added on that legislative thing, and that's still the case now with Howard Greene, who's now the secretary of the majority. He has that same role. He does an awful lot of the floor activities that was not the case back in the old days.

Ritchie: What was Howard Greene's role as deputy while you were doing what you were doing?

Hildenbrand: Well, I should say that that's the role of the secretary's office. A lot of people do them. Howard Greene did the pages, for example. He took care of the nitty-gritty kind of things. He made sure that we had somebody to preside when we needed presiding officers. He made sure the cloakroom was running and operating; he controlled the cloakroom people that were there. He did those kinds of administrative tasks. He kept the record at the end of the vote; he would write down what happened. And then when amendments were

Coming up, he would be responsible for writing what the amendment did, so that members could go down in the well and look and see what this amendment was all about. And he did the checks in the morning to find out where everybody was.

Ritchie: I know you spent a lot of time on the floor in those days, because when I first came to work for the Senate in 1976, I spent a good deal of time sitting in the gallery just watching what was going on. It took me a week to realize that you weren't a senator -- because you were always on the floor, and you always looked like you knew what you were doing, which was more than some of the other people on the floor appeared.

Hildenbrand: [Laughs] That's cause I wouldn't tell anybody else what was going on. I was the only one that knew.

Ritchie: But you must have spent most of your day on the floor, at least when they were in session.

Hildenbrand: Yes. And that pretty much is the role of the secretary of the majority or the minority. When the session starts his role really is on that floor, and he stays there until the end of the day. It's hard to leave it and go up to your office and do some other work because you lose continuity. The key to being able to know what's going to happen is to be able to be there all the time and look at the various nuances that are going on, and the little by-

plays that might occur in a cloakroom. Unless you're there, you miss that and you need to know those kind of things.

Ritchie: The majority leader and minority leader are present a lot, but also the chairmen and the ranking members of the committees, the people who sponsored legislation, often handle the legislation. Did you have to do a lot of coaching of Republicans who were going to floor manage a bill, or oppose a bill?

Hildenbrand: Not too much. Most of them had been there long enough so that they pretty well knew how to be the manager on the minority side of a given bill. Then they just moved over to become majority, and become chairman, they had watched their chairmen of their committee operate for so long.

It was much more difficult for Russell Long to learn to be the ranking minority member than it was for Bob Dole to learn to be chairman of the Finance Committee. The same is true of John Stennis on Armed Services than it was for John Tower. We had been minority for twenty-six years, so we had seen the

majority operate, and we knew how they operated. The majority, while they had us as a minority for twenty-six years, hadn't bothered to see what we did. It's only been in the last year maybe that they have suddenly begun to realize how to be an effective minority. I think this year you will see that they have become more and more effective as a minority. They have finally realized they no longer are majority, and they have

---

begun to study how we operated as a minority, and they're taking a lot of leaves from that same book. Their actions on the Farm Credit legislation is a good example of how effective they can be if they continue to do the things that they are doing.

Ritchie: What is the best strategy for the minority, in general?

Hildenbrand: The first thing you have to do is get a solid minority, that is, one that is totally together. We did not have that for most of the years certainly that I was here, until 1974 when they got into that Wyman-Durkin fiasco. That was the first time we really began to act as a party in total number, and it makes a difference. In those days prior to that, the Democrats would propose something, and they would have seven or eight detractors, and we'd have seven or eight detractors, and so we always lost. If we could have stayed together, with their seven or eight detractors, we could have won. But we never did that. It wasn't until after that that it suddenly became obvious to all these people that hey, there's 43 of us, and if we stay together as a group we only need seven Democrats and we can win.

They give a lot of credit to Howard Baker, in his years as minority leader, for the success that he had against the Carter administration. A lot of it is simply due to the fact that the party realized that if it stayed together as a group, it could, in fact, be

---

very effective. So it stayed together an awful lot during those four years. Baker just made sure that they stayed together.

But you have to be an effective minority in that you can't just oppose, for the sake of opposing. You have to begin to offer alternatives to things. You have to have a program yourself. That's the problem the Democrats find themselves in now: they don't have a program. Not only don't they have a candidate to espouse it, they're not sure what they want it to be. Do they want to be the party back in the Roosevelt days? Or do they want to be a party like Truman? Or what do they want to be? They don't know. It's told on them now in two elections, because you just

can't continue to say: "They're wrong." The people out there say: "Well, okay, what's right?" And if you don't know, the people are going to say: "That's crazy, why should I vote for this because you say it's wrong, but you don't know what's right."

Ritchie: You've on a number of occasions pointed to the Durkin-Wyman election as the turning point. Why did that become such a fiasco? It went on for months.

Hildenbrand: Three months.

Ritchie: They finally had to hold a new election. How did that one election get so bollixed up?

Hildenbrand: Well, when they failed to seat Wyman, and they went into the investigation and sent the Rules Committee up there to count the ballots -- it;s very much like [Richard] McIntyre and [Frank] McCloskey that's going on now in the House. If the House Democrats continue, and if they try to seat McCloskey, my guess is that this session will turn into a tremendous battleground in the House, because the Republicans are just not going to stand for that. It's just going to be a terrible, terrible situation over there. That's about what happened in the Senate in Wyman-Durkin. It just appeared that they were going to try to steal this election. It's the same situation in the House: it made no difference, one more vote did not give us anywhere near control of anything, and it didn't help the Democrats that much. The House is in the same situation. There's, I don't know, sixty votes difference now, so one more is not going to make that much difference. But they just, for whatever their reasons, believed that Durkin should have been the winner, and they were going to go ahead and do this.

We didn't really start that debate until June, I guess, in earnest, when we just laid it down and said this is all we're going to do. Mansfield got a lot of things done before he ever brought that up. Then they just went at it for those three months. They believed that they could get cloture, because they believed that the Republicans who had always supported cloture, the Javitses? the Cases, the Mark Hatfields, would continue to support cloture, no

---

matter what. Therefore they would get cloture, and once they got cloture they could have seated Durkin all day long. But they miscalculated the strong feeling of partisanship that Javits and Case and some of the others had. So Mansfield kept calling for cloture votes, and our side kept voting 43 solid votes against cloture. They kept up, I think, because they believed that sooner or later Javits

and Case would say this has gone on long enough and we're going to vote for cloture, but they never did.

Ritchie: Did you ever have any fear they would?

Hildenbrand: No. I'd get rumors from time to time. Some of the staffs wanted Javits to vote for cloture and switch. I'd get rumors and I would simply go to Javits and find out, or send Scott to talk to him, if I thought it was serious. But once they voted as often as they voted, there was no need to change. Nothing had changed from the first time they voted against it, until the time somebody said now it's time to vote for it. Well, vote for it for what reason? What's different? Why didn't you vote for it the first time? So it was easy for them to stay there. I think they were uncomfortable, not because of Wyman-Durkin, but simply of the procedure of cloture. But they stayed in harness, and the Democrats finally threw up their hands and we made the compromise resolution and had the election over again. And then Durkin won it.

Ritchie: Is there any way that such a partisan body can really settle an issue like that? It seems like the only solution is a reelection.

Hildenbrand: Well, we're going to find out in the House, to see what they try to do over there. I think that's right. I think that, for whatever your reasons, if you finally decide that you can't seat the person who has been certified, then it seems to me the only thing you can do is to have another election. You can't really in good conscience elect somebody in the House of Representatives. Because if you follow that to its ultimate conclusion, we don't have to have elections anymore. We just send over to the House the names of the two people that are running, and let the House vote. Because in effect, that's what they've done. They've said that the people of Indiana in that district should not be represented by Mr. McIntyre, and they ought to be represented by Mr. McCloskey, and they're going to try to seat Mr. McCloskey. It will be interesting.

Ritchie: What did you find to be the most pleasurable part of your job as Republican secretary?

Hildenbrand: Everything.

Ritchie: You liked the whole thing.

Hildenbrand: Yes. Next to working, it's the best job you can have. No, I thoroughly enjoyed it. I liked the floor. I always

had, from the time I came into the Senate I was always fascinated by the things that went on there. Now, to have the responsibility of being on the floor, which was not my responsibility when I was with Boggs, but now to have my job to be there -- from my standpoint it was the epitome of everything that I ever wanted. It was the crowning of a career to be that secretary.

Ritchie: Did the job carry any headaches you wished weren't part of it?

b>*Hildenbrand:* Not really. I mean, you deal with egos, but you get used to dealing with those kind of people. There's no way that you could not deal with them. There's no way that you could do it differently. I didn't find anything about the job that I would do differently if I could do it. It's a thoroughly enjoyable job, if you like the legislative part of the Congress, floor actions. If you like to get into substance and mess around like that, it's not a very good job, because I would get into substance only at the very end, on a last resort kind of thing when we had to work something out. Then I might get involved, but up until that point I didn't have any idea what half the amendments were being offered did -- or care.

Ritchie: You were more involved in strategy.

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: And you've said that personality was as important as politics in deciding how a person was going to vote.

Hildenbrand: Oh, I think that's true. I think that those members on that floor have a tendency to be guided a lot by the relationships that they have with other members. I think where groups of citizens make a mistake is that they believe that every senator is as concerned about whatever their problem happens to be as they are. They don't understand that to some it doesn't mean a damn thing. They really don't care. They don't have a dog in that fight, as the saying goes. But groups such as that, that are so wrapped up in their own proposals, whatever it is, believe that everybody else feels as strongly about it as they do, and that's not the case. So a guy who doesn't have that strong feeling is going to be guided by something else. And what is it going to be? It's either going to be some constituent that he listens to, or has respect for, or it's going to be a colleague that sits next to him on the floor, or a colleague that sits next to him in the committee, or his committee chairman, or his leader, or his president, any number of those things will be factored into how a person votes.

If you look at Reagan's record, in his ability to get some things through, he did it strictly on personal entreaties to a person: "I need your vote." And Howard Baker was very successful, sitting down in that well on that table, when members would come in.

They would come to him and say: "Howard, geez, I can't vote for this. Do you really need me?" He'd say, "I really need you.'" Members will tell you that many times they voted for something simply because it was for Howard Baker.

Ritchie: But Howard Baker had to know that he needed "x" number of votes, that he was that close to winning.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. Well, we always pretty well knew where our count was. We knew how to count.

Ritchie: Because I assume you don't win anything by having one more vote than necessary.

Hildenbrand: Oh, no. We knew where those votes were. We knew how many we had. And we have, from time to time -- those people who said, "I just cannot vote for this, can you let me off the hook." We'd say, "No, we really need you." They would vote with us, and then if it was obvious at the very end that we did not need them, Baker would release them and let them vote against it. And they knew that. They knew that he would not keep them there in that position unless he really needed them. If he could release them, he would, and he did.

Ritchie: There must also be some reciprocal arrangements. If you're in a tight situation and you vote with the leader because he needs you, then I suppose he owes you something back.

Hildenbrand: Well, yes, but that's hard to do, because the leader doesn't really have that much that he can give you back. The only thing he can give you back is his vote on something that you're very strong for. And that too has happened, where Baker has given somebody a vote because they gave him one.

Ritchie: The first two years you were Republican secretary were the last two years of Scott's period as leader, and it was also the Gerald Ford administration. I was looking at the statistics the other day, and I hadn't realized how many bills that Ford had vetoed, and also how many vetoes the Congress overrode -- although they only overrode a small percentage of his vetoes, it was still the

largest number overridden since Andrew Johnson. What was your situation at that stage, given those circumstances?

Hildenbrand: We were in a much stronger situation than we had been in previous years, but by the same token, we did not have the votes to pass anything. But what we did have was the votes to try as best we could to sustain those vetoes, because it takes two-thirds to override. So we were sitting there in a position -- and that's one of the reasons why we failed to override as many as we did. But at the same time, because he vetoed so many, the percentages of override was fairly high. But we sustained an awful lot too, and we did it simply because our people stayed together. Here again, some of the things that he vetoed, guys getting ready to run in 1976, there's no way in

---

God's world they could ever vote to sustain that kind of a veto, just from a political survival standpoint.

Ritchie: Did you find the Ford administration more open to suggestion from Republicans in the Senate?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. It was a totally different atmosphere. Ford was a creature of the Congress, had been there all of his life from the time he came into politics, in the late '40s. That's all he knew. He ran the White House the same way. We had known him, and worked with him, and we knew the people around him quite well. It was a good relationship.

Ritchie: Did his legislative liaison staff change very much from the Nixon administration?

Hildenbrand: Well, there was Clark MacGregor and Bill Timmons, and then Timmons and Korologos and that crowd got out. I guess those were the days when Max Friedersdorf came in, and I don't remember who else. So it was a different liaison group than it had been before.

Ritchie: Did you work together on strategy and suggest approaches to them on how to operate?

Hildenbrand: No, not really. They had their agenda and we had ours. We communicated a lot, and they knew pretty much where our people were. We knew what their problems were. With Ford coming in

at that particular point in time, it was the middle of a four year term. Unlike the beginning of a term, when the administration will send up countless pieces of legislation, they'd already been sent up by the Nixon people. So there wasn't really a great deal of activity on Ford's part. All he was trying to do was stem the tide of all this so called bad legislation that the Democrats who controlled Congress were trying to pass. That's why you found so many vetoes.

Standing, left to right: Hildenbrand, Warren Berger, Darrell St. Clair, Gerald Ford, and Nelson Rockefeller;
Seated: James Eastland
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: You said at one point that the Democrats to a degree cooperated because they wanted things to heal after Watergate. How well did your office work with Mansfields' office at that time, and what sense of cooperation did you get?

Hildenbrand: We worked with them as well as we ever worked with anybody. Mansfield was the type of person that was easy to work with. He was just as heartbroken about the incidents of a president resigning as anybody else. He just didn't feel that it was good for the country to be in that kind of a situation. So, unless it was absolutely impossible, from a purely partisan standpoint, where his people would have run him out of town on a rail, he wanted to cooperate, I think, with the Ford administration, and with Scott, as much as he needed to cooperate with them. Ford, of course, treated him with the respect that someone who is majority leader deserved to be treated, unlike the Nixon operation. And Mansfield responded in kind.

But, Ford came over from the House with a set of values which were a lot different than the Senate's sets of values. That's why I think there were so many vetoes. Also, he was getting ready to run for election on his own. He had not been

elected vice president, he had not been elected president, and I think that sort of rankled him somewhat, that he was sitting in both of those spots and had never been elected by the people. So he was trying to make a mark for himself also.

Ritchie: What was the reaction among Senate Republicans when Ford pardoned Nixon?

Hildenbrand: Well, the group that were still Nixon supporters thought it was a very humanitarian thing, and the proper thing for him to do. Those who did not like Nixon, or believed that he really was more involved in it than was ever proved, thought that it was dumb thing to do. But at the same time, there was a general feeling that the country, now having gotten out from under it, did not have to go back into a trial or something along those lines, which would have relived that whole thing over again, and they were just sort of glad to get it out of the way. I think the Democrats politically believed that he made a big mistake, that it was going to come back to haunt him. As it turned out, it did. But I don't think any of them

---

ever really wanted another trial. I don't think they liked the fact that he was pardoned, but they would have liked it less to have the trial.

Ritchie: Did you work at all in the 1976 election?

Hildenbrand: I worked in the convention, with Jim Baker and John Tower and Bob Griffin, who was floor manager, in stemming the tide of Reaganism, so that Reagan did not get the nomination. I was what they call a delegate hunter. I was on the floor continually, making sure that we knew where the delegates were, and who they were, and that they voted the way they were supposed to vote.

Ritchie: How did you wind up becoming a delegate hunter? Did you volunteer?

Hildenbrand: Well, I was close to Bob Griffin. I had come into the Congress in 1957, the year that Bob Griffin was elected to the House. He was one of thirteen Republicans that was elected to the House. Bob Michel was another one. So I had known Bob Griffin since 1957, and we worked very, very closely together during that period of time. Then when he came to the Senate we renewed our friendship, and then when he became whip I worked with him very closely, both as secretary of the minority as well as assistant to the leader. When it became obvious that there was going to be a fight on behalf of Reagan

for the nomination, Griffin came to me and said: would I be a part of the group that was going to try to lock up the convention and keep it away from Reagan? I said, "Of course."

Ritchie: Did you specialize again in a particular group of delegates?

Hildenbrand: No. We did pretty much generally in the convention. We began to find out where everybody was. I did Pennsylvania, simply because I was close to the delegation, and close to the chairman of the delegation, who happened to be Drew Lewis, at that time, as a matter of fact. And the Delaware group, because I knew them quite well.

Ritchie: Did you think there was much danger of Ford not getting the nomination?

Hildenbrand: Up until about a day or so before the vote, yes. In fact, the morning of the vote we were not quite so sure. Mississippi had still not decided what they were going to do, and without them we probably would have lost. But when their name was called and they voted the way they did, then we pretty well knew that we were okay.

Ritchie: What do you think worked the best for Ford?

Hildenbrand: I don't know. You could speculate. My guess is you can come up with any number of reasons and everyone has as much validity as the next one. He'd been president, and there was a feeling that: geez, you don't want to kick him out. He's the President of the United States. He deserves a chance. My guess is it was that kind of a thing. And the Reagan people had not taken over as completely as they took over in the 1980 convention, when they really controlled it, and again in '84 when they really controlled it.

Ritchie: Did you work closely with Jim Baker at that time?

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm. We worked on almost a day-to-day basis. We would meet each day, morning or afternoon, and go over delegates, who they were, what we needed, what we didn't need.

Ritchie: What was your impression of James Baker then?

Hildenbrand: About the same as it is now. He's an outstanding public servant. I think he did a tremendous job in the White House as chief of staff to Reagan. I think it will stand to Reagan's credit that despite all that Baker had done to keep the nomination away from him in '76, and as deep as some of his staff felt in opposition to him, that he recognized the talent that he brings to that kind of a group, and his organizational ability, and his political savvy. I think it was an outstanding choice on Reagan's part.

Ritchie: I suppose in 1976 you would never have imagined that Jim Baker would wind up as Ronald Reagan's chief of staff.

Hildenbrand: Oh, I think that's right. I don't think there's any question about that.

Ritchie: He's another one who has been considered an "evil genius."

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm. And probably with much more reason that I ever was.

Ritchie: Having been so close to Bob Griffin as minority whip, did you work for him when he ran to succeed Scott in 1977?

Hildenbrand: I did not. I stayed out of that race entirely. I made a commitment to Bob Griffin in 1974, when I ran for secretary. He said that he would support me for secretary, but I made a commitment to him -- at his request -- that I would not involve myself in any leadership race after that. So I stood by that commitment and did not get involved in that race.

Ritchie: Why would he ask you to make a commitment like that? I would have thought he would have wanted your support rather than to have you neutral.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but I guess he wasn't sure. I guess that he just did not want me to be involved at all. Unless he was sure that I was going to be for him, he sure as hell didn't want me to be for somebody else. Because of my role as secretary of the minority, it's a unique position in that you become closer to the members than almost anybody else, even sometimes their own staff. That's some thing that I would not, if I were running, want to have somebody who had that kind of a relationship with all of the members, against me. Because I could talk to every one of them at anytime about anything. This way he neutralizes that by asking me not to get involved. It's just one more thing he doesn't have to worry about, even though I might have been for him. As it turned out, I'm glad that he did, because I

would have hated to have had to choose between Griffin and Baker, who I liked both extremely well.

Senators Roman Hruska (R-NE) and Robert Griffin (R-MI), in committee hearings
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: It would seem that the best way to succeed in your job would be to treat everybody equally.

Hildenbrand: That's the best way, I think, to succeed as a secretary of a party. I don't think that you can be anything less than a friend to each of the members, no matter what their philosophies may be. I like to think that I treated a Carl Curtis or a Bill Scott as well and as equally as I treated a Cliff Case and a Hugh Scott, Jack Javits.

Ritchie: At one point you said that you had difficulty dealing directly with Margaret Chase Smith. Did you find as Republican secretary that there were any Republican senators that you had difficulty dealing with?

Hildenbrand: No. By that time, for four years I had been in the leader's staff, so I knew all of them, much more so than I did when I first became assistant to the whip. But there was no one on our side of the aisle that I had any difficulty in dealing with.

Ritchie: If Hugh Scott hadn't decided to retire in 1976, do you think that Griffin would have ever challenged him for his position?

Hildenbrand: No.

Ritchie: He was content to wait.

Hildenbrand: Yes, he was twenty years younger probably than Hugh Scott, so he had plenty of time.

Ritchie: I suppose the leader always has to worry a little about the whip.

Hildenbrand: I guess so, except I don't have any idea when the last time a whip ever challenged a leader. You'd have to look it up, but my guess is also it would be a very long time ago. It's just not the thing that you do.

Ritchie: Did you know that Scott was planning to retire in '76?

Hildenbrand: Yes. It was no surprise.

Ritchie: The one thing that has always puzzled me: for a man like Scott with his particular reputation, in the very end he got caught in the controversy over Gulf Oil as a client in his law firm. How do you explain something like that, which seems so contradictory to his reputation?

Hildenbrand: I just don't think -- I didn't think it then, and I don't think it now -- that there was anything to it. I don't think it's a question of him getting caught, or anything like that, I think it just wasn't what everybody thought that it was. I knew Hugh Scott too well, I spent too many hours with him, I knew the kind of person that he was. This was not Hugh Scott, this kind of a thing he would not have been involved in. I knew Claude Wild as long as I can remember, but no one has ever shown a scintilla of evidence that Scott was really involved, beyond that stories that appeared. Nothing else ever was proven.

Ritchie: What motivates the press at times like this?

Hildenbrand: Sensationalism. You make enemies in public life, and if happens that an enemy gets ahold of this instead of a friend, those are the kind of problems. And you have media people who don't

---

like certain senators, and who would do anything they could to discredit them. You have others that like them and would do anything they could to keep them from being discredited. Part of the reason, I think, that this never got further than it got, and was sort of confined, is that Scott himself had so many good friends in the press. They respected him. They just stayed away from this and were not going to get involved. It could have been a much bigger story, if everybody there

had suddenly decided that there was something to it, and they all got into it. But in most instances, it was like a Woodward and Bernstein thing, it was confined to just a couple of people, and nobody else picked it up.

Ritchie: Jack Anderson.

Hildenbrand: Jack Anderson, exactly. And there never was any love lost between Scott and Jack Anderson, for whatever reasons, I don't know what they were.

Ritchie: Still, it must have hurt him at the end of his career to have that kind of a cloud over him.

Hildenbrand: Oh, I think so. You hate to retire under that kind of a cloud, particularly someone who had the kind of illustrious career that he'd had through all those years. It's one of those things that's unfortunate.

Ritchie: Do you think that senators and politicians generally feel vulnerable against the press?

Hildenbrand: Oh, sure. Because you're in a position where you can never refute anything that's said about you. And if you do, it's never going to show up at the same place. You know, the denial never catches up with the charge. When you run in campaigns you are always fearful that Monday before an election that a Jack Anderson story will show up, or some other story will show up. You try to guard against it, and sometimes you over react, and you try to answer a charge before one's been made, which even makes it worse. But you don't think about it at that time, you know you're going to get hit with this thing, and you know that there's only three days before an election, so you try to cut your losses if you can.

End of Interview #5

Interview #6: With Howard Baker

(Monday, April 29, 1985)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: You sat out the 1977 leadership race between Howard Baker and Robert Griffin. I wondered if you could give me some assessment as to how and why Howard Baker won that race.

Hildenbrand: My guess would be that Griffin probably lost it more than Howard Baker won it. I'm not really sure. Baker came awfully close the two times that he ran against Hugh Scott. In that period of time, there really wasn't much of a change. There were like four people that we lost in '72, and '74, I don't know, maybe a couple more, but there weren't that many changes. Plus some new people came in in that period of time. I guess that Griffin sort of felt there was a succession that went along with the job, and that he didn't work maybe as hard as he should have worked. Also, I think Baker did what he did the second time he ran against us, and that's he lulled them in the sense that nobody had announced they were going to run. He didn't announce it until the morning of the vote -- which he had done with us one time. Whether Griffin forgot that, or just decided that there wasn't going to be a challenge, I don't know. Then Griffin's staff was quoted as saying that they were lied to by somebody, so you put all of that together. Plus, Chuck Percy was skiing in Switzerland. I have no idea of where he was going to be.

But all in all I think that it was a surprise. Even though we knew that Baker had a lot of support, I don't think that Griffin thought he was going to lose. I think Griffin thought he had the votes when he went in that morning.

Senators Hugh Scott (R-PA) and Howard Baker (R-TN)
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: The whip is usually in a position to do favors for people. He's on the floor a lot. Doesn't he pick up a lot of IOUs?

Hildenbrand: Well, that's true if you happen to be the majority whip, but as the minority whip you can't do anything for anybody, really. You could say, "Help me, I don't want to vote tonight. Can you take care of it?" Well, if you don't have the control, as the majority has, it's hard for you to do that, unless you decided to stand up and filibuster so that they can't have a vote. Very few people ask a leader to do that. There's not a lot that the whip can really do except be on the floor, be partisan when it's called upon to be partisan, and do whatever the leader wants him to do. I guess you have to establish a credibility among your colleagues that they think that you would become a good leader.

I've never really tried to figure out what members look for in a leader. My guess is that it has less to do with substance and political philosophy than it simply does with personality. I have no idea why Scott beat Baker, for example. Philosophically, Baker had more votes certainly, but it didn't turn out that way. Then you've

---

got Griffin-Baker, from a political philosophy there's not that much to choose between the two of them. Why Baker won, I don't know.

Ritchie: Was Griffin a difficult person to work with?

Hildenbrand: I didn't find him so, but here again I had known Bob since 1957, because he came into the House the same time I was on staff over there. We had been friends since that time -- that's a long period of time, twenty years. I did not find him that difficult to work with. He was a perfectionist. As most lawyers, he always wanted to make some changes for the sake of making changes. There was at one time passed around the Lincoln Gettysburg Address as they visualized Griffin would have corrected it if had been submitted to him and he was going to make the speech. But that's the way lawyers have a tendency to be, and Bob was no exception. But he certainly knew the floor, he knew the legislative process. He would have been a good leader, I don't think there's any question. Whether he would have been as good as Howard Baker, I don't think you'll ever know. The thing about Howard Baker that nobody else will be able to judge him on is that he's the only majority leader that anybody remembers, as far as the Republicans are concerned. So people are going to have to be judged against Howard Baker, rather than Howard Baker judged against somebody else.

Ritchie: Also at that time the Republicans lost the White House and a Democratic administration was coming in. How important

is it in terms of a party's self-perception in picking a leader? They were going to be the minority party without a president of their own in the White House. Did that play any role in the decision?

Hildenbrand: Well, it could. Again, I go back to the earlier statement that I made that you have to try to get each member to determine what he looks for, or what he is looking for, in a leader, and it well could be that they were looking for someone who they felt was a little more articulate than Bob Griffin, and that they placed less of a store on his ability to work on the floor, since with a new administration, with a Democrat administration, with Democrat control in the Senate, there wasn't really that much for the opposition to do but oppose, and they may have just decided for whatever their reasons that they needed someone other than Bob. They needed a new image. With the White House going Democratic they needed somebody new to present their platform and their programs. I don't know.

Ritchie: In the two races that Baker ran against Scott, you had worked for Scott.

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: Did you feel that that put you in a vulnerable position when Baker became minority leader?

Hildenbrand: I never really thought about it. Obviously it did, but I had been elected in 1974 by the entire Senate Republicans,

and with Baker winning by one vote, it seemed to me that he was not in any position to go out and say we're going to make the changes and get rid of the secretary of the minority. I hadn't made any enemies that I knew of in that period of time, so there was no reason for them to get rid of me, unless it was simply to make a change. I did know that Baker's staff desperately wanted me out, and in fact told Senator Baker that the first thing he ought to do was to get rid of me. But my friendship with Howard had been so good, even despite the fact that he ran against us twice and lost, and knowing him as well as I did, it never crossed my mind that he might decide that he wanted to make a change in that area. I'd worked with him, I knew him, he knew me. As I said, there was nobody that I knew of that was out for my scalp, except the staff. He as much as told me that the first thing staff told him he had to do was get rid of me. But that was a vengeance that they were going to try to wreak on me.

Ritchie: Vengeance for what?

Hildenbrand: For the fact that I had been involved with Scott in beating Baker twice. They were going to get even. But Howard Baker is not that type of a person.

Ritchie: When Baker became leader, did he express to you the directions that he wanted to go in?

Hildenbrand: No, we had a lot of mutual respect for one another, and the manner in which he went just was something that evolved as we went along on a day-to-day basis. I had a role to play and he let me play that role. It was the same role that I did for Hugh Scott when I was secretary of the minority under him. He made no changes, and I became eventually as close to him as I was with Scott.

Ritchie: I was going to ask you if you could compare Baker and Scott as leaders, and what his brand of leadership was like.

Hildenbrand: I don't really think there's that much difference in the two; I think that Baker brought a freshness to the office that Scott did not bring, simply because Scott had been doing it for thirty or forty years. For Baker it was brand new. He'd only been there ten years, and so he brought a totally different outlook. He learned, I think, a lot, quietly, behind-the-scenes, watching Scott operate with a Republican president. Again, it's hard to compare because Scott had Nixon for the entire time, and this was the first time since Lyndon Johnson that we had a Democrat president. So here again it's like oranges and apples. It's a different leadership when you've got the White House than it is when you don't.

Baker also had the pleasure of having a more united Republican party in the Senate than Scott did, because that was after '74 and Wyman-Durkin, and the Republicans were used to being together as a

---

group, and that carried over. I think that the programs and the policies that Baker and Jack Javits and the Policy Committee were able to formulate during those four years was in a great deal responsible for eventually getting control of the Senate -- although, a president like Reagan running as strong as he did doesn't hurt.

Ritchie: You mention Wyman-Durkin as a unifying force, but it seems to me that there were also some divisive forces, like single issues -- the abortion issue in particular. Were they beginning to pull apart some of this unity?

Hildenbrand: Well, they became more divisive after we took the majority, because they didn't have control enough to bring them up on the floor, and when

they did they had to bring them up in some funny bill that had nothing to do with it, so it was easy to defeat them. You know, you put abortion on a tax bill and you know it's not going to have a long life. They were still in a position of crying in the wilderness. They didn't have the forum that they had when they became a majority. You put Strom Thurmond in as chairman of the Judiciary Committee and you get all sorts of abortion language on the floor. You don't have that when you're ranking, you can't do very much about it. So the single issues hadn't really come out as much as they have been in the last four or five years.

Ritchie: How well did Baker work with the "New Right" senators and their supporters?

Hildenbrand: Well, he didn't have any problem with them. Philosophically in some areas he was close to the positions that they took. He was certainly more closely allied than Bob Griffin would have been. It wasn't until Panama Canal that Baker fell out with the far right.

Ritchie: I wondered in the sense that he strikes me at heart as a very pragmatic politician. How does he deal with somebody who really is emotionally charged on an issue?

Hildenbrand: Just let them go. Leadership brings about a denormalization of your own political philosophy. You sort of suborn it to everything else because it's hard to be a good leader and be up there espousing your own philosophy and you're own programs, and your own policies. That's not the job of a leader. A leader is to lead that flock the way they want to be, from a majority standpoint. You carry their banner rather than them trying to carry yours. He would let the opposition try to deal with them more than he would try to deal with them. He'd get them all together in the room and say, "Go at it. What do you want to do?" Then he'd sit and listen and then he'd offer whatever he thought was a reasonable compromise, if there was such a thing as a reasonable compromise.

His was a compromise leadership, whereas Bob Dole, I guess, is going to have confrontational leadership. I don't think anybody's in a position to say what's right or what's wrong. You have to deal

---

with it, given the circumstances and the time, whether you can get by on a confrontational basis or whether you have to compromise. I think what Baker felt is with Reagan as a new president it was important to get as much of the Reagan program through as we could get through, and to show the country that we could in fact govern -- we hadn't done it in a long time. So I think he went out of his way

to make whatever compromises and agreements he needed to make in order to get those policies and those programs through, in whatever form he had to get them through. You could take the other side of it and have gotten nothing done, which really wouldn't have made very much sense.

Ritchie: The years that Baker was minority leader coincided with the years that Carter was president. I wondered if you could give me some evaluation of Jimmy Carter from the Senate Republicans' perspective.

Hildenbrand: I think that probably they would say that he was smart enough to have some fairly good people around him -- although that would not necessarily be the case in terms of his liaison staff. You know, he hired a good old boy from Georgia, Frank Moore, who was a lovely person but didn't have any more idea what the Senate liaison or congressional liaison was all about than anybody else. So that created some problems. But Carter was not a strong president along the lines of a Nixon or a Lyndon Johnson, so it wasn't that hard to

---

deal with him. He didn't have the programs that Jack Kennedy had, for example. He wasn't going to remake the world or the wheel. I'm not so sure that he knew why he got there. But he was there. Had he been a different type of a president, my guess is that it would have been a different 1980 than it was.

He was what, the first Southern president, if you don't count Lyndon Johnson, who was sort of a mistake that happened. The first Southern president in Lord knows how long, since Reconstruction maybe. That made a difference, I think, because people's perception was that he doesn't reflect the views of the United States. That was a perception that we had of Southerners, that they were different in some regards. He never was one that he could force his views on the nation as a whole, because people had a feeling that they weren't the views of everybody.

Ritchie: There's a perception, I think that Carter was very unsuccessful with Congress. Carter tries to argue, in his memoirs, that he got about 75 percent of what he asked for, but I think the general perception was that he was much less successful -- especially considering that he had Democratic majorities in both the House and the Senate. How would you rate him in terms of his dealings with Congress?

Hildenbrand: I would agree with most people. I don't think he got anywhere near 75 percent of what he wanted. It's like voting

records: you can formulate anybody's voting record to have it say anything you want it to say, if you pick out the right votes. I can make Jesse Helms a liberal if I just take ten votes out of five hundred that he may have cast. And I think this is the same kind of thing with Carter. Depending on what he uses for his 75 percent he could make the claim, but I don't think anybody else thinks that. I don't really think that most people feel that it was a strong presidency the four years that he was there. And I think he will be remembered probably for Iran almost more than anything else, as Nixon, despite all that Nixon did, will always be remembered for the fact that he had to resign, and because of Watergate. I think the same is true of Carter. Carter's administration will be known simply because of the hostages in Iran, and the ill-fated attempt to rescue them.

Ritchie: Given the fact that Carter had Democratic majorities in both bodies, and he was the first Democratic president in eight years, why would you say that he was so unsuccessful in mustering support in Congress?

Hildenbrand: Mainly because the programs that he wanted to put forward were not the ones that these people up here wanted. And you have to remember, he was not one of them. He was the first president to come along since Eisenhower who was not of the Congress. They didn't think that he knew what the country wanted. They were the

representatives and the spokesmen of the country, he was a governor of Georgia. I don't think that Bob Byrd and Tip O'Neill were going to go down and do everything that Jimmy Carter wanted them to do. And again, you have the same problem that other presidents have had: they don't want to feel as if it is a community leadership, or a community president. They didn't want to call Tip O'Neill and Byrd down and say, "I'd like to do this, and here's what I'm thinking, do you have any suggestions of how we might get this done." They didn't want any part of that. They wanted to make the decision; this is the program; and send it up and say, "Now, do it." And they said, "We're not going to do that."

Ritchie: I was reading Carter's memoirs, and he attributed his problems to pushing too much too soon in his congressional program. Do you think that's an accurate assessment?

Hildenbrand: Volume isn't always necessarily the answer. My guess is if it was good it wouldn't have made any difference. This body is capable of handling almost anything it wants to handle, whenever it wants to handle it. But you can't lead this body; water seeks its own level, and so does Congress. If it's good, if the programs are good, and if the country is responsive to those programs, this body

will enact them. But if it isn't, it doesn't matter whether you send two programs or two thousand, it won't make any difference.

Ritchie: The other interesting thing I saw in Carter's memoirs was a quote from his diary in which he said that he found that he was more comfortable around Southern Democrats and Republicans than he was around liberals. Was that evident in his dealings with the Congress?

Hildenbrand: No. You'd have to be stupid to let that come out during his presidency. He wasn't a hail-fellow-well-met. He didn't have people down all the time for drinks. He sure didn't come up on the Hill the way Lyndon Johnson did. So whatever he says is fine. But there was no evidence that he was more or less comfortable with one or the others. But it would stand to reason that raised where he was raised, and coming from where he came from, that he would be more comfortable with Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans, certainly than with a Pat Moynihan or a Pat Leahy or a Ted Kennedy.

Ritchie: I saw the same thing reflected in a statement that Senator Baker made at the end of the 95th Congress. He said, "We have a Democratic president who's singing a Republican tune."

Hildenbrand: Yes, I don't know where he made that, in some speech someplace. That's a good campaign kind of thing, that you can use in campaigns. What it also does is it just alienates the Democrats. They just get apoplectic when they think that their president is in bed with Republicans. You always try to divide and conquer. If you can split the other side, that's fine.

Ritchie: It was always hard to perceive Carter as either a liberal or a conservative.

Hildenbrand: I'm not sure he knew what he was, except from his background. He never certainly could be what we would consider mainstream. There was nothing in his training that would indicate that. He did make some attempts -- I don't recall specifics -- to be more of a people president, and reflect some other parts of the country, but that's hard to do. First of all, you don't understand the other parts of the country, which is also a problem. You don't have any major metropolitan industrial areas for example; so when you start talking about a black problem, or an unemployment problem, that's hard when you come from some funny little town in Georgia. You don't know much about either one of those things.

Ritchie: Early on in his presidency, Carter tackled water projects, threatening to veto major water projects as part of the congressional pork barrel. Was that a foolish move on his part?

Hildenbrand: It didn't make that much difference. This body is used to presidents doing that. He's not the first one, and my guess is he won't be the last. I can remember Lyndon Johnson taking money out of the highway trust fund because he didn't want to build anymore roads. Alan Boyd was then the Secretary of Transportation, and he had to come up before John McClellan, I guess, who was chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and try to explain why this president

---

thought he could affect a recision of all of the money that was in the trust fund supposedly to build highways. But that was the way Lyndon Johnson was, and that's the way presidents are. They have to continue to exert the prerogatives they think they have as the President of the United States, and that is, if they decided there's not going to be anymore roads, there's not going to be anymore roads. But it doesn't work that way, and he found that out.

Water projects, of all things, because they effect almost every district -- if you veto it you haven't got a vote to sustain, because somebody's project is in there, probably. And if it isn't in there, it's going to be in the next time, so you can't afford to vote against your friends who are going to put your project in the next time there's a bill. There are things that you pick that you can get away with vetoes and win, but pork barrel doesn't happen to be one of them.

Ritchie: You don't think it unnecessarily soured his relations with Congress?

Hildenbrand: I don't think his relations were ever that good that they had to be soured. I don't think it made that much difference. By that time, it was so confrontational between the White House, there was such an adversarial relationship that Nixon had established, and Ford wasn't there long enough to change it. So they were still smarting from all of the Nixon days, and I think that

---

Carter inherited some of that feeling -- not against him, but just against the White House trying to dictate to the Congress. He may have paid for some of that.

Ritchie: Some of those chairmen had been chairmen for decades.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. John Stennis, Russell Long.

Ritchie: Scoop Jackson.

Hildenbrand: Scoop Jackson.

Ritchie: Warren Magnuson had been chairman of the Commerce Committee since the '50s.

Hildenbrand: Yes, those chairmen had been there a long time, and no upstart was going to tell them how to do things.

Ritchie: Probably Carter's biggest success in the Senate was the Panama Canal treaties in '78, he spent months on that one issue alone. Howard Baker's support of that obviously had a lot to do with him getting those treaties ratified. Why did Baker support Carter on Panama?

Hildenbrand: First of all, I don't think it's accurate to say that that was Carter's proposal. Four presidents had formulated treaties and attempted to give the Panama Canal back to the

---

Panamanians. And in reality, Carter sent the treaty up, and that was all he did. The State Department, Warren Christopher and his people, were more responsible than anybody else for the Panama Canal treaty. Carter himself did not play that much of a role. When we dealt with anybody, we always dealt with the State Department relative to the Panama Canal. When they put the Byrd-Baker amendment together, it went through Warren Christopher and those people, and they were talking to Torrijos about whether they could accept this or not accept it. So I don't think Carter played a role in the Panama Canal.

Baker felt that it was the right thing to do. Nixon had espoused it, Johnson, Ford, Kissinger thought it was the thing to do. There wasn't anyone who had been in a position of power within the field of international politics who opposed the Panama Canal treaty. It was only the Ronald Reagans and the conservatives who were getting apoplectic about that canal. Baker held off a long time before he made a decision as to what he was going to do. He went down to Panama. He hired two consultants. He had one, Edward Lutvak, and another one, I can't recall his name, who took both ends of the treaty, opposing it and supporting it. They were hired as consultants and were involved in everything that happened. When we went to Panama, they went along.

We went down to see Torrijos. And I think that Baker was impressed by Torrijos, and in talking with the people down in Panama,

seeing the thing. The generals who were down there in charge of Southcom, they all made points for support of the treaty. The Americans who were there in the Zone, their case was not so strong, because it was built on: what's going to happen to our tenure, what's going to happen to our jobs, what's going to happen to our salaries. All of those things were what were concerning them, not whether the relationships between the two countries was going to be enhanced by the canal being returned to Panama, and our standing in the rest of that Hemisphere. All of that, I think, played a part in Howard Baker's ultimate decision that he wanted to support the treaty. The polls out of Tennessee certainly did not reflect support for the treaty, and he had a terrible time in the campaign, with the conservatives going after him on that basis. The Democrat lady couldn't do very much, because it was her president, but the conservatives sure were very vocal, and the conservative Democrats.

Ritchie: Did you go with Baker on that trip to Panama?

Hildenbrand: Yes, I went to Panama more times than I care to remember. I went with [Ernest] Hollings and Bill Scott in August. I went with Byrd in November, and back with Baker in January. So I'd been there at least three times before the treaty vote.

Ritchie: How were these organized? Was the State Department encouraging senators to go?

Hildenbrand: No, this was just something that the leaders decided that if they were going to have to support this, and if they were going to have to ask their colleagues to support it, they wanted to know what it exactly was they were dealing with. Byrd took six Democrats when he went, and asked Howard Liebengood and I to go, so there would be some representation of the Republican leadership on the trip. So he took six Democrats plus himself on that trip, and everyone of the them that was on that trip voted for the treaty.

Ritchie: I know on the trip that Baker made he took Jake Garn and John Chafee with him.

Hildenbrand: Garn and Chafee, yes.

Ritchie: Garn voted against the treaty.

Hildenbrand: And we knew that when Garn went down, but he and Jake were good friends and their wives liked each other. And it was an opportunity for Garn

to see exactly what we were talking about, and what was going to happen, and to meet Torrijos. You never know, something could have happened and he could have decided to change his mind.

Ritchie: I wondered also if he had deliberately taken along someone who was clearly leaning for the treaty and someone who was leaning against the treaty?

Hildenbrand: Yes, just as he had two staff people, one for it and one against it in consulting areas. He did that with malice aforethought.

Ritchie: Supposedly, some senators told Baker that no Republican who voted for that treaty would ever get the Republican nomination for president in 1980. Did that enter into his consideration?

Hildenbrand: No. There were those who said he would never get reelected in Tennessee. But he had made the decision, he felt it was a right decision, and he was going to take his chances on '80 and '78.

Ritchie: He's supposed to have told Carter: "If I keep voting right on all these issues I won't win the next election!"

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: He and Byrd worked closely in putting together the Byrd-Baker amendment. Was that something that came out of the Senate, or was that something suggested by the State Department?

Hildenbrand: No, it came out of the Senate. Once that treaty got up here, it was really the Senate's baby. The administration was here, and they were available, but what happened was that Baker and Byrd made a decision that they were going to do whatever was

---

necessary to get the treaty adopted, as long as they could do it with the blessing of Carter and Torrijos. Whatever it took to get it passed -- that was the way it was sold to Carter and the way it was sold to Torrijos: without this, you don't have a treaty. You're going to have to live with this, and we hope that you can.

Ed Brooke, for example, I worked closely with him in negotiations. He had a problem, and I don't recall what it was now, with something in the treaty. We tried to fashion, and finally fashioned an amendment, which satisfied him, and he voted for the treaty. He did not want to vote for it originally, because of the

problem, but we worked on it. Ambler Moss, who later became the ambassador to Panama, was Christopher's right-hand man during all those negotiations, and was very, very close with Torrijos. He was the one that was our liaison with the White House and with the State Department, in trying to get things accomplished, and trying to convince them that we needed to do this or the treaty was lost.

Ritchie: How did Baker operate in the sense that perhaps a majority of the Republicans in the Senate were opposed to the treaties? How did he operate as a leader under those circumstances?

Hildenbrand: He turned it over to Paul Laxalt, and Laxalt led the fight against the canal treaty. Baker just worked with those individuals who were already supporters of the treaty, and he worked

---

with those individuals who were on the fence and hadn't decided what they wanted to do. Then of course, he worked with the Democrats, and with the State Department.

Ritchie: It was sort of a tightrope operation, to be a leader of your party when your party was leaning in the other direction.

Hildenbrand: Well, yes, but here again he had Nixon and Ford both strongly in support of the treaty. So he had some backing. The conservatives had Ronald Reagan. There wasn't much that they could do. They were going to oppose it. There was never any talk of impeaching Baker or doing anything. A lot of that, I think, has to go to Paul Laxalt. I think Paul's manner in treating the leader, even though he was leading the fight in opposition to that treaty, and knew that Baker was not, the way in which he treated Baker through all of that, and the discussions that they had through all of that, also was helpful. Because that group needs a leader, and Laxalt was sort of the titular head. He was Reagan's closest friend in the Senate. Even though Reagan wasn't president, but nevertheless everybody knew that he was in fact Reagan's closest friend and was going to be very much involved in the 1980 convention. And he was not about to take on Howard Baker. So it was like a snake without a head; they didn't really have a place to go and nobody to lead them, because Laxalt wouldn't put up with that kind of nonsense.

Ritchie: Were you surprised at how emotional the Panama Canal issue became?

Hildenbrand: No. Conservatives are always emotional, no matter what the issue is. If it's something that they're either violently for or violently against, they're emotional about it. You look at all of the issues, you'll find that they're very emotional, particularly when it comes to God and Country and Flag. They just sort of felt that we were selling out the United States, turning that canal back to the Republic of Panama. Almost traitorous, I guess, to some of them.

Ritchie: Baker must have felt intense pressure on him.

Hildenbrand: Up until the time he made the decision and it became public that he was in fact going to support it, along with the Baker-Byrd amendment, there was of course a lot of pressure on him. But once he made that decision, and once it was announced, they knew where he was going to go, and they let him alone. They knew he wasn't going to change his mind, which, as it turned out, he didn't. But there was never any doubt how he was going to vote, once he made that decision.

Ritchie: Some of the books that I've looked at give Robert Byrd most of the credit for getting the Panama Canal treaty through. Would you go along with that assessment?

Hildenbrand: No. There was enough credit to go around. I don't think that anybody can say that they did it, we did it. I think the Baker-Byrd amendment probably is more responsible for the passage of the treaty than anything else, but I don't think that Byrd could take anymore credit than Howard Baker could take, for example. It was easier for Byrd, because most of his people supported it anyway. And he sure didn't convince any Republicans. Any Republicans who got convinced, got convinced by Howard Baker. Anybody who wants to write and take credit for it, I think, can go ahead and do it. They're as right as anybody else would be.

Ritchie: I gather that people didn't think that John Sparkman, as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, provided much leadership on behalf of the treaty.

Hildenbrand: Well, Sparkman was getting old at that time. There were a lot of people on the Foreign Relations Committee that did not necessarily feel that he reflected the views of the administration in all areas. And he was a different type of a person, certainly, than a Bill Fulbright. Fulbright was very, very strong, whether you agreed or disagreed, he was very strong and very articulate. Sparkman was a Southerner. Liberals did not necessarily trust him, although he was more moderate than a lot of the Southern Democrats. There wasn't really that much role for him to play. He, in the Senate, could not have done for that treaty what Bob Byrd did. He

didn't have the stature that Bob Byrd had. It needed somebody, the leadership had to get behind this, it was not going to be done by committee chairmen. So Sparkman didn't have that much of a role to play, really.

Ritchie: Byrd was relatively new as majority leader, and this was a test of his ability to deliver, wasn't it?

Hildenbrand: Well, yes, but he was not an inexperienced person. He'd been Mansfield's whip since '71, and before that he was secretary of their conference. So he'd been in the leadership for quite some time. But you're right, in that with Carter in the White House, it really was a test of his leadership. It would have been reflective on him had they lost.

Ritchie: Was the Panama Canal a good example of the way Byrd and Baker worked together?

Hildenbrand: That may be the only example of something that was meaningful that they worked together and were able to accomplish something. They got along, but they didn't get along and compromise the way Mansfield and Scott did, for example. I'm not so sure there was the same mutual respect. There was mutual respect, but I don't think it was as deep seated as Mansfield and Scott. Mansfield and Scott were cut from the same cloth and they understood each other. Intellectually they were close. Baker was new, Byrd was new.

Friendships and respect of that kind take a while, you can't do that overnight, and these two had been together less than two years at that time, in leadership posts.

Ritchie: The whole treaty almost came undone at the end when Dennis DeConcini offered his amendment.

Hildenbrand: But we knew, we had seen the amendment, it was not a surprise. It was one of the things we knew we were going to have to deal with. Everybody was prepared for it. If we didn't have the votes for that, then we didn't have the votes for the treaty anyway, so it wouldn't have made any difference.

Ritchie: So you don't think that that really changed the nature of the treaty?

Hildenbrand: I don't think so. I mean, what it did is it made the Baker-Byrd thing more saleable to the administration and to Torrijos. If you look at the lesser of the two evils, they lived a lot longer with Baker-Byrd than they could with

DeConcini. So I think it had the effect of at least strengthening the Baker-Byrd amendment.

Ritchie: The Panama Canal debate was also broadcast over the radio. How well do you think that experiment worked?

Hildenbrand: I think it worked exceptionally well. I think it worked better than anybody even thought that it would. I don't think that anybody could visualize women in their kitchens preparing dinner listening to a debate on the Panama Canal. We in the Congress have a tendency to sort of look down our nose at constituents, at people, since we don't feel that they're as interested in the sophisticated things that we might be interested in. They have a tendency to think that they're interested in pocketbook issues, and war issues, but that they don't really get interested in things such as this. But anytime you have a conservative cause, whether it's a pro or a con, you're going to have a lot of interest -- because they drum up interest throughout the country with their causes, and opposition to this was a conservative cause. So there was a lot of interest.

Ritchie: Some commentators suggested that the debate lasted longer because it was broadcast.

Hildenbrand: I don't think that's true. Opponents of television in the Senate will lead you to that. They will believe that because they think television would lengthen the Senate sessions because everybody will want to get on television. I don't think that getting on radio played that big of a part in members' desire to go to the issues. It was a very complicated issue, and there was a lot of emotion on both sides: to give back or not to give back this

---

canal, that conservatives would say we fought and bled and died for. And it was ours, that's what they've always contended.

Ritchie: Well, Baker went to the mat on the Panama Canal, which clearly meant a lot to Carter, even if he may not have been as directly involved in it. Then Carter vetoed . . . .

Hildenbrand: Clinch River.

Ritchie: . . . . which was Baker's pet project. Wasn't there any sense of his being owed something in return?

Hildenbrand: None whatsoever. Baker had a chance to go to China in either 1979 or '80, at Easter time, and had an airplane. He had been invited by the Chinese. At the last minute the Defense Department said, "We're sorry, but we need that aircraft for somebody else," and took it away from him. He had to call the Chinese, and say, "I'm very sorry, but I don't have any means to get there." They didn't feel they owed him anything.

Ritchie: But he opposed the SALT II treaty very vigorously, which probably helped to make sure it never came to a vote. They could never have passed it without his support, do you think?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I don't think they could have, no. But administrations have a tendency, like constituents to politicians, it's not what you've done for me, it's what have you done for me

---

lately. That's the same thing. The fact that he did it when he did it doesn't make any difference. It's what did you do yesterday, or what are you going to do today. You know, the canal was never really Carter's. It wasn't an idea that started with him, it was something that had been around quite a while. So he did not feel that strongly about it. I would venture, and I don't know if it's to be a fact, but on the basis of the people who opposed the treaty, if Jimmy Carter had been in the Senate, he would have been opposed to the treaty. Philosophically, I think that's probably right. But he was President of the United States, and it was a different ball game.

Ritchie: Whereas the SALT treaty was a Carter initiative.

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmmm. And there again, it's difficult dealing with the foreign power such as Russia. It's hard to know what to believe and what not to believe. We still argue today the relative strengths of the two countries. My guess is we don't really know what they've got. My guess is we come close to it. But Carter never, I think, instilled in the people a feeling that he knew what the hell he was doing in the field of foreign affairs. Nixon was a consummate foreign policy person. He was a lousy domestic person, but he was very good in foreign policy. He really understood all of the countries and all of the leaders. He'd have been a hell of a Secretary of State. Carter, on the other hand, was good domestically, as Reagan is. But once you get outside the borders of Georgia,

---

he didn't know very much about what was going on. That plays a little bit of a part, to think that somebody like that would initial a treaty like SALT II; They just didn't trust him. They weren't so sure that he wasn't giving away the store. And

the verifiable part of it was very difficult. There was almost was no verifiable part of it. People just threw up their hands and said, what the hell, it's not worth the paper it's written on. We can't tell whether anybody's living by it.

Ritchie: Do you think that Baker's opposition to SALT helped to rebuild some of his bridges to the groups that opposed the Panama Canal treaties?

Hildenbrand: Oh, maybe, but they'll never forgive Howard Baker for the Panama Canal. If he lives to be whatever years he lives to be, he'll always be remembered as the person who turned the Republican party into supporting the Panama Canal, and is responsible for it carrying a Panama flag instead of a United States flag. They'll never forgive him. Conservatives have a very long memory, and don't forgive that often. It's hard to get back in their good graces, once you're out of them.

Ritchie: So you don't think that had any part in his calculations on which side to support on SALT?

Hildenbrand: Oh, no. He never could get back in their good graces, and he knew that. You can't be wrong, even once, with them. You have to be one hundred percent. It's not "I'm an almost conservative." You've got to be one. He was smart enough to know that there wasn't anything that he could possibly do to make him the darling of the conservatives. They had their darlings.

Ritchie: The worst failure in legislation that Carter seemed to have had was his energy bill. He must have given more national broadcasts on energy than any other issue, and the bill kept coming apart in Congress. Why did they have so much trouble getting an energy bill passed?

Hildenbrand: Basically, I think, because of its impact on everybody who travels. It's a difficult subject. There aren't very many people, certainly constituents, who know about oil wells and natural gas wells, and drilling, and oil depletion, and all of the things that go into an energy crisis. All they know is that there wasn't any heating oil in New England to keep people warm, and some thing had to be done about that. If you remember those summers with those long lines on gas rationing. It was a difficult time, but we got ourselves into that situation on our own, and I think what Carter was trying to do was to try to set the groundwork so that we would never get there again. We were so dependent upon foreign oil that if we couldn't drill oil, or find it ourselves, or get OPEC to let us

have it, we had to find alternate sources of energy, whether it was gas or wind or whatever. Well, you know, that's difficult to sell to the American people, because they don't understand that, they're not used to that. They have gasoline that runs their cars and they have oil and coal that heats their house. You start to talk to them about gas and solar heat, they don't understand that. That doesn't mean anything to them. They're not that much of a pioneer, today's people, that they're going to go ahead and say, "Jesus, that's fine, let's go ahead and build solar panels on all of the houses, and let's do whatever it takes."

There was also a feeling against Big Oil. They blamed Big Oil for the crunch that they were in, because they felt that Big Oil was simply reaping major profits and they weren't really doing very much to help the oil storage facilities, unless it was worth their while. That's part of the Abourezk-Metzenbaum fight on natural gas. It was more an anti-corporate fight than it was a let's try to do something for the people to help our energy situation, our energy crisis.

Ritchie: Carter argued that Congress really wasn't equipped to handle a complex piece of legislation like energy, because they had to break it down into fifteen committees in the House and so many committees in Senate. That it couldn't be handled by one group. Is that a fair assessment?

Hildenbrand: It's a fair assessment if you're sitting at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Civil rights bills could be as complex as anything else. Anti-trust provisions of laws could be complex. Complex bills are not something that Congress had not dealt with before. The fact that it went to as many committees as it went to doesn't certainly enhance it's ability to pass. That's the same thing here -- when you get that many committees working on it you've got to wind up with a terrible piece of legislation. To some degree he's probably -- there's some validity. The less committees you have operating on a given piece of legislation, the easier and more simpler it is for everybody to understand it. But you get that many people involved in it and they all want to put a mark on it. That makes it difficult.

Ritchie: It was about that time they reorganized the committees, too.

Hildenbrand: In '77, Stevenson-Brock. But this was now after '77 and Carter was still complaining that the committees were too fragmented. He wanted it to go to a single committee, one single committee. But there was no way the manner in which it was drafted did not infringe on the jurisdiction of other committees. And

committee chairmen are very, very jealous of their prerogatives, as well as the rules of the Senate, which spell out what those responsibilities are, those areas of jurisdiction.

Ritchie: Carter was always talking about comprehensive programs: we need a comprehensive program for this or that.

Hildenbrand: That's why it got referred to all those committees. If he had had a simple piece of legislation, it would have gone to a single committee. But if you draft a bill, and this is true even here in the Senate, the members of the Senate do that, they try to get too much in it, and then they fragment it, and it goes to committees that they don't want to have jurisdiction. So it's always best to draft a bill in the very simplest of forms so that you only deal with a single committee and it can't be re-referred and killed in some other committee. That's what he did with that: it was so complex, and it went so many places.

Ritchie: Did it leave itself more vulnerable to lobbying efforts against it?

Hildenbrand: Oh, it always does when you get that many people involved. The more you put in a bill, the more people can get involved in opposing it. The other side of the coin, I guess, is the more people can get involved in supporting it also. But it always seemed to me that the simpler it was -- I guess it depends on where you

are, what side of the issue you're on. You can see where you want to get as many people involved to help you, and then the other side of that is that if you get into that then you get that many people involved in opposing you. Maybe it's a Catch 22.

Ritchie: An issue like energy and oil, I imagine, brings out the big guns in 1obbying?

Hildenbrand: Well, you know, those are the people that had the money to pay for the lobbyists. Big Oil always had good lobbyists, and always had the money to pay lobbyists. Through the years they have been very, very effective. Their home state senators certainly have taken care of the oil industry. They haven't really been that badly hurt, as compared to some of the other industries throughout the country. It's like agriculture: you've got to eat.

Ritchie: In general, what qualities would you say make a person an effective lobbyist?

Hildenbrand: The most effective lobbyists, I think, are those who understand the Congress of the United States, the way it operates, and the personalities of the individuals in the Congress. Secondarily, he needs to know the issue for which he is lobbying. And I've said this to companies through my years of service in the Congress, that I would much rather you hire someone who knows the Congress and all of its little intricacies, and train them in your

---

industry, whatever that is, than to hire somebody who is conversant with your industry and try to train them in Congress, because I don't think you can do that. Most of the good lobbyists are people whose history or background is the Hill. If you look at the lobbyists in Washington, Bill Timmons, Tom Korologos, Boggs' son, Tommy Boggs, all came off the Hill in some form. Tommy Boggs was raised by a mother and father [Lindy and Hale Boggs] that were in Congress. Korologos started as an aide to a senator and wound up at the White House. Timmons started as an aide to a Congressman and wound up at the White House. Some of the leading lobbyists for defense contractors are all off the Hill.

Ritchie: What is it that they know that somebody who wasn't on the Hill wouldn't know?

Hildenbrand: They have a feeling about this place. They understand that this is family, in the first instance. And they understand what makes this place go. They understand how senators themselves work with each other. They know personalities. They know that you can have somebody support something because of something that somebody did for them totally unrelated to what it is that you're working on. You have to know those personalities, you have to know who likes who, and who doesn't like who. You have to know that an individual senator has fifteen votes against him, just by saying his name. Those are things that you have to be up here to learn and to find out. You have to live with it in order to understand it.

Ritchie: What kind of mistakes can a lobbyist make? What's the type of thing that a person who hasn't been up here might stumble on?

Hildenbrand: Oh, major mistakes I think that lobbyists make is to try to really pressure a member into voting for or against something, or to try to exert pressures, to be untruthful. Members hate to be lied to -- maybe that of all of the things. What you have to do, I think, to be a good lobbyist is to go in to a member and put all your cards on the table and be totally up front, say "This is where we're coming from, this is what it means, this is why we need your support." If you don't do that, you run the risk of making an enemy for life. While he may not

help you on this issue, unless you're a single-issue lobbyist, he's going to be around to help you on others. I don't think there's any issue that is worth destroying your credibility with the Congress in order to get it accomplished, unless you're going to do this and quit, and never have to worry about it. But if you're going to be around, in order for you to be accepted among these members, you've got to be absolutely up front with them and absolutely truthful. They respect candor. Even thought they may not be with you, they respect the position that you've taken. Until you prove differently, they respect you.

Ritchie: Does a reputation spread beyond one office? Do members clue each other in about their relations with lobbyists?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. Members will talk, particularly committee members on the same committee, dealing with the same issues. That's more apt to be true of somebody who's a bad penny than it is somebody good. Members are more apt to say, "Christ, stay away from whoever it is that's bad news," than they are to say, "Gee, I hope you see Harry, he's a hell of a nice guy and he's got a good story to tell." Members would be less apt to do that they would if it was a bad scene.

Ritchie: With the incredible increase in cost of campaigning, does this add a new pressure in terms of lobbying, that the lobbyists have campaign contributions they can make available to members?

Hildenbrand: Well, but it's within limits. You can only accept so much. Sure it plays a role. Lobbyists now have a tendency to go out and hold fund raisers for members in order to raise money. It's easier to do that than it is to try to come up with a contribution on your own. So members do that. But you have to first of all believe that the Congress is corrupt, in the first instance, to believe that a member's vote can be bought because you're going to raise money for him if he votes a certain way. I think you would be hard pressed to find any kind of an example where you can say that a member's vote was purchased by this lobbyist or that lobbyist, or this group or that group. Although after an election, journalists will write -- and

---

you've seen the stories -- they got so much money from the medical profession, and they supported whatever it is. What they do is they draw a parallel between the vote that this person cast and the fact that he received a hundred thousand dollars from the medical community. Well, you can do that with every guy's that running, because he's voted on every issue there is, and anybody that gives him money I can draw the parallel that he voted that way because he got five thousand dollars contribution.

But that's a ridiculous way to treat campaigns, and certainly a way to treat members. You know, they're held in mostly disrespect anyway. I guess in a survey they're lower than garbage men. A lot of that is because newspapers and television continue to write those kind of stories. If you say that often enough, people that are listening to it, they're not sophisticated, they don't know what goes on here in Washington -- Washington's a foreign country to most of them. They like Dan Rather, and Dan Rather says "That's the way it is," and so they say, "Yeah, boy those guys are really doin' it." They don't have anymore idea whether they are or not than they can fly.

The news media sometimes doesn't accept the responsibility that it has, and sometimes is not as good in living up to that responsibility as maybe they should be. The fight now over Ted Turner and CBS, based on the fact that they think they're a liberal, pinko,

---

whatever they think they are, and that all they hear is the bad side of things, well, the news media and television can be blamed for some of that. They have a tendency not to present the full story. They don't necessarily lie, but they leave things out, because it's not quite sensational enough if you put it in. It's like the old story of a bad story in the newspaper. The people say, "Oh, well, we're going to retract it." Well, the story appeared on page one, and the retraction appeared on page thirty. It seems to me that journalism should accept the responsibility up front and not print that, or print it in its entirety and not print it and try to get away with it, and then if they don't get away with it retract it someplace else, because the retraction never catches up with the first story.

Ritchie: After the four years that Howard Baker was minority leader, he had gotten quite a national reputation as a leader against Carter's programs and holding the Republicans together on most issues. He announced his candidacy for president, but his campaign never got off the ground. He withdrew right after the New Hampshire primary. What happened?

Hildenbrand: Well, simplistically, two things happened. One, he's right when he says you cannot run for the presidency of the United States and have a full-time job, because running is a fulltime job. The second part was, he did not have good organization. They were neophytes in political campaigning at that level. Because

---

they could not have all of his time, it was very difficult. That's really what happened. What he did as leader doesn't translate into very many votes. He managed to stave off some things, and he managed to pass some things, but those

are not issues that the people are going to flock to the voting booth to support you, because you were a great leader. They could care less, as far as that's concerned. The only thing that got him was exposure on television, so that they knew who he was. But nobody ever said because you're such a great leader we want you to be our president.

And you have to remember that Reagan started from 1976, when he damn near beat Ford in the convention in Kansas City, that group stayed together. Everybody that ran was fighting an uphill battle to run against Ronald Reagan. Even if they could have beat him in some primaries they'd have gone into convention and they didn't have the delegates. He still had those delegates.

Ritchie: But being minority leader was even an additional burden in the sense that he had to be on the floor rather than out campaigning.

Hildenbrand: I don't think that you can run for the presidency of the United States and be in the leadership. Jack Kennedy did it because he left in January and never came back, when he was a senator from Massachusetts in 1960. Some of the great letters were written by Hugh Scott and Ken Keating in that period of time. They wrote

---

periodically, they wrote to Jack to tell him that they realized that he was very busy out there and that he didn't have time to come to Washington and do the things in the Senate that he should be doing. They didn't want him to totally not know what was going on, so they would write him letters and tell him that this is what we did today. It was like a little child who went to camp and wrote home to their mother and father and said what we did. Those letters are priceless. They wrote to Jack to tell him they knew that he wasn't coming back and couldn't be and we want you to know what we're doing. Everybody got a big kick out of them, including Jack, he thought they were funny and enjoyed them. They put them in the Record from time to time, whenever they wrote them.

But he left, and hell, he never came back until he got the nomination. Lyndon, on the other hand, was here, he was majority leader. He couldn't leave.

End of Interview #6

Interview #7: Secretary of the Senate
(Monday, May 6, 1985)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: Did you work at all in the 1980 election?

Hildenbrand: In the Reagan presidential campaign? Uhh-uhh.

Ritchie: Did you stay out of presidential politics after you became Republican secretary?

Hildenbrand: Yes. Nobody wanted me to do anything, so I didn't bother, in either '76 or in '80. That is, I wasn't actively involved in the campaigns.

Ritchie: There's a story that the night before the election of 1980 you put a note on the Secretary of the Senate's door saying, "Under New Management."

Hildenbrand: "Opening Under New Management."

Ritchie: Is that true?

Hildenbrand: It was before that. It was in October. Stan [Kimmitt] as Secretary of the Senate is ex-officio and secretary-general to the Association of Secretary-Generals of the parliaments throughout the world, as I was when I became secretary. It's a position that the secretary holds. He went on a fall Interparliamentary

---

Union meeting to some funny land. He always took Gail Martin with him and some of the other people. I talked to Nordy Hoffman, who then was the sergeant-at-arms, and I said, "You know, what I ought to do is get a sign made, and put a sign on his door so that when he comes back it will say: Closed, Opening Under New Management November 4th," or whatever the day after the election was. Nordy thought that was a great idea, so he had somebody in his sign shop make the sign. We went in a couple of nights before Stan got back, he came back on a weekend, and we'd been up Thursday or Friday and put that sign on his door. He always closed his door to his office, so we put the sign on his door. He came back, and we knew that he would go into his office as soon as he came back, which was Saturday, and he did indeed come into the office. He found the sign. We didn't realize that we were being prophetic at the time that we put the sign there. He didn't think it was very funny even then, and thought less of it after it happened. But Nordy and I thought it was a pretty funny story.

Ritchie: So you really weren't optimistic before the election?

Hildenbrand: No. We had what, forty-three I think, so we were looking at eight seats, or seven seats and a tie. We could see where we could get fairly close. We

were thinking forty-seven or fortyeight, pick up five seats, something like that. But I don't think it

---

ever dawned on anybody that we would do what we did. I don't think also that we realized that Reagan was going to run as strong, or that Carter was going to be as weak as he was.

Ritchie: Do you recall your feelings on election night, as the news started coming in?

Hildenbrand: I was drunk for two days. Those were some of the funny stories of that campaign. When I left, which was, oh, 3:30 or 4:00, I guess, in the morning, I was well in my cups by that time. We still had not gotten the majority. We were still short. [Mack] Mattingly was still out; John East was still out; [Jeremiah] Denton was still out. Those three were still out, and I think somewhere else there were some that were not resolved. So I went home in my drunken stupor and got into bed. At about 7:30 the phone rang, and I'd only been in bed about two hours by that time. It was Baker, saying that we had captured the majority and to come back in. So I got up and showered and dressed and came back in -- and continued to drink throughout that day and into the next. It was Thursday before I was sober enough to realize what had happened. But it was quite a surprise.

Ritchie: Do you attribute that shift strictly to Reagan's coattails?

Hildenbrand: Well, yes. We'll know this time how much of it was Reagan's coattails, and how much of it was individuals. It's the situation that the Republicans find themselves in in '86, and that is the numbers were working our way, and that coupled with the strong candidacy of Ronald Reagan -- he appealed to people. I think that he made a difference in those key races where it was close, that we really should not have won under ordinary circumstances, like Mack Mattingly in Georgia, and like Jeremiah Denton in Alabama, like John East. Those were races we had no business winning. But with Reagan going as strong as he did, I think it made the difference in those races. That's the one problem that the Democrats have in '86. They don't have anybody at the top of the ticket that's going to help them pull those people in. They're going to have to do it on their own. It's not going to be as easy as they thought that is was going to be, four or five months ago.

Ritchie: How did the Senate Republicans shift from twenty-six years of being in the minority to suddenly being in the majority?

Hildenbrand: Not very easily. You have to remember that there was no one in the Republican ranks (except Strom Thurmond, who was a Democrat when he was in the majority last), there was no Republican who had ever been in the majority. The closest was John Tower, and he didn't come here until May of '61. Nobody ever remembered what it was like to be in the majority. Mark Trice was gone, everybody that

---

was here at that time was gone. We had no idea what it was we were supposed to do. We had been the minority long enough and had watched the majority operate long enough so that we pretty well knew what was expected of us, in terms of continuing the operation of this institution, but nobody had ever been a chairman of a committee. It was quite traumatic for an awful lot of people.

I was lucky in that Stan Kimmitt, my predecessor, and I had been friends for ten to twelve years by that time. So the transition from my standpoint was an easy transition, plus the fact that I'd been in the Senate since 1961, so I knew the Senate offices, because I'd worked in them, and I knew the leadership and the support staffs of the sergeant-at-arms and things like that, because I'd been in the leadership and on the floor. So I did not have the problems that some of the other people had in turning over from minority to majority. Where you had good relationships -- Banking, for example, between Danny Wall and Ken McClain, they just switched over, and it was an easy transition for them, because they were good friends and they'd worked together and it wasn't very hard. But in those committees where there was a lot of friction and a lot of partisanship, it was a very difficult transition for them to make. You have to decide who you keep, and who do you let go.

The problem that I had with my conservative members was that they wanted me to fire everybody, because that's the way they did it

---

twenty-six years ago. Well, a lot had happened in twenty-six years, and the secretary's office and the sergeant-at-arms office was not anywhere near the kind of an office it was in 1953 and '54. Both Liebengood and I went into the jobs with the decision that we were going to do whatever we thought was best for the Senate as a whole because we thought, and still do, that it would reflect on Howard Baker as the majority leader. So we made very few changes. We were called to a meeting with the chairman of the conference, Jim McClure, who wanted us to do something else. We just said there's no way we're going to do anything more than what we're doing. It died down, and that was the end of it, at

that particular time. But there are still an awful lot of people who felt that I should have cleaned house, as it were, in the secretary's office.

Ritchie: Well, it was certainly a testament to the idea of a professional, nonpartisan staff. They'd been talking about it for a generation, but there hadn't been a change in party to test it.

Hildenbrand: Yes, well [Frank] Valeo, I think, started it when he was secretary. Then the [John] Culver Commission came along and they recommended, if you remember, the creation of a "super administrator" over both the sergeant-at-arms and the secretary, but the net effect of what the Culver Commission was really saying was exactly what Valeo was trying to do, and that was professionalize the staff. Then Kimmitt continued that. The problem that Republicans had was that

---

the decision to professionalize was made when you had all Democrats in those positions. The obvious reason for that was that we hadn't been in power for twenty-six years, so there wasn't anything else but Democrats. And also, I don't know even to this day how many of those people who are in those positions are really Democrats versus Republicans. The executive clerk, for example, is a Republican. He was appointed by Margaret Chase Smith. Kimmitt gave him the job, and didn't have to, but moved him up, which is a sign of the professionalism that Stan wanted to have, and that I wanted to have.

Ritchie: It's still a strange world up here: there's no civil service, there's no tenure, everybody wonders from Congress to Congress.

Hildenbrand: Yes, there's no protection. And, you know, with a new secretary coming in, there were people who were let go. There's no protection; there's nobody you can go to. If you are a Democrat, and it's obvious that you are -- and I had some that worked for Kimmitt that had never been anything but Democrats -- so you say, "I'm sorry, but your time is up." There's not very much that they can do. Try to find a job someplace else. But that's the nature of the political beast.

Ritchie: With a Republican administration coming in in '81, and with the Republicans taking a majority in the Senate, with all the committee positions, there was a lot of patronage to go around.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and there weren't very many places for Democrats to go, if they were taken out of their jobs in either the committees or in one of the support

staffs. They didn't have the administration, and there weren't very many places for them to go.

Ritchie: I wondered about the period between the election and the inauguration, and the types of planning that went on. With Senator Baker looking ahead to being majority leader, what kinds of concerns did he have, and how did he begin to take the lead as a majority rather than a minority leader?

Hildenbrand: I don't know that he had a lot of concerns. He'd been minority leader for four years, and he'd been a very faithful minority leader in terms of his being on the floor throughout those four years. Except for that ill-fated presidential race in 1980, he was there almost every day. I guess in '78 he ran for reelection, so he was down in Tennessee a little bit during that period, but even then he did not have to go that much, and it was a quick trip down and a quick trip back. So he had spent an awful lot of time on the floor learning how to be minority leader. It wasn't that big of a transition for him to switch over to be majority leader.

He spent a lot of time in familiarizing himself with the rules, and with the procedures, because Byrd was and is a master of Senate rules. Baker knew that he was going to have to know those rules backwards and forwards because Byrd would call him to task at every

---

opportunity -- and as it turned out, that's exactly what Byrd did. Byrd did it long enough until he finally realized that Baker was conversant with the rules, and he did know the rules, and then he stopped. Then they became fairly good friends again, but there was a period of time when he went out of his way to try to embarrass Howard Baker as the majority leader, by calling on the rules.

Ritchie: It was sort of a testing period?

Hildenbrand: Uhh-huh, exactly. And I don't fault him for that. He's there to protect his people, and if he can gain the upper hand by those kind of things, there's nothing illegal or wrong about it, or immoral, or anything else, it's the way a good leader should work. But for those of us who were close to Howard Baker, we felt that it was an embarrassment that really should not have been. If you look at it in retrospect, and think about it, we would have done the same thing had the roles been reversed. And I think Byrd and Baker are very, very close friends, and have such a total respect for one another. I'm sure that Bob Byrd misses Howard Baker now.

Ritchie: Did Baker have the parliamentarian coach him on how to proceed?

Hildenbrand: Yes. I had made a decision at the time, because of the problems that the parliamentarian, Murray Zweben, had gotten into with some of the conservatives on our side of the aisle, it was

---

obvious to me that that was one of the positions I was going to have to change. I told Stan that he should tell Murray that I was going to have to do that. I wanted to make as few changes as possible, but I knew that I needed to make some visible changes so that my members could see that there had been changes. Murray was just someone that visibly my people, rightly or wrongly, felt was very, very Democratic, with a big "D." They wanted him changed, so I made the change. Bob Dove helped Howard Baker in getting up to speed on the rules.

Ritchie: I remember that Murray had entered a friend of the court brief in the Taiwan treaty issue, and Senator Goldwater had been quite annoyed about that.

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: Was that the major reason?

Hildenbrand: That was part of it. That was a big reason. I could have never gotten by with leaving him. Goldwater would have been all over my case. But there were other conservatives who felt as strongly as Barry did, for differing reasons. But the conservatives, the McClures of the world, just felt that they could not get a fair shake from Murray. Murray was in an untenable position. You know, you do what the majority leader wants you to do, and it's very hard to try to be bipartisan in that job.

Ritchie: Is the parliamentarian really that beholden to the majority leader?

Hildenbrand: Well, he's selected by the secretary of the Senate, who's certainly beholden to the majority leader. If you want to get rid of him, and you've got the votes to do it -- his isn't an elected post, he's there at the pleasure of the secretary.

Ritchie: I wondered in the sense that his role is to interpret the rules. Doesn't the parliamentarian strive to be nonpartisan?

Hildenbrand: Yes. And Murray did too, but if you're on the other side of the aisle, and he gives an interpretation and it's not the one you want, he's partisan. Forget the fact that it's a proper ruling, that doesn't really enter into it. It's not the ruling that you wanted, so therefore it's got to be a partisan rule. I think that

that's what a lot of our people felt, that his rulings leaned to favor the Democrats in the Senate.

Ritchie: Well, very early on it became clear that Baker was going to work very closely with the Reagan administration. Baker himself was a candidate for president and, while he was a conservative, he wasn't as conservative as Ronald Reagan was, but he seems to have interpreted his role as majority as the White House's point man on the floor of the Senate, and did it very effectively.

How do you explain the closeness with which Baker was able to work with the Reagan administration?

Hildenbrand: I don't think that the 1980 campaign had anything to do with anything. There was never animosity between Ronald Reagan and Howard Baker. Everybody was in the race to see who was going to be the candidate for president, and Reagan won, and that was fine. When Baker became leader, you must remember, I call him a "congressional brat," in that he was in the Congress -- his father was a congressman, his mother was a congressman, his father-in-law was the minority leader of the Senate. That's all he knew, was the Congress of the United States. It's like being an army brat, by osmosis you know the things that you're supposed to do.

He set out to be a good majority leader, and he realized that the way to do that was to be as successful with the administration's program as it was possible for him to be. That's what got him the majority leadership, was the Reagan administration's programs, the programs that Reagan espoused if he ever got to be president, that's what got us the majority. You don't throw away a winning hand. Baker was a smart enough politician to realize that Reagan was riding awfully high, and the way to go with him was to ride along with him.

Ritchie: Was there that same sense in the party as a whole? Did he have much trouble holding the other Republicans to the task?

Hildenbrand: No. The first crack out of the box there was, I think, a debt limit vote, early on. It was a crucial vote. It just needed to be done. We had about thirteen conservative Republicans who had never voted to increase the debt limit, and had campaigned as a matter of fact against increasing the debt limit. They were called into Baker's office to talk about what we could do, because the Democrats weren't about to help us. If we were going to pass it, we were going to pass it on our own. Jesse Helms, to his ever-dying credit, and Strom Thurmond, made very, very strong pleas to these people -- to Charlie Grassley, who was one

for example who never voted for it in the House -- to vote to increase the debt limit, that it had to be. The point they simply made was, "hey, I'm chairman because he's president. I'm not about to turn my back on him now, simply because I've never voted to increase the debt limit. I'm just going to hold my nose and vote." They put such pressure on those, that when it was over the thirteen of them all voted to increase the debt limit.

Ritchie: I always wondered about that. The Democrats refused to vote until all the Republicans had cast their votes.

Hildenbrand: That's right. But we did the same thing to them, so turnabout was fair play, as far as they were concerned.

Ritchie: But in a sense did that help Republican party unity by forcing them to vote together?

Hildenbrand: No, we knew that. It helped to the degree that we told all of our people that "look, the Democrats are not going to help us. Either we have the votes to pass this, or it's not going to be increased. And then I don't know what we do." They knew that they had to provide the votes. There was no question.

Ritchie: But on one of the first really crucial issues, it was the party standing together that counted.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. The Democrats are in the same boat now. They're getting now where we were, in that after this farm credit vote, when they stood together, they are now looking for ways in which they can continue to stay together. If Byrd is smart, he'll manufacture those ways, if he has to, in order to get those people used to that syndrome of voting as a party and as a bloc. Because you can't just do it on one vote. You have to keep going back and letting them do it again until they get used to it.

Ritchie: And chipping off enough of the majority to make the difference.

Hildenbrand: Yes, see they don't need that many. They've got forty-seven of their own votes. They only need four votes. With our people, the situation the Republicans are in now, with twenty-two of them running for reelection, some of them who are not running are mavericks anyway, so it's not hard to find four votes. Bob Dole's

job is much more difficult than Bob Byrd's, at the moment, even though he's majority leader.

Ritchie: Early on in that Congress, the decision was made to put the budget on the fast track and to concentrate on that to the exclusion of almost everything else. Who made that decision?

Hildenbrand: Pete Domenici and Howard Baker, with David Stockman. We met at Howard Baker's house on a Sunday, I guess, before we made the decision to do this, with Stockman, and Jim Baker, and Ed Meese, and [Michael] Deaver, [Donald] Regan, who was then treasury secretary, Domenici, Hatfield. People who were going to be involved in the whole thing, devised the strategy to get this budget moving along the lines that we wanted it to move.

Ritchie: Did the idea come from the Congress or the administration?

Hildenbrand: It was the Congress. The administration didn't have any idea about procedures or how to get things like this done. Domenici really, he and Hatfield were the strong people that understood the budget process. Domenici had learned at the feet of Henry Bellmon -- he and Muskie were really the architects of the budget process -- so Pete had learned his lessons well, and knew pretty well how they wanted to proceed. He knew the Budget Act backwards and forwards.

Ritchie: And they were able to come up with the scheme of the Reconciliation bill as the major vehicle.

Hildenbrand: Because we had the votes to do that. It would have been difficult if you didn't have the votes to do that. But in looking at it, in order to formulate the kind of a budget that they wanted, that was of course the way to do it. They needed the chairmen's support because it treads a lot on the chairmen's prerogatives in reconciliation, it doesn't give you much latitude. But everybody was convinced that the economic health of this country was so important that they had to do whatever it was to get it started. They believed enough in Reagan to go ahead and do this, because they thought that he was right. Two years or so later there was an awful lot of gnashing of teeth, because we weren't quite so sure that the whole thing was going to work. Interest rates got way up into the seventeens and eighteens, and we could see where maybe we had made a big mistake. But, as it turned out, he was right. It all leveled itself out to where we are now.

Ritchie: Can you recall the atmosphere of that meeting in January of 1981? Were people apprehensive about the way things were going? Were they confident? Did they think they could get what they wanted?

Hildenbrand: Yes, I think that they were. I don't know that they were confident, but I think that everybody was willing to go

---

ahead and assume the responsibility that was required to get this done. They all believed that if they stayed together that they could do it. It was sort of euphoric, because they were a majority party for the first time, and they believed that that would carry them, that it would be hard for somebody now to vote against them, on the Republican side, because you didn't want them to be a majority party.

Ritchie: On the other hand, the current budget is having troubles. Within the budget there are so many different factions that have their own particular needs in getting it through.

Hildenbrand: But you can't equate '85 with '81. You've got, first of all, a lame duck president; you've got a total new Republican leadership, from majority leader all the way down through. The Democrats are becoming united, for the first time. It's a different atmosphere, it's a different attitude. You've got twenty-two Republicans running in 1986. The Democrats believe that they can take back control; they're not going to help at all. So it's a different situation. And you're dealing at it from a standpoint of deficit reduction, which is not really where we started in '81, that's not where we were, but that's where they are now. So there's a different emphasis than there was then.

Ritchie: There was some concern in '81 about the potential deficits. Wasn't it Howard Baker who referred to the "magic asterisk" in David Stockman's figures?

Hildenbrand: Oh, we knew about the deficit, but it wasn't as big an issue as it is now. We did not believe then, and as it turned out we were right, that the average person out in the street understood deficits -- because he can't see it, he can't feel it, he can't smell it. It just doesn't affect him. So to go out and try to make a deficit an issue in a campaign, the guy doesn't know what you're talking about. But because we've continued to build on that deficit, and it became more and more in the news through the last four or five years, in this last campaign it became obvious that the people, while they may not understand it, don't like it. So that's why there's this emphasis on deficit reduction that wasn't there then. We knew about deficits, and we knew they were bad, but they weren't causing problems for anybody, except the economic purists. So we didn't mess with them.

Ritchie: Republicans had campaigned against deficits for a long time.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. A lot of the things that we did when we became the majority party, a lot of our members had to go home and go to confessional, because they were doing things that in all of their political life they had never done before -- but then, of course, they had never been a majority party before. But anything economic, deficits, increasing taxes, debt limit, all those things, were an anathema to Republican conservatives generally. Then they found

---

themselves in bed with the likes of the Lowell Weickers and the Mark Hatfields of the world, and it caused them all sorts of problems. But they believed in Reagan and that was another thing that helped, that he was their man and if that's what he wanted, they were going to do it.

Ritchie: Reagan came to the Capitol on a couple of occasions, and went to the President's Room. Did Senator Baker suggest that to him?

Hildenbrand: Yes. We did that on inauguration day. Baker was somewhat of a historian about the Senate, but really not that much, but he realized the value of the President's Room and what it had stood for and why it had been there. It had never been used as long as I can remember for anything like that. Lyndon Johnson came up there I think one time to sign something, I don't remember what it was. But he recommended that what the president ought to do, on his very first act, was to go into the President's Room and sign some nomination forms for his cabinet. So after he was sworn in as president, he came from the platform into the President's Room, and he signed the letters appointing his cabinet, and then gave them to the Vice President of the United States, who was then the President of the Senate. He came up about maybe twice after that. I know there was a meeting with Tip O'Neill

---

and Jim Wright and our leadership on economic problems that was held in the President's Room. So he was there at least a couple of times that I remember.

Ritchie: Was Senator Baker suggesting ways for President Reagan to effectively lobby for his program, or was the administration pretty well geared up for that sort of thing?

Hildenbrand: Oh, no. Baker wanted them to do this because he wanted them to see the relationship between the administration and the Congress, that it was going to be a two-way street, that we were going to go back and forth. We didn't have to go down there all the time, that he could come up here just as easily as

having us go down there. He believed that it was important for everybody to see that in the very beginning, that there was going to be a relationship between the White House and the Congress, and certainly the White House and the Senate.

Ritchie: How would you compare Reagan as opposed to his predecessors in terms of his dealings with Congress?

Hildenbrand: Well, he was not a political animal. His instincts were so good. He didn't have the ego that his predecessors had had. It was not hard for him to come up on the Hill. He took the word of Howard Baker; Howard Baker was his leader. So if Howard Baker said "we ought to go and do this," he said "we'll go do that."

He didn't have people saying, "oh, don't do that. Show them who's boss," and all this kind of business. He is very, very amenable to those kind of things, and was always available if Howard Baker wanted to talk to him about anything.

Ritchie: Did Baker have a direct line to the White House?

Hildenbrand: Yes. He did not use it as much as some others might have used it. He had a lot of respect for Jim Baker, and he went through Jim Baker because he knew that his views would be going into the Oval Office through Jim Baker. But there were times when he realized that he really had to talk to the president, and he had no difficulty in getting through to him. Nobody said, "Can I tell him what it's all about," or anything like that. They either put him through, or they said the president will call you back.

Ritchie: Considerably different from Scott in the Nixon years.

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: What about Reagan's congressional liaison? How would you rate that?

Hildenbrand: They reflect -- and I think this is true to some extent, liaison people have a tendency to reflect the boss of the agency, or in this case the President of the United States. If you

---

have a president who wants to get along with the Congress, then your job becomes very easy because that's what you're going to do, and that's what they did. I think that they did exceptionally well in that regard. They were not the heavy hitters that a Bryce Harlow was, or a Mike Manatos was, or a Kenny

O'Donnell was, but nevertheless they were good journeymen liaison people. They could bring the message of the White House to the leaders. The leader used Jim Baker an awful lot, although he recognized how important it was to go through the liaison people, and did, as often as he could. In fact, we have chairmen's meeting at 11:45 on Tuesdays, and he invited the White House liaison to sit in on that, which was unheard of, because that was an internal thing where we used to scream and holler a lot. But he asked the White House liaison to sit in on it.

Ritchie: Did that help, do you think?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I don't think it hurt. The thing that I like about it simply is that sitting as a liaison officer, I can get a sense of the deepness of the feeling of members if I'm in that room, moreso than I can if somebody just tells me about it. I can feel the intensity in that room that I can't get by Baker just calling me up and saying, "Man, we had a meeting and it was terrible." That doesn't really do much for me. But if I'm sitting there and listening to Lowell Weicker scream, or Strom Thurmond, or John Tower, or Mark Hatfield, I'm better able to say to the President of the United

---

States, "I mean, these guys are mad. I don't care what anybody else tells you, they are mad." You don't know that unless you sit there, so I think from their standpoint it was a good thing for them. And it was good from our standpoint because it got the message to the White House.

Ritchie: Now, when you say that people were mad, these were sessions where chairmen had to decide who was getting attention, who's bills would get to the floor?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I wasn't talking specifics, I was just raising the question does it help them, and I said yes, it helps them because of the intensity of feeling that they can get in the room.

Ritchie: I was just curious as to what types of things that they would discuss that would raise those emotions?

Hildenbrand: Oh, they would discuss legislation, and they would discuss programs the administration had sent up. They would discuss whether or not they had the votes to pass them. They would discuss whether there were problems, what kind of problems, where were the problems coming from. You know, all of those chairmen did not necessarily go lockstep with everything the administration wanted to do. The fact that Bob Packwood might report it out didn't necessarily mean that Strom Thurmond was going to embrace it, just because it was a Republican chairman. So you had some people in there with some

very strong feelings about things that they weren't going to change just because a Republican chairman proposed it.

Ritchie: The other really remarkable thing about that year was that Senator Baker was able to put off social issues until after the budget issues were taken care of. It seems to me that that was a critical decision, and it was pretty amazing that he carried it off. How did he manage that?

Hildenbrand: Well, he just sat down with the people that had the social issues and said, "hey, look, you're going to get your day. I'm going to give you time to debate this issue." Abortion, for example, was one that Jesse was always pushing him for, or prayer in the schools, or busing. He just flat told them, "I'm committed to you that before a certain day" -- whatever that day was, I don't recall the dates now -- "I'm going to have a bill on the floor and you're going to be able to debate the issue of abortion," or whatever it is. And they all went along. They believed Howard Baker's word. If Howard Baker said they're going to have the chance to do this, they believed they were going to have a chance to do it, and they did. He felt very, very strongly about giving his word and keeping it. He would have done most anything in order to keep that word. People said, "Well, you don't have to bring this up." He said, "Yes, I do. I made that commitment." That's how he managed to hold off all the issues until we'd disposed of the budget issue.

Ritchie: Considering how emotional those issues had been in the campaign just before then, and in so many people's careers, it had to take a lot of willpower on their part not to bring them up.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and in some cases it was hard for them to explain to their constituencies, particularly lobbying groups, as to why they weren't pushing for this. They didn't care about the budget, what the hell was the budget as far as they were concerned. Abortion was key to them. So it was difficult for the Jesse Helmses of the world to take that position and stay off of those issues. We tried as much as possible to give them an out of some sort so that they could sort of blame us, while at the same time acquiescing to what we were doing.

Ritchie: Did anybody give you any particular trouble?

Hildenbrand: No. The lobby groups did, but the members didn't give us any trouble.

Ritchie: Then after scoring a huge success on the budget issue, most all of those social issues were stalemated, they never did pass abortion, or school prayer.

Hildenbrand: Which is what we knew when we started in the first instance. We just didn't want them up at that particular time. You know, these were not issues that were suddenly new, that nobody had ever heard of before. We'd been dealing with busing for as long as I

---

can remember. And while abortion was a relatively new issue, it was still six, seven years we'd been messing with that. Prayer in the school the same way. These were not new issues. We knew where the votes were all along, in terms of how difficult it was going to be to pass any of those things, which is another reason why Baker didn't want to mess with them until he got the budget out of the way, because they'd just have a tendency to stalemate everything and tie up the Senate, for something that's not going to be enacted anyway.

Ritchie: And in fact, Republicans fought against them as well as supporting them. Senator Weicker and Senator Packwood really led the . . . .

Hildenbrand: Fight against abortion, and had been for years before that, so that was nothing new.

Ritchie: We talked about liaison when we talked about the budget, I wondered if you could tell me what you thought about David Stockman's role in all of this, and how effective or ineffective he was in that early period of getting things launched?

Hildenbrand: Well, David probably memorized that budget, knew it better and still does than anybody else. He had a tendency to rub people the wrong way, and to be maybe a little arrogant, certainly very dogmatic in his positions, unbending. But he had a way to go, and that's the way he wanted to go. You just had to beat him down to

---

get to the point -- and sometimes they went over his head and would go to Baker and go the president and say, "you know, damn it, this is not going to work. Get him to back off." There were many, many compromises. But Stockman was liked one day and hated the next. It all depended on what day it happened to be.

Ritchie: Did it help his position that he had been a House member before?

Hildenbrand: No.

Ritchie: He knew the way the Congress worked perhaps better than if he had come from outside?

Hildenbrand: No, David is an intellectual to the nth degree and probably didn't understand how the Congress worked anyway, even though he'd been in the Congress. He was much more of a substance man than he was anything else.

Ritchie: I wondered if that magazine article that came out on him, "The Education of David Stockman," affected his relationships with people up here?

Hildenbrand: Not really. There were some that took great delight in the article, and other's it didn't matter. These people in this fishbowl are used to stories and articles. If you're strong enough and in a strong enough position, why you can roll with those

---

articles and they won't bother you too much. Members have a tendency -- they're one-day stories and they chortle about them, but two weeks later nobody will remember what the thing was all about.

Ritchie: It doesn't tend to undermine a person's credibility?

Hildenbrand: No. It raised questions that may not have been there before, but he's still here and that says something, I guess.

Ritchie: The election of 1980 brought in a whole new class of Republican senators, more than a dozen . . . .

Hildenbrand: Sixteen.

Ritchie: One of the largest Republican classes in a generation. Were there any particular problems in dealing with that many freshmen senators?

Hildenbrand: Well, it was a big class, a bigger class than we were used to. There were eighteen new members that came in: two Democrats and sixteen Republicans. We weren't used to dealing with that big of a class. But it didn't make any difference to us one way or the other. It would have made a difference if they could have suddenly decided they all wanted to get together and be a bloc. That caused us a little concern in the outset. We got to thinking about it. We had nothing on which to base it, we just sort of thought, if

those guys suddenly decide that they're that big of a group, which they are, and they decide that they want to have a major impact on this whole place, they could do it, because that's a lot of votes, sixteen is what twenty percent maybe, or maybe more than that. But as it turned out they never got into that kind of a category.

Ritchie: Well, did Senator Baker make any overtures to them so that they wouldn't feel they were being left out?

Hildenbrand: One of the things he did with the chairmen's meeting, he invited a freshman member each week, a different freshman member each week, to come to the chairmen's meetings, so that they became a part of the system and they began to understand what went on in the chairmen's meeting, and how people managed bills and things like that. He went out of his way to make sure that they knew what was happening, so that they weren't treated lightly. By bringing them into those councils like that, why he made it possible for them to enter their pleas for something, or not for something. Also it gave the rest of the members, that is the other fifteen or sixteen, a chance to say to someone, "you're going to the chairmen's meeting, how about raising this or raising that." And then I think that those members went back and talked to the other members and brought them up to date on what was happening. It was impossible to get all of them in there, so that was the system that he devised to keep them informed, to bring a different one in each week.

Ritchie: Did he have any difficulties in placing people on committees, keeping everyone happy, all those freshmen members?

Hildenbrand: We do a different deal than the Democrats do. The Democrats do it by the majority leader, or the minority leader as the case may be. He just does it with the steering committee, which is his steering committee. We don't do that. We have a committee on committees and we go strictly on seniority. In some cases that's better, because then you don't have the people clawing and screaming at you if you don't give them the assignment they want. It's by seniority and that's it, we don't make any changes.

Ritchie: Did the Republican Policy Committee play much of a role in the early years of being in the majority?

Hildenbrand: No. No more so than they had in the minority.

Ritchie: They were just drawing up position papers rather than plotting strategy?

Hildenbrand: Mmm-hmm. That was not their role, never has been.

Ritchie: We talked before about the way that Senator Scott and Senator Baker used the leadership in the minority position, did anything change when you went into the majority?

Hildenbrand: No. Except that we now had committee chairmen to consider. So we had a tendency to have meetings that were larger than just the leadership. It was hard to have just leadership meetings when you had committee chairmen that were involved. Depending on what the issue was, you'd have the leadership and then you'd have a couple of chairmen, because it was their issue.

Ritchie: Senator Baker was on the floor a lot. I can remember going in and seeing him most of the time, it seemed. What did he use Senator Stevens for, as his whip?

Hildenbrand: He didn't really use Senator Stevens that much for anything, except for times when he wasn't going to be there, or if he had to leave and he wanted Ted to close. Ted was always in the meetings. He knew what was going on all the time. We used to meet at 9:00 every morning, senior staff meeting, and Ted was always invited to that. He knew as much as everybody else knew about what was going on, or we tried to at least make sure that he did. But Baker wanted to make sure that he knew that floor as well as anybody else, and the way to do it was to be there. And that's what he did. He liked the floor, he liked to be there. Unlike Scott, who did not like the floor, and didn't want to mess with it; it was beneath him, almost. So there wasn't much for Ted to do.

Ritchie: Is there much problem in terms of scheduling things on the floor? You've got all those chairmen coming together, does each one of them want their major bill out next? How do you keep them all happy?

Hildenbrand: That's the biggest problem, I think, that a leader has, the daily scheduling. It's getting worse all the time. Twenty years ago they didn't have whip notices, or they didn't have scheduling things, the leadership decided this bill was coming up and it came up, and nobody voiced any complaints or said "no, I can't take it up, I'm not going to be here," or this, that, or the other thing. Now you have to almost clear with a hundred senators what you're going to take up, because if somebody can't be here, or doesn't want to be here, or doesn't want to

take it up at this time, then they get into a case of -- you know, it takes unanimous consent or something and they say "no, I'm not going to give you unanimous consent." The place runs now by unanimous consent more than it ever did before. Twenty years ago we didn't know what unanimous consent was.

Ritchie: The idea of a senator putting a "hold" on a bill, is that something new?

Hildenbrand: Well, new in the last ten years, if that's new. I don't remember it back in the early days when I was with Scott, when he was first minority leader, we had in those days a calendar committee which used to look at all the bills and say these can go or these

---

we ought to take a look at, or something like that. But the business of putting holds on legislation was not what it is now. Now, every time you turn around somebody sends a letter that says I want to hold this bill. I'm sure every bill on the calendar has got a hold on it from someplace.

Ritchie: Well, how do you deal with it?

Hildenbrand: You deal with by simply, when the time comes that you're going to take it up, you just call the people that have holds and say, "I'm very sorry, but the bill's coming up tomorrow." There is nothing in the rules, a hold has no status unless the leadership gives it status. It doesn't mean anything unless the leadership decides that it means something.

Ritchie: It's more of a signal . . . .

Hildenbrand: It's a courtesy.

Ritchie: But it means that potentially that person could object to a unanimous consent agreement.

Hildenbrand: Yes, because sometimes when they send us the letter and put a hold on it, they don't tell us why they want that hold. So we don't know if they're opposed to the legislation, whether they just have a speech that they want to give, whether they've got an amendment that they want to offer, all of those things we don't know

---

unless the letter tells us. So we have to check at the time we're ready to take it up and find out what their interest in it is.

Ritchie: And who keeps track of all of that?

Hildenbrand: The secretary of the majority, Howard Greene and his staff. All the hold letters, so called, go to Howard Greene's office. They keep the calendar, and they mark the calendar that says who has holds, so that every time you say, "we're going to take this bill up," you can look at the calendar and you know who you have to talk to before you can do it.

Ritchie: Do you suspect that many of these holds are coming from staff rather than from senators?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes, no question about it. Many, many times we'd get a letter, and we'd see the senator in the cloakroom and we'd say, "why do you want to hold this bill?" And he wouldn't have the vaguest idea what we were talking about. Had no idea. But they'll support their staffs, till they find out. Many times we'd appraise the senator and he'd say, "I don't have any idea, let me call my office," so he'd call his office and then he'd come back and say, "Oh, yeah, blah, blah, blah, blah." Then we'd know what it was.

Ritchie: Has the increase in staff really complicated work on the floor, work in the Senate?

Hildenbrand: I think so, and I've thought so for quite some time. I'm sure that I'm not alone in that. I think it's complicated the life of a member. I think the number of committees that a member has, and the number of subcommittees that a member now has is directly related to the size of staffs. If you didn't have as many staff people as you have, you wouldn't have all the committees, because you wouldn't need to, you wouldn't be on everything that you could lay your hands on. Each staff person decides that you ought to be an agricultural expert, or some other kind of an expert, so he pushes you to go that way. So the first thing you know you're trying to get on the Agriculture Committee and you haven't got a farm in your whole state. I don't think there's any question that staff has played a major role in the way this institution has changed. Certainly it can no longer be considered as a thinking man's body, the "greatest deliberative body in the world," because it sure isn't any longer. Nobody deliberates anymore.

Ritchie: Is that also because the schedule has gotten so crowded?

Hildenbrand: Not the floor schedule, the member's schedule! The last place he wants to go is on the floor. If we paid members on the amount of time they went on the floor, they wouldn't make very much money. They just have so many other things pulling at them: committee meetings, constituencies, the need to go out and raise

money for campaigning, the need to go out an make speeches to supplement their income, which is not that much. If you look at the salaries of chairmen of the boards and then you look at these members making seventy-three, or whatever it is, thousand dollars with a $300 billion budget, or whatever the heck it is that we're dealing with, it's sort of ludicrous.

Ritchie: Was that perhaps one of the motivations behind Senator Baker's desire to have television in the chamber, to make it more attractive for members to be there on the floor?

Hildenbrand: I don't know that he ever thought that was a possibility. I think he just thought that the American people had a right to know what was happening on the floor of the Senate. If members didn't want to come over and there was an empty chamber with two people talking, so be it. But that didn't get around the point that he believed that sitting in Ottumwa, Iowa, in your kitchen, you had a right to know what was happening on the floor of the Senate, as you had the right to know what's happening on the floor of the House.

Ritchie: Why do you think he was unsuccessful in getting television in the chamber?

Hildenbrand: There were just forces on the other side of the issue that did not want it -- Russell Long, Wendell Ford, some of the others that did not want to see TV -- and you must remember, Russell

Long was here back in the days when the Senate really was a great deliberative body. It's hard to get over the fact of what it once was. This was just another step in the direction of doing away with the Senate as a meaningful institution in our government.

Ritchie: He just never felt he had the votes to get it through?

Hildenbrand: Never felt he had the votes. Plus the fact that it was always difficult for him, there was always something else that needed to be dealt with, something that was important. TV in the Senate was not going to bring down the rafters anyplace in this country. So it was hard to find time to debate it the length that was going to be needed to debate it in order to try to be successful.

Ritchie: In that first year, a problem arose in the Foreign Relations Committee when Senator Helms objected to a series of appointments. There was a lot of criticism at the time of Senator Percy, when he was chairman of the committee,

and also of Senator Baker as majority leader, for allowing these nominations not to come up for such a long period of time. Was there anything that Senator Baker as majority leader could have done to facilitate the president's appointments going through that he didn't do, or was there any reason why he kept out of that dispute for so long?

Hildenbrand: Well, no. The nominations are referred to the committee and the committee has the right to act or not to act. We would allow the chairman to go ahead at his own pace. If we were under great pressure from the administration to take action, as the leadership, then we would just simply call the chairman and say, "We don't care whether you report him favorably or unfavorably or whatever it is, but the role of the committee is to report that nomination to the floor." The Constitution says the Senate will advise and consent, it doesn't say the committee will advise and consent, so you don't have a right to just keep that there. If you want to vote it down, then that's something else again, but just not to do anything at all isn't the way that this ought to be. On some occasions I think we even discharged the committee in order to get them up on the calendar where we could bring them up. But it's hard to get a discharge petition. So you have to rely on the responsibility of the committee chairman, that once he finds that either he can't get a vote or he's not sure he's got the votes and he doesn't want to defeat the guy, then the best thing is for him to try to get it out without a vote. In most instances he would have been able to do that. He would have been able to report it without recommendation, or report it disapproved, or report it anyway he wanted to report it.

Ritchie: Considering the position of majority leader and how it's fluctuated in the last twenty years, from a Lyndon Johnson through a Mike Mansfield and a Robert Byrd to a Howard Baker, do you

---

think that the position is more powerful than it used to be, less powerful, the same? What direction do you see it going in?

Hildenbrand: I see it going in a direction where the majority is simply going to be a floor leader, and that his whole responsibility will rest in getting legislation enacted, or getting it up and considered and either passed or defeated. He won't ever again wield the power that a Lyndon Johnson had, for example, simply because the Senate has changed and the people have changed. Lyndon Johnson would get run out of town on a rail in this body as it's constituted now. They would never put up with those kinds of shenanigans.

There's the story that they tell of Joe Clark from Pennsylvania, who when Lyndon was the leader and Bobby Baker was his chief aid, Joe Clark was in the back of the chamber, he had one of these desks at the very back of the chamber, and he was just railing at the leadership something terrible on some issue which nobody seems to remember. And Bobby Baker went down to Lyndon Johnson and told Lyndon: "You can't let him get away with talking about the leadership like that. You've got to put him in his place." Lyndon said, "You're absolutely right. When this is over, when he's finished, you tell him I want to see him." So when it was over, Baker went to Joe Clark and said, "The leader would like to see you." So Joe went down to the front desk and sat down next to him, and there was a lot of arguing back and forth and waving of arms and hands, and finally Clark got up and

---

stalked out. Lyndon turned around to Bobby and motioned to him to come back and said, "You and your smart ideas, he told me to go to hell. Now what do I do?" And that's about where I think that they are now. You can scream at them, but there's nothing you can do to them. If they don't want to do what you want them to do, you can't do much about it.

Ritchie: Did Senator Baker express much frustration about the job?

Hildenbrand: No, not really. I think he sort of liked being the leader. If you recognize the limitations that the job has, then you can live within those limitations. I think that Baker early on realized those limitations. I think he enjoyed being the leader. I think he enjoyed the role that he played. He will always be remembered as the first Republican majority leader in twenty-six years in the Senate of the United States. He will be, I think, recognized as one of the better of the majority leaders that this body has ever had.

Ritchie: At the same time that he was majority leader, you were Secretary of the Senate. I wanted to ask you how your role changed, or if it changed, when you moved from being Republican secretary to Secretary of the Senate?

Hildenbrand: Well, when I first was approached and asked to be secretary, I said no, because I was afraid that my role would change. I had been a legislative animal all of my life and I did not want to change that. I told Senator Baker, "No, I want to stay where I am as secretary of the majority. That's what I like to do, and that's what I want to do." He said, "I respect that, and if that's what you want to do, that's fine." So they started a search for somebody to be secretary. A lot of my friends found out what I had done and just called me every name in the book and threatened to have me committed to St. Elizabeth's and all sorts of dire

things like that, until finally I realized that it wasn't very smart on my behalf not to be the Secretary of the Senate, which certainly is the capstone of a career in this institution.

So I called Howard Baker at home on a Sunday, and I said, "Have you found anybody to be Secretary of the Senate?" He said no. I said, "Well, what would you think if I reconsidered?" He said, "I'd like to talk to you about it the first thing in the morning." The first thing in the morning we met and I told him that I had thought about it and I'd decided that if he wanted me to be, I would be the secretary. I explained to him my problems, and things that I thought, and he said, "Well, what you don't realize is that as the Secretary of the Senate you can make it anything you want to make it. If you want to spend all your time on the floor, spend it on the floor. Who's going to tell you you can't do that?" So I realized

---

the wisdom of what he was telling me, and I said, "okay, I'll go ahead and be the Secretary of the Senate." So he put my name before the caucus, and I became secretary.

Ritchie: Were you able to carry out your desire to be on the floor?

Hildenbrand: Yes, because I was smart enough to hire people or to utilize people who were there in the jobs that they had been doing, and hired people like Marilyn Courtot, who became my assistant secretary, who had an administrative background. That was her strong point. So I left the administration of the secretary's office up to her and I continued to do what I had always done, fool around on the floor, which is what I had wanted to do anyway. My relationship with Marilyn and some of the others was good enough that they would take no action unless they had cleared it through me, so I had no problems in worrying what was going to happen when I wasn't there. But it got me out of the nitty-gritty of having to meet with the department heads and do all those kinds of things, which would have taken up much more time than I really had to spend if I was going to be Baker's righthand man as far as the legislative agenda was concerned.

I was his liaison with the Democrats. I had good relationships in my years as secretary of the minority with most of the Democrats, and I was a good friend of Bob Byrd's and a good friend of Alan

Cranston's and John Stennis'. So he used me a lot in negotiations when he wanted to find out what the Democrats wanted, or what they were looking for. I would do that for him.

Ritchie: Did you ever get a good sense of what the Democrats wanted in that period?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. It was mostly on specific issues. If we were at loggerheads on a given subject or something, you could go to them and find out what would it take for us to be able to get together on something. Sometimes there was no way of getting together. What they wanted was something that we just could not do for them. But at least we knew what we were faced with.

Ritchie: Had the Democrats had a similar type of liaison with the Republicans, when they were in the majority?

Hildenbrand: No. They didn't much care whether we wanted something or didn't want anything. It didn't really make that much difference to them. They always sat there with so many votes that it didn't make any difference.

Ritchie: Having been in the minority for such a long period of time, do you think that made you more sensitive to the minority?

Hildenbrand: At least I knew where they were coming from. I could understand their moods. I could understand their reasons for a

lot of things. I think the new leadership that the Republicans have now, that's causing them some problems because they had never been in the minority leadership and they do not understand how these things work. I think that they are accusing the Democrats of being very partisan, or trying to take over the operation of the Senate, when in effect they're being nothing more than a constructive minority, which we had been for so many years. They're just doing the same things that we did. But if you don't recognize that, it certainly sounds as if they're going to try to take over, which is not the case.

Ritchie: In addition to serving as liaison to the Democrats, what other types of jobs did you do for the majority leader?

Hildenbrand: Oh, just about anything. As I said, we had senior staff meetings every morning and we went over the day's activities and we went over what was coming up and what we were going to do or try to do. We formulated the

positions for chairmen's meetings, the agenda for policy luncheons. Just generally I sort of served as a confidant of Baker, somebody that he could talk to and bounce things off of just to get different reactions. It's a bad individual who allows himself to be placed in a vacuum where he's talking only to himself, because you have a tendency to get the answers that you want. Baker always used staff in such a way; he would raise things and say, "I want to do this." He expected somebody, usually somebody like me, who has a tendency to be disrespectful on occasion, to flat

---

out tell him that I thought he was crazy and that was the dumbest idea I had ever heard. But he expected that. At the bottom he might decide to go ahead and do it, no matter what it was you said, but he wanted to make sure that he got some different viewpoints, and some different things that he might not have thought of.

Ritchie: Traditionally the secretary's office has served as a retreat, right off the Senate floor, for members to get away to. Did you have members who would just come in to use it as a place to sit down, put their feet up and relax?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. I sent out a letter to all members shortly after I became secretary in which I indicated that I would be opening such a place after 5:00 o'clock in the evenings, when we were in session. If they needed a place to come and be by themselves, or to talk to their colleagues, or whatever it is, to feel free to use my office.

Ritchie: Did you have some who came in regularly?

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes. I have some now who are complaining because they don't have a place to go.

Ritchie: The Senate once had a much more club-like atmosphere, and I guess its harder and harder now for the senators to recreate that, to have a place to unwind, and to get that inner group feeling.

Hildenbrand: I don't think it's the place so much as it is the make up of the Senate is different. When it was a club, and when it was clubby, you were dealing with men whose family life had gone by. Their children were grown and had gone on and they were now grandfathers. They had no life except the Senate, and so you got together and talked to your friends because that was your life. Now you have the Dan Quayles of the world who are in their thirties with three children and a wife that's very demanding -- I don't mean that in any disrespectful way, but as wives can be. They don't have the time to be clubby, except when we're in

sessions and they can't go anyplace anyway. But if there's no session, they've got places to go and things to do, and it isn't sitting around with the colleagues.

Ritchie: You said on a number of occasions that personal factors really count in the way a senator votes. Is this lack of clubbiness affecting the way the Senate operates and the way members relate to each other?

Hildenbrand: Yes, I think it is, although the clubbiness now comes about more as a result of committees on which you serve. You get to be clubby with the members that you serve on committees with because you see them more than you see anybody else. But you don't have the free flow of information among the members as you would have

---

if they were sitting around having a toddy. To that degree, that's taken something away, because I think that exchange of ideas is always good.

Now you have Wednesday Club, which is the liberal to moderates of the Republican side, who meet on Wednesdays, as the name implies. You have a Steering Committee, which is made up of the conservatives, and they meet. So there's those two clubs within the Republican side of the aisle that at least meet socially once a week. But their ideas are all preordained because they're all conservatives and they're all liberals, so there's not much of an interplay between the two philosophies, although Ted Stevens, to his credit, some years ago decided that they ought to once a month have a joint meeting. So now they have joint luncheons once a month, when the liberals and the conservatives get together at lunch, and that's healthy.

Ritchie: Did Senator Baker use the conference much when he was majority leader?

Hildenbrand: No.

Ritchie: Just formally at the beginning of a session and not much after that?

Hildenbrand: We found that we never could get anything done in conference, because if it was an issue that we felt needed to go to conference, if it was that important, it was also emotional and

---

caused all sorts of problems for everybody and you never could get anything resolved. So we got into big harrangues and screams and shouts and hollers and nothing ever happened, we couldn't resolve it.

Ritchie: At the same time that the Senate was showing

remarkable party unity, in the House there was a lot of party divisions, especially among the Democrats where the Boll Weevils and others split off. Was Senator Baker and were the Senate Republicans at all active in working with the House?

Hildenbrand: No.

Ritchie: Or was that strictly the White House liaison?

Hildenbrand: We did not. We did our own thing with whatever it was. Baker and Michel talked continually, they knew what was going on. But we never tried to get the House members themselves involved. There's no way that they could do anything near what we were doing. We were a majority, they were a minority. It was like apples and oranges.

Ritchie: One of the sources I read said that because Senator Baker was able to keep Republicans united and effectively pass the president's program in the Senate, that that allowed the White House to concentrate on the House. Is that a fair assessment?

Hildenbrand: I would think so. Yes. They did not certainly have the problems with us that they had with the House. And it also helped, I think, Bob Michel in the House in that it gave him a talking point to the other Republicans, to say, "Hey, you can't let those guys in the Senate do this. You've got to help." So that was just another argument that he could use to try to keep his forces in line: if the Senate could do this, the House should do no less.

Ritchie: It was a very successful strategy.

Hildenbrand: In some instances it worked quite well, yes. I think that Tip O'Neill, the Speaker, was not very happy with the way it turned out over two or three years, I guess, before it began to get unraveled. But he had a difficult time in dealing not only with his own people, but also with a more united party on the Republican side than he was used to having.

Ritchie: After four years as majority leader, Howard Baker decided not to run for reelection. What factors went into his decision not to run in 1984?

Hildenbrand: I think two: I think he was tired and wanted to make some money; and he believed, rightly or wrongly, that you could not run for the presidency from where he was. He had tried that in '80 and it was very

unsatisfactory. He still had in the back of his mind that he wanted to be President of the United States, and to stay

here and run for six years, he would still be here when that 1988 election came along, and he just decided that he did not want to do that. And I think also the economic situation was such that he wanted to earn some money. And he'd been here eighteen years and he just wanted some time to be with his wife, and do some of the things that he wanted to do, without having the press of the responsibility of being the leader.

Ritchie: Was there any pressure from the Reagan administration for him to stay on?

Hildenbrand: No. He did it two years ahead of time. He went up and flat out told them that he wasn't going to run. So they knew that far in advance.

Ritchie: At the same time, you decided to retire as Secretary of the Senate.

Hildenbrand: I had been talking about doing something anyway before he made his decision. I don't think I ever would have gone had he not decided to go, even though I had been talking about going. Then when I had my triple bypass operation, why that just was perfect from my standpoint.

Ritchie: The timing was right.

Hildenbrand: The timing was just perfect. He made me very happy when he called me into his office and said, "I've decided to announce that I'm not going to seek reelection." I couldn't have been happier.

Ritchie: Were you surprised at the way the majority leader's race turned out, to succeed Senator Baker?

Hildenbrand: Yes, to some degree, although I'm not so sure why. I think I thought that Dick Lugar would be a stronger candidate than he was. I certainly believed that when it came down to Dole and Stevens, if Stevens had that much strength to stay in that long, that he would win. So I think I was surprised that Bob Dole got it. He's told many people that I was opposed to him. I don't know whether he thinks I worked against him or not, but he's wrong, and I've told him that he's wrong. I stayed out of that one just as I stayed out of the others. I got into it to the extent that if somebody asked me, I gave them the answers. Alan Simpson asked me when he decided he might want to do it, how was the best way

to go about doing it. I told him my experiences with Hugh Scott in running those kind of things. John Chafee talked to me about running for conference chairman. And Lugar talked to me about running for the leader's office. So to that degree I did give them counsel, but only because they asked. If they asked, I answered. But I didn't work against Bob Dole, contrary to what he might think.

Ritchie: Did you recommend anything other than going around and seeing people face to face?

Hildenbrand: No, because I still think that's the way to get elected. That's the way Scott did it, and he was successful, and until somebody finds a better way, why I think that's the way to do it. But you have to do that, and you can't let somebody else do it for you. If you want to be leader, want to be it bad enough, you'll take the time to go do those kind of things and not let staff do it and say "I talked to so and so's AA and they're going to be for you." Well, that's no good. You need that commitment face to face.

Ritchie: Well, all told you were with the Congress from 1957 through 1985. Could you give me an overview today about how the institution has changed, what the Senate is today as opposed to what it was when you were started? I guess what I'm angling at is which ways do you think the changes have been positive and which ways do you think they've been negative.

Hildenbrand: I think it's a totally different Congress now than it was thirty years ago, but I'm not so sure that the Congress of thirty years ago could handle the situations that we have today. So I think that probably what we have, as frustrating as it is, is the right kind of a situation for the times. I don't think you can go back to the way that it was. You'll never go back to how it was. I'm not so sure that it would work. In the late '50s and the early

---

'60s, television was not yet as strong as it is now. You weren't getting around the country as fast as you're getting around the country now, with the jets that we have. The age of members was different then than it is now. There weren't the lobbying groups that there are now. The demand on members' time was not anywhere near then the way that it is now.

Mark Hatfield, when I testified for the last time before the Appropriations Committee, asked me how we could change things to make them back the way they were. I said the only way you can do that is to start over. You'd have to eliminate the Senate and start it from scratch. There's no way that you can go back. You can't undo all of the things that have been done. That's the problem in

the staffing area, in the committees. Dan Quayle tried this last time and succeeded beyond my wildest expectations, cutting down members with three committees. But the only reasons they were all on those committees was because they had staff on those committees, and they didn't want to lose staff. So as long as you're going to build on staff that way, you're going to continue to have no time to do the kind of things that you ought to do.

You could call the session and require everybody to be on the floor and then lock the doors and not let them go. Then you would get back to where it was thirty years ago, when members would come over on the floor and they'd spend three hours on the floor and that

---

was their day, that was all they did. But now, members don't spend three minutes. They're like those trained mice, when the bell rings they come over and vote and then go back. Mice do that, when the bell rings they know it's time to eat. That's the only time members come to the floor, pretty much, unless they're managing a bill.

In the old days, a member came on the floor, he knew exactly what the vote was. He knew exactly what the issue was. He knew exactly what they were voting on. Members walk in that door now and don't have any more idea what's up on the floor of the Senate than they can fly. That's why the leadership on both sides of the aisle have written things down in the well for members to come down and read what the vote is all about. That to many is the first time they know what they're about to vote on. Well, that doesn't lend itself really to what everybody said was the greatest deliberative body in the world -- to have thirty seconds to read something that some staff person has written, and then to have to vote yes or no. These are not issues like we're going to have licorice candy on Saturday, these are arms control and foreign policy decisions and major appropriations for highways and airports and all sorts of things like that, Social Security and things like that. But it's not going to change.

I would venture that if the Democrats take control in two years that the size of committees will go right back up the way they were

---

before Quayle got into these things. That's just the way it is. There's no way that you are going to be able to go back to the way that it was. And I'm not so sure that it would work if you did. I've always said that this country was lucky in that every time it was in a crisis there always seemed to be the right person in the presidency to handle that crisis. Nobody quite knows how they got there at this particular time, but they always seemed to be there at the time when this country

needed them. I think the Senate is the kind of an institution now that the country needs to handle what's happened. I don't think it got here to handle it. I think that it's here because it was forced to be the kind of an institution it is because other things happened within this country, and I mentioned some of those: the lobbying groups, and the communication and the television, and the airplanes and things like that. I think they forced this institution to be the kind of an institution it is today, compared to what it was thirty years ago.

Ritchie: Given what the institution has become, what would you recommend to a freshman senator who is just starting?

Hildenbrand: In terms of what?

Ritchie: Well, someone new coming in and sitting down to ask: what do you do to become an effective senator?

Hildenbrand: The thing to do to become an effective senator, I think, is to focus on a single issue. Become an expert at something, whatever that is. You must have something that you feel strongly about, and I would just trade on that. In most instances, for your own career, from a reelection standpoint, you look at your state and decide what it is that is going to do the most for my state. So whatever that is, you focus on that. Then I think also you have to be very strong in constituent services. I think constituents expect you to be of service to them. It used to be, twenty or thirty or forty years ago, they'd elect you and they'd send you to Washington -- half of them didn't know where it was, they'd just send you someplace -- and leave you alone. These days they tell you: "Here's what I want you to do." It didn't use to be that way, but that's pretty much the way it is now. So you have to do those constituent services because they expect them.

There's something to be said for the proposals that people have made for limited time for a senator to serve. I'm not sure what the time is, but I can see the wisdom of a person not having to run for reelection, being able to come in here and make value judgments on issues outside of the political pressures that are brought to bear on members now. Whether that's two terms, or whether you increase the term and say you get eight years instead of six, and then you can only run once. You'd get your money's worth out of a member if he spent eight years here. He'd spend a couple of years learning what

---

was going on, then he'd have six more in which he could really do something. But less than that really doesn't make any sense. Six years is not enough, I don't think, for a single term. To run twice doesn't make any sense because then for the

first six years he's running for the second six years. That doesn't make any sense. But eight or ten years maybe would be something that you might think about, in that you only serve that period of time. That gives you enough time that you get the experience that your need, and if you rotated them you'd always have the two-thirds of them that would have been here long enough to do whatever needs to be done.

The days of the Old Bulls being here from the time they were forty till they're eighty are long gone. You won't see another Strom Thurmond, or a John Stennis, who have served as long as they've served. Those records will never be broken because nobody's ever going to stay here that long. It's too trying physically and it sure as hell's too trying financially to stay here that long.

Ritchie: Also in terms of advice to a freshman senator, what's the best way for them to relate to other senators, particularly the older, established senators?

Hildenbrand: I think first and foremost you have to respect the institution. I think everybody should come in with a respect for the institution. Then you have to respect the people that make up that institution. People laugh and deride the members that get up and

---

say, "My distinguished friend" from wherever it is, and they know that they hate his guts. Well, so what? There's an aura about that body that lends itself to that. If you don't have that you're going to have fist fights on the floor, and you don't need that. So allow that aura to continue to permeate that chamber, that respectful aura that they have. What they do outside, you know the old story about Strom Thurmond and Ralph Yarborough fighting in the hall of the Dirksen Building because Yarborough wanted Thurmond to go in and make a quorum and Thurmond didn't want to go in and make a quorum. You don't have too much of that any more. Members just don't have time to get that much involved in issues that they're going to go fight about them. But I think you have to respect the institution for exactly what it is and the role that it plays. Then I think you have to respect the individuals that are here, even though you don't agree with them.

Ritchie: Is it as important for a new senator to keep quiet in the beginning and be be deferential to the senior senators as it was say twenty years ago?

Hildenbrand: Probably not. I would like to see it that way. I would like to go back to the days when you didn't talk for the first year, except to answer your name when they called it. But I don't think that the electorate would put up with that. I think they expect you to hit the ground running and do something the first day

that you're there, remake the wheel or whatever it is. So I don't think it would work. I would like to see it. I think there's a learning experience that goes along with that that would make you a much better senator than they have today, if you spent that first year learning instead of shooting off your mouth, because you can't learn while you talk.

Jim Allen started that, as a matter of fact. He was the one that came in here and broke the business of not talking for the first year. You know, in the old days people used to come over to hear somebody's maiden speech. Now you have to get there as soon as they open the doors because some guy's going to make his maiden speech. In those days, people would send out letters to their colleagues to announce they were going to go make their maiden speech, they'd been here a year. Cale Boggs did that. But not anymore. I'd like to see it come back, but I don't think the electorate would stand for it.

Ritchie: Is it as important for a member to know the rules these days?

Hildenbrand: No, not unless he's going to be in the leadership. He's pretty well protected. Nobody's going to embarrass him. They're not going to let him make major mistakes. I think its important that he know the fundamentals of the rules so that he knows how to offer an amendment, what can happen to him when he offers it, when he looses the floor. They caught John East in that kind of a

situation two or three years ago, late at night, 1:00 o'clock in the morning or something. He was going on an all-night session. He was not up to the rules and either he yielded for something or he did something and the minute he did, Stevens got recognized and adjourned the Senate. John East sat there with his mouth open and had no idea what had happened to him. What had happened to him is he just wasn't totally conversant with all of the rules. So if you're going to be involved on the floor, in that kind of debate and amendments and things, it's important that you know fundamentally those rules that apply to the handling of bills and the handling of amendments. But some of the rules about who has access to the chamber and stuff like that it doesn't make very much difference.

Ritchie: In recent years a lot of people have been elected to the Senate who had no previous political career. They were athletes or astronauts or businessmen, but

some of them were never elected to office before. Has this changed the nature of the body and created a new type of Senate?

Hildenbrand: Well, I think it has something to do towards doing that, but that's reflective more on our political systems in the states than it is here. Because they no longer are requiring that you come up through the ranks before you can get a nomination. If you've got the money to put in the filing fee, you can run. The power of the state parties is not as strong as it used to be, so

---

anybody that wants to put a filing fee down, if they can get the support can get himself elected. But, yes, I think that has a tendency to change the makeup of the Senate. I think it reflects more on issues outside of the political considerations than it might if you were dealing strictly with political animals. The people today are looking more at issues nonpolitically first than they are politically. Years ago you looked at things politically: what was it going to do to my party, or what was it going to do my state, or what was it going to me? Now they look at the issue more as to what the issue really is.

Ritchie: Are there any areas that we haven't touched on that you think would be important to cover?

Hildenbrand: Only my personal life, and we're not going to touch on that!

Ritchie: Well, Senator Baker called you the "Total Senate Man," so in a sense I guess the Senate has been your life.

Hildenbrand: Just about. It's certainly been a great part of my life, and it's been the most enjoyable part of my life, that's for sure.

Ritchie: Well, I thank you very much for participating in this oral history.

Hildenbrand: Delighted to do it. And write to Mark Hatfield and tell him that I did what he told me I had to do, the last time I appeared before his committee.

End of Interview #7

Index

A

Abourezk, James (D-SD), 268
Aging, White House Conference on, 23, 27, 30
Agnew, Spiro, 112, 121-2
Agriculture Committee (Senate), 49-51, 54, 313
Aiken, George (R-VT), 78-9, 158
Aiken, Lola, 79
Air and Water Pollution Subcommittee, 49-52
Air Transport Association, 15
Airways Modernization Board, 15
Albert, Carl, 147
Alcorn, Meade, 107
Allen, James (D-AL), 337
Allott, Gordon (R-CO), 43, 96, 102, 111, 207
Anderson, Jack, 235-6
Appropriations Committee (Senate), 40, 86, 194, 250, 331
Arends, Leslie, 35
Armed Services Committee (Senate), 124, 132, 156-7, 215
Atomic Energy, Joint Committee on, 108

B

Baker, Bobby, 317-8
Baker, Howard, 68, 71-7, 90, 93, 98, 104, 106-11, 150-1, 172-3, 179, 192, 199, 206-7, 216-7, 222-3, 237-76, 286-329, 339 Baker, James, 228, 230-1, 292, 299
Baker, Richard A., 184
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee (Senate), 283
Bellmon, Henry (R-OK), 293
Bible, Allen (D-NV), 42-3, 100
Biden, Joseph (D-DE), 85, 96
Blakely, William (D-TX), 46
Boggs, Hale, 172
Boggs, J. Caleb (R-DE), 4-6, 37, 39-49, 54, 58-62, 66, 78, 87, 93-7, 98-100, 105, 108, 337 Boggs, Thomas, 272
Boren, Molly (Mrs. David), 181
Boyd, Alan, 194, 250
Brewster, Daniel (D-MD), 153-4
Brock, William (R-TN), 160, 269
Brooke, Edward (R-MA), 156, 257
Brownrigg, Billy, 105
Budget Act, 293-6
Burdick, Quentin (D-ND), 45
Burger, Warren, 203
Bush, Prescott (R-CT), 32-3
Butterfield, Alexander, 200
Byrd, Robert C. (D-WV), 72-3, 78, 92, 125, 134, 248, 253-6, 259-62, 286-7, 292-3, 320

C

Carswell, G. Harrold, 137-9
Carter, Jimmy, 63, 216, 245-53, 256-7, 274-5, 267-8, 270, 276
Case, Clifford (R-NJ), 17, 48, 68, 126, 136-7, 156, 218-9, 232
Case, Francis (R-SD), 48
Chafee, John (R-RI), 96, 255, 329
Chavez, Dennis (D-NM), 45, 51
Chiang Kai-shek, 173
Chiao Kuan-hua, 164
China Trips, 132, 152, 160-77, 184
Christopher, Warren, 253, 257
Chou En-lai, 165, 167-8, 173-4
Civil Rights Legislation, 36-7, 66-7, 75, 80-4, 114, 123, 127-8, 140, 208-9, 269
Clark, Joseph (D-PA), 317-8
Clean Air Act, 52, 54-62
Clean Water Act, 52
Clinch River Dam Project, 264
Cloture, 65, 68, 218-9
Colson, Charles, 115
Commerce Committee (Senate), 51
Committee on Committees (Republican), 92
Committee to Reelect the President, 188-91
Conference (Republican), 111-4, 141-2
Congressional Liaison, 31-5, 117-21, 124-5, 144-5, 225-6, 245-6, 299-301
Connally, John, 118
Conners, William, 58
Cooper, John Sherman (R-KY), 49, 60, 136, 156
Cotton, Norris (R-NH), 111-2, 206, 210
Courtot, Marilyn, 320
Cowan, Gene, 87, 121
Cranston, Alan (D-CA), 130-1, 320-1
Culver, John (D-IA), 284
Curtis, Carl (R-NE), 211, 232

D

Dash, Sam, 199
Dean, John, 139
Deaver, Michael, 293
DeConcini, Dennis (D-AZ), 262
Denton, Jeremiah (R-AL), 281-2
Dirksen, Everett McKinley (R-IL), 48, 63, 69-70, 72-4, 78, 80, 83-4, 88-9, 102-3, 105-6, 116, 132, 148-50, 206-10
Dockery, Robert, 161, 164
Dodd, Christopher (D-CT), 161
Dodd, Thomas (D-CT), 33
Dole, Robert (R-KS), 104, 215, 244, 292-3, 329
Domenici, Pete (R-NM), 96, 293

Dompierre, Oliver, 207
DuPont Company, 15-6, 26, 58
Durkin, John A. (D-NH), 67-8, 136-7, 216-9, 242-3

E
East, John (R-NC), 281-2, 338
Education and Labor Committee (House), 13
Education and Labor Committee (Senate), 51
Ehrlichman, John, 63, 117-8, 120, 143-5, 149, 191
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 16, 28, 30, 35, 57, 63, 94, 107, 117, 247
Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 35
Energy Legislation, 267-9
Ervin, Sam (D-NC), 199

F
Fannin, Paul (R-AZ), 211
Finance Committee (Senate), 49, 215
Ford, Gerald R., 112-3, 118, 143, 145-9, 172, 203, 224-30, 251, 253
Ford, Wendell (D-KY), 314
Foreign Relations Committee, 51, 156-60, 260-1, 315
Forsythe, Bob, 23-4
Frear, J. Allen (D-DE), 24-5, 38-40
Friedersdorf, Max, 63, 118, 225
Fulbright, J. William (D-AR), 157-8, 260

G
Gallagher, Cornelius, 20
Garn, Jake (R-UT), 255
Goldwater, Barry M. (R-AZ), 51, 65, 84, 89, 126, 128, 140, 156, 203-5, 211, 288
Grassley, Charles E. (R-IA), 291
Greene, Howard, 207, 213-4
Grey, L. Patrick, 202
Griffin, Robert (R-MI), 92, 104-5, 108, 112, 159, 228-9, 231-2, 237-40
Gruening, Ernest (D-AK), 153
Gurney, Edward (R-FL), 199

H
Haig, Alexander, 200, 204-5
Haldeman, H. R., 63, 117, 120, 143, 145, 149, 191-3
Halleck, Charles, 21, 35, 148
Hamburger, Martin, 161
Harlow, Bryce, 35, 63, 117, 300
Hart, Philip (D-MI), 66, 127-8, 140-1, 208
Haskell, Harry, 11, 13, 15-8, 22-30, 37, 41, 96
Hatfield, Mark 0. (R-OR), 108, 136, 211, 218, 293, 300, 331, 340
Haynesworth, Clement, 73-4, 137-8
Head-Counting, 126-32, 222-3

Health, Education, and Welfare Department, 30-3
Helms, Jesse (R-NC), 96, 186, 247, 291, 302, 315
Hickenlooper, Bourke (R-IA), 111, 114-5
Hickey, J. J. (D-WY), 45
Hill, Lister (D-AL), 33-4, 45
Hobby, Oveta Culp, 16
Hoffman, Nordy, 280
Holds, Legislative, 310-1
Hollings, Ernest "Fritz" (D-SC), 131, 254
Hostadtler, Alma, 20
Hruska, Roman (R-NE), 41, 48, 72, 88-90, 107, 111, 117, 127-8, 139, 141, 207-8, 211 *Human Events*, 208
Humphrey, Hubert (D-MN), 80-3, 131

I

Impeachment, 202-3
Impoundment, 194-6, 250-1
Inner Club, 323-5
International Parliamentary Union, 178-9, 279-80
Interparliamentary Services, Office of, 181-2

J

Jackson, Henry "Scoop" (D-WA), 252
Javits, Jacob (R-NY), 17, 48, 67-8, 126, 136-7, 156, 186, 196-8, 211, 218-9, 232, 243 Johnson, Lyndon B. (D-TX), 39, 46, 63-6, 77, 94, 117, 158, 194, 242, 245-6, 249, 250, 253, 278, 297, 316-7
Jordan, Len (R-ID), 106
Judiciary Committee (Senate), 243

K

Keating, Kenneth (R-NY), 67, 277-8
Keith, Hasty, 23
Kennedy, Edward M. (D-MA), 72, 91, 133, 249
Kennedy, John F., 38, 45, 62-4, 85, 246, 277-8
Kennedy, Robert F. (D-NY), 98
Kimmitt, J. Stanley, 124, 279-80, 283-5, 288
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 36-7
Korologos, Tom, 225, 272
Kuchel, Thomas (R-CA), 67, 69-71

L

Laxalt, Paul (R-NV), 73, 257-8
Leahy, Patrick (D-VT), 249
LePenta, Jim, 25
Lewis, Drew, 229
Liebengood, Howard, 200, 255, 284
Life Magazine, 86

Lobbyists, 78-9, 270-5
Long, Russell (D-LA), 72, 131, 215, 252, 314-5
Lugar, Richard (R-IN), 329
Lutvak, Edward, 253

M
MacGregor, Clark, 117, 120, 225
Magnuson, Warren (D-WA), 20, 252
Manatos, Mike, 63, 300
Mansfield, Mike (D-MT) 77-80, 125, 130, 132-4, 136, 147, 154, 158, 160-4, 226, 261 Mao Tse-tung, 173-4
Martin, Joseph, 21
Mathias, Charles "Mac" (R-MD), 87
Mattingly, Mack (R-GA), 281-2
McCain, John, 152
McClain, Ken, 283
McClellan, John (D-AR), 250
McCloskey, Frank, 218, 220
McCloskey, Paul, 74, 138-9
McClure, James (R-ID), 284, 288
McGovern, George (D-SD), 185-7
McIntyre, Richard, 218, 220
McNamara, Pat (D-MI), 51-2
McNamara, Robert, 153
Media, 4-13, 18, 86, 89, 144, 234-6, 262-3, 274-6
Medicare, 93-4
Meese, Ed, 293
Metcalf, Lee (D-MT), 45, 97
Metzenbaum, Howard (D-OH), 268
Michel, Robert, 19-20, 327
Miller, Jack (R-IA), 45, 96, 108
Mitchell, Clarence, 140
Mitchell, George (D-ME), 61
Mitchell, John N., 66, 127, 139-40
Moore, Frank, 245
Morse, Wayne (R/D-OR), 153-4
Moss, Ambler, 257
Moynihan, Daniel Patrick (D-NY), 249
Mundt, Karl (R-SD), 107
Muskie, Edmund S. (D-ME), 49, 51-2, 54, 60-2, 293

N
Nader, Ralph, 52
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 140
National Association for the Advancement of White People (NAAWP), 59
National Defense Education Act, 35
Nixon, Richard M., 35, 37, 63-4, 89, 95-7, 110, 112-3, 115-7, 119-20, 122, 140, 143-

7, 149-50, 155, 160, 165, 169, 185, 189, 192-5, 200-2, 205-6, 225-7, 242, 245, 247, 251, 253, 265, 299

O
O'Donnell, Kenneth, 63, 300
O'Neill, Thomas P. "Tip", 147, 248, 297, 327

P
Packwood, Robert (R-OR), 106, 301
Panama Canal Treaties, 73, 177, 244, 252-64, 266
Pastore, John (D-RI), 70
Pearson, James (R-KS), 108, 136
Percy, Charles (R-IL), 237
Policy Committee (Republican), 113-4, 243, 308
Post Office and Civil Service Committee (Senate), 54
Public Works Committee (Senate), 49, 51-2, 54, 93

Q
Quayle, Dan (R-IN), 331, 333
Quesada, Elwood, 15

R
Rafferty, Max, 69, 71
Randolph, Jennings (D-WV), 52
Rather, Dan, 191, 275
Reagan, Ronald, 222, 228-31, 253, 258, 265, 277, 279, 281-2, 289-90, 297-9
Reconciliation Bill, 293-5
Regan, Donald, 293
Republican Conference, 74
Richardson, Eliot, 16
Riegel, Don (D-MI), 74, 138-9
Ritch, John, 180-1
Rockefeller, Lawrence, 28
Rockefeller, Nelson, 16
Roth, William (R-DE), 19, 37
Russell, Richard (D-GA), 45, 75, 123-4

S
Sahagian, Salpee, 161, 170
Salinger, Pierre (D-CA), 42
SALT II Treaty, 264-6
Scott, Hugh (R-PA), 41, 48, 66, 71, 73-5, 78, 87, 89-90, 93-5, 99, 101 -42, 143-52, 155-58, 160-4, 167-71, 176, 179, 185-87, 192, 198-200, 203-12, 224, 226, 232, 234-5, 237, 241-2, 261, 277-8, 299, 309-10, 330
Scott, William (R-VA), 211, 232, 254
Simpson, Alan (R-WY), 329

Simpson, Milward (R-WY), 45
Smith, Margaret Chase (R-ME), 23, 96, 102, 111, 129, 136, 233, 285
Sparkman, John (D-AL), 260-1
Staff, 50-1, 159-60
Steering Committee, 325
Steering Committee (Democratic), 92
Stennis, John (D-MS), 75, 124, 131-2, 215, 252, 335
Stevens, Ted (R-AK), 71-2, 309, 325, 338
Stevenson, Adlai (D-IL), 160, 269
Stockman, David, 293, 295, 304-6

T
Taft, Robert A., Sr. (R-OH), 107
Tate, Dan, 63
Television, 86, 89, 263, 314-5
Thompson, Frank, 35
Thomson, Keith, 45
Thurmond, Strom (D/R-SC), 9, 36, 156, 243, 282, 291, 300-1, 335-6
Timmons, William, 118, 225, 272
Torrijos, Omar, 253, 255, 257, 262
Tower, John (R-TX), 46, 103, 113-4, 116, 132, 156, 215, 228, 282, 300
Trice, J. Mark, 102-3, 105, 129, 206-7, 212-3, 282
Turner, Ted, 275
Tydings, Joseph (D-MD), 153

U
Unanimous Consent Agreements, 134-6, 310-1

V
Valeo, Francis R., 161, 164, 284
Vice Presidency, 121-2
Vietnam, 95, 112, 120, 151-58
Voting Rights Act (1970), 127-8, 140, 208-9

W
Wall, Danny, 283
War Powers Act, 196-8
Watergate, 95, 109, 147, 185-205, 247
Wednesday Club, 325
Weicker, Lowell (R-CT), 199, 300
Wendell, Harlan, 16
Whips, 71-2, 80, 101-5, 108, 133-4, 309
Wild, Claude, 234
Williams, Harrison "Pete" (D-NJ), 20
Williams, Jeannette Smith, 19-20
Williams, John J. (R-DE), 19, 38, 41, 49
Wright, Jim, 298

Wyman-Durkin Election, 67-8, 136-7, 216-9, 242-3
Wyman, Louis (R-NH), 67-8, 136-7, 216-9, 242-3

Y
Yarborough, Ralph (D-TX), 336
Young, Milton (R-ND), 111-2

Z
Zweben, Murray, 287-9