

**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Preface**  
by Donald A. Ritchie

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The evolution of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from bipartisan support to challenge and confrontation of presidential foreign policy has been perhaps the most dramatic movement in the history of the Senate since World War II. The unity fostered by the Cold War was shattered in the 1960's by such shocks as the Bay of pigs invasion, the landing of American troops in the Dominican Republic and Vietnam, the efforts to destabilize the Allende government in Chile, and the perception of a "credibility gap" between the White House and Congress. With great reluctance, Chairman [J. William Fulbright](#) and other members of the committee broke with the administrations of [Lyndon Johnson](#) and [Richard Nixon](#) and began to redefine the Senate's role in foreign policy. This movement from the days of [Arthur Vandenberg](#) and [Tom Connally](#) to those of Fulbright, [Eugene McCarthy](#), [George McGovern](#), and [Frank Church](#), is here recounted by Pat M. Holt, who served on the Foreign Relations Committee's staff from 1950 to 1977, retiring as its chief of staff.

Beginning in 1958, almost by accident, Pat Holt became the committee's specialist on Latin American relations. Shortly afterwards came Vice President Nixon's ill-fated tour of South America, ending with the storming of his limousine in Venezuela, and then Fidel Castro's revolution in Cuba. Latin American relations thereafter assumed an increasingly important position on the committee's agenda. Suspicions over the Johnson administration's version of conditions in the Dominican Republic--as reflected in Holt's examination of state Department and CIA records--clearly shaped the committee's response to reports coming out of Vietnam. The various investigations of events in Chile also significantly affected the committee's dealings with the Nixon administration.

Pat Mayo Holt was born on September 5, 1920, in Gatesville, Texas. He attended the University of Texas and the Columbia School of Journalism and served as a reporter for the *Melbourne Herald* in 1941, the *Providence Journal* from 1942 to 1946, the *Congressional Quarterly* from 1946 to 1949, and the *Reporter* from 1949 to 1950. Drafted into the Army during World War II, he came to Washington as a Japanese language translator, and remained in the capital after the war. In 1950, Chairman Tom Connally hired Holt as a member of the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and he remained with the committee for the next twenty-seven years. During that time he served under the chairmanships of Connally, [Alexander Wiley](#), Walter George, [Theodore Green](#), J. William Fulbright, and [John Sparkman](#), all of whom he discusses in these interviews.

As an observer of American foreign relations, Pat Holt wrote several books, including *Colombia Today--and Tomorrow* (New York: Praeger, 1964), *U.S. Policy in World Affairs* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971), *The War Powers Resolution* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1978), and *Invitation to Struggle* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1980), with Cecil Crabb. To these writings, this oral history adds his personal reminiscences of the men and events associated with the Senate Foreign Relations committee during his twenty-seven years of service. Holt died on September 24, 2007.

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**About the Interviewer**--Donald A. Ritchie is associate historian of the Senate Historical office. A graduate of C.C.N.Y., he received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Maryland. He has taught at the University College of the University of Maryland, George Mason University, and the Northern Virginia Community College, and conducted a survey of automated bibliographical systems for the American Historical Association. He has published several articles on American political and economic history, and a book, *James M. Landis: Dean of the Regulators* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), and has served as editor of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Historical Series of executive session transcripts. A member of the Oral History Association, he is an officer of OHMAR (Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region).

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Chief of Staff  
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**Interview #1**  
**Years in Journalism**  
(Tuesday, September 9, 1980)  
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

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**RITCHIE:** When I looked over the brief biography of you in the Staff Directory, it struck me that you had a journalistic background. You're the first person that we have done an interview with whose earlier interest was journalism, and who came to Capitol Hill as a member of the press gallery before you became a member of the staff. I wanted to get some background information from you about where you went to school and how you got into journalism in the first place.

**HOLT:** Well, I went to elementary school and high school in Gatesville, Texas, the small town in central Texas where I was born and grew up. My father was the publisher of the weekly paper there.

**RITCHIE:** What was the paper?

**HOLT:** It was, and still is called--it's not in the family any longer--the *Gatesville Messenger*. When I finished high school I went to the University of Texas and got a degree in journalism. I also got a B.A. degree with a major in economics, which has long since become obsolete.

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**RITCHIE:** When you were growing up, did you work on the newspaper?

**HOLT:** My father's paper? Yes, summers in high school, starting in the back end in the print shop part of it. I fed hand presses and set type and that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** Was it basically a rural district?

**HOLT:** Oh yes, Gatesville is the county seat of Coryell County, and in those days--we're talking about the middle 1930s, I finished high school in 1936--Gatesville then had a population of about three thousand, I guess, maybe a little bit more. The whole damn county had about twenty thousand. So, as I said, I went from there to the University of Texas and worked on the student newspaper there, the *Daily Texan*. Then when I finished Texas I went to journalism school at Columbia University in New York and got a Master's.

**RITCHIE:** Was there anybody there in particular that you worked with?

**HOLT:** At Columbia? Nobody in particular. I made a lot of friends there, some of whom I still see at reasonably frequent occasions, classmates. The faculty was really quite impressive but I was not any particularly closer to one than I was to the other.

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**RITCHIE:** What was your intention at that point? Did you plan to go back to Texas?

**HOLT:** No, I guess one reason I went to Columbia in the first place was to get out of Texas. Another reason was that in 1940, when I finished Texas, although you could get a newspaper job in the state, the going salary was around twenty dollars a week. I thought maybe I could do better in the East. So when I finished Columbia I was one of three students in that class who were given what was and is known as a Pulitzer traveling scholarship. These things were provided under the will of Joseph Pulitzer, who endowed the Columbia Journalism School. They carry a stipend of \$1,500, with which you are supposed to spend a year abroad. In 1940, with a little luck and with a few odd jobs you really could spend a year abroad for \$1,500. So I took this and got married and sailed off to Australia. The tradition with these scholarships had been to go around Europe. Columbia had a sort of an understanding with the Associated Press that people on these scholarships would be passed from one A.P. bureau to another, spend a few months in each: London, Rome, Berlin, Paris. Well, in 1940 that was no longer practicable! Really, the only two parts of the world open were Latin America, the Southwest Pacific, and the Far East at that time. A part-time faculty member at Columbia was a fellow named Abe Rothman, who was also the United States correspondent

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for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Through him I met a fellow, David Bailey, who was running the Australian government's information service in the United States. The Australians at that point were beginning to worry about the war, and their public relations in the United States, and so on. Bailey had come out of the *Melbourne Herald* to do this essentially wartime job in the United States, and he offered to arrange for me to have a job on the *Melbourne Herald* if I would spend this scholarship time in Australia. Since I wanted to take a new wife with me on the thing, I needed to supplement the stipend of the fellowship, and it sounded like good experience and a great adventure anyway, so that's what we did.

Our intention had been to spend several months in Australia and then work our way up the east coast of Asia to Japan and then come home. Well, after several months in Australia, Pearl Harbor intervened and that was no longer practical. So we hung around a little while. It wasn't easy to travel in those days. We finally found a Swedish cargo-passenger ship which was going from Australia to San Francisco and we got on that and came back. I then went back to New York to look for a job and found one on the Providence, Rhode Island, *Journal-Bulletin*,

where I worked as a reporter for a year or a little bit more when I went in the Army.

**RITCHIE:** Where did you work for the *Providence Journal*?

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**HOLT:** In Providence.

**RITCHIE:** Doing local reporting?

**HOLT:** Yes, most of the time I covered the federal beat, the federal building in Providence, which was mainly the federal court, the remnants of the W.P.A., the F.B.I. office there. As the war developed there got to be a proliferation of federal agencies: the O.P.A., there was a land-acquisition office to expand the Naval base and the military installations in general, that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** The Providence Journal used to be the old rock-ribbed Republican paper, at least in an earlier period. Was it still that way when you were working for it?

**HOLT:** Pretty much. A piece of the folklore around the paper was that Franklin Roosevelt had once said to Sevellon Brown, who was then the editor and publisher: "God damn it Brown, you are a Democrat three and a half years out of every four, except for the six months of a presidential campaign!" Mainly due to the drive and character of Sevellon Brown, the *Providence Journal* in those days was a hell of a good newspaper and an exciting place to work. It was a monopoly newspaper, but that didn't matter to Brown because

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he competed against his own standards, which were very tough competition to meet.

**RITCHIE:** So you then went from Providence into the Army.

**HOLT:** Into the Army.

**RITCHIE:** Was that by choice or by draft board?

**HOLT:** It was by the draft board.

**RITCHIE:** What did you do in the Army?

**HOLT:** Well, I ended up in Japanese language training program in Georgetown University here in Washington, and from there I went to Arlington Hall in an

outfit called the Second Signal Service Battalion, which was part of the office of the Chief Signal Officer. It was concerned with signals intelligence.

**RITCHIE:** Was some of this because of your experiences in Australia?

**HOLT:** No. It was, well one hesitates to be too precise why any Army assignment is handled the way it is, but in basic training in the Army, and what was then the old Army Air Corps in Atlantic City, New Jersey, did very poorly on the mechanical aptitude test. I think the Army was reasonably impressed with the fact that I had a Master's degree; they weren't seeing too many new

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recruits in 1943 with that. I was young enough then so that I did pretty well on the Army general classification test. So from basic training I was put in something they called the Army specialized training program and shipped off with a bunch of other people to City College in New York, where they tried to decide what to do with us and gave us a bunch of other aptitude tests. I did very well on the language aptitude test. They were impressed by the fact that I had three years of college French as well. They said, "Gee whiz, we'll put you in French and then you can be a telephone operator when we reinvade the Continent." I said to them, "Look, I know I had three years of college French, but I'm pretty good at knowing how much I learn in a course, and I learned damn little French." They gave me some further tests and agreed with me that I knew damn little French. Then they said, "Well, how would it grab you to start out fresh in a totally new language?" And I said, "Well, that sounds all right." So they said Japanese, and off I went to Georgetown and then to Arlington Hall. And that's where spent the rest of the war.

**RITCHIE:** So then you were here in Washington for the duration of the war?

**HOLT:** I was in Arlington, Virginia, for the duration of the war.

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**RITCHIE:** Once you finished studying Japanese, what were you doing?

**HOLT:** Well, it was a terribly sensitive secret in those days; I guess it's less sensitive now. Mainly, I was translating Japanese radio intercepts. Also from time to time I worked on cryptoanalysis, trying to decode them.

**RITCHIE:** Did you get a good grasp of Japanese while you were doing this?

**HOLT:** Well, at that time--but in the first place this was totally reading oriented, there was no spoken Japanese. I never learned anything beyond the most rudimentary elements of speaking the language. At one time, by 1945, I guess I knew maybe two thousand Japanese characters and could translate or read it

with some facility. But the point needs to be emphasized that what I was reading and translating most of the time was pretty stylized military language in which the pattern was pretty much the same. The same thing would follow the same thing. We would fool around over there some trying to translate captured diaries that Japanese soldiers had kept, and at my level anyway that was just a hopeless task. In the first place it was handwritten, and in the second place it was unfamiliar content. But

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the routine kinds of messages about damage reports from American bombing raids or assessments of Japanese bombing raids, how many planes they had lost, how many planes they had shot down, how many ships were in a convoy that was sailing from Yokohama tomorrow night, that kind of thing I did pretty well with.

**RITCHIE:** But by the time the war was over you wanted to get away from Japanese, I gather.

**HOLT:** Well, not necessarily. But I wanted to get away from the Army.

**RITCHIE:** Was there any chance they might have sent you to occupied Japan?

**HOLT:** I wanted in those days to go to Officers' Candidate School. I was accepted for it but I busted the physical because my height-weight ratio was inappropriate, the Army felt. By this time it was getting on into 1945 and I resigned myself to finishing the war as a sergeant. I figured that the prospect of a sergeant getting out of the Army was better than the prospect of a commissioned officer. But some of my contemporaries over there who did make it through OCS were sent to the occupation and indeed some of them made a career out of it, not in the Army but in the CIA.

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**RITCHIE:** Did you have any contacts with the CIA then?

**HOLT:** Well, the CIA in those days did not exist, it was the OSS. I had no contacts with them, this was strictly a military signals intelligence operation. We did deal with some Japanese diplomatic traffic, that is, Arlington Hall dealt with it. I did not very much because again the complexity of it was a little beyond my language ability.

**RITCHIE:** So you were discharged then in 1945?

**HOLT:** In '46.

**RITCHIE:** And you were here in Washington at the time?

**HOLT:** I was.

**RITCHIE:** Had you followed what was going on in the federal government? You were a journalist and you must have had some curiosity.

**HOLT:** Oh, yes. I was then. I had been since, at least I was in high school, interested in public affairs. I read the newspapers and that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** So you decided to stay in Washington?

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**HOLT:** Yes. The *Providence Journal* was legally obligated to rehire me. They asked me to come back; I think they probably would have even without the legal obligation. I liked the paper but neither my wife nor I liked living in Providence. Jobs were real easy to get in those days. So I ended up with Congressional Quarterly News Features--as a matter of fact in those days it was called Press Research. I got involved, actually in the summer of 1945 I found a part-time job moonlighting with an outfit called Trans-Radio Press, which was a little one-horse wire service aimed at small radio stations that were too poor or too stingy to afford A.P. or U.P.I. I used to go in there and rewrite press releases and put them on the ticker and what-not, on the weekends.

Then I noticed a blind ad in *Editor and Publisher* which said something like "liberal Washington news bureau seeks writer. It gave a post office box number and I answered the ad and in due course got a letter from Nelson Poynter, who had established Press Research in 1944. He asked me to come in and see him some time. Well, by this point we had gone through V.J. Day, or at least we had dropped the Bomb and V.J. Day was imminent. The Foreign Service of the State Department was heavily recruiting in the Army, particularly in places like Arlington Hall. It seems just incredible now, only thirty-five years later,

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that the description they posted in plain sight of everybody for the kind of people they were looking for were "white males, college graduates, age between 23 and 27, either unmarried or without children." All of which fit me precisely. But can you imagine a government recruiting on that basis now! It's incredible!

Well, anyway, the thing that really attracted me about this was a promise that if you were accepted in the Foreign Service you would be discharged from the Army forthwith. So I beat a hasty path down to talk to the Foreign Service. They were very receptive, except that part of the deal was to stay for at least two years and go to whatever Godforsaken place they sent you. And that didn't appeal to me too much. I was going to get out of the Army in a matter of months anyway. However, in walking back to the bus to go back to Arlington after this Foreign Service interview, I coincidentally went by the address of Press Research. I thought, what the hell, I'm here, I might as well go in and talk to them. So I did,



and we hit it off pretty well. They hired me either on the spot or pretty soon thereafter. I started moonlighting for them while was still in the Army.

My job for them, which I did at home and went into the office with the results of it every week or two, was to read the *Congressional Record*, for which I was paid a dollar and a half an hour. I read the *Congressional*

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Record and I charted votes and I kept track of amendments and things like that. I thought it was the greatest thing that ever happened. In the first place because the *Record* fascinated me, a fascination which I lost after having read it for twenty-five years--it changed a lot in the meantime, in those days it was more nearly a record than a collection of junk. But the only thing I liked about this job was that although by that point I was a staff sergeant I still had to do K.P. at intervals at Arlington Hall. There were a bunch of guys in the guard battalion out there who would do K.P. for you for ten dollars. Well, I could pay one of these guys ten bucks to do K.P. for me, and I could work eight hours at home reading the *Congressional Record*, which was less time than it took to do K.P., and make twelve bucks, to come out two dollars ahead on the deal. I thought that was pretty good. Then when I got out of the Army in March of '46, by this time Press Research had become Congressional Quarterly News Features and had pretty well settled on the direction it has since taken.

**RITCHIE:** What was-the difference between them? What was Press Research originally?

**HOLT:** Press Research was established in 1944 to provide research and background, feature kind of material, for newspapers who were supporting

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Roosevelt in the '44 campaign. Though it was originally very politically oriented, after the campaign Nelson Poynter, who was a very imaginative fellow, and his wife Henrietta, thought they had the germ of a good thing going and de-politicized it, made it objective, and after a good many false starts decided to concentrate on covering Congress, which they thought was the big neglected story in Washington. And thus *Congressional Quarterly News Features* was born. As Dean Acheson said in another context, I was present at the creation.

**RITCHIE:** Was it a large staff at that time?

**HOLT:** No, it was not. Oh, gee, they had maybe eight or ten people in two or three rooms down here on 17th Street between Pennsylvania and H. It was a hectic place, the birth pangs were substantial, and the staff was sort of a revolving door. Nelson and Henrietta were difficult people to work for.

**RITCHIE:** In what ways?

**HOLT:** Well, Nelson, I think I described him as very imaginative, he was the kind of guy who had about an idea a minute and wanted it implemented the next minute and had utterly no discrimination between good ideas and bad ideas. However, he would at least listen when somebody who was working for him said,

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"Nelson, you know this really isn't a very good idea." But this led to a certain amount of friction. Both of them were very demanding of people, I don't mean in the sense of having high standards like Sevellon Brown, I mean in the sense of intruding in personal lives. There weren't any office hours and they would call you at seven o'clock in the morning to ask, "Have you read page 22 of the *New York Times* yet?" "No, Goddamn it, I hadn't waked up yet!" That kind of thing. And as I said, there was a revolving door. They had a penchant for hiring people and then firing them. Or people left and so on. So in a personal sense it was not a good situation. In a professional sense it was fabulous. It was better than any graduate seminar on the American Congress or on the American political system that you could imagine because you were as close to the middle of it as an outsider could get. You were doing things that had rarely been done in journalism before. It was an enormously valuable and productive learning experience.

**RITCHIE:** When you answered the ad for that job, they said it was a liberal publication, and that apparently attracted your attention.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** Could you explain why that attracted you at that time?

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**HOLT:** Well., to go back a little bit, I began to have a political consciousness in the 1930's with the New Deal, FDR, all of that. I was a big fan of FDR and the New Deal and I guess in that sense I was a product of the times and the environment out of which I came. I would guess that most of the economics and government faculty at the University of Texas probably had similar views, you know they weren't all that blatant about expressing them in class but the bias, if you want to call it that, came through pretty clearly and rubbed off.

**RITCHIE:** I wondered about your family's paper and what its political leanings were.

**HOLT:** Oh, well, hell it didn't really have any political leanings. My father was moderately active in politics. He was the Democratic county chairman in Coryell County for a while. He and my mother too, for that matter, engaged themselves locally in state Political campaigns. One of my earliest memories is mother

driving around the back roads of Coryell County with me while I handed out anti-Ferguson literature. You know, she would stop in the road and I'd run up to the farm house and leave this piece of campaign stuff. The Fergusons were very controversial figures in Texas politics in those days. I guess we're talking about the early '30's. Jim Ferguson had been governor approximately the time of World War I

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and had been impeached by the legislature, and since he was barred from holding office anymore his wife Marian, who was universally known as "Ma" ran and was elected governor a couple of times. Every time a Ferguson ran, my family rose to the barricades.

This has some relevance later on: my father was reasonably close to Tom Connally. Connally, as a matter of fact, represented the congressional district where I lived when he was in the House before he went to the Senate. There were other people running for governor or attorney general, one damn thing or another, who would come through town during a campaign and Dad would take them around and introduce them around the square and bring them home for dinner--that's the meal in the middle of the day--and that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** So, you were originally attracted to the advertisement in that it offered a sense of politics and journalism combined?

**HOLT:** Well, I guess that matter had something to do with it, subconsciously.

**RITCHIE:** But once you joined the organization it became a non-partisan, neutral publication.

**HOLT:** That's right.

**RITCHIE:** Did that create any frustration for you?

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**HOLT:** None, no. No, I had been well-schooled, well-drilled, both at the University of Texas and at Columbia, that by God there is a distinction between news and editorials and don't you ever forget it. You can do one or the other but you sure as hell can't do both.

**RITCHIE:** And that was particularly true in the Congressional Quarterly, I would imagine.

**HOLT:** Oh. yes.

**RITCHIE:** Could you describe just what the Congressional Quarterly was at that time--what your functions were, and especially who their audience was?

**HOLT:** The name Congressional Quarterly has always been something of a misnomer. It was selected to begin with because the idea was to put out a quarterly publication which would be the record of Congress for a particular three month period. Then these four quarterlies would be combined into an annual which was and is called the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* at the end of every year. The market for this was, and to a considerable extent still is, newspaper editorial offices and libraries as a research tool. Then Nelson decided that quarterly was really too long a period for this,

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so there was a thing called the *CQ Weekly Report*. This did on a weekly basis what the quarterly did on a quarterly basis. In addition to that, the *CQ Weekly Report* almost always had a fairly extensive feature story which dealt with one issue that was timely. It being a very hectic period, particularly given the Poynter managerial style, everybody on the staff sort of did everything, but for a considerable period my primary function was to produce these weekly features. That was a lot of fun and a very enlightening piece of experience.

**RITCHIE:** In what ways?

**HOLT:** Well you just got into everything. You know, doing a thing like that once a week now strikes me as just way, way too Goddamn much work. But my previous journalistic experience had been on afternoon newspapers that had five editions a day and anytime you spent more than thirty minutes writing a story you were either dawdling or you really had something pretty big, so a week relatively seemed like a luxury time. A good deal of research and interviewing went into these things as well.

**RITCHIE:** Did you focus on the Senate, or the House, or just anything that came along?

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**HOLT:** Through happenstance and coincidence during my days at CQ I spent more time around the Senate than I did around the House. The Senate interested me more than the House, as a political institution. But one of the strong points of CQ was and is the coverage it devotes to pressure groups and lobbyists, which were a whole lot less sophisticated then than they are now, but they haven't changed all that much. So we did a lot of that, and I spent a good deal of time, to my enormous benefit, chasing around town interviewing lobbyists about what they were after and how they worked and so on. I found most of them quite open and candid with this young squirt just out of the Army. Then we followed the development of legislation. I did some work on the Greek-Turkish aid program; I did an awful lot on the Marshall Plan when it was coming along. I followed the

Taft-Hartley Act; I followed the Sugar Act, and that was a revelation about lobbying that was later very valuable. We did a lot of political analysis of congressional districts and voting patterns and that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** That was a very tumultuous period, too. You got there just about the time that the Republicans took control of Congress for the first time in twenty years.

**HOLT:** That's right.

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**RITCHIE:** The staff was so small back then, you must have had to deal directly with the senators themselves. How did it work in those days?

**HOLT:** Senators were much more accessible than they are now. Senatorial or congressional staffs were very much smaller. You got to know some staff people up here, but you dealt I would guess mainly with senators themselves.

**RITCHIE:** There were some real congressional giants in those days, people like Arthur Vandenberg and Robert Taft and others. Were there any in particular that left a strong impression with you?

**HOLT:** Well, the two you mentioned. I never did really know Vandenberg that well. Taft, I got to know much better. Hell, he was on the Foreign Relations Committee during the last years of his life. But from early on I developed an enormous admiration for him and came to like him personally as well. I disagreed with where he came out on most issues of public policy, but he had that rare quality of intellectual honesty. He was a whole lot more open minded than his public image would lead one to believe.

**RITCHIE:** Was he a good source for reporters.

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**HOLT:** Yes. In the sense that he would level with you. The art of the leak was then not very well developed and one didn't really think of sources in terms of leaks and that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** Were there certain senators in general that you could go to for information? Were there people who knew what was going on better than others? Or did you just go to whoever happened to be managing the bill or whoever was in the leadership?

**HOLT:** Well, I pretty well confined myself to who was managing the bill, or who was chairman of the committee or the ranking minority member, or something like that. Also by the nature of the product that CQ put out, you relied more on what a bill said or what a report said, what was in an amendment, what somebody said in a hearing that could be documented if need be. Well, Taft was a

guy like that. The others that impressed were Elbert Thomas of Utah, Connally, George Aiken, Charles Tobey, old Senator [Robert] Wagner from New York, who I guess was pretty close to the end of his time in the Senate. Also, Joseph O'Mahoney of Wyoming, William Langer of North Dakota, and Scott Lucas.

**RITCHIE:** Did you have any dealings with Styles Bridges in those days, when he was the Appropriations chairman?

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**HOLT:** Yes, but not so much.

**RITCHIE:** He's not an easy man to figure out. He seemed to have been very powerful but more of an inside operator.

**HOLT:** I think that's probably right. I got to know Bridges better later on, after I was actually working for the Senate, but I never did know him well. Oh, one of them in those CQ days was Joe McCarthy, who was really *sui generis*. I had been briefly exposed to [Robert] La Follette, right at the beginning of my work for CQ. Naturally CQ was very much interested in the La Follette-Monroney Act, which became the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946. I was personally distressed to see La Follette defeated in '46. But the guy who defeated him, namely McCarthy, came to Washington with the 80th Congress in '47 with the reputation of a young, moderate Republican, part of the new breed, with what was then accepted as a good war record--we later learned differently. But not the stereotype conservative, stick-in-the-mud mid-western Republican. Indeed, McCarthy pretty soon began to make a splash on the Banking Committee with respect to veterans' housing and housing in general. Public housing--or the federal government's involvement in housing in those days--was much more controversial than it is now. McCarthy by and large had a public posture of being reasonably liberal on the subject.

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Well, towards the end of the 1947 session of Congress I was at work on a story about freshmen senators and what kind of a splash they made in their first session of Congress. I now don't off-hand recall who some of the others were, but McCarthy was one of them. In the process of doing the research for this thing I ran across some references in the Wisconsin newspapers, the *Madison Capital-Times* I guess, to some rather peculiar ways in which McCarthy had handled his income taxes. So I called him. I guess I said first to somebody on his staff who I was and what I was doing and so on, and very promptly McCarthy came on the phone and said, "Come up and see me, I'd like to talk to you." So I went up to see him and I said, "You know, I've run across this stuff about your income taxes." "Oh," he said, "there's nothing to it. Here, I'll show you." And he dug out this file and gave me his income tax returns, all the while carrying on a non-stop monologue which was laced with irrelevancies but had enough on the subject to

keep throwing you off the trail. I looked at his income tax returns and I was trying to listen to him at the same time and I couldn't make any sense out of either one of them. It was a classic performance.

A similar performance is described in much greater detail in Richard Rovere's book, *Senator Joe McCarthy*, in which indeed McCarthy drags Rovere along to his dentist's Office for an appointment and washes his mouth with Bour-

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bon and all that. You know, McCarthy was a very peculiar character. He was not at that time on the Communist kick that he got on later. But you could tell that there was something strange about that guy.

**RITCHIE:** I find an interesting ambiguity among a lot of the people we've interviewed. There were apparently a lot of likeable traits to McCarthy that people have trouble sorting out now because of later reputation.

**HOLT:** Well, I unfortunately got to know him much better later on. I suppose in my time on the Hill I must have known in one degree or another hundreds maybe a thousand members of the Senate, and McCarthy is the only one that I ever came to dislike so Goddamn much that I couldn't even bring myself to say hello to him when I met him in the hallway. So as far as I'm concerned he ended up with no likeable traits at all. But in his early years he certainly did have some. He was not an unpleasant guy to have a drink with. He had a much more outgoing personality than he had later. McCarthy later developed a persecution complex and became very withdrawn, but in the early days he was a very outgoing fellow.

**RITCHIE:** You described the income tax-story, in which McCarthy acted in a clearly very

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manipulative way. What sense does a reporter have in terms of politicians trying to push stories on them, trying to shade stories and influence the way the news is written.

**HOLT:** Well, the good reporters develop a pretty fine sensitivity to this kind of thing. It requires some experience, and I didn't have all that much experience in those days. Even in those days it was pretty clear to me that there was more there than met the eye and I was the object of a con job, or a snow job. But my sensitivity to that kind of approach was not as well developed then as it became later. It wasn't as well developed as the good reporters around this town have it now.

**RITCHIE:** What was the press gallery like in those days? Did you have a desk there?

**HOLT:** No, I had a card to the gallery. I was frequently in and out of it. It was a much smaller place than it later became. I haven't been in the thing in years, I don't know what it's like now. But it was a very chummy place, a lot of leather couches and arm chairs around a lot of banter and wise cracks and gossip among the reporters. A pretty relaxed atmosphere except when something really big was happening, like the last night of a session, or the wind-down of an important

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debate, or something like that. I used to like the atmosphere in the press gallery.

**RITCHIE:** Since you were doing a weekly survey, a factual survey, did you find other reporters using your material? How did the rest of the press gallery look on the Congressional Quarterly at that time?

**HOLT:** In the beginning nobody had ever heard of us. As a matter of fact we had a hell of a time getting admitted to the press gallery.

**RITCHIE:** That's right, because you didn't file telegraph dispatches to a daily paper, and that was a criteria.

**HOLT:** That was the problem with respect to the daily press gallery.

**RITCHIE:** Oh, and you were in the Periodical Press Gallery.

**HOLT:** The problem with respect to the Periodical Press Gallery was that we didn't have a second class mailing permit! But we kept hammering away, pecking away, chipping away, and eventually this was overcome. But CQ had a considerable struggle in its early days of name recognition and winning acceptance. Just finding

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somebody to buy the damn product, it was a pretty hard row. I don't know how much money they lost. The Poynters could afford it because they owned the St. Petersburg Times in Florida, which is a small paper but a very profitable one. It was a long time before CQ made a profit. It was longer before it made a profit than it was before people began to recognize what it was.

**RITCHIE:** Did you begin to get some recognition from other reporters in the gallery?

**HOLT:** Well, in the sense that they knew who I was, yes, sure. You were around up there, you sat at the press table at a committee hearing or something like that, usually everybody knows who everybody else is--especially in those days. The press corps was much smaller then than it is now. TV didn't amount to much.



**RITCHIE:** The CQ was started in part because they said the press didn't cover Congress adequately. And a lot of-time the Congress complains that the president is more thoroughly covered than the Congress is. Is it your feeling, from having worked up there, that the press really wasn't doing an adequate job in covering Congress?

**HOLT:** Well, I think that's right, but you have to make a couple of distinctions to be

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clear what it is we're talking about. CQ was founded on the premise that Congress was not adequately covered, but what that meant was that Congress in its totality as a political institution was not adequately covered. Then and now, with any particular story up here or any particular piece of legislation the press I think does a good job. I think they covered the Marshall Plan very well, the Taft-Hartley Act, that kind of thing. I think now they will cover a tax bill very well for anybody except a tax lawyer. And they do a better job now on Congress as an institution and the politics of Congress than they used to do. But I think in another sense, in the totality of Congress they do a worse job. This I guess is inevitable because the volume of legislation, of non-legislative hearings, of this and that up here is so much greater now than it was then that there is no way a newspaper or a general interest news magazine can cover the whole damn thing. You look what's happened to the size of the *Congressional Record*; you look what's happened to the size of the *CQ Weekly Report*. You know, we used to do something about every Goddamn bill except private bills. You could do this in maybe sixteen pages. Now the *CQ Weekly Report* runs, oh, gee, I don't know, it's as thick as *Time* magazine.

**RITCHIE:** You were able to follow up on legislation too, from week to-week, whereas the press

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has a tendency to focus on events of the moment but not what happens to it down the road.

**HOLT:** That's right.

**RITCHIE:** So you stayed with CQ from 1946 until 1950?

**HOLT:** No, till '49.

**RITCHIE:** And you went to the *Reporter* then. What made you decide to make the switch?

**HOLT:** Well, I mentioned earlier that from a personal point of view CQ was not a satisfactory place to work. And although professionally I was flowering, or growing anyway, learning a hell of a lot, personally I was unhappy, that is I was unhappy with the office environment, I wasn't unhappy with life in general. So I started looking for a job, oh hell, in '48. Not just any job, you know I didn't want to go from one frying pan to another. And in the fullness of time, by which time it was '49, I caught on the *Reporter*, which was then just beginning.

**RITCHIE:** It was Max Ascoli who was founding that.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** What was his purpose? I know it became a very impressive journal, but what was the idea behind it when it was started up?

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**HOLT:** Well, if you want a well-reasoned, coherent statement of it you had better ask somebody else.

**RITCHIE:** How about an impressionistic statement?

**HOLT:** I was not party to the planning stages of the *Reporter*. I was just still a pretty young kid, I wasn't thirty yet, looking for a job. They were looking for a staff. Max--I guess I was hired with out ever meeting him, but I got to know him later on--he was a very complicated guy, an Italian anti-fascist intellectual refugee from Mussolini. As a matter of fact he had been in jail and had been beaten up. He fancied himself a liberal. I guess in most respects he was, but he did not fit the prevalent American stereotype of a liberal, or a conservative either, as far as that was concerned. As nearly as I can describe it now, the object of the *Reporter* was to provide a well-informed point of view which was not available in other magazines which then appealed to intellectuals or otherwise intelligent people with a serious interest in public affairs. It was going to be what *Harper's* and the *Atlantic* and *Saturday Review* and so on could not do. It took it a number of years to figure out what that was. As you said, it later became a distinguished journal. I guess the last time I saw Max I told him the magazine had gotten much better since I left it! But we were

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sort of floundering around in those days. I was there for a little bit less than a year. I mentioned that CQ was a revolving door in its early days, so was the *Reporter*. They began with the idea that they would be staff written, and they would have a Washington bureau, of which I was a part. I think there were five people in it.

**RITCHIE:** Was Douglass Cater one of them then?

**HOLT:** No, Douglass was in the New York office.

My assignment on this was Congress. I did a story on farm legislation. I did a profile of Bourke Hickenlooper. I don't know if I can remember the other things I did. We used to go to New York every other week for an editorial conference in which everybody would wring his hands and moan and Max would lecture and pontificate. Out of this we were supposed to get a sense of guidance and direction, which never really came through to me very clearly.

**RITCHIE:** So you were doing the same type of writing?

**HOLT:** Same type of writing, yes.

**RITCHIE:** But not quite at the same pace.

**HOLT:** No, it was a more relaxed pace at the *Reporter*. In the first place the

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*Reporter* then was bi-weekly, and in the second place you weren't expected to be in the magazine every issue.

**RITCHIE:** But after a year you decided to go?

**HOLT:** Well, Max decided. The magazine was losing more money even than Max's wife could afford, so they made a major decision to switch from being staff written to being contributor written. Which meant that the Washington bureau was wiped out. Max came down here, it was just before Christmas in 1949, and called us over to his suite in what was then the Statler Hotel and broke this news. The bureau chief took us down to the bar in the Statler and we all got drunk on the last expense account!

**RITCHIE:** So this was Christmas of 1949?

**HOLT:** '49, yes. So I started looking feverishly for another job and ended up in the Foreign Relations Committee.

[End of Interview #1]

**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Interview #2**  
**Tom Connally and the Foreign Relations Committee**  
(Thursday, September 18, 1980)  
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

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**RITCHIE:** We left you off at the last session on Christmas eve, 1949. You had just been told that the Washington bureau of the *Reporter* was being terminated., and from there you moved to the Foreign Relations Committee. The question then is: how did you get onto the Foreign Relations Committee at that time?

**HOLT:** Well, it wasn't Christmas eve, 1949, it was a week or two before Christmas. Anyway, it was the Christmas season. Well, how I got on the Foreign Relations Committee: in the course of looking for an escape hatch from CQ I had talked to Senator Connally. After the Democrats recaptured the Senate in the 1948 election, Connally knew he was going to be chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee again. By this time the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 had gone into effect and committees presumably had professional career staffs, and the Foreign Relations Committee really did. But Connally, I guess maybe even then with his eye on what he thought would be a campaign for reelection in 1952, was looking around for somebody who knew Texas, knew the press, and at least

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knew something about foreign affairs. He talked to Les Carpenter about this. Les was a newspaper man in town, and Les wanted to stick with a career in journalism.

**RITCHIE:** Was that Liz Carpenter's husband?

**HOLT:** Yes. But he mentioned it to me and I guess maybe he mentioned me to Connally. Anyway, Connally and I had some conversations about it. This was in the winter of 1949, and I was about ready to come up here when the *Reporter* job opened up. So I somewhat reluctantly went to Connally and sort of backed out of that. Then a year later when the *Reporter* job ended I went back to Connally and said, "OK, I'm ready now." He said, "Are you sure? I don't want you up here for two or three months and then going off someplace else." I said, "Well, I'll agree to stay for a year if you'll agree to keep me for a year. Well, he didn't want to do that! Anyway, I went and stayed for twenty-seven years.

**RITCHIE:** Did you have any reluctance about leaving your career as a journalist at this stage? Or did you anticipate that you were going to go back to being a journalist later on?

**HOLT:** I didn't anticipate one way or the other. I didn't have very much reluctance about

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leaving journalism. As a matter of fact, I don't recall that I seriously looked for a job other than the Foreign Relations Committee. This took, I guess, a couple of months, during which I was unemployed and during which I did some odds and ends of freelancing. It did my ego an awful lot of good to discover that I could indeed make a living that way. But it was a very nerve-wracking thing because you never knew where the next assignment was coming from and therefore you were reluctant to turn down any assignment that came along, and therefore you found your self working harder than I like to work. I did miss journalism for a few years after I was on the staff, and indeed from time to time I thought about going back to it, but I never thought hard enough to do anything about it.

**RITCHIE:** Can you describe what the Foreign Relations Committee was like back in 1950? I know it was considerably different than it is now.

**HOLT:** Well, it had thirteen members. I got there in February of 1950. This is easily checked, as I recall there were eight Democrats and five Republicans. There were eight people on the staff.

**RITCHIE:** That included secretaries?

**HOLT:** It included *a* secretary. We used to send stuff out to be typed commercially, for

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God's sake! The entire staff was in the two rooms that the committee still has in the Capitol, plus one room across the hall where the Democratic Policy Committee is now.

**RITCHIE:** That was it?

**HOLT:** That was it. The committee was really loaded with the barons of the Senate. Going down the majority side, Connally was chairman [Walter] George was next to him, and George was chairman of the Finance Committee. I've forgotten the order of seniority after that but Elbert Thomas was a member of the committee and he was chairman of the Labor Committee. Millard Tydings was on there and he was chairman of the Armed Services Committee. There was Brien McMahon, who was chairman of the Atomic Energy Committee. There was Claude Pepper, and [J. William] Fulbright. was junior Democrat. That's only seven. Maybe the eight to five ratio was wrong. Maybe I forgot one.\* On the Republican side You had Vandenberg; you had [Bourke] Hickenlooper, who had been chairman of the Atomic Energy Committee in the 80th Congress; you had Henry Cabot Lodge.

**RITCHIE:** And Alexander Wiley.

\*Theodore Francis Green

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**HOLT:** Oh, yes, you had Wiley who had been chairman of the Judiciary Committee and who was to be chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. I'm not sure whether Arthur Capper and Wallace White were still there when I got there or not. Time blurs from when I was covering the committee and from when I started to work for it. They would sit around that big table in S-116, at that time the chairman sat at the end of the table with the members along each side, instead of the way they do it now with the chairman in the middle and the members spread around him. The relationship with the executive branch was much closer and more intimate then than it was later. The committee later on developed more of an idea of doing its own things. But when I first came up there, somebody from the executive branch was always present when they marked up a bill and would argue with them about why a particular amendment ought not to go in there and that kind of thing. They later rigorously excluded all executive branch people from mark-up sessions; and then still later of course with the "sunshine" rules and what-not they began marking up in public, which meant that the executive branch was right back there again, although the executive branch did not speak up as much as it once did.

**RITCHIE:** In those days Francis Wilcox was chief of staff.

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**HOLT:** Francis Wilcox was the chief of staff, yes. He had been hired by Vandenberg, with Connally's concurrence, when Vandenberg became chairman of the committee in the 80th Congress, which coincided with the effective date of the Reorganization Act. Francis, at that time, was working for what was then called the Legislative Reference Service, now the Congressional Research Service. He had been detailed from LRS to the committee at some point during the war, I'm not sure when but it was at least prior to the U.N. conference in San Francisco, which he attended along with Vandenberg and Connally, and did the staff work on the U.N. charter in connection with the advice and consent of the Senate, and all of that. He went to the early meetings of the U.N. General Assembly with Vandenberg and Connally, and it was the natural, logical thing for him to be the first chief of staff, when they got around to having one.

**RITCHIE:** How did the staff operate in those days? You had seven staff members and one secretary.

**HOLT:** Yes, at the time I got there, besides Wilcox there was Thorsten Kalijarvi, who had also I think been with LRS, there was Carl Marcy, who had been with the department of State in the Office of the Legal Advisor--the Legal Advisor in those days handled

congressional relations--and there was Morella Hansen, who was sort of a junior professional who handled files and looked things up, did research, that kind of thing. Cy O'Day was the chief clerk, he had worked for Vandenberg on Vandenberg's personal staff before. Emmett O'Grady, who had come I think from Connally's office, but I'm not sure, was the receptionist, answered the phone, and so on. Isabelle Smith was *the* secretary; and I think that was it. So, with no more people than that, everybody sort of had to do everything.

I had been hired because I fit the description that Connally was looking for that I mentioned a while ago. I had not before then known any of the staff at all well. I guess I had a casual acquaintance with Morella who was very good at searching out documents for the press and that kind of thing. Maybe with Wilcox and some of the others, but for all practical purposes I was sort of thrust on them. Later, when I was chief of staff, I had people thrust on me and didn't like it very much, but I must say that Wilcox behaved admirably towards me, notwithstanding this. And I did take some of the burden off the rest of the staff, after they came to trust me a little bit. I did most of Connally's speech writing! I also did a lot of stuff with the press, at first limited pretty much to the Texas press and by no means confined to foreign relations. In the beginning, Connally trusted me more than Wilcox did, which

was natural, but we reached a point where there wasn't any difference. I did an awful lot of answering Connally's mail, and went to most committee meetings, and hearings.

At the time I got there the committee had a subcommittee, headed by Senator Thomas of Utah, which was reviewing the U.N. charter--the charter wasn't very old at that point but it hadn't worked like people really had expected in '45. The Cold War had intervened and there was groping and grasping and fumbling around looking for ways to amend it to make it work better. Carl Marcy was doing the staff work for that subcommittee. The Marshall Plan had to be reauthorized on an annual basis. In 1950 the committee got around to considering Truman's Point Four program, which he had proposed in his Inaugural of the year before. This represented a considerable departure and broadening in foreign aid. The United States had sort of fooled around with technical assistance in Latin America, going back to the days of Nelson Rockefeller's role as coordinator of Inter-American Affairs in World War II, but Truman's vision was global and the committee was sort of timid to jump in that particular swimming pool. It dabbled its toes for quite a while before it did.

I remember at one point in the hearings when somebody from the executive branch was saying that one of the objects of the exercise was to improve the climate for foreign investment and stimulate foreign investment.

Connally thought that this was not a very good idea, that it wouldn't work, that to the degree that it did work and the investments went sour the people who had made the investments would come running to the government to bail them out--a certain amount of foresight involved in this, but that's getting ahead of the story. Anyway, I remember him asking this witness, "If you had a hundred thousand dollars, would you invest it in Ethiopia?" But the committee was persuaded, and Connally was a pretty good soldier.

He viewed his role as chairman of the committee differently from some of his successors. He thought a part of his job was to help the president and the president's program. In the Senate debate on Point Four somebody, I think it was [Leverett] Saltonstall, who also had doubts about this business of encouraging private investment, asked Connally, "What do these words 'favorable climate' in the bill mean?" And Connally shot back, "Warm in the winter and cool in the summer." [Kenneth] McKellar of Tennessee, who was then chairman of the Appropriations Committee said, "Where are we going to get the money for this?" Connally said, "We're going to get it out of your committee, that's where!" But the damn thing was approved by the Senate by only a one vote margin, I think it was 36 to 35, a real cliff hanger.

But the two main things that happened in my early days on the committee were: one, I think it was the

week before I started to work, Joe McCarthy made his famous speech in Wheeling, West Virginia. I think it was the first Saturday I worked for the committee (hell everybody worked on Saturday in those days) that the committee had an interminable executive session on how to deal with McCarthy's charges, and out of that came the appointment of the Tydings subcommittee, which investigated them. The Tydings subcommittee had its own staff and really operated pretty independently. The rest of us didn't have very much to do with it. The other big thing that happened that year, of course, was the outbreak of the Korean War. The role of the committee and the American response to this, or more accurately the lack of the committee's role and the American response, is quite striking in view of the present way things are done up here now. In effect the committee didn't have any role. It gave no particular evidence of wanting one. I think it's fair to say that the committee generally supported what Truman did, and was content to let him do it. I think later on when the Korean adventure began to turn sour, there were some members of the committee who regretted their passivity in the beginning. But, anyway, that's the way it happened.

**RITCHIE:** So, in other words, you jumped into the fire when you came on the committee; 1950 was a pretty hot year.



**HOLT:** Right.

**RITCHIE:** I just want to go back on a couple of things. The Foreign Relations Committee seems different from most of the committees. It really hears most things as a unit rather than in subcommittees. They have consultative subcommittees, but they were relatively powerless. They can't meet without the approval of the full committee. Doesn't the full committee handle most issues as a body?

**HOLT:** Well, it certainly did for a long time. That has broken down somewhat in recent years. But at the time I got there, and for a number of years thereafter, the committee had a very strong tradition of acting as full committee and not having subcommittees. The stated rationale for that was that foreign affairs was indivisible. That you couldn't fragment the jurisdiction of the committee into neat little blocks, as for example the old Labor Committee--it was easy to separate its jurisdiction over labor management legislation from its jurisdiction-over say education bills. This was less applicable to foreign relations. The example was frequently cited of the Finance Committee, which also operated as a whole and I guess still does to a considerable extent. I think an unstated reason for Foreign Relations procedure was that the people who run the committee, Vandenberg,

Connally, later George, wanted it that way. It enhanced, made things easier to control, enhanced the power of the chairman.

In the '50's the committee went through several rather sharp organizational debates, specifically on this point. Hubert Humphrey came on the committee at some point in the '50's [1953] and almost immediately manifested his dissatisfaction with that way of doing things. When Humphrey was dissatisfied, everybody around him knew it! Humphrey was also dissatisfied with staffing arrangements. He felt that the staff was too much answerable to the chairman and not enough to individual members. In point of fact, the staff tried assiduously to avoid that, but it never really fully satisfied Humphrey on that score. As a result and as a matter of fact, you know things were run the way the majority of the committee wanted them run. Humphrey, God knows, had a fair and open opportunity to press his case, and he just got voted down in the committee. As a part of this process, at some point the committee appointed a subcommittee [in 1958] to consider the question of the staff, whether it ought to be enlarged--that was the first thing Humphrey was getting at. By this time the staff had grown slowly and incrementally, I don't know how many people it had but it was bigger than it was when I got there. The chairman of that subcommittee was

John Kennedy. I don't remember who else was on it. I was assigned to do the staff work, such staff work as it needed. I produced a draft of staff regulations, and a draft report for the subcommittee. The report said that one person ought to be added to the staff. This one person would handle matters involving interparliamentary contacts and the reception of foreign visitors, which the committee was just beginning to get serious about. And then the other thing the report said was that the committee ought to formally adopt the following regulations for the staff. I wrote the draft, Kennedy thought about it some and fiddled with it here and there, and presented it and argued it to the committee. The thrust of these regulations was that the staff as a whole worked for the committee as a whole, and that any member of the committee could call upon it for anything relating to committee business. And that the staff was supposed to keep a low profile in public. Those weren't the words in it. The words I used went back to the Roosevelt administration, which were that the staff ought to have a "Passion for anonymity." The committee knocked that phrase out. I remember George Aiken said "let's leave the passion out of this." But the staff was specifically prohibited from writing for publication or speaking in public without the express permission of the chief of staff, or in this case the chairman of the committee.

The staff was abjured to be non-partisan, not to concern itself with partisan political, activities outside of working hours, and so on. That in effect sort of institutionalized and formalized what had been the practice earlier, and continued to be the practice for a long time.

**RITCHIE:** There was a staff member of Wiley's, I think, who gave a speech at a Republican Women's Club. Wasn't that what prompted this?

**HOLT:** Ah, yes, yes. I've forgotten where he gave the speech. When Wiley became chairman in 1953 he thrust on the committee, on the staff, Julius Cahn, who had previously been on Wiley's personal staff, and insisted that Julius have the title of counsel, which the staff never had anybody with that title before. Wilcox didn't like this a damn bit. He liked it even less than he did my appearance three years before. I think he saw Cahn more as a threat to him and more as a threat to the traditional staff-committee relationships and methods of operating. Cahn was more aggressive and ambitious than I was. I'm not sure how long Julius stayed, but I think he stayed after Wiley reverted to ranking minority member. Anyway, at one point he did make a speech somewhere, which was reported by the press, in which he spoke of John Foster Dulles as being a "moral force," or something to that effect, which offended the hell out of Fulbright; he found

Dulles' moralizing offensive to begin with. Fulbright made a fuss about this in the committee. It did not lead to Julius being fired, but it sure as hell led to him being muzzled, and provided an example for all the rest of us to keep our mouths shut.

**RITCHIE:** One reason I wondered why the committee was able to meet as a whole on all these issues was that there was a sort of basic unanimity to the committee. They were all for the most part internationalists and had a similar world view.

**HOLT:** Pretty much so. As a matter of fact, in the very early days the committee was not really representative of the Senate. I don't want to over-emphasize the extent to which the committee always acted as a whole. There were ad hoc subcommittees from time to time, there simply weren't. any standing subcommittees. I mentioned that when I got there Elbert Thomas had a subcommittee on the revision of the U.N. charter, the McCarthy charges were investigated by a subcommittee. There was an ad hoc subcommittee appointed about 1952 to make a study of the United States information programs abroad. Fulbright was chairman to begin with and when the Republicans took over Hickenlooper was chairman. The committee was always studying something. It avoided the word investigation, which was so popular with other committees, and still is, on the Hill.

The committee seemed to think that investigation implied some kind of raucous washing of dirty linen, whereas study was a more sober, serious, responsible exercise.

Investigation did have sort of a sensational connotation in those days, because McCarthy was investigating everything in sight. And indeed it was McCarthy's investigation of the information program--it was one of the things--which led the Foreign Relations Committee to do a study of the information program. One reason the committee was so fussy about its staff was that McCarthy had his staff members Schine and Cohn, David Schine and Roy Cohn, chasing around the world and leaving a trail of horror stories behind them. The committee was aghast at this and you know damn well its staff wasn't going to be caught in anything like this.

But back to subcommittees, early on in my service there, the committee established this framework of consultative subcommittees. I first heard about the idea of consultative subcommittees from Francis Wilcox. I'm not sure whether the idea originated with him or whether somebody in the State Department suggested it to him, but any way he sold it to Connally and to the committee, and these were established. The original idea was that there would be a subcommittee

for every assistant secretary of State, with whom the subcommittee would meet irregularly as required, for a totally off-the-record discussion for what-

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ever it was in their particular geographic or functional area. The idea being that this was a way of keeping at least some members of the committee currently informed about every Goddamn thing that was happening, and would reduce the burden of so many full committee meetings to deal with the same things. The system worked indifferently at best, or spottily at best. Some subcommittees and their chairmen took it seriously, others didn't. Some in the nature of things had more to consult about than others. In time the system got skewed because the number of assistant secretaries of State proliferated faster than the majority members of the Foreign Relations Committee, and things had to be reorganized. My recollection of this is that in the early days the Subcommittee on Latin America was one of the more active. I remember during the period from 1953 to '54, whatever Congress that was, Hickenlooper was the chairman of it and Henry Holland was the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America. Holland was really very good about taking the initiative in telling the committee things and in consulting with it. I remember particularly the developping crisis, or we thought it was a crisis, in Guatemala, which led to the covert intervention and overthrow of the Arbenz government in 1954. On several occasions Holland would call up and would say, "Gee, I need to see that subcommittee," and we had very good luck about getting them

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together in the back room over there in S-116 in the Capitol, at around five o'clock in the afternoon. Holland would come up and tell them what was going on, and they would figuratively stroke their beards.

**RITCHIE:** Was he altogether candid about the American role in Guatemala?

**HOLT:** Well, I was coming to that. He was, by the then standards of candor and congressional access to information, which were much lower than they are now, Holland was pretty candid. He reported the intelligence that a Polish ship was bearing arms to Guatemala. He reported the deployment of the United States Navy in the Gulf of Mexico at a minimum to watch it but with the option of intercepting it if that was decided. He reported the surveillance of the unloading of the ship in Puerto Barrios. He reported the activities of the Guatemalan exiles in Honduras. He did *not* report, but he strongly implied that they were getting help under-the-table, which sort of gave the subcommittee pause. I don't recall that they threw up any caution flags to Holland, but I do remember one afternoon, after Holland had left, Hickenlooper stayed behind talking to Wilcox and me. He said, "You know, it's all very well when you're an assistant secretary of State to talk about going in to a country." He said, "What worries me is how the hell do you get out."

Which, coming from a good, otherwise conservative midwestern Republican struck me at the time and I remembered it. Anyway, it happened and it worked, at least it worked on a short-time basis. Congress immediately appropriated at fifteen million dollars or something to help the new government in Guatemala, and so on. I guess that was about the only example worth recording of the activities of the consultative subcommittees, at least in the early days. Later on, the State Department--I guess this required an amendment to the Foreign Service Act, and Congress did it--created an additional assistant secretary. In the early days, one assistant secretary handled Africa, the Near East and South Asia. There began to be agitation for a separate assistant secretary for Africa. Questions of blacks in the United States became involved in this, and some political sensitivities were touched--which is sort of curious in view of the fact that not very many blacks voted in the 1950's, we hadn't had the Voting Rights Act yet. Anyway, this was done and so pursuant to custom it was thought necessary or at least desirable to have a subcommittee on Africa, not only to match the organizational pattern of the State Department but also as a public indication that the Foreign Relations Committee was more serious about Africa than it had been in the past. Well, by God, we couldn't find anybody to be chairman of it! There was a great search and every Democrat

on the committee had a great excuse not to be. Finally, Marcy put it to Kennedy who was a pretty junior member then. Kennedy said, "Well, if I take it, will it ever have to meet?" And Marcy said no. So Kennedy took it, and then when he was the Democratic nominee in 1960 he was criticized for being the chairman of a subcommittee that never met.

**RITCHIE:** I've only found one transcript for that subcommittee, in looking through the executive sessions. In 1959 they had Paul Nitze reporting on his trip through Africa, but it was more of a conversation than a hearing.

**HOLT:** Well, in those days, consultative subcommittees didn't keep transcripts anyway. And indeed I don't think their meetings were even recorded in the committee calendar.

**RITCHIE:** There's a note in the minutes, but that seems to be about the most.

**HOLT:** I guess that would be as far as it went, yes.

**RITCHIE:** Just to go back a minute when you talked about the Guatemalan situation. I haven't seen very much reference in the early records of the committee to the CIA. It doesn't seem to have been until

later in the 1950's that Allen Dulles came to testify. Was it that the committee couldn't get the CIA to testify, or didn't they recognize the CIA's role in foreign policy in those days?

**HOLT:** When I first went on the committee in 1950 you never heard about the CIA around the place. But fairly early on I remember Walter Bedell Smith, when he was director of the CIA, came before the committee from time to time for a general briefing about things. I don't remember if transcripts were kept; if they were, they're in the custody of the CIA, because that was the procedure. I don't remember much of what Smith said, and as a matter of fact I'm having trouble distinguishing between his appearances before the committee as director of Central Intelligence and his appearances as Under Secretary of State later on, when we saw a good deal more of him. Coming into the Allen Dulles era at CIA, the committee by this time was getting to be more curious about those things. Allen Dulles was a very reluctant witness, making the argument that he reported to the Armed Services Committee, which had jurisdiction over the legislation which had created the CIA, and also the Appropriations Committee, and that was it, period. And this is the way Congress had wanted it done. Well, the Foreign Relations Committee

didn't like this very much and indeed complained to the State Department and specifically to John Foster Dulles about it. John Foster originally, I had the impression, was reluctant to get involved in this particular squabble, although to us, anyway, he gave the impression that he thought his brother was a little too stand-offish. Well, at one point Allen went out to San Francisco and made a speech, which was reported in the press, and John Foster called him and said, "Allen, you can't go around the country making public speeches and refuse to meet privately with the Foreign Relations Committee. You can do one or the other, but you can't do both." So, Allen came up and then he came back again on numerous occasions. So the foot was in the door, so to speak, but it wasn't very far in the door. Allen had an enormous talent for talking a lot without saying very much.

**RITCHIE:** Someone else on the committee once said that Allen Dulles never told the committee anything that they couldn't read in the *New York Times* that day.

**HOLT:** Well, I hadn't checked that out, but that's the general line. Towards the end of his career, when he was sitting there with some of us waiting for members of the committee to appear, to come back from a Vote in the Senate or something, he remarked about how

valuable it was to smoke a pipe. He said, "You can think of a whole answer to a question while you're trying to light the damn thing." And he went through a lot of matches!

**RITCHIE:** Going back to one other question I had, would you say that there was a spirit of bi-partisanship on the committee when you came? Was there a basic unanimity between the two parties?

**HOLT:** Oh, yes, as a matter of fact, for a long time the only strict party line vote that committee took was on an amendment to the Mutual Security Act early in the Eisenhower Administration. The Administration wanted the authority to fire, without regard to the Civil Service Act, people working in the Foreign Aid program above the level of GS-9. The Democrats all voted against it and the Republicans all voted for it, and it was on that earthy political basis that the committee split. On the important issues they were sometimes divided, but they never split along partisan lines. When I got there, there was a division in the committee over China policy. Old Senator H. Alexander Smith of New Jersey in particular was pushing greater support of Chiang-Kai-shek, and Connally was resisting. Other members were somewhere in between. Then of course later on Bill Knowland of California came on the committee and

also took up the cudgels for Chiang. The committee wasn't always unanimous, but it was never partisan.

**RITCHIE:** Was that true of the staff as well? Were they basically bi-partisan internationally-minded?

**HOLT:** Oh, yes. The staff generally kept its personal opinions to itself. We didn't even talk to each other very much about these things. There were differences in approach among staff members. Kalijarvi was essentially a Republican, Marcy and I were essentially Democrats. I don't know where the hell the others were. But we really didn't talk to each other very much about those things. We didn't particularly try to push the committee to come out on one point or another. I think we were all pretty much personally pleased with where the committee came out most of the time. You know, gee whiz, if we hadn't been there, there would have been more turn over on the staff, because you're not going to work for an institution that you think is going in a mistaken direction.

**RITCHIE:** Could you give an assessment of Tom Connally as chairman of the committee? What kind of a person was he? And was he up for the job of being chairman? I know he had a hard act to follow, following Vandenberg.

**HOLT:** Well, yes, I think he was up to the job of being chairman, as the job of being chairman then was generally viewed. Connally, as I indicated earlier, sort of started from the premise that he was a Democrat and Truman was a Democrat and they ought to pretty much go down the same road, and that the president had a preeminent role in foreign policy. This did not stop Connally from opposing the president when he disagreed with him. I don't off-hand think of any major issue of foreign policy on which Connally did so. He did so on a lot of domestic issues. Connally had great influence in the Senate. He had been there a long time. He was a member of the "Inner Club." He was a very strong personality, witty and sarcastic as hell in debate, thought very well on his feet. He had a different situation as chairman than Vandenberg had.

Even before Vandenberg became chairman, Vandenberg took a position which was somewhat more internationalist than had been the traditional position of the Republican Party. Vandenberg had to manage things so that he brought other Republicans in the Senate along with him on this, which is one reason he negotiated so hard and so skillfully with the Truman Administration about the organization of the Marshall Plan, and who would run it, and so on. Connally did not have this situation to deal with, so far as the other Democrats in the Senate were concerned. I

guess what I'm saying is that Connally had more troops than Vandenberg had. You know, if you just think back about the other Democrats I mentioned who were on the committee when I came there, these were powerful men in the Senate in their own right: Walter George, Millard Tydings, Brien McMahon, and so on.

**RITCHIE:** Well, there was a year or so after Connally became chairman that Vandenberg was still on the committee. How did Vandenberg operate in the minority having been on the majority? I get the impression of him as being a dominating personality.

**HOLT:** Well, I think that impression is correct. He was certainly a strong personality. By the time I started to work for the committee, Vandenberg was sick. If I remember I started in February and Vandenberg died about July or sometime that summer. He was not around the committee very much after I joined the staff. I had of course known him some what before I joined the staff. I had seen him and Connally operate together. That's a pretty good example of some of the personal relationships that I think make the Senate such a great institution and make it work as well as it does. Connally and Vandenberg really didn't like each other very much, but they each knew that they damn well had to get along with the other one and that nothing



would be gained by having a fuss. This was more a difference of personality than it was a difference of view about policy. They were both pretty vain and had large and fragile egos. But in this respect they weren't any different from any other person in the Senate. You know, by definition senators are vain and have large egos. Geez, if they didn't they'd never go through what they have to do to become a senator!

But I think Connally was a little jealous of Vandenberg's publicity and public image as a statesman and so on. And I think Vandenberg probably thought he was smarter than Connally. I never heard any of this from Vandenberg. I did hear some of it from Connally in very private, unguarded moments. In public and even in dealing with each other in small groups they put these things aside, and each one knew that he couldn't do very much without the concurrence of the other one, and took steps to get the concurrence. They were very correct in their dealings.

**RITCHIE:** You said that Connally originally approached you on the issue of coming on the staff to help him with his reelection campaign.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** But as it turned out he didn't have a reelection campaign.

**HOLT:** That's right.

**RITCHIE:** In effect, politics passed him by in Texas in that election. And the same thing happened to Walter George in 1956. What is it about being chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee that doesn't appeal to voters--especially in southern states that reelect every other chairman?

**HOLT:** Mainly, as a result of the Connally and George experiences, and I guess also Wiley who was defeated, although he had ceased to be chairman by that point, there sort of grew up some conventional wisdom around here that being chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee was the kiss of death. I'm not sure that's right. What happened to Connally and what happened to George, and indeed what happened to Fulbright in '74, I think, is more readily explicable in more basic political terms. Here's a guy who's getting pretty old--Fulbright wasn't as old as Connally and George, he was sixty-nine when he was defeated and he didn't look that--but anyway he's getting old, which means he's been out of the state for a long time. He tends to lose touch. Your last election ortwo has been pretty easy, and as you put it a while ago, politics just sort of passes you by.

I think the Foreign Relations thing maybe had more influence in Connally's case than it did in the others, because this was 1952, the Korean war was still going on, it was unpopular as hell at that point, nothing like Vietnam became, but people didn't like it. There had been all the hullabaloo only the year before about the firing of MacArthur; the McCarthy thing was still in full swing; Millard Tydings was defeated in '50. Connally was sort of tarred, or at least stained with this. But the main thing was that there was a whole new generation of politicians in Texas that were ambitious as hell, and just passed him by. The same thing happened to George in '56, and George didn't have the baggage of Korea and McCarthy and all of that that Connally had, but he could see the handwriting on the wall.

**RITCHIE:** So basically Connally tested the waters and realized there was no chance for him and then decided not to run.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** When Connally stepped down as chairman, and at the same time the Republicans took control of the 83rd Congress, did you wonder about your future with the Foreign Relations Committee?

**HOLT:** Oh, hell yes, we all did. At some point in that interregnum, Wilcox said, "You know, if I have anything to do with it I want you to stay." I guess Connally also put in a good word with Wiley. I remember the first meeting the Foreign Relations Committee had after the Republicans took over in '53. They ran all the staff out of the room. We were sitting there in that back room in the Capitol, and geez it seemed like it was going on interminably. Marcy or Wilcox or somebody said, "I haven't been so nervous since my Ph.D. orals." It went on and on and on, and finally somebody dared to crack the door and peek into the room, and hell they had all gone--which is typical of senators, you know, they'd never think to tell somebody waiting on them that they're through; they just walk out the damn door. I don't know how long they'd been gone, but Wilcox ran Wiley down and Wiley said, "Oh, yes, we're not going to make any changes in the staff except that I want Julius Cahn on the staff."

**RITCHIE:** Did you notice any changes in the way the committee did business under the Republicans than under the Democrats? Was there any noticeable change in the tempo or the tone of the committee?

**HOLT:** No, not really. They instituted a rule that they wouldn't consider a nomination

until they had a letter from the Secretary of State or the president or somebody saying that the nominee had been subject to a full field FBI investigation on the basis of which he had been cleared and soon. This was to sort of plan a backfire against McCarthy. The first big issue I remember before that committee while Wiley was chairman was over the nomination of Chip Bohlen to be ambassador to the Soviet Union. The Republicans made a big fuss about it. I guess however it was mainly McCarthy. I don't remember any Republican who was on the Taft, who had committee who was making much of a fuss. come on the committee that January, was sort of privately and quietly outraged by McCarthy with respect to Bohlen, and it was Taft who primarily carried the load getting Bohlen confirmed.

**RITCHIE:** He was a man of principle.

**HOLT:** Yes. McCarthy kept making a fuss about what was in Bohlen's FBI file, and the Eisenhower Administration was following the practice of the Truman Administration and was adamant in refusing to allow anybody on the Hill look at an FBI file. Finally the committee said to them, "Look, if you want this nomination confirmed somebody up here has got to look at that damn file." So an arrangement was made whereby a subcommittee of two, which turned out to be Taft and

Sparkman, went down to the White House and read the file, and came back and reported to the committee. Sparkman said there's nothing there on any conceivable basis to turn this thing down. Taft was more outraged than Sparkman over the scurrilous character of a lot of the stuff that was in it. They never did describe it in detail. But Taft was very influential in all this.

**RITCHIE:** Did the committee feel any particular kind of pressure from McCarthy directly?

**HOLT:** No. He was making speeches in the Senate. He was getting a big play in the media. There was a climate of opinion that was being created. I don't recall that McCarthy came around to the committee. He might have testified, I just don't remember.

**RITCHIE:** I didn't see very many references to him in the committee's transcripts, even in 1954 when he was the number one national issue. And yet he was spending a lot of time attacking foreign service officers. USIA libraries. Were they keeping a sort of hands-off policy?

**HOLT:** Well, they weren't going around looking for direct confrontations and that kind of thing. You know they had created the Tydings subcommittee, which pretty well discredited McCarthy's charges, and then

Tydings was defeated as a consequence. McMahon was a member of that subcommittee and he was reelected that same year, but the Tydings thing sort of shocked a lot of people. The committee dealt with this, to the extent that it did deal with it, indirectly. While McCarthy was investigating USIA, or whatever the hell it was then called, the Foreign Relations Committee was more quietly and less flamboyantly studying the same thing. One of the conclusions of this Foreign Relations subcom. mittee study was that Congress ought to leave it alone for five years, which of course was the opposite of what McCarthy was then doing. Congress then left it alone for fifteen years, which was maybe too long. And the committee did essentially cosmetic things, like the rule I mentioned requiring FBI clearances for nominees.

I don't recall anything else directly having to do with McCarthy, and I don't recall, bearing out what you said, much discussion in the committee. The committee was reasonably passive in the early years of Eisenhower and Dulles and the personnel actions that were taken in the Foreign Service. Scott McLeod, who was a protege of Styles Bridges, went down to be Assistant Secretary for Administration, or whatever they called it then, and cut a pretty wide swath through the Foreign Service. That was the period when the old China hands, John Paton Davis, John Stewart Service, and so on, were sort of drummed out

of the Foreign Service, and the Foreign Relations Committee really didn't pay much attention to any of this. In retrospect I think they probably should have, but they didn't.

**RITCHIE:** Did you ever have any personal dealings with McCarthy?

**HOLT:** After I joined the staff of the committee? No, not really. You know he and I were both around and we would run into each other here and there. Oh, there was one other thing. I guess it was still during the Truman Administration. Truman appointed a fellow in New York, Phillip somebody, and I think it was to be a delegate to the General Assembly about in 1952.

**RITCHIE:** That wasn't Phillip Jessup?

**HOLT:** Phillip Jessup, that was it, thank you. McCarthy was reasonably quiet about this, but Harold Stassen made a hell of a fuss, on "soft on Communism," security grounds. Foreign Relations had a subcommittee of which Sparkman was chairman, which went into this. They heard Stassen at length. They heard Jessup. remember Sparkman at the time saying it was the hardest job he'd ever had in the Senate. Of course, he hadn't been in the Senate too long by then, whether held

still say that, don't know. But anyway, as of that time. The upshot of this was that the committee did not act on the nomination.

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Back to my personal dealings with McCarthy, I remember at one point when George was chairman, during a foreign aid debate, McCarthy was heckling George in McCarthy's own inimitable, obnoxious way, about some relatively minor and complicated point in the bill. I was sitting with George on the Senate floor. As I said, it was a relatively minor and complicated point and George really didn't know very much about it. Given the constraints under which the staff operates on the Senate floor in situations like this, I was trying to explain the damn thing to George, with McCarthy keeping up his drumfire of questions. I was whispering in George's ear. McCarthy looked over at me and said, "Let the senator answer. I want the senator's answer, I don't want yours." Of course I couldn't say anything to McCarthy, but silently I looked at him and framed with my lips so he could read them: "You son of a bitch!" George had sufficient presence and prestige in the Senate that he could stare down anybody including McCarthy on a confrontation like that. Damn few senators were going to desert this grand old man from Georgia.

**RITCHIE:** Well, we've gone only from 1950 to 1954, and I still have a lot of questions left to ask, so I think the best thing would be to hold off now Until we can have another session.

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**HOLT:** Well, some of the stuff we talked about stretches on, I mentioned Kennedy and the subcommittee, and Kennedy didn't come on the committee until 1957.

**RITCHIE:** But just running on a chronological basis--and there are so many issues in foreign policy in that period. It's probably one of the busiest periods in American history in terms of international relations, so we still have a long road to go here.

[End of Interview #2]

**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Interview #3**  
**George, Dulles, and Eisenhower**  
(Monday, September 29, 1980)  
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

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**HOLT:** In connection with the committee's relationship with the CIA I neglected to say anything about the role that Senator Mansfield played in that. Very soon after he came on the committee, which I guess was in 1953 or thereabouts, he began urging that Congress establish an oversight mechanism for the CIA, analogous to what it had done for the Atomic Energy Commission, through the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. He introduced a succession of resolutions to that effect, most of which died the lingering death in the Senate Rules Committee. I think along about '56 or so he did get a Senate vote on one of them and it was rejected. He had considerable support for this in the Foreign Relations Committee, but the thing was unsuccessful until very much later.

**RITCHIE:** Why was it so unsuccessful?

**HOLT:** Well I think there just weren't very many senators--or certainly not enough senators--who shared the Mansfield uneasiness about the relationship Of Congress to the intelligence community as a whole, but particularly in those days it was the CIA that people

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were worried about. This view held that most intelligence operations, if not all of them, certainly most of them involved political questions of foreign policy and if unsuccessful, or if uncovered, would have political consequences in foreign policy, and that therefore the political judgment of Congress ought to bear, in Vandenberg's figure of speech, on the take-off as well as the crash landing. But most senators weren't all that concerned about it and were content to leave the existing mechanism alone.

**RITCHIE:** The existing mechanism was the Armed Services Committee?

**HOLT:** The Armed Services and Appropriations subcommittee.

**RITCHIE:** Did the Foreign Relations Committee ever get any information from the Armed Services and Appropriations committees?

**HOLT:** In the period of the 1950's which we're talking about, no. Now, very much later, towards the end of the 1960's that situation changed.

**RITCHIE:** I know that Senator Richard Russell was particularly opposed to sharing jurisdiction over the CIA.

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**HOLT:** He was.

**RITCHIE:** Do you think that was just a jurisdictional issue?

**HOLT:** Well, to a degree it was a jurisdictional issue. Hell, the Senate is full of jurisdictional issues between committees and people feel very strongly about them. I think in connection with the CIA there was a more subtle and very largely unspoken--certainly unspoken publicly--difference or conflict at work. This was that when you came right down to it the people on the Foreign Relations Committee, such as Mansfield, did not fully trust the people on the Armed Services Committee with respect to the CIA. And the people on the Armed Services Committee, such as Russell, did not fully trust the people on the Foreign Relations Committee, such as Mansfield.

**RITCHIE:** There does seem to be a distinction: the more liberal, internationalist senators wind up, on the Foreign Relations Committee, and the more conservative senators seem to gravitate toward the Armed Services Committee.

**HOLT:** Well, that was true in the '40's and the early '50's. It began to change a little bit at some point during the '50's with the adoption of the policy on the part of Senate Democrats that every

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senator would have a major committee before any senator had two major committees. This resulted in the appointment of people like Frank Lausche to the Foreign Relations committee. And Lausche was a pretty conservative senator on these matters.

**RITCHIE:** But Lausche and Homer Capehart were always very much in the minority on the committee.

**HOLT:** Yes, and the Vandenberg Republicans (Vandenberg was dead by now), his wing of the party went to some considerable length to keep their representation on the Foreign Relations Committee pretty generally in the Vandenberg tradition. As a matter of fact, the reason George Aiken came on the Foreign Relations Committee was to keep Joe McCarthy off.

**RITCHIE:** Was McCarthy making a real attempt to get on?

**HOLT:** Yes. I'm trying to think of which vacancy it was that created this. I suppose that Taft died in 1953.

**RITCHIE:** Charles Tobey died then too; wasn't Tobey on the committee?

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**HOLT:** Tobey was on the committee. As a matter of fact I think one reason why Tobey came

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on the committee was to keep McCarthy or people like him off it. And then I guess it was when Tobey died that Aiken came on, to preserve that.

**RITCHIE:** Wasn't Aiken only peripherally interested in foreign policy?

**HOLT:** Well, that was the general impression at the time he came on the committee. But during the period he served, which my God was twenty years or close to it, he developed a considerable interest in it, particularly in Latin America.

**RITCHIE:** He also saw the international connections to agriculture.

**HOLT:** Oh, yes he did. And Bourke Hickenlooper even more so. And Hubert Humphrey even more so yet!

**RITCHIE:** Looking over the last interview, there was one other area that I wanted to ask You about, and that was to get your impression on the relationship between the Foreign Relations Committee and the administrations that it was dealing with. We talked about the Truman years, and you mentioned how Tom Connally felt that as a Democrat his function was to be a good soldier for the president's foreign policies. Would you say that

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was a feeling that was shared by other members of the Foreign Relations Committee? How did they see their relationship to the administration's foreign policy, especially in those earlier days?

**HOLT:** I think the most important thing to be said about that in the Truman administration, and carrying on into the early years of the Eisenhower administration, is that the question never really arose very much in the sharp form in which you just posed it. The significant thing about that particular period was that quite apart from how anybody viewed his role or his relationship there was a pretty broad consensus of the direction in which foreign policy ought to move. And given that consensus, given the general agreement and the fact that the committee was on a parallel track with the administration, you just avoided a lot of the difficulties that flow from disagreements and role reappraisals and all that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** But there were a lot of shocks in those years, the collapse of Chiang-Kai-shek in China, and Truman's firing of MacArthur, and all of that.



**HOLT:** It's an extraordinary thing that there was the very bitter Republican attack on Acheson and the China hands in the Foreign Service and so on over the debacle in China, did not spill over at all--or to a

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very limited degree onto things like the Marshall Plan and NATO and so on. There was a "great debate" I guess in 1951 over Truman's proposal to send additional American ground troops to Europe. The Republicans, led by [Kenneth] Wherry of Nebraska and Taft, opposed this but the debate really revolved more around the relative powers of the president and Congress than it did over the substance of the issue. Connally and the committee as a whole took the view that the president as commander-in-chief had the authority to send the troops without reference to Congress. Taft and Wherry were arguing that if they were going to be sent, Congress ought to participate in the decision. That particular point of constitutional law was considerably muddled by the fact that a great many people up here felt that the troops ought to be sent, regardless of the legal underpinning for sending them.

As a matter of fact, there were some people, Connally being one, who didn't like very much even the notion that the Senate should endorse what the president was doing, because in this view such an action would carry with it the implication that the Senate had a constitutional role in the matter, which they didn't see. Of course, the whole, climate up here changed very dramatically on that point over the next twenty years. The Senate became much more assertive of its constitutional prerogatives, but again the constitutional or legal questions were muddled by

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people's views of the substance of the policy involved. When they thought the troops ought to be sent to Europe, most of them were content to let the president send them; when they thought the troops should not have been sent to Vietnam then they began to use various devices available to Congress to bring them home.

**RITCHIE:** I'm also interested in your evaluation of Dean Acheson and his relations with the committee. How well did he get along with the Foreign Relations Committee in those days?

**HOLT:** Well, with the committee I suppose one would have to say that on the balance he got along pretty well. He got along with the committee certainly a whole lot better than he got along with the Senate or the Congress as a whole. Acheson sometimes had a rather acerbic or even arrogant manner, and therefore offended or alienated a good many people. But he never really came under attack in or by the Foreign Relations Committee in the way that John Foster Dulles did later or Dean Rusk, or even Bill Rogers or Henry Kissinger. You know, he came under very bitter attack from Senate sources outside the Foreign Relations Committee, but I don't recall the committee having that kind of disagreement or

relationship with him. And again I think it was mainly because the committee generally was in agreement

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with the main thrust of Acheson's policy. For a lot of members of the committee this extended to China policy.

China policy was so damn controversial in those days that politicians weren't leading any parades to defend this particular thing, which of course Acheson and Truman had to do, they were stuck with it anyway. But privately, and to a degree publicly, people like Connally and George would say "the administration is right about China." Connally in public was quite acerbic in his comments about Chiang-Kai-shek. I remember him telling a press conference once that Chiang is a Generalissimo, but the trouble is he doesn't generalize, he's no leader. He once said in a Senate debate that Chiang had run off to Formosa and had taken X million dollars of gold with him. He was challenged on this by Knowland, and came back the next day and said he wanted to apologize, that Chiang had not taken X million dollars worth of gold with him, that Connally had been mistaken and in fact Chiang had taken 3X million dollars worth of gold.

**RITCHIE:** That was Connally that said that?

**HOLT:** Yes. Connally privately referred to Knowland as the "senator from Formosa" and once in an unrelated debate over statehood for Hawaii, which Knowland was supporting and Connally was opposing, Connally said "I'm opposed to statehood for Hawaii," and then under his breath said, "and for Formosa, too."

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**RITCHIE:** I'm interested in your observations on Acheson. Acheson is usually criticized for having such poor congressional relations, and one thing that John Foster Dulles supposedly tried to do when he became Secretary of State was to mend his fences with the Congress. And yet with the Foreign Relations Committee Acheson got along pretty well.

**HOLT:** Well that's my memory of it. I think you would have to say that in general Acheson did have pretty bad congressional relations. I mean, after all., a majority of Senate Republicans called for his resignation as Secretary of State; you can't get much worse in congressional relations than that. But this was outside the committee to a very considerable extent. Acheson worked on his congressional relations, at least so far as the Foreign Relations Committee was concerned. I think Acheson viewed Congress as a potential source of trouble and his approach to it was one of co-option, to eliminate it as a source of trouble. This worked reasonably well with the Foreign Relations Committee because as I've said the committee, or most members of it anyway, generally agreed with the Acheson policy. It did not work with respect to the Republicans in the Senate in general, because they disagreed with it, and a good many of them also saw

the situation in China and later Korea as an issue which they could make a lot of mileage on in the '52 election, which they did.

**RITCHIE:** How would you then compare Dulles to Acheson, particularly on his dealings with the Foreign Relations Committee?

**HOLT:** Well, they were different personalities. Acheson was more urbane, aloof, given to intellectual arrogance, which was by no means always unjustified, it was just an unfortunate personal trait. Dulles was more pedantic, one might even say theological. The roots of the relationship were different. Dulles had served in the Senate, as an appointed rather than as an elected senator, but anyway he had been up here.

He was Truman's and Acheson's chief negotiator for the Japanese peace treaty, during which he assiduously cultivated the Foreign Relations Committee and particularly its subcommittee on the Far East, which at that time was headed by John Sparkman. This was in the early days of the consultative subcommittee structure, which we discussed earlier. At irregular but frequent intervals during the period of negotiating the Japanese peace treaty, Dulles came up to the Capitol and had breakfast with members of the Far East subcommittee. I was not a party to these things, so I don't know what went on,

but members of the subcommittee were very well satisfied with what went on and with the relationship in general. Dulles also was very well satisfied with it. As a matter of fact, some thought was given to assigning a young Foreign Service officer to write the history of this as a text book case of the way Executive-Congressional relations ought to work. I don't suppose that anything ever came of the idea, but the fact that it was considered is an indication of the general satisfaction on all sides.

Well, it's from this background that Dulles arrived to be Secretary of State. He had a lot going for him really that Acheson didn't. He immediately ran into trouble from some of the same Republicans in the Senate who had been giving Acheson trouble, namely the McCarthy wing of the Republican party, and this was over the nomination of Chip Bohlen to be Ambassador to the Soviet Union. Well, with very considerable help from Taft, Dulles and Eisenhower got over that. I think in general it can be said that Dulles' relations with the committee were pretty good, as Acheson's were, although they began to decline over the period of Dulles' incumbency. Dulles worked at this as Acheson had worked at it. When George was chairman of the committee in '55, '56, Dulles went by George's apartment at the Mayflower Hotel and had breakfast with him every Wednesday morning. What they talked about, I don't know, because neither one

of them ever communicated much about this to members of their respective staffs. As a matter of fact, Dulles and Eisenhower were considerably responsible for George becoming chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. When the Democrats recaptured the Senate in the election of 1954, the question arose as to who would become the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. George had been the ranking Democrat, after the departure of Connally, but George was chairman of the Finance Committee, and he was really more interested in taxes than he was in foreign policy. There were cynics around who said his supporters and campaign contributors in Georgia were more interested in taxes than they were in foreign policy, but anyway George was not breathing hard to get to be chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Next to George on the Democratic side was Theodore Francis Green, who in the fall of 1954 observed his 87th birthday, and was already showing a few signs of this. In addition to which, throughout his political career Green had shown himself to be much more of an independent maverick than George had. So the Eisenhower administration decided that they would much prefer to have George than Green as chairman of the committee. I know Dulles, and I think Eisenhower, talked to George about this. One of the reasons George was reluctant to take it was that he did not want the social

attention which came with the job, and the protocolary functions of it. George was getting pretty old himself by this point and he didn't like to go out at night very much. One of the quid-pro-quo's involved in his agreement to assume the chairmanship was a promise from the Eisenhower administration that although for reasons of protocol they would feel impelled to invite him to state dinners at the White House, they would understand if he did not come. So the Dulles-George relationship was a pretty good one.

Dulles' relationship with the committee really began to go downhill following the Suez crisis of 1956. This led in early '57 to the administration's proposal of what came to be known as the Middle East Resolution, which was a successor to the earlier Formosa Resolution, and a forerunner of the famous Tonkin Gulf Resolution. The Middle East Resolution, as I recall did essentially two things. It gave the president a bunch of foreign aid money to sort of play around with in the Middle East to use as he saw fit; and it authorized him to use the armed forces if necessary to defend against communist aggression, or whatever the phrase was. The Formosa Resolution a couple of years earlier had been handled very expeditiously in the Congress. The Middle East Resolution ran into a great buzz saw of questions, trouble, and opposition up here. I think that by the time they got around to voting on it there were only eighteen

or something votes against it, but it had a long and troublesome passage. There were people who thought that, in its provisions about the use of the armed forces, it muddied the waters of the president's authority as commander-in-chief. There were people, Wayne Morse being the most articulate, who called it a "pre-dated declaration of war," or a blank check to the president. There were rather diverse people, like Russell and Fulbright and Kennedy, who were more vaguely troubled by what they saw as increasing and open-ended involvement of the United States in the morass of the Middle East, in a sort of no-win situation. Russell once said that considering the resolution was like wrestling with moonbeams, that you could never quite get a grasp on it.

Anyway, the resolution was referred to the Armed Services and Foreign Relations committees jointly. Green by this time was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and Russell acted as chairman of the joint committee. And they met *endlessly* in the Armed Services Committee room over here in what is now called the Russell Building. In the course of which I think they had Dulles on the witness stand for nine days in a row, all day. Fulbright particularly kept pressing about how it was that the then current situation in the Middle East had developed. Fulbright thought that the point of no return the matter had been Dulles' withdrawal of American par-

ticipation in the Aswan Dam project in Egypt the summer before. In point of fact, Dulles had been under considerable pressure from the Senate Appropriations Committee to do exactly that.

But, anyway, during the course of consideration of these problems, the joint committee adopted a resolution calling on the State Department to submit a complete and documented history of the development of United States policy in the Middle East. I think this idea originated with Fulbright, and Fulbright originally limited it to the period beginning with the Aswan Dam project. The Republicans on the committee insisted that it be broadened to go back to the beginning of World War II, because if dirty linen was going to be washed they wanted to be damn sure that some of Truman's dirty linen was going to be hung out as well. This was a fascinating exercise. One of the troubles with broadening the thing so much was that it became damn near unmanageable. The State Department was very responsive to flit, this request. Indeed, so much so that there was a suspicion they were being too responsive in order to dump too much stuff on the committee. But they went through an elaborate exercise.

Bernard Noble was then chief of the State Department's Historical Office, and he pulled in people from the Middle East to review everything they had down there, annotate it to some degree, and ship it up here. This went on for a

period of months and it seemed to us at the time that they were really being pretty slow. Given the volume of the material and the magnitude of the task maybe they weren't. But anyway, as I recall we eventually got something like twenty-seven file drawers! I was put in charge of this, and George Denney who was on our office staff did some work on it as well. We obviously did not read twenty-seven file drawers; we did read an awful lot of it. We looked to see what was there and there was an extraordinary collection of stuff there. I hope it hasn't again been dispersed in the State Department's files; I hope they kept it together some place down there but I don't know what happened to it after we sent it back to them. It had everything from unclassified, essentially irrelevant documents, like the commercial air agreement with Turkey--that was one of the first ones--to White House memoranda and other memoranda with handwritten marginal notes signed "H.S.T.", the kind of thing which presidents traditionally have very strongly maintained was covered by executive privilege. An awful lot of internal State Department documents and State Department-White House memoranda regarding the most sensitive aspects of American foreign policy connected with the creation of the state of Israel and so on.

**RITCHIE:** Did any of that material go up to the Eisenhower years, or was it all in the Truman years?

**HOLT:** No, it came up to the Eisenhower years. As I recall we got most of the stuff we wanted about the Aswan Dam. Well, George Denney and I between us went through this stuff pretty carefully. I didn't do very much else for a period of months, as a matter of fact. Fulbright went through a good deal of it. I remember my secretary for a period of weeks had to come to work on Sunday morning, in a little room we had over there in the Capitol, to open the safe so Fulbright could sit there and read this stuff. Held read for a while and she'd lock the safe again. Knowland also read some of it. As a matter of fact, Fulbright and Knowland, as I recall, had been appointed sort of a subcommittee of two to carry out this exercise. All of this resulted in a speech which Fulbright made in the Senate that was *very* critical of the Eisenhower administration, as a matter of fact he made two or three speeches that year, very critical of the Eisenhower administration in the Middle East, particularly in respect to the Aswan Dam. Knowland made an answering speech on the other side of the issue. Both of them were frustrated by the feeling that they were under wraps and were inhibited from documenting the conclusions they reached because the documentation was at that point still classified. But that, I think, was the point that marked the beginning of the deterioration of Dulles' relations with the Foreign Relations Committee.

**RITCHIE:** I get the feeling, from looking at the transcripts that there was some frustration, particularly with Fulbright and others, about what was happening to

consultation. That consultation was not consultation, it was just brief advance warning. Just before that Middle East resolution was introduced, at the end of the 84th Congress, before the 85th Congress had convened, Dulles requested a secret late-night meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee to brief them on what was going to become the Eisenhower Doctrine. Later on, Fulbright in a speech on the floor said that the committee was not being consulted on this, it was merely being informed in a dramatic setting.

**HOLT:** Yes, I think that's right. I had forgotten about that secret meeting that you referred to. It was so God damned secret that I didn't even know about it at the time it was happening, and I still don't know what went on there. Yes, I think that was true, even more so I guess the year after the Middle East resolution when Eisenhower landed troops in Lebanon. Then of course, Dulles left as Secretary of State in 1959 and Herter succeeded him for the remainder of the Eisenhower administration. Herter was well known and liked and respected on the Hill, mainly because of his prior service in the House. He had a lot to do with the legislative implementation of the Marshall Plan, and so on. He was really not a very

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strong Secretary of State, as viewed from here. It's not entirely his fault, because he came in so damned late that he was sort of an interim or caretaker Secretary. However, he had the misfortune to be there at the time of the U-2 incident in May of 1960, although it's interesting that in connection with that, Douglas Dillon, who was then Under Secretary, carried the ball for the State Department up here.

**RITCHIE:** Douglas Dillon was very popular with the members of the Foreign Relations Committee. I've seen a lot of references to him when he became Under Secretary in 1958.

**HOLT:** As a matter of fact, at that time he became Under Secretary for Economic Affairs. The position of Under Secretary for Economic Affairs was created legislatively for the express purpose of having Dillon fill the job. The principal duty of the job was to coordinate the foreign aid program, and the committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee too wanted Dillon in the damn job. And there was an understanding with the Eisenhower administration that he's the one that would be appointed to it.

**RITCHIE:** What made him so popular?

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**HOLT:** Well, later on it's easy enough to see, but in the beginning I don't really know. You know he began his government service as Eisenhower's ambassador to France and in that job he impressed a good many senators. Now, what he did to impress them, I don't know. I wasn't that much involved in it. But they were sufficiently impressed to create this position of Under Secretary for Economic

Affairs. After he was in that job, Dillon became one of the principal forces in the administration to "liberalize," if that's the word, United States policy toward Latin America, which up to that point had been stuck in a rut of orthodoxy, the roots of which were in the Treasury Department. We wouldn't even talk about commodity price agreements on doctrinaire economic grounds. Everything was to be left to private investment in Latin America. If the Latin Americans wanted economic development, let them do something more to attract private investment and they'd get it.

Dillon began to argue for a loosening of this, and so did Tom Mann who became Assistant Secretary about the same time. In this, they found some allies within the Foreign Relations Committee, one of them being George Aiken, and another being Wayne Morse, and another being Bourke Hickenlooper. And so, by '59 this thing had begun to turn around. I think 1959 was the year the Inter-American Development Bank was created, with United States

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participation, something which only a few years before the United States had refused even to consider. Then in the summer of 1960 Eisenhower was in Newport and issued a statement about a new policy for Latin America, which represented the complete turn-around that led to the Act of Bogota in September of '60 and that in turn led to the Alliance for Progress. Dillon by this point was well known around here and very well liked, but you know he had been before, and I don't quite know why.

**RITCHIE:** This whole question about gathering information seems to me an important one. The Foreign Relations Committee obviously had to know what was going on, and yet there were a lot of times when the senators on the committee complained that the only way they could find out what was happening was by reading the newspapers. What were the channels to the State Department and to the administration? How did they get information? And was it as bad as they were saying?

**HOLT:** Well, I guess it was pretty bad for a while, although it took the committee quite a time before it began really to press on things like this. The channels to the State Department that you asked about were mainly to the Office of Congressional Relations and the offices of the various Assistant Secretaries, and of course the Secretary himself and the Under Secretary and so on.

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There developed during the decade of the '50's a greater network of staff relationships with these people than had been in existence to begin with, in quite informal ways like telephone conversations or lunches or something of that sort. The committee and occasionally in subcommittees relied more on the hearing procedure, either formal or informal, you know a guy from the State Department



would come up and brief the committee on this thing or the other thing, or discuss this or that problem with it. Some State Department people were rather more forthcoming in these things than others, but I guess it's fair to say that most of the time certainly, whoever it was from the State Department was more in the role of an advocate than a consultant. Although, frequently, or occasionally anyway, there was just straight forward passing on of information. I remember a vivid account by John Foster Dulles of the overthrow of Mossadegh in Iran, in which Dulles described the old man climbing over the wall of his garden wearing his pajamas to escape the mob. But in all of this nothing was said about the unseen hand of the United States in the process, that did not become apparent until later.

The Department was very forthcoming, as I mentioned, in response to the committee's request about the Middle East in '57. During the Lebanese crisis in '58 an arrangement was made whereby every morning somebody from the State Department would arrive with telegrams and maps and what-

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not, which would be available in S-116 for senators to come in and look at during the day. These had scarcely more on them than the A.P. wire but that was it. It was not until, well, you know one of the very important ways in which Congress informs itself through foreign travel. Members of the committee accompanied by staff had been traveling throughout the decade if the '50's. Originally they were not always accompanied by staff, but in those early days even when they were then which this was done left them pretty much at the mercy of the Foreign Service apparatus, wherever they were. It wasn't until much later that the staff acquired enough expertise and really enough of the committee's confidence to go out and assess a situation independently. Looking back on it now, from twenty-five years, especially in the light of what's been doing since then, the flow of information really was pretty meager in the '50's.

**RITCHIE:** How useful was the Legislative Reference Service then?

**HOLT:** Well, it was extremely useful in terms of looking thing up, particularly in those days when the committee itself, had a much smaller staff and other resources than it's got now. The Legislative Reference Service also did some useful studies for the committee. I recall off-hand one on the relative eco-

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conomic performance and prospects of China and India, which was really damn good, and very enlightening. It turned out that neither China nor India followed the course foreseen, but then you can't foresee everything. They did some really very good reports from time to time on Soviet foreign aid programs--a lot of stuff which I suspect even the Executive Branch didn't know, certainly didn't tell us if they did. It did some country studies that were useful background material. But it

wasn't used as much as it is now. Well, it didn't have the staff or sources then that it has now.

**RITCHIE:** It lent you some staff from time to time, too, didn't it?

**HOLT:** It lent us some staff from time to time. Francis Valeo came from LRS.

**RITCHIE:** Was that whenever there was a new issue or a new area that needed strengthening of the staff? His specialty was the Far East, I know.

**HOLT:** Yes, although he did a lot of other things as well. Valeo came for a temporary period--or we thought he was going to be temporary--to help out on a subcommittee, I guess it was the subcommittee I mentioned earlier that was created to study the foreign information program. He came over to help out on that and I'm not sure he ever went back.

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**RITCHIE:** A little earlier you talked about Walter George. He was actually chairman twice, for a few months in 1941 and then became chairman for the 84th Congress. There's very little known about him, you know he destroyed all of his papers.

**HOLT:** He did? I'll be darned.

**RITCHIE:** Yes, and there has never been a biography written about him. It's hard to figure him out now, but I get the feeling from looking through accounts that he was enormously respected by his colleagues.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** But I'm not quite sure why, and I was wondering if you could explain some of that.

**HOLT:** Well, the origins of it I don't know. You know, George had been in the Senate for a long time before I got here.

**RITCHIE:** Since 1922.

**HOLT:** But by the time I arrived on the scene he was one of the most powerful men in the Senate, widely and deeply respected. Why, well, gee whiz this sounds trite but I think you just have to fall back on it as character. He was honest, intellectually and

otherwise. He was conservative but open-minded. He was very good at accommodating diverse points of view, usually in a way that resulted in their being done in the way George had wanted in the first place, but also in a way that left everyone else feeling pretty good about it. You know, I really can't go very much beyond that. I would suppose that a good deal of his position in the Senate was a consequence of, or at least related to his long service as chairman of the Finance Committee. And I just had nothing to do with the Finance Committee.

**RITCHIE:** What was his grasp of foreign affairs and the issues that were facing the committee? Was he really on top of it all?

**HOLT:** He was pretty damn good, as a matter of fact. I think you have indicated another reason for the respect in which he was held. I guess as much as anybody I've known up here, George epitomized political wisdom. I don't mean political in the sense of how you maneuver to win a damn election in November, but in a more basic and profound sense of recognizing trends that are going on and trying to influence them rather than fight them. George, well, I remember once while he was chairman, George remarked that Chou-En-lai in his judgment was the ablest living communist, and it sort of impressed me that he would pick out a fellow like Chou-En-lai to say that

about. Another adjective that well describes George is reasonable. As a matter of fact, he was always looking for what he called a "reasonable solution" to something. George, as much as anybody I guess, was responsible for what became a phrase of art in American security treaties, that each party would respond according to its constitutional processes. That question first came up, in my experience anyway, in connection with the North Atlantic treaty, when on the one hand there was a desire to make the responses as automatic as possible, and on the other hand a desire to protect the prerogative of Congress to declare war. The reasonable solution which George found to this was to say according to constitutional processes, and then he muttered under his breath, "whatever *they* are."

**RITCHIE:** Like Connally, George wound up losing his seat to an up-and-coming young politician from his home state, in his case Herman Talmadge, and decided not to run again. He was given an appointment in the Eisenhower administration, wasn't he?

**HOLT:** He was made an ambassador at large, or something like that, working on NATO, as I recall. I think he went to Europe and some Foreign Service officers went with him and wrote a report. He did fool around with something like that for a period of some months, but I don't think he ever did very much with it.

**RITCHIE:** He sort of epitomizes a situation--he was a Democrat and the Democrats were in the majority in the Senate, but they had a Republican president, and they had to get along with each other. There didn't seem to be very many waves between the committee and the administration during his chairmanship. How much do you think that influenced the Formosa treaty? You said that the Formosa treaty went through comparatively easily by contrast to the Middle East Resolution, which was just two years later.

**HOLT:** Well, resolution, it wasn't a treaty. Well, there was a treaty with Formosa too, at about the same time. The Formosa resolution and then the treaty came up I think in the very early days of George's chairmanship. He had not been chairman for very long, which didn't really make all that much difference because he'd been around the committee and around the Senate for a long time. I guess, as a matter of fact, he was president pro tem that last Congress he was here. Well, I don't think George was extraordinarily influential in that Formosa business early in '55. That resolution also involved a secret meeting, which again I didn't know about until after it had happened. This was the Democratic members of the committee, not the committee as a whole. They were concerned about it.

In a way, that Formosa Resolution is analogous to the Gulf of Tonkin which came along years later, in that the context in which it was considered made the Eisenhower administration, particularly the president, look like a moderate, as compared to some others who were beating the drums of war and armed intervention. The Formosa Resolution followed the French disaster at Dienbienphu, and the negotiation of the Southeast Asia treaty at Manila the year before. You know, the committee wasn't getting as much information then, indeed the public wasn't getting as much, the Executive Branch wasn't leaking as much then as it does now. But there was enough so that people got the impression of a division of opinion within the Joint Chiefs of Staff over what the American response to Dienbienphu and later the shelling of Quemoy and Matsu and increased communist activity in the Straits of Formosa, over what the American response ought to be. Eisenhower was sort of cooling down the superhawks in the Pentagon over this.

One of the most moderate people involved was General Ridgeway, who was then Chief of Staff of the Army, who had absolute nightmares over the vision of his army slogging ashore in Vietnam or Fukien Province in China or some damn place. The Navy was much more "hell-let's-go," Admiral Radford and so on. So while a good many senators were bothered by the potential of the Formosa Resolution and later the treaty with Taiwan to enmesh the United States

in a difficult situation, they also sort of wanted to support what looked like the moderation of the president vis-a-vis some elements of the JCS. In the case of the Gulf of Tonkin, nine years later Lyndon Johnson looked like a moderate, compared to Barry Goldwater, who by that time had already been nominated as the Republican candidate, there was sort of a parallel in that sense.

**RITCHIE:** Well, having discussed Walter George, I'd like to talk about Theodore Green and the committee after that, but perhaps we should save this for our next session.

[End of Interview #3]

**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Interview #4**  
**Latin American Specialist**  
(Friday, October 17, 1980)  
Interviewed by Richard A. Baker

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**RITCHIE:** We've been talking up to now about the 1950's, and I wondered if we could start today with a general description of what you were doing as a committee staff member during that period. What were your functions on the staff?

**HOLT:** There was a lot of variety. You know, the staff was very much smaller then than it became later. It grew a little bit during the 1950's. I started, as I think I said in one of the earlier interviews, sort of as Connally's guy, when he was chairman. I did a lot of press stuff for him, speech writing, and handling mail, and even some Texas politics before he decided not to run in '52. So I was sort of all over the lot. I went to almost all of the hearings and committee meetings and so on. Then I worked into doing substantive things on foreign aid bills as they came along. When Wiley became chairman in '53, he put on a big pitch for the St. Lawrence Seaway, which had been around for twenty years and had always been bottled up. Connally was strongly opposed to it because of the Texas ports,

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but Wiley really pushed it, and I handled the St. Lawrence Seaway legislation as the staff member. I also did a lot of work on the Bricker Amendment, which was not a Foreign Relations Committee matter--it came out of the Judiciary Committee--but since it went to the heart of the treaty-making process the Foreign Relations Committee was much interested in it. Wiley was also a member of the Judiciary Committee and was strongly opposed to it. I did a lot of things to help him with that.

**RITCHIE:** What type of things did you do?

**HOLT:** Well, speeches and arguments or talking points. There was a long process in which the Eisenhower administration tried to find some language that would satisfy [John] Bricker and his people without doing what in their view was unacceptable damage to the treaty-making process. There were *endless* hours spent fooling around with words, you know, what hypothetical situations would this particular formulation apply to, and so on. In this process there were a good many meetings in the White House with Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles and various senators who were interested in it. Wiley's principal function in these

meetings was to stiffen the spine of the Eisenhower administration and keep them from agreeing to something which they would

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probably later regret. I never went to any of these meetings but I wrote an awful lot of talking points for Wiley to use in them. Then I sat with him on the floor of the Senate during the debate on the Bricker amendment, which was eventually defeated by one vote.

**RITCHIE:** Why was Wiley so strongly opposed to it?

**HOLT:** Well, I think he just had a gut feeling that it would do violence to the Constitution, that it would change fundamentally the way in which the United States conducted its foreign relations, and that it was generally a bad idea to have called into question a large body of treaties which had been regarded as standard and unexceptional would no longer be possible.

Wiley, I think, had an unfortunate public image, in that the popular conception of him was sort of as an intellectual lightweight, and a buffoon, and a guy who was clowning around promoting Wisconsin cheese and that sort of thing, which really did him an injustice. He was not the greatest intellect that ever came to the Senate, nor the best lawyer, but he was by no means the worst either. He had a very considerable degree of political courage. There was a substantial mail campaign generated by the supporters of the Bricker Amendment, and Wiley was upon the receiving end of a lot of this. I remember him saying once, "I've got 10,000 letters supporting the Bricker

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Amendment, but three million people voted in Wisconsin in the last election, and I haven't heard from the other 2,990,000 of them." You know, I think if it had not been for Wiley, Eisenhower would have caved in on this thing with Bricker. He very nearly did anyway in connection with the substitute which George finally offered for it. In assessing senators and members of Congress generally people say "his name is on this particular piece of legislation" or so on, I think one of Wiley's greatest accomplishments was something which did not become law, namely the defeat of the Bricker Amendment.

**RITCHIE:** Do you think that Wiley reflected the sentiments of the rest of the Foreign Relations Committee, even though they weren't handling the amendment?

**HOLT:** Well, the Foreign Relations Committee was all over the lot on that thing. Let's see, by the time it came along Connally and Elbert Thomas and Claude Pepper and Millard Tydings and Brien McMahon were gone. Knowland leaned

towards Bricker. Taft really didn't think much of it, but Bricker was his colleague from Ohio and Taft did not get himself in front on that particular issue. And George of course was sort of in the middle, as it turned out. Sort of concurrently with the debate on the Bricker Amendment there arose the issue of the NATO Status of

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Forces Treaty, which was a treaty to regularize the legal status of members of the armed forces stationed in NATO countries. It recognized the fact that the government of the foreign country where these troops were stationed had criminal and civil jurisdiction over them for crimes or other actions taken off the base and off duty. Up to that time, sort of as a hangover from the war, the American army, navy, air force, but the army was mainly involved, had exercised exclusive jurisdiction. Well, that was a situation which could not be sustained over a long term peace time, so the Status of Forces Treaty was negotiated, and it really set off the Brickerites and people who claimed that we were abandoning our boys to Saudi Arabia where they would cut off their hands for stealing a pair of pants in the barracks or something. Saudi Arabia wasn't involved in this, but we did have troops in Saudi Arabia then, air force personnel. Turkey was a member of NATO. So there was a big, big fuss about this.

I did the staff work on the NATO Status of Forces Treaty, and Bricker offered a reservation to it, the effect of which would have been to gut the treaty, to negate it. Taft came up with a compromise which everybody could live with. I remember going into Taft's office as majority leader, I guess this was really the legislative thing that Taft was involved with; he died shortly

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thereafter. But I went in to see him to talk about the problem which this treaty and the Bricker reservation presented. He called in a secretary and sort of off the top of his head dictated a compromise or substitute for Bricker's reservation, which was rather artfully done. It had a lot of good words in it and didn't say very much! And when he was through he very off-handedly said to me, "Let's try this on Bricker." He said, "I think Bricker is so tied up with his amendment that he really won't push this other thing too much." And indeed that turned out to be the case, and Taft prevailed upon his substitute. In large part because of Taft's personal prestige in the Senate and particularly among the Republicans--you know, nobody could accuse Taft of selling out the United States. Then very shortly after that he went to the hospital for the last time.

Let's see, what else did I do? I did some work on the subcommittee which spent '52, '53, studying the overseas information programs. That subcommittee was followed by one to study technical assistance programs, and I was the Principal staff man on that. We wrote some staff studies, we got some good help from what was then the Legislative Reference Service, we organized some hearings with



outside people, we did some traveling. The subcommittee made a report in '56, I think it was, which I think would stand up pretty well today. Mansfield was the chairman of that

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subcommittee. During most of the '50's everybody on the staff was a kind of a utility infielder, because of the smallness of the staff, and so most of us at one time or another got involved in everything major that came along. For purposes of the committee calendar and also for purposes just to be sure that somebody was paying attention, we did rather grandly parcel out the world among ourselves and say so-and-so will be in charge of Europe, so-and-so the Far East, and what not. I handled the Middle East for a while during that. I did some work on NATO, I mentioned the Status of Forces Treaty. I made a long trip in '57 I guess with Senator Green, during which we visited every NATO country, beginning with Canada and ending with Turkey.

Then in 1958 Al Freeman of the staff left to go to one of the United Nations agencies. He had been the fellow who handled Latin America, to the extent that Latin America was handled at all, which wasn't very great. So we were casting about for somebody to inherit Freeman's assignment. Somebody said, "Oh, give it to Pat, at least he's been there. There's nothing happening there and it won't add anything to his workload." Well, this was about January or February and in April or May Nixon made his famous trip to Latin America as vice president and was stoned and spit upon in Caracas. Wayne Morse, who was then chairman of the Latin American subcommittee, said, "We're in

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trouble in Latin America. We've got to make an in-depth study to find out why and what to do about it." So I was put in charge of that study, and spent most--by no means all--of my time on Latin American affairs for the next fifteen years.

**RITCHIE:** Didn't you work previously with that subcommittee when Bourke Hickenlooper was chairman? You mentioned something about that earlier.

**HOLT:** I had been assigned to it earlier, yes, during the Hickenlooper period and the Guatemalan affair. In those days we used to trade these off every couple of years or so, and Al Freeman came on the staff in the meantime. Al really had a background in Latin America which I didn't have. I just came in cold. Al had lived there, held been with the United States delegation to the Inter-American Court of Justice, or something like that, and he spoke Spanish--which I did not in those days. So he did it. But there really wasn't all that much to be done. I remember in those early days during one of the arguments over what staff size ought to be, somebody made the point that the committee did not really need an expert on everything, that if we were organized that way on the staff the poor guy who had

the Far East would work nights and weekends, while the guy who had Latin America would go out and play golf every afternoon.

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**RITCHIE:** Am I right in thinking that the senators picked their subcommittees in terms of the potential publicity that would be involved with them, that certain subcommittees had a lot more glamour to them than others, and that the junior senators got committees like Latin America?

**HOLT:** No, I don't think that's right really. Certainly not to the extent that its the case now. Subcommittees in those days didn't really amount to all that much, and since in the beginning certainly just about all their meetings were executive and off-the-record there was not very much potential for publicity anyway. This was not universally the case. I mentioned at an earlier time the difficulty we had finding somebody to be chairman of the African subcommittee. But I suppose it was not until the study of Latin America that Morse pushed, inspired by the Nixon trip, that the consultative subcommittees began to receive very much attention. The reports of the subcommittees studying the information program and the technical assistance program attracted attention, but that was pretty much a one-shot deal. Those subcommittees also held some hearings which attracted some attention, but not enough to make that a determining factor, I don't think.

**RITCHIE:** What type of a person was Wayne Morse to work for?

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**HOLT:** I always got along with him very well. He gave the staff considerable freedom. He relied on the staff to a considerable degree for ideas and suggestions and how do you implement an idea which Morse himself had, or which had been suggested to him from outside. He was given to lavish praise of the staff, particularly in public, which usually preceded some particularly onerous assignment. He had a kind of pixyish sense of humor. With a straight face at some point he instructed me to draft articles of impeachment against John Foster Dulles! I reminded him that under the Constitution that had to originate in the House. He prided himself on being a constitutional lawyer, and said rather ascerbicly: "I know that; draft them anyway!" So I really did spend some time--or had the LRS spend some time--looking for precedents on how articles of impeachment were drafted. I don't think I'd ever seen any up to that point. Then it turned out he wasn't serious about it anyway.

At one point, I guess, he was chairman of the Committee on the District of Columbia, he was certainly very active on it. He became outraged one time because the Senate defeated an amendment he offered to include laundry workers in the District of Columbia under the minimum wage law. I've forgotten

what the minimum wage was then, but you know it was not as much as it is now. So as a con-

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sequence of the Senate rejecting this amendment, he offered a resolution to reduce the salaries of all the Senate staff to whatever it was that was the average wage of laundry workers in the District of Columbia, which was even less than the minimum wage. He came into the Foreign Relations Committee room late one afternoon, just so pleased with himself and said, "Well, I've fixed Holt and Marcy now," and told us what he had done. I said, "If you'll pay time and a half we'll still come out ahead!"

He used the staff to get rid of importuning constituents or other people. He would frequently call up and say, "Come over to my office right away," or sometimes he would come into your office with somebody in tow, and say, "This is Mr. So-and-so who is a valued friend of mine, he's done outstanding work in this that or the other thing, and he's got this problem in Argentina or wherever." Then he would introduce you to Mr. So-and-so as the greatest living expert on Argentina or whatever his problem was, and say, "I want you to take care of it and report to me." After a few occurrences like this it became plain that he never wanted to hear the God damn problem again and you weren't really supposed to take all of this build-up seriously. He never said it, he just made it plain by his lack of interest thereafter. He was very supportive of that staff.

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In 1967, I guess it was, he conceived the idea, at least I guess he conceived it--it certainly didn't originate with the staff--of a major study of the Alliance for Progress and why it hadn't worked any better than it had, and I was also in charge of that one. Most of it was done by outside contractors or consultants, but one of the segments dealt with labor in Latin America and the relationship with labor in the United States, and we couldn't find what I thought was an adequate outsider to do this, so we hired temporarily a young fellow from the OAS Secretariat, named Bob Dockery. Dockery spent about a year doing this study, went around talking to a lot of people, and it came out to be quite critical of the AFL-CIO and particularly an organization called the American Institute for Free Labor Development. This was something very dear to George Meany's heart. By this time, Morse was involved in his 1968 reelection campaign, which turned out to be unsuccessful, and he'd always had strong labor support in Oregon. I said to him, "You know, I think this is a good study, it's objective; the study itself did not really criticize AIFLD, but it said a lot of things about what AIFLD had done that hadn't been done before, and I said to Morse, "George Meany won't like it worth a damn, you ought to know that." He said, "I don't care what George Meany likes or doesn't like. If you think this is accurate,

print it." So we did, and sure enough George Meany didn't like it worth a damn. Morse was very polite to Meany, he even had a hearing of the subcommittee in which Meany could come and spread his objections on the record, but he never backed off an inch from what was in that study. He was a very courageous guy, also astute as hell as a politician, which I guess is how he got away with it!

**RITCHIE:** That first year that you became a specialist in Latin America started out with Nixon and ended with Castro's revolution in Cuba. All of this seems to have come as a great shock to the committee, they seemed very perplexed with what was going on. Was that your sense of their reaction?

**HOLT:** You mean in Cuba?

**RITCHIE:** Yes.

**HOLT:** No, I don't think so really. Going back even to '57, that subcommittee in '57 and '58 held a number of these private, off-the-record consultative meetings with Dick Rubottom who was then Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, and I don't think the senators who paid attention, this being mainly Morse, Hickenlooper, and Aiken, were under any particular illusions about what was happening down there, or with respect

to Castro. Now, a lot of the popular discussion of this period has been in terms of whether or not Castro was a Communist or an "instrument of the Kremlin," and who recognized this at what point in time, and that kind of thing. That was not really the issue as it was seen, either by the subcommittee or by Rubottom. The other side of the issue in public discussion had Castro as a sort of Robin Hood figure up there in the mountains. Herbert Matthews of the *New York Times* contributed a lot to this, a romantic figure who was going to overthrow this son-of-a-bitch Batista and bring democracy--in the Anglo sense--to Cuba. Neither the subcommittee nor Rubottom had any illusions about that. Castro was viewed, whether he was a Communist or not, as a mercurial, very unreliable, and largely unknown quantity, and the dilemma with which the subcommittee and Rubottom wrestled was that in their view--which I think was correct--Batista had no future in Cuba. It would not be in the United States' interest that Castro run Cuba, therefore the problem became to find somebody other than either Batista or Castro and see if the United States government still had enough influence to bring him to power in Havana. It proved to be impossible to find anybody, but God knows they looked. The committee didn't look, the State Department did and reported to the committee about it, and the committee hemmed and hawed and

stroked its beard figuratively and so on. The triumph of the Castro revolution on New Year's Day 1959 was generally greeted with approval in the United States, and indeed throughout the hemisphere, not because of Castro, but because of Batista. Everybody was glad to get rid of him.

This consensus of approval was very short lived, and I guess the first guy to break it was Wayne Morse, who became very upset over the summary executions that shortly followed in Cuba, and made some speeches about it in the Senate. Morse also strongly encouraged the State Department and the White House to get an American ambassador in place in Cuba. The guy we'd had down there had left, but Morse said we needed an ambassador in Havana, and fairly promptly--there was a delay of two or three weeks--the White House sent Phil Bonsai, who was one of the better old Latin America hands around the State Department. The committee, I think by this time the full committee was getting interested in what was going on down there, brought Luis Munoz Marin, the Governor of Puerto Rico and one of the grand old liberals of the Caribbean, up to talk about it. Munoz's message was: "Be patient, give this thing a chance," which sort of impressed Fulbright, but was very rapidly taken over by events. The Eisenhower administration was being much more stand-offish, to put it mildly, towards Cuba than was the

committee, and was resisting suggestions that Castro be invited to Washington, or that contact with him be established at a higher level than simply having Phil Bonsai as ambassador to Havana. This was taken out of the administration's hands by the American Society of Newspaper Editors who invited Castro to address them at their spring meeting in 1959. So Castro and this bearded, guntoting entourage in fatigues, with hair down to their shoulders, and so on, descended on Washington.

The Foreign Relations Committee invited Castro to an off-the-record meeting, and he came with a large entourage. A lot of senators turned out, including a number who were not members of the committee. The meeting was less satisfactory than it should have been, because although interpreters were available and present, Castro insisted on speaking English which he then did very poorly, so that it was difficult to understand what the hell it was he was trying to say. He made the point that Cuba wanted to diversify its foreign trade, it was too dependent on sugar--you know there's nothing very revolutionary about that thought. The atmosphere of the meeting was somewhere between warm and friendly on one hand and hostile on the other. Currect but a little bit at arms' length and reserving judgment, which was really not too different from Munoz' advice to be patient and give it time. And then things began to go downhill.

Disillusionment began to set in, not just in the United States but throughout the area. I made a trip in the fall of '59, a long trip--actually it was two trips unbroken by a return to the United States--around Latin America. I started out with Aiken and went around and then put Aiken on an airplane home from Panama, and the next day Morse came through Panama and I joined him and we went around in the other direction. This was the fall of 1959 and people like Romulo Betancourt in Venezuela and Pepe Figueres in Costa Rica were saying in effect that the "bloom is off the rose," of the Castro revolution. They were then saying it privately; they came to say it publicly later. This impressed both Aiken and Morse, but they didn't really do anything about it that I recall then, not that I suppose there was a great deal to be done.

**RITCHIE:** How did you go about making yourself a Latin America expert in those days?

**HOLT:** Well, in the beginning I read a lot. I talked to a bunch of people in and out of government. The study that resulted from the Nixon trip was very largely if not entirely done by outside contractors and consultants, most of whom were academics, and in the process of looking for people to do these things and negotiating contracts, and so on, that process gave me

entree into the world of academia dealing with Latin America. I began to study Spanish. I didn't really learn very much until later when I lived in Latin America. And of course I traveled a lot. I mentioned that long trip with Aiken and Morse. I had been around Latin America before with Green and with Hickenlooper and I went again with Hickenlooper. By that time the committee was allowing its staff to travel by themselves, and I did a good deal of that.

**RITCHIE:** What kind of a perception did you have about United States relations with Latin America at that time?

**HOLT:** This is the late '50's you're talking about?

**RITCHIE:** Yes.

**HOLT:** I think I was sort of caught up with the then prevailing--or what shortly became the prevailing view in the United States that we ought to do something, for God's sake. The 1950's were a period of political change in Latin America in the sense that a series of dictators were replaced by democrats, or at least popularly elected governments. Dictators acquired a bad name. Peron was overthrown in Argentina in '55 and guess that started it. Odria in Peru went out in '56. Rojas Pinilla in Columbia in '57. Perez Jimenez in

Venezuela in '58. Batista in '59. A little bit later Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. Some of the people who followed these dictators were really very impressive in terms of their vision and perception and leadership qualities, particularly Alberto Lleras Camargo in Columbia and Betancourt in Venezuela. A lot of people around the United States, including me, thought that it was very much in the national interest of the United States for these people to succeed in establishing viable, open, liberal political systems, and that the alternative to this was social turmoil and probably Communism. We were still pretty much influenced by the atmosphere of the Cold War at that point. There was a book at that time by Karl Schmitt and David Kirks on this whole thing and they gave it the title *Evolution or Chaos*, and that pretty well summed up the way I and some other people were thinking.

**RITCHIE:** Up to that point the only real activity I can see in the Foreign Relations Committee annually was Senator George Smathers of Florida would come up with a multi-million dollar development loan proposal for Latin America that never got anywhere.

**HOLT:** Well, what did get somewhere were two or three Smathers' amendments for relatively insignificant sums, like fifteen or twenty-five million, for demonstration projects for water, or sewers, or health,

or education, and for housing guarantees or self-help housing projects. This reflected the view which a lot of people had then that if you could show people how to do something so that they would be better off then this would be sort of contagious and they would do more of it on their own. The history of the last twenty or twenty five years makes that seem sort of naive, but there were a lot of people around, I'm afraid including me, who thought it was a valid idea at the time.

**RITCHIE:** Just moving a little bit off the Latin American subject but also on the subject of aid, it seemed that the largest share of the committee's time was spent on foreign aid in the 1950s. That seemed to have the most extensive hearings, which went on and on forever, when you're trying to read through them. What would happen there--would everyone who specialized in a different area pool their resources for the foreign aid discussion? It seemed like there was a large number of staff sitting in on foreign aid meetings. Did each baliwick then try to shape the final outcome and distribution of funds?

**HOLT:** No, not really. There were a lot of staff people involved in it, but it wasn't divided up as neatly as you suggest. I had started working on foreign aid legislation I guess the first, or second, or third

year I was on the staff. At some point during the '50's I became the member of the staff primarily responsible for foreign aid legislation, which was in addition to all these other things I did that we've been talking about. My concern was with the whole damn bill worldwide, but I had help from other people on the staff. There were, and still are although they handle it differently now, essentially two broad problems involved here. One is the program itself, what does the administration intend to do with all this damn money they're asking for, and are these the right things and the right amounts, or should you go off in one direction or another. And the other is the framework of legislative authority and restrictions in which this is done. Some of the legislative framework gets extraordinarily complicated, it's become much more complicated over the year as there has been an accretion of barnacles added to it. But in the process of committee consideration of foreign aid bills this distinction was not really made all that clearly; these things sort of blended in with each other.

**RITCHIE:** Well, there had to be a lot of compromises made. Everybody couldn't get everything they wanted, and be happy with what came out.

**HOLT:** That's right. I suppose it's fair to say that very rarely was anybody completely happy with what came out.

**RITCHIE:** You had to deal with the House on that, unlike a lot of other foreign policy issues the House was very much involved in the money end of it.

**HOLT:** Right.

**RITCHIE:** As a staff member did you have to deal with the staff or the members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee?

**HOLT:** Oh, yes. These contacts were not as frequent or as extensive as one might think. They revolved mainly around conference committees and the writing of conference reports and that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** Every once in a while I find the various members of the committee saying something like: "We can't cut this amount too much, because when we get to the conference we're just going to split the difference with the House." Is that an accurate summary of the way the decisions were made?

**HOLT:** Well, in the period we're talking about, yes. There was a kind of a charade in which senators in the mark-up sessions, which were then held privately, would say, "This is going to be cut on the floor." And the implication of that was, "Let's



not cut it very much here." The other side of the argument was, "if we don't cut it here to some extent, it's going to be cut even more on the floor." Then of course there was the problem of how do you adjust it in conference. Money issues in conference were almost always split down the middle. The really difficult issues in new money problems. The Senate in conference concerned non one of those years voted to finance the program with public debt transactions, which would bypass the appropriations; process, and there was the long argument with the House about that. The House ultimately prevailed. This had to do I guess with the creation of the Development Loan Fund. The Senate got on a kick for a while of favoring multi-year authorizations, which the House very strongly resisted, and generally prevailed on. There were very, very long and tedious conferences through a good deal of this period. House conferees generally seemed to be more devoted to upholding the House position, one could say stubbornner than Senate conferees. They were almost always better briefed with respect to the details and minutia involved than were senators. They spent more time on it, and they did their home work on it.

**RITCHIE:** Why do you think that was?

**HOLT:** Well, I think the basic reason is that a member of the House didn't have as much to do as a member of the Senate. In those days members of the House served on only one committee. Senators served on at least two. Members of the House have more frequent elections, but they have fewer constituents involved in the elections.

**RITCHIE:** I know the senators seemed to rely very heavily on the staff for those minutia. Large portions of the executive session transcripts seemed to be taken up with just trying to find what paragraph it is they are talking about, what page in the bill. And there were very elaborate briefing books.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** Although some of them came in very well briefed on the items they wanted to add into the bill, a lot of them seemed to have pet interests that they pushed from Congress to Congress.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** I also wanted to ask you about what role the Senate Appropriations Committee played in all of this, and whether or not you had to deal with them. Once you passed your bill, didn't it depend on how much money they were going to appropriate?

**HOLT:** Sure, there were a series of whacks taken at foreign aid money every year, in the Foreign Relations and Foreign Affairs Committees in authorizing legislation, in the House and the Senate in the authorizing bills, and then again in the appropriations committees, and again on the floor of the House and Senate. Most of the time the Foreign Relations Committee sort of left the Appropriations Committee alone in this connection. There were some overlaps in membership--I don't at this point remember who those overlapping members were in the period we're talking about, but there were two or three. Every once in a while, with respect to a particular item, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee would lobby the Appropriations Committee or some members of it, but there was not really all that much contact.

**RITCHIE:** Some of the Appropriations Committee staff members took particular interest in questions of foreign aid. Just recently there was an article in the *Washington Monthly* on William Jordan, who has spent some twenty years or more overseeing the AID programs. It must have seemed somewhat frustrating after all the work you did on a foreign aid bill then to have in effect a final arbiter beyond you.

**HOLT:** I didn't think Bill Jordan had been around that long. Certainly I didn't know him

then. The staff member of the Appropriations Committee that we dealt with was Tom Scott, who was the staff director, and whom you also ought to interview. Tom was a thoroughly professional fellow and there was never any friction, conflict, frustration, or anything else. No, I don't think it bothered me in the sense that you suggest. I guess it did a little bit in the early days, and you know there were debates in the Senate over foreign aid appropriations just as there were over authorizations. People were mainly trying to cut them, but sometimes trying to raise them.

**RITCHIE:** It seems fairly consistent in that period that the House would make severe cuts in the foreign aid program and the Senate would be the agency to restore the cuts, usually after a lot of administration urging.

**HOLT:** I think that's right. Of course, that's true with appropriations generally. As a matter of fact for a long time the Senate Appropriations Committee acted mainly as a body to which the administration could appeal House reductions in appropriations, whether we're talking about foreign aid or the forest service. The Senate Appropriations Committee wouldn't even consider an item in a House bill that had not been reduced or that the administration wasn't appealing something about. I guess maybe it's still that way, but I'm not sure.

**RITCHIE:** All this period we've been talking about, '58 to '59, was when Theodore Francis Green was chairman of the committee. He was chairman for about a year.

**HOLT:** A couple of years as I recall. I think he left in '59, and became chairman at the beginning of '57 when George left.

**RITCHIE:** Green was at that time close to ninety years old.

**HOLT:** He had his ninetieth birthday in 1957, yes.

**RITCHIE:** Was he too old to be chairman of the committee? Was he still functioning effectively?

**HOLT:** I think one would have to say no. There might be a little question about the month of January 1957 when he became chairman, but no it was all down hill from there on.

**RITCHIE:** Can you give any examples of the problems his age caused? And how did the staff cope with it?

**HOLT:** A part of the problem was that Green was always, or at least for so long as I knew

him, a demon about minutia. This particular preoccupation became much more pronounced as he became older. It was just increasingly difficult to get him to focus on what the damn substantive problem was, as distinguished from whether one uses "that" or "which" in a particular part of a memo dealing with the problem. He once took up a considerable amount of time arguing that the word refugee, was incorrectly used. That it ought to be "refuger," referring to one who had taken or sought refuge, and that the refugee would be the situation from which the refuge was taken or sought. Well, I suppose linguistically he had a point, but it was the kind of thing that would just drive other members of the committee absolutely through the ceiling.

**RITCHIE:** He also seemed determined to make everyone live up to the ten-minute rule in asking questions. That drew a lot of friction from senators who felt themselves cut off from questioning.

**HOLT:** I don't particularly remember that, but it's certainly in character.

**RITCHIE:** At this time the committee seemed to be getting some bad press. There was a lot of criticism that it was doing increasing amounts of its work in closed session. Was there any sense that Green

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was a detriment to the committee and to the Democratic majority on the committee?

**HOLT:** Well, yes there was, but I don't think it had much to do with closed-door sessions. The committee, the Congress as a whole for that matter, has always had a bad press on that point. Some of it deserved, some of it not. The problem has been ameliorated with the passage of sunshine rules and things like that, which have created other problems of their own, but that's a separate issue. I suppose that there was some reluctance to expose this old man in public, to provide the spectacle of his trying to preside over something that he really wasn't quite up to. But along that line a much more acute problem had to do with managing legislation on the floor of the Senate. You know, he would--and I guess most of the legislation in the two years we're talking about had to do with foreign aid--he would be given a set speech, which he would go over fretting over the difference between "that" and "which" and such things. He didn't see too well or hear too well by this point. He'd get up in the Senate and mumble-stumble through a speech and was not very well able to respond to questions or to deal with amendments as they came up. This just sort of had to be very informally parceled out among other members of the committee, and Lyndon Johnson, who was then majority leader.

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His age caused a couple of other problems, particularly for the staff. After a closed door meeting, Green was really not up to the task of briefing the press. The staff in those days was much more reluctant to talk to the press than it is now, and yet some part of the story had to be gotten to them if the reporting was going to be accurate and not misleading and cause a lot of unnecessary confusion. The problem of arranging the committee's agenda and scheduling meetings and that kind of thing largely fell to the staff. It just got less guidance from the chairman than it was accustomed to before or since.

**RITCHIE:** I notice that the difference between hearings in 1958 and 1959 was almost two to one. There were almost twice as many hearings in '59 as there were in '58.

**HOLT:** Really?

**RITCHIE:** And I wondered if that was another reflection of Green's chairmanship?

**HOLT:** Well, it might have been. I wasn't aware of that difference.

**RITCHIE:** Can you relate the way about how they finally came to convince Green to step down as chairman?

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**HOLT:** Oh, yes. This was a brilliant example of Lyndon Johnson's talent to manage people. It began with an editorial in the Providence, Rhode Island, *Journal*, which was headed "Step Down, Senator Green," or something like that. Anyway the point was that Green had gotten too old for the job. What particular incident provoked the editorial I no longer remember, maybe it had been an accumulation of things. Green was always given to fairly blunt and forthright comments about things. He was really very liberal. He was very sympathetic to what is now known as the Third World and anti-colonialism, and nationalism and so on. For a long time he from time to time offended our friends in Europe with remarks, not to mention a lot of people in the United States. As he became older and his hearing failed he would frequently say things like this that were really *non sequiturs*. There were a number of *faux pas* of this nature in '58. Whether that is what provoked the editorial, I don't know. I suspect the editorial might really have been inspired by Carl Marcy in a conversation with one of the *Journal's* Washington correspondents. You ought to interview Marcy as part of this series and get his version of these events as well.

Anyway, Lyndon Johnson seized on the editorial to call Green and tell him how outraged Johnson was by the editorial. The burden of Johnson's message was "Gee whiz these people in Providence have no idea how much work it is to be chair-

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man of the Foreign Relations Committee and what a heavy burden you're carrying. A man who has had your distinguished record of public service really ought not to be subjected to this at your stage in life. You've earned respite and relaxation and here you are with the burdens of the world on your shoulders and these ingrates in Providence are saying you ought to quit." The point was, Green really did have a pretty crumby Job that he didn't have to do. I guess Johnson sent Bobby Baker over to make the same point to Green. Over a period of days, or a few weeks, this seed began to grow in Green's mind, and he said, "Well, maybe I don't have to be chairman. I can continue in the Senate and on the committee and let somebody else do all this dirty work.

So Johnson grabbed this before the old man could change his mind, and although he wasn't even a member of the committee he called a meeting of the committee to deal with this. Johnson presided at the damn meeting. All the committee was there, as I recall, certainly most of them. Johnson went through this spiel again, about how Theodore had come to him and asked to be relieved and Johnson had

plead with him to continue this noble work he was doing, but Theodore was adamant and Johnson had in fairness to recognize that he did deserve some relief despite the added burdens that it would throw on Johnson as Majority Leader, he would no longer have Theodore to rely on for

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foreign policy or managing legislation, but he hoped he'd still get his advice, and wisdom, and judgment. Oh God, it was pretty thick! But this was a matter Johnson thought that the committee ought to decide. He called on every member of the committee to express their views on it, and they went around the table and every member repeated one way or the other what Johnson had just said. They almost laid it on too thick, because the old man began to waiver. He was really quite touched with this display of affection and support and asked leave of the committee to retire into the inner room, over there in the Capitol, and consider the matter briefly. Well, the committee granted him leave to do this, and he got up to go, and Johnson turned around to Marcy who was sitting behind him and said in a whisper: "Go with him. Don't let him change his mind!" And Marcy went out with him, and in the inner room was Eddie Higgins, who was Green's long-time administrative assistant. Green said to Eddie: "They want me to continue as chairman, what should I do?" And Eddie said: "Don't do it Senator, don't let them talk you out of this." So he hemmed and hawed a little bit and came back and said well, he really felt he must be adamant in his desire for relief. And everybody present breathed a sigh of relief. Then the transition was delayed for three or four weeks as I recall, because Fulbright would become chair

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man of Foreign Relations, but Fulbright then was chairman of what was then called Banking and Currency. He would be succeeded at Banking and Currency by Willis Robertson of Virginia, and there was a housing bill coming along which Johnson wanted and Fulbright supported but which Robertson opposed. Johnson didn't want the change in chairmanship of Banking and Currency to occur before the housing bill was through the Senate, so that delayed it a little bit. In the process of accepting Green's resignation as chairman, the committee voted to create the office of "Chairman Emeritus" and bestow it on Green, and he reveled in this title--so much so that a couple of years later, when he left the Senate at the end of his term he used to show up unannounced for committee meetings and complain bitterly to the staff that he no longer received notices of the committee meetings, and there was a tricky period of some months before he went back to Rhode Island.

**ITCHIE:** Well, with Green's retirement as chairman, Fulbright became chairman and that started a whole new era for the committee. I think we would be best to begin our next interview with Fulbright.

[End of Interview #4]



# Pat M. Holt

Chief of Staff

Foreign Relations Committee

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## Interview #5

### Fulbright and the Bay of Pigs

(Monday, October 27, 1980)

Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

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**RITCHIE:** We left off last week with J. William Fulbright becoming chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, a major turning point in its history. Could you start by giving your opinion of Senator Fulbright, and what type of a person he was to work for in those years?

**HOLT:** Well, he was a joy to work for. As a matter of fact, when Wiley became chairman in '53 I thought about going back into journalism, I hadn't been out of it all that long at that point. But then I looked down the seniority on the Democratic side of the committee and thought if I stick around here a little bit, one of these days Fulbright will be chairman and it will be fun--and it was. I said he was a joy to work for, and that is true, but he was at the same time hard to work for in the sense that he had very high standards and a very low tolerance for mediocrity or run-of-the-mill performance, which I guess is one of the things that made it a joy, because it was a challenge. He was, most of the time, very low-keyed, not excitable, relaxed, easy-going. He is not overly endowed

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with patience and has a rather low threshold of boredom. But he didn't particularly take his frustration, his boredom, his impatience out on the staff. It was easy enough to tell when he was in a bad humor, and at those times it was prudent to postpone approaching him with something. Sometimes it couldn't be postponed. He was very open-minded, quite willing to consider almost any point of view or body of facts that concerned something which interested him. He used the staff in a way that no other chairman in my experience either before or after him did, that is, he would call one of us or more than one of us in to kick a problem around, what should be done about it and so on. Frequently he would get a variety of views or suggestions from the staff and he would then make up his mind himself. He was very open to dissent and argument. As a matter of fact, the most probing questions you would get from him was when you agreed with him. If he said, "It occurred to me this morning that such and such would be a good thing to do, what do you think of that?" And if you said, "Gee, I think that's a great idea," then he would come back at you: "Why?" You really had to have a pretty damn good case to convince him! On the other hand, if you said, "Well, I don't think that's a very good idea," he was very open to listen to why you didn't, sometimes he would abandon it and sometimes he wouldn't.



He maintained a very sharp division between his office and staff as a senator from Arkansas and the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee, although during the period of his chairmanship there were some people that moved from his personal staff to the committee staff. The committee staff as such was never involved in Arkansas or in purely domestic affairs. As a matter of fact, even before he became chairman he was talking to Carl Marcy and me one day about the situation in the Middle East and proposed an idea for action--when he had an idea about what United States policy used to be it generally found its way into a speech, sometimes into conversation with the administration or a letter, but frequently into a speech. I've forgotten the specific topic that was being considered that day, but he was saying what would you think of doing so-and-so. And Marcy and I thought it was a sensible thing to do, but Carl raised the question of what would the reaction to it be in Arkansas. And Fulbright sort of bristled and said, "You leave Arkansas to me. I will trim on domestic matters for the sake of Arkansas and my constituents, but I'll be damned if I'll trim on foreign policy." I never saw him deviate from that, except possibly in the case of the famous "chicken war" in which he raised an enormous amount of hell because of the European Economic Community's restrictions on the importation of chickens,

a large number of which are produced in Arkansas. That's a sort of a border line case. I thought I had something else in mind to say, but it escapes me.

**RITCHIE:** During the period we've been talking about, the 1950's, Fulbright became increasingly the most critical member of the committee toward the Eisenhower administration. In some respects the breakdown of the old bipartisan spirit of the committee towards the administration seemed to begin with his speeches about Suez and the Eisenhower Doctrine. He seemed very skeptical about Eisenhower and Dulles. Did you have any sense of that evolving in those days, and why he of all the senators seemed to be looking for a more independent role for the committee from the administration?

**HOLT:** No, I don't really. It was quite in character for him, and it reflected the evolution of his own thinking about things. He was very independent intellectually, politically, so far as foreign policy was concerned. I'm not quite sure if the way you put it is entirely accurate. Wayne Morse much more than Fulbright made a career out of disagreeing on policy matters and started it long before Fulbright, as a matter of fact. I've forgotten when Morse came on the Foreign Relations Committee.

**RITCHIE:** It seems to me it was when he became a Democrat in 1955, wasn't it?

**HOLT:** I don't know, there was some delay because of his progression from Republican to Independent to Democrat. Morse maintained that Vandenberg had promised him the next Republican seat on the committee, and then when one developed the Republicans wouldn't give it to him. When he finally did come on it was as a Democrat, but before he was on Foreign Relations he was on Armed Services and those two committees were doing a lot of things jointly in those days. So Morse made his presence felt.

**RITCHIE:** When Fulbright became chairman, did the committee change? Did the way it did its work change? And was the atmosphere different on the committee?

**HOLT:** Well, it didn't change in any fundamental sense. The atmospheric, so to speak, changed in that in contrast to the Green period of something approaching a vacuum in the chairmanship the vacuum was filled, and there was a sense of direction, and things went more smoothly, and the press was enlightened instead of confused when it was briefed after committee meetings, and things like that. It was just a smoother operation.

But the fundamental approach of the committee, the issues or the way it operated or so on, didn't change. As a matter of fact, it reverted to what it had been under George, who preceded Green.

**RITCHIE:** One remarkable thing about that whole period, I think, is that the staff basically stayed the same. After Francis Wilcox went to the State Department Carl Marcy became chief of staff, and you have all those changes in chairmen throughout the '50's until Fulbright became chairman, and yet there was very little shakeup in the staff.

**HOLT:** That's right.

**RITCHIE:** How do you account for that? Nowadays there are much more dramatic shakeups than that.

**HOLT:** Oh, goodness, yes. Well, staffs are much bigger now. Well, the Foreign Relations Committee had a tradition, not a very long one as Senate traditions go, but beginning with the effective date of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, it was effective in January of '47 with the beginning of the 80th Congress, primarily because of Vandenberg but also because most if not all of the rest of the committee agreed with Vandenberg on this point. This was stated explicitly in

the committee rules, which adopted the point of view that we're going to take seriously the provisions of the Reorganization Act about professional career committee staffs. And they did.

**RITCHIE:** You do have a strong line of southern chairmen, with the exception of Wiley and Green. I wondered if that perhaps might have had some effect. Was there any affinity there that might have helped staff continuity?

**HOLT:** No, I don't think so. I think I'd quarrel a little bit with your description of a "strong line" of southern chairmen. The southern chairmen you had were strong characters. But you only had two of them for a period--let's see, Connally after 1947 was chairman for four years and George for two. You had Vandenberg for two years and Wiley for two and Green for two, so it's six and six. Well, of course, Fulbright was a southerner, and when you get to his era you had a strong line of southern chairmen if you take the whole period from '47 until now. No, I don't think that had anything to do with it. There's sort of a popular image that southerners may be a little bit more addicted to patronage than northerners, but I don't think there's much hard evidence to support it.

**RITCHIE:** Where was Carl Marcy from? He came to the committee from . . .

**HOLT:** From the State Department.

**RITCHIE:** He was your colleague for many years. What was his role on the committee and how did you function with him?

**HOLT:** Very well. Of course he was chief of staff from '55 to '73 and his function was to run the staff, which he did very well. The staff in those days was not very formally structured. All the professionals were given the title "consultant," which I didn't like very much because I thought it was misleading. They eventually got away from that and started calling them something else, but that's the way it was for along time. There was nobody designated as deputy or number two to Marcy, but in fact I performed that function, acting as chief of staff during his absences and that sort of thing. Carl and I got along very well indeed. We have mutual respect for each other. We don't and we didn't always agree on everything, but who does? We communicated to a large degree by a process of osmosis. This particularly was true after most of the staff moved into the Dirksen Building and we were not in that cozy arrangement in the Capitol where we saw each other fifty times a day. But I guess as a result of long experience

and close association with each other, with respect to any particular situation each of us could sense what the other one was thinking about it, or what approach the other one would take, without having a conversation about it. We used to go for days at a time without any contact with each other.

**RITCHIE:** Did you work mostly in the Dirksen Building and he in the Capitol?

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** That was after 1958.

**HOLT:** When we moved into the Dirksen Building. I was one of those who moved. I guess maybe a part of the deal to get office space in the Dirksen Building was to give up a couple of rooms we had in the Capitol, one of which I had been located in, so I had to move. But I was glad to do it. To revert a moment to Green, the question of moving to the Dirksen Building came up while Green was chairman and Green resisted it. The original idea was to move everything to the Dirksen Building, and Green didn't like that. He was comfortable with that old place in the Capitol and he wanted to stay there. He had no notion what soever of the crowded conditions under which the staff had to work.

There was resistance in the committee generally to the notion of giving up all of its space in the Capitol. They wanted to hold onto S-116 and S-117 and eventually that's the way it worked out. But it took a great deal of persuasion of Green to get us any space at all in the Dirksen Building. Morse was very helpful on that. At some point in Morse's education before he went into law he had studied a lot of psychology and he applied it very well in persuading people to do things without arguing with them. It was sort of ironic, because Morse was so argumentative about damn near everything, but when he wanted somebody to do something, as for example Green to agree to move to the Dirksen Building, he was very clever and skillful. But that's a digression, where were we?

**RITCHIE:** The move to the new building also gave you capabilities of having many more public meetings . . .

**HOLT:** Sure.

**RITCHIE:** More television and radio broadcasting than before. I guess you had to move to the Caucus Room for your public hearings.

**HOLT:** That's right.

**RITCHIE:** But that wasn't particularly a concern of Green's?

**HOLT:** Well, Green just wanted to keep on doing things the way they had been done!

**RITCHIE:** The other members of the committee of that time included Mansfield and Humphrey, who both became the Democratic leader and whip in 1961, and Kennedy and Humphrey who were running for president. Did presidential politics ever intrude into the committee or get in the way of the committee's work in that period from '59 to '60?

**HOLT:** Well, the most striking intrusion that I recall is that it became damn near impossible to get a quorum because so many members of the committee were out campaigning. This is a recurring problem around the Senate in election years anyway, presidential politics aside from it, because senators concerned about their own races for reelection as senators aren't around very much. But particularly beginning in the late '50's presidential politics had intruded on it as well. You know, there have been years when three or four members of the Foreign Relations Committee were running for president.

**RITCHIE:** John Kennedy was on the committee from '57 to '60, and you worked with him on a couple of occasions. What was your impression of him as a senator and as a member of the committee?

**HOLT:** Damn good. One of the brightest guys I've ever known, as a matter of fact. He could grasp a complicated thing very quickly, ask very penetrating questions. If you were going to brief him you'd damn well better do your homework. And he was very courageous in a political sense. The first thing I recall that really struck me about Kennedy was before he came on the committee, after he came to the Senate, during the debate over the St. Lawrence Seaway legislation, on which I did the staff work for the Foreign Relations Committee. Kennedy made a very well reasoned speech in favor of the seaway, which coming from a Massachusetts senator with the port of Boston strongly opposed to it was unprecedented and close to earth shattering. After he was on the committee he was a member of the subcommittee on Latin America at the time that the subcommittee under Morse's chairmanship began the study of United States Latin American relations, following the Nixon trip in '58. I was in charge of the study and I outlined it and sent copies around to the members of the subcommittee and they had a meeting over there one afternoon to consider

this outline. Kennedy said, "I want to know what John Kenneth Galbraith thinks about this, he was in Latin America not long ago." So at his direction I called Galbraith and made an appointment and flew up to Boston one morning and spent the afternoon with Galbraith and then flew back to Washington and reported to Kennedy that Galbraith thinks this is fine, he had one or two other suggestions about people who should be brought in on it, and Kennedy said okay. He liked to search out for other opinions and it didn't really matter to him how much trouble it was on somebody's part to get them. I thought it was pretty *avant garde* to go to Boston and back in one day for maybe an hour's conversation with somebody, well hell around this period somebody on Kennedy's personal staff had done a speech for him on foreign policy and Kennedy said to him, "See what Walt Rostow thinks about it." Well, it turned out that Rostow was spending a year at Oxford in England, so one of Kennedy's guys got on an airplane and flew to England and discussed this thing with Rostow and came back!

The last two years that Kennedy was on the committee we didn't see a hell of a lot of him, you know he had other things on his mind. He was not the most faithful member of the committee in attendance, but when he was there he made a contribution.

**RITCHIE:** Did you have any sense of what the relationship between Kennedy and Fulbright was at that time? Did they work together well or were they relatively independent of each other?

**HOLT:** I don't have any particular or very good sense of that. My impression is that they did not particularly work together. One reason being that Kennedy wasn't there all that much. Fulbright constantly complained as chairman about the difficulty of getting members to come to committee meetings. He used to growl at the staff: "Get so and so, call so and so and get him over here."

Particularly junior members, of whom Kennedy was one. He used to have us chasing Kennedy to get him to a committee meeting, with no success or even much hope of any success. And he would growl about Kennedy's absenteeism, and others too for that matter, but I remember Kennedy particularly. Fulbright supported Johnson for the Democratic nomination in 1960. I don't know, I don't recall that he made much of a public display about this, but it wasn't any secret. At one point during the spring, I guess, Harry Truman happened to be in town for something or other and Fulbright had an off-the-record appointment with Truman in an effort to persuade him to support Johnson. But after the convention Fulbright was very

happy with the ticket, he was very happy about Kennedy's election. Kennedy wanted Fulbright to become Secretary of State, and there's a great deal of public misunderstanding about why Fulbright did not become Secretary of State. The popular story, which is embedded in the literature somewhere I guess, is that after considering the appointment of Fulbright Kennedy backed away from it because of Fulbright's southern connections and record on civil rights and so on. One version has it that Bobby Kennedy in effect vetoed Fulbright, or talked his brother out of it. What consideration the Kennedy brothers gave to that aspect of the thing I don't know, but I do know Fulbright's thinking.

Along about December 1960, there was a lot of speculation about Fulbright becoming Secretary of State, which scared Fulbright to death because he didn't really want to be Secretary of State and he didn't want to have to say no if Kennedy asked him. Fulbright somehow or another became aware of the fact that Senator Russell was going to see Kennedy about an unrelated matter at some point, and called Russell and said, "I hope you can convince Kennedy that I ought not to be Secretary of State." And Russell said, "I will try to do no such thing. I think you would be great as Secretary of State." And Fulbright said, "Dick, for God's sake, I don't want to be Secretary of State! I don't want him to ask me to be! And I can be a whole lot

more help to him in the Senate as chairman of this committee than I can as Secretary of State. And furthermore, if I resign from the Senate my successor as the Senator from Arkansas is most likely to be Orville Faubus, and Kennedy doesn't want *him* in the Senate." And Dick Russell said, "Oh, well, on that basis I'll talk to the president-elect." So he did, and Lyndon Johnson was very unhappy about this because Lyndon, in his version of it anyway, had been instrumental in promoting Fulbright with Kennedy to begin with. Johnson afterwards said to Carl Marcy that he, Johnson, had it all set for Fulbright to become Secretary of State and Fulbright queered the deal.

But after Kennedy became president the relations with Fulbright were really pretty close. Kennedy used to send Fulbright particular pieces of foreign service reporting that had intrigued Kennedy, some of them quite sensitive. It's ironic given the long history of any president resisting efforts on the part of the Senate to have access to stuff like this that here was a president on his own initiative passing them on to the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. Fulbright never shared them very widely; I'm sure he got a bunch that I don't even know about. I do know about some of them.

**RITCHIE:** Very early in the Kennedy administration, Kennedy let Fulbright know about the plans

for the Bay of Pigs invasion, and from what I understand you got involved in that story through the writing of a memorandum. Could you give me the background on that?

**HOLT:** Yes. I don't know at what point Kennedy "let Fulbright know about this," as you put it. But beginning during the winter of 1960-61, I started to pick up little straws in the wind from around town and from people I talked to that something of this nature was a foot. Nobody ever briefed me on it or told me about it, but I had been around long enough to put a couple of straws in the wind together. As a matter of fact, on supposition and intuition, I constructed what I thought was a likely scenario, which turned out to be pretty damn close to the plan they actually had in mind. This disturbed me a good deal and I didn't quite know what the hell to do about it. I thought about going to Morse, and while I was thinking whether I ought to or not, simply by coincidence one day after a committee meeting, Fulbright was just sitting around the committee room as he frequently did talking to the staff, me, and I guess Marcy was there, and it was a natural thing to bring this up. I said, "Senator, I get the indication that this and this is in process and it bothers me because I don't think it will work and I don't think we ought to try it if it would work." He said, "I agree with you. I think that's what they've got in mind."

I don't know whether he had had prior knowledge or whether he was intuitive like I was.

So we kicked this around for a while as to what to do about it and what we decided was that I should prepare a memorandum which Fulbright could give to Kennedy. We felt some urgency about this, so I did it that afternoon and that night. I think I worked on the damn thing until about eleven o'clock that night, and got it typed the next morning, and Fulbright mulled over it some, and talked about it some more and changed it a little bit. By this point, I guess, we were getting close to Easter, which came in March that year. By coincidence, Kennedy had learned that the Fulbrights were going to Florida during the Easter recess of the Senate to see one of Mrs. Fulbright's cousins, or some relative like that. Kennedy was also going to spend Easter at Palm Beach, and he invited the Fulbrights to go with him on Air Force One, which they did. During the trip Fulbright just gave him the memorandum and said, "Here's something I hope you'll read and think about." Kennedy read it on the spot and at the time made no particular comment. All of this I'm saying now I was told later by Fulbright. On the return from Florida, on the plane Kennedy said to Fulbright, "We're having a meeting as soon as I get back about Cuba, and I hope you can come to it with me." So Fulbright did. Big meeting over in the State Department. It was the meeting at which



the go/no go decision was supposed to be made. Everybody there, the Joint Chiefs, Allen Dulles, the CIA, Rusk and so on were saying "go." Fulbright was the only guy who said "don't go." Kennedy said, "Well, let's sleep on it." So they didn't make the decision.

Fulbright and Hickenlooper--who so far as I know didn't know anything about any of this--and I then went off to Rio de Janeiro with Douglas Dillon, who was then Secretary of the Treasury, to a meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank. While we were in Rio, Kennedy told a press conference that American forces would not involve themselves in any operation in Cuba, and Fulbright and I thought that meant that he had decided against the damn operation. On our way back from Rio we over-nighted at Ramey Air Force Base in Puerto Rico and the next morning got the word--this was a Sunday, I think--that Cuban exiles had bombed Havana, and we thought, "Oh, hell, we misread what Kennedy said to the press." Then the next day there was the Bay of Pigs invasion and it all began to come out in the wash. Kennedy later said to Fulbright, "You're the only guy in town who can say I told you so." Fulbright refrained from saying I told you so. He did preside over a thoroughly extensive series of hearings, post-mortem on the thing, which as you move into Publishing the executive transcripts from the '60's I hope

you can jar loose. It really didn't consist of much more than rehashing all the bad advice the Kennedy had received, but it was an interesting exercise. It's interesting on that point, after the failure of the Bay of Pigs the Foreign Relations Committee was hell bent to investigate it, which they did. Eighteen months later, after the success of the Missile Crisis, Dean Rusk practically begged the committee to investigate it, offered to make the total executive branch records available. The committee didn't have the slightest interest in it, which I thought at the time was missing a great opportunity, but I think it proves the point that Congress is more interested in picking over the corpse of a failure than in studying the anatomy of a success.

**RITCHIE:** I think it's very impressive that you and Fulbright came to a conclusion that was against the consensus of the rest of the government, but wound up basically being the most accurate view of what was going on. How did you come to that analysis of the Cuban situation?

**HOLT:** Well, it's pretty well set forth in that memorandum which I wrote, which Fulbright gave to Kennedy. The text of the memo, or most of it, has since been published in two or three places. There were three chains of reasoning in it. One of them was that

the prospects of success for this--we proceeded on the basis in this memo, since we really didn't know what the hell they had in mind, we approached it from the point of view of what ought to be done about Cuba, what American policy towards Cuba ought to be. One of the options available for American policy was to try to overthrow Castro, and how might this be done? Well, it might be done through the landing of a group of exiles who would establish a beachhead and then form a government which the United States would recognize and respond to appeals for help. If this happened it would succeed in overthrowing Castro only at the cost of massive and pervasive American entanglement in Cuba, the end of which could not be foreseen. Then the argument was made that even if we thought it would work, we ought not to do it because it violated a number of treaties to which the United States was a party. Indeed, to the degree that these Cuban exiles came from the United States or were supported in exile by the United States, it violated domestic laws of the United States. The point was made that one of the things which distinguished us from the Soviet Union was respect for law and by God we ought to respect it. And then, finally, the argument was made that the threat to United States interests posed by Cuba was not great enough to warrant this kind of effort, in any event. The phrase, which has frequently been quoted, we used was that Cuba is a thorn in the flesh, it's not a dagger in the heart.

**RITCHIE:** Do you think that this opinion evolved from your travels through Latin America in the 1950's, and the meeting you attended with Castro and the Foreign Relations Committee in 1959? Was it something you were arriving at over the years?

**HOLT:** Well, I guess so.

**RITCHIE:** I find it interesting, because your opinion was out of step with what was the prevailing atmosphere in both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations in 1959, '60, and '61.

**HOLT:** Yes, you know the Eisenhower administration in its last days, early in January of '61, severed diplomatic relations with Cuba in response to a Cuban action which limited to ten or eleven, or some small number, the number of people which they would allow us to have in our embassy in Havana. The Eisenhower administration, mainly Tom Mann, said, "Well, hell it takes more gardeners than that. If we can't have any more than that we won't have anybody." I have since suspected that that might have been more pretext than reason, that what they were doing was preparing for the situation which would result from the Bay of Pigs, when they didn't want to be responding to the pleas for help from a provisional government on a beachhead at the same time

we had diplomatic relations with the other one. But, you know, taking the pretext as the real reason I thought at the time, before I got very much involved in the Bay of Pigs, I thought that this was a bad idea. I was not under any illusions about the possibilities of working with the Castro government, or what a handful of diplomats might be able to do, but I thought--and I still do--as a matter of principle that you have some kind of diplomatic relations with any body that has a legitimate government. At least maintain the possibility of talking to them if they have anything they want to talk about. I thought that about Peking too, long before it was the conventional wisdom around here!

**RITCHIE:** The Kennedy administration did come forth with probably the sharpest break in United States-Latin American relations for a long time with the Alliance for Progress, a more positive response to Latin America. Were you involved at all in the early planning of that? And what was the role of the Foreign Relations Committee in the establishment of the Alliance for Progress?

**HOLT:** Well, indirect, in the sense that I'm not aware of any committee involvement in the period immediately preceding the Kennedy announcement of the Alliance, but there is a history to this. The

Kennedy Alliance for Progress was not all that sharp a break with the immediate past. American policy towards Latin America had begun to change about in 1957 or '58, as a result of a number of factors, one of which was sort of unfocused pressure from the Hill and particularly the Foreign Relations Committee. Morse, Aiken, Hickenlooper, to some extent, and there were people in the executive branch who were sort of pushing the Eisenhower administration the same way. Tom Mann was one, Douglas Dillon was another. Milton Eisenhower thought so--he might have been the most influential of the lot, I don't know. Anyway, in the summer of 1960 President Eisenhower issued a statement of policy about Latin America which was really a forerunner of the Kennedy Alliance for Progress speech the following March. The Eisenhower statement laid the basis for United States participation in the Bogota Conference of September 1960, which produced the Act of Bogota, which was the forerunner of the charter of Punta del Este, which formalized the Alliance for Progress in Uruguay a year later. In all of this ferment and change in the last couple of years of the Eisenhower administration the Foreign Relations Committee, and particularly Morse's subcommittee on Latin America, was a pretty heavily involved. Morse and Hickenlooper and I went to the Bogota Conference in September of '60, for example. Also, Kennedy had been a member of the Morse subcommittee and

had contributed to shaping the study that subcommittee made of Latin America following the Nixon trip in 1958.

**RITCHIE:** So the groundwork was all laid before the Kennedy administration made their announcement.

**HOLT:** Right.

**RITCHIE:** The other major Latin American event of the Kennedy administration was the Missile Crisis of 1962. By this time, presumably, Kennedy was taking Fulbright's advice a little more seriously than he had at the Bay of Pigs. Did you get involved in the crisis atmosphere of 1962?

**HOLT:** No. As a matter of fact, at the time the Missile Crisis broke I was in Rio on my way to a meeting of the Interparliamentary Union in Brasilia, with a sizeable delegation of senators. We proceeded to Brasilia according to plan the next morning, and by the time we left Brasilia the damn crisis was over! So all I know about the Missile Crisis comes from what I've read in books. It's been extensively studied. And a couple of things that Fulbright said. The Congress, as a matter of fact, had practically no role in the Missile Crisis. It wasn't in session at the time it broke. Kennedy sent the Air Force flying around the country to bring a number of

them back the day of the evening when he made his speech. You know, the advice he got from Fulbright on that occasion he didn't take either, but in retrospect it seems like pretty bad advice.

**RITCHIE:** Fulbright was in favor of an air strike, wasn't he?

**HOLT:** Fulbright and Russell were both in favor of air strikes. Fulbright thought--I think "surgical air strikes" was the term the Air Force favored, sort of like you cut out a cancer or something--Fulbright's reasoning was that this would be less provocative than interfering with freedom of the seas and possibly boarding Soviet ships and all that kind of thing. I think the lesson to be drawn from the Missile Crisis, so far as Congressional involvement in matters of this kind is concerned, is that Congress, in a crisis situation of that kind, really cannot make a very constructive or considered contribution unless it has been involved in the process that leads to the decision. This means unless it is totally informed. You know, here were these ten or twenty or whatever number members of Congress who were confronted with the problem by Kennedy at five o'clock in the afternoon and in thirty minutes were supposed to react to it. Well, you just don't react very sensibly in that kind of thing. In Theodore Sorensen's book on Kennedy he quotes the president

as saying after this conference, "If they," meaning members of Congress, "had been through what we've been through for the last week they would have come out at the same place." The whole point is that they had not been through it.

**RITCHIE:** Would you say in general that the Kennedy administration was more open with the Congress and the Foreign Relations Committee in particular than the Eisenhower administration had been? You gave the example of Kennedy turning over documents to Fulbright, but was that institutional or was the just the relationship between the president and the chairman?

**HOLT:** So far as I know that was because of the personal relationship between Kennedy and Fulbright. Now, I don't know who else on the Hill that Kennedy might have been sending these little things to. I'm not aware of anybody, but that doesn't mean he wasn't doing it. No, it was not institutional. I don't off-hand think of an instance in which the committee had a major quarrel with the Kennedy administration over access to information. I'm inclined to attribute that more to the fact that the Kennedy administration only lasted two and a half years or a little bit more, almost three years, than to the fact that it was inherently more open and forthcoming. If it had endured as long as the Eisenhower administration,

I'm sure there would probably have been some point when this would have happened. It happened with Eisenhower, but on the other hand the Eisenhower administration on occasion was quite forthcoming. You know, I mentioned earlier those several file drawers of stuff they gave us on the Middle East. I think there is an axiom about any administration. It's forthcoming when it thinks that will help its case, and it's resistant when it doesn't think so.

**RITCHIE:** What were the relations of Dean Rusk to the committee, as Secretary of State? In those years before Vietnam.

**HOLT:** Well I was about to say, Rusk's relations with the committee followed a constant downward trend! They started off quite good, as a matter of fact. Rusk was known to the committee and the staff from his earlier service in the State Department, and while he was president of the Rockefeller Foundation the committee had called on him for advice from time to time. So it started off quite good. I went to the Punta del Este conference in January or February of '62, the one that excluded Cuba from the OAS. Morse and Hickenlooper were there. Rusk himself was there. We had a very good relationship with him and with the State Department people generally at that conference. They included us in everything, which is not always the case when you go to a conference like that.

I guess, well things started to go downhill really with the intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, although that did not involve Rusk very much. It involved the president more than Rusk. That's another set of transcripts I hope you can break loose when you reach that point. Rusk's problems with the committee, or the committee's problems with Rusk really are due almost entirely to Vietnam.

**RITCHIE:** The last major foreign policy action of the Kennedy administration is the one that gets it probably the best credit in the textbooks, and that was the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1963. I know that for years the Foreign Relations Committee had been investigating nuclear disarmament. Hubert Humphrey had a subcommittee that he was constantly managing to continue despite some hesitation from the rest of the committee.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** Were you involved in any way in the disarmament issue and the plans for the Test Ban Treaty?

**HOLT:** Not directly, no. I was present at a lot of committee meetings when these things were discussed, and so on, but I did not particularly get involved in the substance of what was going on.

**RITCHIE:** Fulbright acted as sort of the point man for the administration on the treaty. He led the fight on the Senate floor.

**HOLT:** Yes, as a matter of fact he and Aiken and I don't know who else went to Moscow for the signing of the damn thing. That was a purely ceremonial occasion, but it's illustrative of Kennedy's efforts to involve the Senate in the process, to get their pictures in the papers with him and Khrushchev and so on.

**RITCHIE:** Were they involved in it before the ceremonies, or was it basically window dressing?

**HOLT:** Well, again with the caveat that I wasn't too closely involved with this myself so there might have been something going on that I was not, am not, aware of, it's my impression that they didn't have much to do with it. Of course, there's a long history of arms control negotiations of one kind or another, and a long history of Senate interest in it, going back to the Humphrey subcommittee that you talked about. And there's a long history of individual senators dropping in on negotiating conferences, and that kind of thing. But the Test Ban Treaty fell

in place pretty damn quickly, as a matter of fact, during the summer of 1963. It all came together

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really over a period of about two months or so, and I do not have any recollection that the committee was very much involved in that particular process.

**RITCHIE:** By the end of that year the Kennedy administration was abruptly terminated and we move into the Johnson years. Do you sense that in the long run there was continuity between the Kennedy administration and the Johnson administration, or a real deviation? In other words, do you think that the way things were going under Kennedy, particularly in foreign policy and his relations with the committee, that things would have developed the same way if Kennedy had remained as president, or was it your sense that things began to change?

**HOLT:** Well, over the long term, who the hell knows? I certainly don't. Over the short term there wasn't all that much change, I don't think. As a matter of fact, one of Johnson's first efforts was to provide some continuity. In the first weeks, months even, particularly the first weeks of the Johnson administration he was on the phone to senators constantly, with a variety of things on his mind. I think a part of it was to protect or strengthen his political base in the Senate. Part of it, I guess, was a sort of natural wanting to talk to the people he knew best in Washington out-

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side of his immediate staff and associates, because he had played the Senate like a violin for so damn long. The Fulbrights and the Johnsons in this period were quite close. Betty Fulbright did the president's Christmas shopping for Lady Bird and Lynda and Luci that year. And Dick Russell was another one who got a lot of these phone calls, some of them at very odd hours of the night. Fulbright complained once that the president called him at eleven o'clock at night or something and he said, "Geez, he just won't hang up, and you can't hang up on him!

"But the first real problem of foreign policy that the Johnson administration faced, as I recall it, was the riots in Panama, which broke out on January the 8th or 9th in 1964. The committee and other interested senators were briefed on that while it was happening. They had a good many discussions with Tom Mann about policy toward Panama. Fulbright had a lot of conversations with the president about it, so did Mansfield. Mansfield and Fulbright both, and so far as I know independently, were urging upon the president a more forthcoming policy, looking toward renegotiation of the 1903 treaty. In the aftermath of the riots, Panama broke diplomatic relations with the United States. So then the problem became one of getting these relations reestablished. The Panamanians made renegotiation of the 1903 treaty a condition for this.

There were long negotiations about what to negotiate about, and at one point they got hung up over the use of the words "discutir" and "negociar" in the Spanish text of the communique. "Discutir" meaning to discuss, and "negociar" meaning to negotiate. Johnson really got stubborn as hell about this and insisted that he would talk about anything but he didn't want to nail down commitment to negotiate. Well, a lot of people, including Fulbright, thought that this was a semantic quibble which was not worth holding up international diplomacy for. Adlai Stevenson thought the same thing. He and Fulbright talked about this. Fulbright brought Stevenson to see me to talk about it. Fulbright and Mansfield were saying to the president or to anybody else who'd listen to them, "Don't be so unbending on this point." I don't recall that the committee as a committee did very much about it. But of course Johnson was under contrary advice from other senators. During the riots Russell even suggested, during one of the briefings that we had, that the Air Force should bomb Panama, or strafe the mobs, or something. Anyway, he wanted to use more force than they were doing, and Russell carried a lot of weight with Johnson.

**RITCHIE:** Well, now as we begin to move into the Johnson years and the issues begin somewhat to change, I think we should look forward to that in another session.

[End of Interview #5]



**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Interview #6**  
**The Dominican Republic and Gulf of Tonkin Affairs**  
(Monday, November 10, 1980)  
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

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**RITCHIE:** We were talking last week about the Kennedy administration and the beginning of the Johnson administration, and one name that has come up in several of our discussions is Thomas Mann from the State Department, who served in the Eisenhower and Johnson administrations as assistant secretary for Latin American Affairs. I wonder if you could specifically give me an assessment of him, what his role was, and what your relationship was?

**HOLT:** Well, I've known Tom Mann for a long time. I've forgotten when I first met him but I guess it was some time in the '50's. Career professional Foreign Service Officer, very professional. One of the Foreign Service's stars, so far as Latin America is concerned; one of the people who contributed to turning around the Eisenhower administration with respect to it; Jim and basically a rather perceptive observer of Latin American trends. He was assistant secretary for Economic Affairs, I guess, before he was assistant secretary for

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Latin America. He changed I think in 1960. With the Kennedy election, Herter was Secretary of State then, Kennedy appointed Mann as Ambassador to Mexico on the strong recommendation of Herter and maybe Eisenhower. Mann did not like the plans for the Bay of Pigs worth a damn, although he went along with them. After the thing occurred, Mann sort of shrugged and said to me, "Well, I voted for it." But I gather without a hell of a lot of enthusiasm. Mann now says that he went to Rusk before the Bay of Pigs and said, "I want out of this thing," but he was still assistant secretary at the time the thing was pulled off. He went to Mexico shortly thereafter.

He was brought back from Mexico to be assistant secretary again by Johnson, very soon after the Kennedy assassination. He was Johnson's guy with respect to Latin America. He had direct access to the president. The president made it known far and wide that when Mann said something it was the president talking, and he didn't want Mann taking any guff from the rest of the bureaucracy. And Mann made it work. United States policy with respect to Latin America has traditionally suffered, and still does, from the variety of agencies and departments who have a finger in the pie and who are usually squabbling with each other, and are not very well coordinated. Mann is one of the two assistant

Secretaries in my experience who was able to bring this under control – the other being

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Ed Martin, who was there during the Kennedy administration and who did it mainly because of the force of his personality and his skill at bureaucratic infighting. Mann had those attributes as well, plus the strong support of the president.

As a matter of fact, when Mann made the move from Mexico back to Washington, there was talk in the White House and around about up-grading the position of assistant secretary to Latin American under secretary, to give it more bureaucratic clout. Johnson never proposed that, although he toyed with the notion for a while. I think one reason he did not propose it was perhaps some advice he got from the Hill not to, it was not a popular idea up here, although later on at the behest of George Aiken the Senate did provide by law for that to happen, it failed in conference. The first thing Mann had to deal with, really, was the Panama riots in January 1964, he had not been on the job for very long at that point. He saw early on that the basis for United States-Panamanian relations had to be changed from the 1903 treaty, and was instrumental in moving Johnson to agree to the negotiations which began in the spring of '64.

In coming back to the State Department from Mexico, Mann was insistent on having the authority to run the shop, and one of the things he wanted, or that Johnson wanted to give him, was a letter from Johnson to Mann

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containing really a sort of job description with the authority to go with it. One Sunday afternoon, I guess this was just before Christmas in '63, Johnson phoned me at home and said that he had been talking to Fulbright and that Fulbright said I had some good ideas about it, and would I draft a letter that Johnson could send to Mann describing this, and then he went on at some length about what ought to be in the letter. As was typical of Johnson he wanted it fifteen minutes ago. He asked me to phone back and dictate it to somebody at the Whit House, and also to call Mann at Mann's hotel and talk to him about it. So I did this. I read my draft to Mann, Mann read his draft to me, they weren't all that different. As was typical of Johnson when he wanted something like this, or a speech, he would ask a number of people to do the same thing and then he or George Reedy would take scissors and paste and put the damn thing together, using the parts of each that appealed to him the most – that's what happened in this case.

At some point in early '65, I guess, Mann moved from being assistant secretary for Latin America to being under secretary for Economic Affairs at the State Department, but he continued to be the fellow that Johnson talked to the most about Latin America, and when the Dominican Republic crisis

developed in late April of '65, Mann was the guy in the State Department who dealt with it most, although United

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States policy in that crisis was really run out of the White House. It was really run by Lyndon Johnson, who in effect acted as the Dominican Republic desk officer for about three months. I was in Asuncion, Paraguay, of all places, attending a meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank when the Dominican revolution, which led to United States intervention, erupted. I read the Paraguayan press with growing incredulity as these events unfolded. After the Inter-American Bank meeting I went to Argentina for about a week. So it was a couple of weeks or so in to the Dominican situation before I got back to Washington. My impression is that in the beginning of that crisis there were no real consultations between the Executive Branch and the Senate. Some things were done to keep the Foreign Relations Committee informed. Mann came up two or three times, there were leadership meetings in the White House, that kind of thing. But I am not aware of any senatorial input into, or dissent from, the policy that was followed. However, as events unfolded there seemed to develop a discrepancy between what the Johnson administration was saying about the situation and what the press was reporting from the Dominican Republic.

Towards the end of May, I guess, at one of the meetings of the committee when Mann came up to inform them, he encountered some skepticism and reacted to this by saying, "If you knew what we know you wouldn't have

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any doubts about the correctness of the policy we're following." And he was a little taken aback when the committee, I've forgotten which senator it was, said to him, "Well, why don't you tell us what you know?" He said, I'd like to do that, but I've got to check it out." Well, he went back and checked it out, I guess with McGeorge Bundy, maybe with the president himself, and came back or called up and said, "Okay." I went down to his office, they gave me a little room with a filing cabinet in his suite as under secretary, and I spent about two or three weeks reading a file drawer or two of reporting from Santo Domingo. That was the first time I ever saw raw CIA reports – I guess also the last!

I read through this and concluded that sure enough the way the situation had been presented by the Johnson administration really did not jive with the reports that the administration was getting from State and CIA, and reported this back to Fulbright. I wrote a long memorandum about it, which served as the basis for extensive hearings by the committee that were scattered out over a period of about six weeks. Different members of the committee came to different conclusions as a consequence of these

hearings and there was never a committee report. It seemed the committee was so damned split about it that no meaningful report would have been possible. Fulbright pondered the situation for a while and

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asked the staff to draft a speech about it. This, I guess, was by early August, and I was going off on vacation. Seth Tillman drafted the speech, drawing heavily on the memorandum I had written which started the whole thing. He sent it to me while I was on vacation. Fulbright made one important change, which placed the responsibility for what he perceived to be the misguided American policy on Johnson's advisors rather than the president himself. Seth and I argued with him about this because it was perfectly clear that Johnson was the guy who was calling the shots on this. In any event, Johnson was the guy who in our system was responsible for it, whether he was calling the shots or not! I remember making the point that one of John Kennedy's finest hours was when he took responsibility for the Bay of Pigs.

Fulbright was thinking in terms of his own relationship with Johnson and his ability to continue to have some influence there, and thought that he would weaken this relationship with Johnson less if he did not put the responsibility directly on the president. Well, that was a vain thought as it turned out, but anyway that was his rationale for doing it. He agonized over whether to do anything for quite a while. I don't know what eventually influenced him to go ahead. He got conflicting advice from the staff. I said I thought it would be useful for the American pos-

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ition in the rest of Latin America to have an indication that the United States Government was not totally monolithic about this thing, and to let the liberals in Latin America know that there was at least somebody reasonably high up in the government who disapproved of it. I think that argument appealed to Fulbright. Anyway, when he finally decided to go ahead with the thing, I was back from vacation, we were into late August or early September, and an interim president was about to be inaugurated in the Dominican Republic, a step which was expected to lead to the beginning of the withdrawal of the force that was there. Fulbright didn't want to do anything to rock that particular boat, so he said, "Well, we'll wait until after this event and then do it."

Once he decided to go ahead, he went over that speech with a fine-tooth comb and in effect said to the staff, "I don't want to hear any more argument about whether to do it, I just want to be sure that it is factually accurate." I remember a long session in his office one afternoon in which he was going over it for about the last time and the point he kept harping on with respect to almost every sentence in it was: "is this so? Is it the truth? Can it be documented and supported?" And we said, "yea, it is." "Well, that's all I care about," he said. He

sent a copy of it to Johnson in advance with a letter saying, all want you to know this is what I'm going to say in the

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Senate this afternoon," or tomorrow, or whatever. "It pains me to do this. I'm doing it in the spirit of being helpful to you in case things like this arise in the future (this is a paraphrase--not a direct quote). The tone of the thing was more in sorrow than in anger, and his-hurts-me-more-than-it-does-you, and so on. Well, it was not received in that spirit in the White House! Indeed, rather than using it as Fulbright had hoped as a means of learning from past mistakes, and so on, Johnson inspired some of his friends in the Senate to be prepared to respond to it and to give Fulbright hell when he made it, and this happened. It had the reaction I had foreseen in Latin America. Eduardo Frei was then President of Chile and the morning after the speech there arrived to Fulbright a telegram from Frei congratulating him on it. The Peruvian Congress--they had one then--passed a resolution commending Fulbright, and various things like this happened, which were very encouraging to Fulbright, but really sort of increased the irritation of the administration. This sort of soured my relationship with Mann for a considerable time. We're still cordial with each other, as a matter of fact I had a very pleasant lunch with him in Austin last spring (he's living in retirement down there now). But we never quite got back to the intimacies which we had had before. Mann continued to maintain

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that there were some things, some reports which had been that held back from us. He was still on this kick, you know, you don't really know as much about it as we do. Well, don't think that was so. I checked the serial numbers of the telegrams that I was looking at! Although one has to leave open the possibility that there is some back-channel stuff that I didn't see. Anyway, we saw enough. That affair had more profound effect up here than just with respect to the Dominican Republic, or even to Latin America. It ruptured the Johnson-Fulbright relationship, but even more profoundly than that I think it opened the first crack in what later came to be the "credibility gap" over Vietnam. It demonstrated to Fulbright and others that things were not always as Johnson and the administration were portraying them. This became very important in cultivating the seeds of doubt which already existed about the policy in Vietnam. As a matter of fact, somebody said at the time that if he--meaning Johnson--is this impetuous and disembling with respect to a little old country like the Dominican Republic, why the hell should we trust him with respect to a major operation like Vietnam? I think this contributed to doubts about what really happened in the Gulf of Tonkin the year before, and--although there's no direct relationship--encouraged the committee to reopen the Gulf of Tonkin affair. You know, things were generally downhill in Executive-Legislative relations from that point forward!

I mentioned the Gulf of Tonkin, this might be a good time to talk about the Senate's role or lack of a role in that. It occurred in early August of '64. Johnson produced the famous Tonkin Resolution, which he wanted. George Ball or somebody from the State Department came up to a meeting in Mansfield's offices as majority leader one afternoon. Mansfield was there, Fulbright, Russell, Saltonstall of Armed Services, I don't remember who else from Foreign Relations. I was acting chief of staff then because Marcy was out of the country. I was there; Bill Darden, the staff director of the Armed Services Committee, was there. There was some fiddling around with words in the resolution but there wasn't any real discussion of substance. Most of the conversation was about procedure and scheduling and so on. It was decided that the resolution would be introduced that afternoon by Fulbright and co-sponsored by Russell, Hickenlooper, and Saltonstall, and that it would be referred jointly to Foreign Relations and Armed Services, that they would have a hearing on it the following morning, and attempt to report it to the Senate that day, with floor action promptly following. In the light of all of the soul-searching that had gone on over similar resolutions with respect to Formosa and the Middle East in the 1950's, Bill Darden and I listened to this with growing incredulity. I remember Darden

and I whispering to each other during the meeting, there's no way they're going to get this thing done that fast." Well, it turned out that they did--to their later bitter regret. I have frequently thought since then that I should have at least raised a caution that this thing had implications that maybe ought to be considered at greater length, but the reason I didn't was that I was absolutely sure that the damn committee would do it without any prompting from me. Well, it turned out I was wrong. I don't know if it would have made any difference if I had raised it. One of the things that appealed to Fulbright and others was what looked like the measured, moderate response which Johnson was taking to the alleged provocation in the Gulf. Goldwater had been nominated by the Republicans back in July of that year. The Democratic convention was not until later but everybody knew who the nominee was going to be. Compared to Goldwater the Johnson reaction looked moderate. There was also a desire up here, on the part of the Democrats, to support the president in the political situation that existed in the United States. So it was done. There really wasn't much concern about--much vocal concern, anyway--about Vietnam in the committee for some months thereafter. The Dominican Republic, as I said, opened the first crack in what came to be the credibility gap.

**RITCHIE:** This has been a very wide over-view of that period. I have some specific questions to go back to. Going back first to the Dominican Republic

intervention, Johnson made a lot of very broad statements. He talked about beheading of people, and the ambassador was being shot at in his home, quite inflammatory statements. From what you are saying, you found that the documentation did not support these statements. What was your reaction when you looked at the documents, and where did you see the conflict between what the president was saying and what you were reading?

**HOLT:** Well, there just wasn't anything in the documents to support that thing. I think Johnson had said at a press conference or some place that fifteen hundred people had their heads cut off and stuck on poles and so on. There was just no evidence that this was the case. He said the ambassador phoned him from under his desk, for God's sake, while bullets were going into the American embassy. Well, we asked the ambassador himself if he was ever under his desk: No!

**RITCHIE:** Why do you think the administration felt the need to create this incredible picture that its own documents didn't bear out?

**HOLT:** Well, in the first place, Johnson was a man given to exaggeration and hyperbole anyway.

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the second place, well, let me back up a little bit. one of the things which became clear in the course of this review, and one of the points Fulbright made in his speech, was that the situation of disorder and the extent of Communist involvement were the pretext rather than the real reason for the Johnson intervention. The real reason being that Johnson did not want Juan Bosch to return to power in the Dominican Republic. Bosch had been strongly supported by the Kennedy administration--indeed, Johnson as vice president had gone to Bosch's inauguration in '62, I guess it was, or '63. But he had turned out to be a weak, indecisive president and Johnson didn't want him back. Well, this would not have been a persuasive reason for the drastic action which Johnson took. Therefore it became necessary for the Johnson White House to create reasons which in their view would be persuasive, not only with the Congress and the American public but especially with the OAS and the other countries of Latin America, and one way to do this was to present a picture of public disorder so great that it was threatening the safety of foreigners generally in the Dominican Republic, not just Americans.

One of the pretexts on which the 82nd Airborne and later the Inter-American police force, whatever the hell they called it, went into the Dominican Republic was the evacuation of foreigners. Most of them happened to be

Americans, but there were other foreigners who were evacuated as well. As a matter of fact, Art Buchwald wrote a brilliant column about the last American left in the Dominican Republic who kept pleading with them to evacuate him, and they refused because if we do that we don't have any excuse to stay here any longer!

Beyond this, it was important to the administration that the intervention be in collaboration with the beleaguered Dominican government. The military officers comprising that government had several times asked for United States support and had been turned down. They were told, in effect, that the United States would intervene only if the Dominican formally stated that they could no longer assure the safety of foreigners. The Dominicans interpreted this, correctly, as meaning that if they did make such a statement, then intervention would follow. And that's what happened.

**RITCHIE:** The fact that they opened the documents to you, the raw intelligence material, would indicate that they assumed that you were going to come to pretty much the same interpretation of them that they did.

**HOLT:** That's right, and that's one thing that irritated Tom Mann so damn much when I didn't, and when the committee didn't.

**RITCHIE:** Do you think they had just gotten into a mind-set where they believed their own exaggerations?

**HOLT:** I don't think Mann ever really believed this business about fifteen hundred people having their heads cut off. The committee pressed him about that at some length and he was evasive and clammed up.

**RITCHIE:** In his memoirs, Johnson only claims one person had his head cut off, and he makes a big thing out of that.

**HOLT:** No, Johnson might well have persuaded him self of this. I don't really think he fooled Mann, but one of Mann's characteristics is absolute loyalty to whoever was president.

**RITCHIE:** When you were looking at these documents, over a couple of weeks time, did anyone in the administration--Mann or anyone else--try to influence your thinking or your interpretation of the documents?

**HOLT:** No.



**RITCHIE:** They just left you to yourself?

**HOLT:** Yes.

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**RITCHIE:** Did you work in the White House?

**HOLT:** No, in the State Department. In Mann's office.

**RITCHIE:** And did they keep bringing things out? Was it a body of papers, or did you keep requesting more material?

**HOLT:** They had them, as I recall they had them assembled when I went down there. The guy I dealt with on a day to day basis was a fellow named Bob Adams, who was Mann's special assistant, or something like that, held been with him in Mexico and I'd known Adams for a number of years. He at one point was chief of the political section of the American embassy in Mexico. He was available if I had a question about something, but it was basically just reading what they provided, and making extensive notes.

**RITCHIE:** I've heard that Dean Rusk was particularly outraged at your report, in fact he took it as sort of a personal affront. Did you ever get any feeling of that from him? Did he ever respond or comment to you?

**HOLT:** I don't recall that he did. It was quite clear that he didn't like it worth a damn.

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I don't now remember the precise way in which that dislike was manifested. Some third parties reported to me some sort of snide remarks which Rusk made to them from time to time about "that Pat Holt," and such. I don't remember that he ever said anything to me about it. You know, for the duration of the Johnson administration relations with us, as I said, got steadily worse, and there was a frigid chill between the committee and Rusk just in general. But after Rusk left the State Department I have seen him several times. He's been quite cordial and pleasant. I think he's mellowed.

**RITCHIE:** The speech that Fulbright made in September of '65 on the Dominican Republic, he agonized over it because the rest of the committee was too divided to agree to act--what was the response of the rest of the committee to your report and who did you feel was more convinced by it? Can you remember what the breakdown was?

**HOLT:** Not in any completeness. When Fulbright made the speech I think Morse made some comment to me to the effect that it's about time that somebody said this. I suppressed an urge to ask him, "Well, why haven't you said it before now?"

Morse was not normally reluctant to voice his views on any damn thing. I think Hickenlooper was pretty quiet through

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out that affair. Lausche I think was supportive of the administration. I know [George] Smathers and Russell Long were, but I'm not sure they were on the committee then.

**RITCHIE:** Russell Long left the committee about that time, didn't he?

**HOLT:** I don't remember the dates, but I remember he was one of those who supported the president in the Senate when they were debating.

**RITCHIE:** Eugene McCarthy called for an investigation of the CIA in response to the reports on the Dominican Republic, I think in 1966.

**HOLT:** Yes, I guess so, I don't recall that there was any connection, but there might have been. As a matter of fact, one of the things that developed in the course of this review of the Dominican situation was that the CIA was rather more accurate in its reporting than the State Department. We also had that impression as we got more involved in the-Vietnam affair later on. The Dominican affair erupted at a time when the CIA had a new director, Admiral Raborn, who had been there only a few days, and I heard from somebody, I've forgotten the source, that in the early stages of the Dominican thing Johnson asked Raborn for evidence of Communist involvement. Raborn being very new to the job didn't know enough

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about it, and said held go back and check. He went back to Langley and they told him there weren't any communists. Johnson didn't like this worth a damn and called in J. Edgar Hoover and said, "Find me some Communists in the Dominican Republic." This led to a great infusion of FBI agents into the damn country, and Johnson did produce a list of fifty-seven or something Communists, some of whom turned out to be dead and others were out of the country and what not. That was the source of much bureaucratic unhappiness as between the FBI and CIA, the two agencies which never have gotten along very well anyway. And it took years to get the last FBI people out of the Dominican Republic.

**RITCHIE:** Also getting back to Tom Mann, he has come under a lot of criticism, especially from Diplomatic historians, for what they call the "Mann Doctrine" on Latin America, which was supporting anti-communism in Latin American countries through economic assistance without regard to the particular type of regime that was there. In other words, they would continue to support military regimes, which was perceived as a change in the Alliance for Progress that the

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Kennedy administration had been attempting to work towards. Is that an accurate view of Mann? Or is he coming under unfair criticism?

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**HOLT:** Well. I don't think I ever heard of the "Mann Doctrine." I think that the way you describe it probably overstates the business. What strikes me more strongly about the Mann-Johnson policy towards Latin America was the support of American business, American investment, and of regimes which created a favorable climate for foreign business to operate. This was most clear, I guess, in the case of Brazil, which also occurred early on in the Johnson administration, the end of March, the beginning of April in 1964 when Joao Goulart was forced to resign. The situation in Brazil had been deteriorating for some time. Goulart was sort of a fuzzy radical, but also a rather weak president and the source of much concern in Washington by Mann and just about everybody else.

When the Brazilian revolution or coup d'etat began, I think it was in the end of March, Mann on his initiative came up to talk to the subcommittee on Latin America about it. The overthrow of Goulart at that time was a fait accompli, what was uncertain at that time was whether there would be an orderly transition or whether Goulart's successor would be confronted with violent opposition in the country. Mann felt that it was important that the revolution succeed and told the subcommittee that a Naval taskforce consisting of an aircraft carrier and I don't know what else was on its way to stand off the coast of Brazil

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so as to be in a position to respond to requests for help if the new Brazilian government made them. The subcommittee, and I'm talking mainly about Morse now, I don't remember who else was present, did not shed any tears over the departure of Goulart. It was concerned that the transition be accomplished according to Brazilian constitutional processes. There was at least the facade that Goulart had resigned, and under the Brazilian constitution his successor was supposed to be elected by the Congress, and the president of Congress was supposed to be elected by the Congress, and the president of Congress was supposed to act as the interim president in the meantime.

This pretty much is the script that was followed, for about ten days anyway, but Mann was sort of contemptuous of the Brazilian Congress. I remember he said, "They have no troops." Morse said, "That doesn't mean they're unimportant." Well, anyway, after about ten days or so General Castello Branco became president of Brazil and Brazil entered a period of draconian suppression of opposition people, and also a period of dramatic economic growth, which was good for business. And for a number of years following the revolution of 1964 members of the committee from time to time would complain about the

repressive character of the Brazilian government, which the Johnson administration didn't really deny, it just sort of apol-

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ogized for it. It said these reports were exaggerated and changed the subject to the Brazilian economy, and that sort of thing.

Finally, in the Nixon administration, when [Frank] Church was chairman of that subcommittee, he got sufficiently exercised to have some hearings on it, although the immediate focus of his concern was the AID public safety program, which he was worried about generally, and we selected Brazil as the case study for it. Bob Dockery and I went to Brazil and spent two or three weeks looking at it down there, which laid the basis for some hearings, I guess this must have been about 1971. And those hearings in turn laid the basis for a movement which developed and which eventually led to the abolition of the public safety program by law. But I guess that's about all the Brazilian part of the story.

**RITCHIE:** Well, do you see that there is a continuum of policy from the late Eisenhower years when they began to recognize Latin America in a different way through the Kennedy Alliance for Progress and through the Johnson administration? Or do you think that the administrations were responding differently and there were really sharp changes?

**HOLT:** Well, there was a continuum for say about ten years. There was a change in emphasis,

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I think, in the Johnson administration, Brazil being a good example. But I think the biggest change perhaps was that the Johnson administration was more ad hoc in its approach to Latin America. It didn't really buy the grand design of the Alliance for Progress the way the Kennedy administration had. You know, I cited the case of Brazil, well, on the other side of this is Chile. The Johnson administration, with Mann as assistant secretary, gave substantial covert assistance to the Christian Democrats in Chile and to Eduardo Frei. And they were at one point the showcase for the Alliance for Progress, they were certainly the epitome of liberal democratic non-military civilian government.

**RITCHIE:** One diplomatic textbook that I looked at said that when Mann became the assistant secretary in charge of the Alliance for Progress that he allowed it to "wither on the vine" from neglect. Is that a fair assessment?

**HOLT:** It withered. I think it's more complicated than that textbook presented it. One of the things Mann did when he became assistant secretary early in the Johnson period was reorganize the Latin American bureaus of both State and

AID so that they were totally integrated, back-to-back was his phrase for it. This gave State more direct control over the AID program. It was one of the

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main things Mann did to coordinate the squabbling bureaucracies that I've talked about earlier. Mann, and Johnson too for that matter, believed in using AID as a part of the political policy of the United States in whatever country they were dealing with. In this they didn't really differ all that much in principle from numerous other people who've been involved with AID and foreign policy. The difference was more one of degree than of principle, the way they approached it.

**RITCHIE:** One other question about Latin America. You said you went down to Brazil later on in 1971, and that was the question about how the AID program had used its public safety training. What did you find in Brazil, and did it surprise you? Were AID programs being used to train secret police?

**HOLT:** The popular charge in those days was that AID public safety was training local police forces in techniques of torture and so on. We never found any evidence to support that, either in Brazil or I also went to Guatemala and the Dominican Republic and looked at it in some detail. What emerged from this was that the public safety program was a very great political liability in a public relations sense because the fact of its existence identified the United States with repressive police forces. These public safety people were imparting to

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these police forces the techniques of investigation, crime control, control of riots, and so on, which worked in Los Angeles. But they worked in the United States in a milieu in which the courts were independent and there was a free and inquiring press and public opinion was important. When these techniques were transferred to police in a country like Guatemala or Brazil as it was in the 1960's then the United States or nobody else had any control over the use they would be put to. You know, one of the things that was done in Brazil was technical assistance to the Brazilians in establishing a fingerprint identification system. All right, you can use that system either to find people who steal automobiles or to find people who don't like the government. In the United States it's used to find people that steal automobiles--sometimes--actually we didn't know it at the time but by 1971 the Nixon administration was going pretty damn far too! But I think that was the main point about the public safety program.

**RITCHIE:** Well, then you made a connection between the reaction of the committee and Senator Fulbright to the reports of the Dominican Republic to a reassessment of its role in the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, and what the administration was saying about Vietnam at that time. In the longer run the

Vietnam issue is the larger issue, and yet the Dominican Republic served as sort of an

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introduction to it. A couple of questions. In your book, *Invitation to Struggle*, you said "Congress paid strikingly little attention to the steps taken by the Johnson administration in 1965 to convert the American role in Vietnam from support and advice to active participation." I was wondering if you could take that a step back further. Had the Congress and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee been particularly concerned about Vietnam in the days before the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, or was that a relatively back burner issue?

**HOLT:** It was a relatively back burner issue. It was a source of some concern and some doubt about what it might lead to, but it was not a very active item on the agenda. At some point in this period, I don't remember whether it was '64 or '65, there was a picture in the *Washington Post* of a captured Viet Cong being dragged through a little creek by his ankles, which were tied to a jeep or something, and the cut line said that this was happening in an effort to make him talk. Well, that really upset me. I drafted a letter, which Fulbright signed, to [Robert] McNamara asking him if this was the kind of technical assistance our training teams were giving the South Vietnamese, that if it was, then things really were worse in Vietnam than we had thought because the whole history since the persecution of the

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Christians by the Romans proved that this kind of crap didn't work and we were on a losing wicket out there. Then Fulbright went on to say that he had been increasingly troubled about the policy in Vietnam and had refrained from public criticism of it because frankly he could think of no alternative, but if this was the kind of thing we were getting involved in he thought we just ought to cut our losses and get out. I've forgotten what McNamara replied to the damn letter, I think it was something to the effect of, "oh, gee whiz, we aren't doing things like that!" But Fulbright did not make a public fuss over it, nor did anybody else. In private conversations Fulbright and a few other senators would voice doubts about it, but these were tempered--or public statements were tempered--by the argument of Johnson that the policy will work if we stay in it and if we give the impression of unity. So it took a while before anybody other than Morse and Gruening were willing to break the impression of unity that Johnson was trying so hard to create. But as I recall the sequence of events, You had the Gulf of Tonkin in August of '64, and then in February of '65 you had the response through bombing to Viet Cong bombing of an American garrison in Pleiku and that bothered some members of the committee, Albert Gore being one, but again there wasn't any great public fuss about it.

Then in the summer of '65 came the first big injection of American ground troops into Vietnam, and like the Gulf of Tonkin Johnson handled this in a way that made it look moderate, because he went through a big process of considering what to do about it, calling in advisors here and there, the White House was leaking proposals for calling up the Army Reserves and asking for a tax increase and this, that and the other thing. And when all he did was send whatever number of troops over there it looked well, gee whiz, this isn't going as far as it might have. It was not really till towards the end of '65, if I remember it correctly, that Fulbright decided to go public with this. His immediate objective was to persuade the Johnson administration. This is what led to the first of the famous hearings which came along in early '66.

**RITCHIE:** Sort of an educational program?

**HOLT:** Yes. He was a great educator.

**RITCHIE:** Just one more question on the Gulf of Tonkin I once heard Wayne Morse give a speech after he had left the Senate, in which he said that the night before the resolution he got a call from a source of his in the Pentagon who told him to make sure that he saw the logs of the *Maddox* and the *C. Turner Joy*. The next day he asked McNamara about this and McNamara said, well, you know these

ships are off in the Pacific. Apparently he later discovered that the logs had been flown in and were at the Pentagon at that time, but were kept back from the committee. It seems strange that, after the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Formosa Resolution, the only person on the committee who had any qualms was Wayne Morse, and that was only because he had gotten a tip from inside the Pentagon the night before. No one had any sense of the complications or implications involved in this? And Fulbright didn't express anything at the time?

**HOLT:** No. No. And as you say, it does seem damn strange.

**RITCHIE:** You attribute this basically to the tone that Senator Goldwater set in 1964?

**HOLT:** That was a part of it. That was a lot of it.

**RITCHIE:** In retrospect, do you see the Johnson administration as sort of setting it up for the resolution, or do you think they just took advantage of the resolution after it had been passed?

**HOLT:** Well, you know they had had drafts for the resolution lying around for quite a while. I don't know whether the resolution was the whole object of that exercise in the Gulf of Tonkin or not, really.

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**RITCHIE:** When George Ball met with the leaders that Sunday afternoon, was there any sense of the way that the administration planned to carry out the resolution? Did they give any assurances of limited action?

**HOLT:** It wasn't a Sunday afternoon, it was an afternoon but I don't remember the day of the week. But yes, as a matter of fact, I think the action either had already started or it had been announced. It was a very prompt reaction in terms of bombing North Vietnam.

**RITCHIE:** Johnson went on television to announce retaliatory bombing.

**HOLT:** Yes. Yes, there were assurances. I think maybe one thing that was involved in it was the fact that neither the Formosa Resolution nor the Middle East Resolution had resulted in the dire consequences that some of the skeptics feared at the time. You know, this was just another lot of language. One of the points that the Johnson administration made was that this would show national unity and support for the president and all of that. The idea being that if we were firm enough the Viet Cong would just give up. Somebody in a committee hearing at one point during the Vietnam thing said to Cabot Lodge

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when he was ambassador, "How do you think that this is, ever going to end?" He said, "It will end when those guys in the black pajamas out in the jungle wake up some morning and say we don't want to do this anymore."

**RITCHIE:** Given that J. William Fulbright was very close to Lyndon Johnson in the Senate--Johnson used to refer to him as "my Secretary of State" when Johnson was Majority Leader--and that Johnson tried to get Kennedy to appoint Fulbright as Secretary of State, and that they were close personal friends, why do you think that Johnson failed to listen to Fulbright, especially in those early years of '64 and '65 when Fulbright, though critical, was trying to win over support in the administration?

**HOLT:** Well, I don't really know. Of course, after the speech on the Dominican Republic Johnson sort of scratched Fulbright off his list. But prior to that I don't really know. Of course, prior to that there wasn't all that great an American involvement in Vietnam. The first big batch of ground troops didn't go over till the summer of '65. But you know, Johnson didn't listen to Mansfield either.



According to Johnson's memoirs, Mansfield was dissenting more strongly and earlier than Fulbright.

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**RITCHIE:** Do you think Johnson had just insulated himself in the White House, surrounded by people who automatically agreed with him?

**HOLT:** I just don't know.

**RITCHIE:** Well, I think this is probably a good break for us. We've gotten started with Vietnam, but it's a long war.

[End of Interview #6]

**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Interview #7**  
**Vietnam and Chile**  
(Wednesday, November 19, 1980)  
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

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**RITCHIE:** Lyndon Johnson was famous for the word "consensus"; he used it all the time and he considered it essential. By 1966 the consensus was beginning to come apart and the Foreign Relations Committee contributed to this through its series of highly publicized, nationally televised hearings in January and February of 1966. Since that was such a turning point, I wondered if you could give me some of the background to those hearings, how the committee decided to hold them, and what preparations were made for them?

**HOLT:** Well, I can give you some of it. I was not primarily concerned with it. In the fall of 1965, following the Dominican affair, Fulbright began to take a closer look at the situation in Vietnam and he went through a considerable period of questioning what should the committee do about it, what should he do about it. I remember in the late fall, I guess it was, a snowy Saturday afternoon, I and Marcy and Jim Lowenstein sat around with Fulbright in his office in the Dirksen Building, kicking this thing around. As one consequence

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of that, Lowenstein put Fulbright in touch with Bernard Fall, the historian of that area.

I guess in December of '65 Fulbright and a few other senators were going to Australia. I think it was to a meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which the United States is not a member of but we traditionally have been invited for the international affairs and defense part of it. The White House--well, the Defense Department, but everybody up here thought it was the White House telling Defense what to do--refused to make a jet aircraft available, and Marcy really got upset about this, and screamed and yelled, to no avail. So they went to Australia in a propeller plane and Fulbright took along a bunch of books on Southeast Asia and the Far East generally, he had a lot of time to read! He came back just full of Chinese history and the incidents of the terrible way in which the West, principally the British, mistreated the Chinese, and decided that we were going to have some hearings, and so they were scheduled. Actually, I was out of town for part of them. I had to go to San Francisco with a bunch of Mexican congressmen, and then when I got back I got the flu or some damn thing and lay around at home for two or three days watching them on television. But this produced the first of many confrontations between Rusk and Fulbright.

As I recall, Fulbright at that time was not as firmly opposed or as outspoken in his opposition to American policy as he later became. He was more in the position of questioning it. Clark Clifford, much later, described the evolution of his own position with respect to Vietnam as moving from a doubt to an opinion to a conviction to an obsession. I think that's probably a fair way to describe the evolution of a lot of thinking about this. I think those initial hearings in early 1966 were significant in two respects. One, they contributed to, and in a sense they began, the erosion of support for the Johnson policy in the Senate. Up until that time the only people who had just flat opposed it were Morse and Gruening. You began to see people like Fulbright and Gore moving in that direction. The other significant aspect of it was that they made dissent respectable. The dissenters were no longer a bunch of crazy college kids invading deans' offices and so on; they were people of substance.

I don't remember the precise sequence of this, but later on anti-Vietnam war witnesses before the committee included very solid members of the establishment. I think they had the president of the Bank of America at one point, and General [David] Shoup, who was former Commandant of the Marine Corps, and such people as that. As a matter of fact, to skip over a couple of years, on the morning after

Johnson's speech in 1968 in which he said he would not be a candidate for reelection, Fulbright received a telegram which said simply: "Mission Accomplished. Shoup."

**RITCHIE:** It seems that the fact that those hearings were televised--or most of them, at least--had a lot to do with their impact on the public's consciousness. Did the committee have any role in encouraging the televising of the hearings? Or was that strictly up to the networks?

**HOLT:** Well, that was strictly up to the networks. You may recall at one point Fred Friendly left CBS in a huff because the network insisted on doing a rerun of "I Love Lucy" instead of the hearings. But, yes, the committee encouraged it. I didn't have anything to do with it, but Marcy would talk to people from the networks: "Would you be interested in televising it if we had a hearing with these witnesses on this day?" And the schedule of the hearings was fixed with television coverage in mind.

**RITCHIE:** From that period on, through the end of the Johnson administration, it seems that things got worse. The war escalated and the committee's relationship with the administration grew more distant and tense. What was the atmosphere like in the committee, and how were people responding to what was happening?

**HOLT:** It got pretty frigid before we were through. I think it's not exaggerating to say there developed a Cold War between the committee on one side and the State Department and the White House on the other. This led to other things as the committee, mainly Fulbright but he had support from people like Morse, McGovern, and Gore and to a considerable degree Javits and Case, the committee cast around for other instruments which it could use as levers to bring pressure on the administration. The chronology is not very clear in my mind, I'm not sure whether some of these things happened during the Johnson administration or Nixon's. But there was a series of amendments to foreign aid legislation restricting this or that or prodding them in this direction or that. The basic statute for the State Department was amended to require that it be reauthorized annually, which opened the door to poking around into all kinds of things down there. There was that kind of activity going on.

There was another kind of evolution going on up here during those years as well, the opposition in Congress to the Vietnam war really developed in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. For a while the committee view was a minority in the Senate as a whole and a good many things the committee proposed or wanted to do were not supported by the Senate. Then the Senate came around and started supporting these, but the House wouldn't go along with

them. Then eventually in the House this opposition developed also. There was that sort of progression.

**RITCHIE:** I was wondering about the relationship between various senators. Johnson was encouraging his supporters to respond to Fulbright's speeches, and I was wondering if there was any tension created by the strong difference of opinions. The Foreign Relations Committee were out in advance, they were attacking the incumbent president, who was a member of the majority party. Did it disrupt the way things were done around the Senate in that period or have any consequences on personal relations in the Senate?

**HOLT:** I don't recall any. You know the Senate, with respect to things like this, is a rather peculiar institution. I think it's one of the glories of the Senate and why it works as well as it does that senators very rarely let their personal feelings to ward each other get in the way of carrying out the Senate's business, or vice versa. You know, there were some rather close friendships and working relations between senators who disagreed with each other about most questions of public policy. At the other extreme there were senators who didn't like each other very much who usually voted the same way.

**RITCHIE:** On that line, I was wondering what was Fulbright's relationship to the growing group of doves, especially those on the committee, people like McGovern, Eugene McCarthy, Gore, Cooper, and Church? A lot of the anti-war legislation has other names on it, people went to the forefront on it. Fulbright always seemed a little more skeptical. Was he a leader of that group, or was he aside from it?

**HOLT:** Well, I guess he was neither a leader nor aside from it. He became sort of a hero to the anti-war movement generally, but he was quite content for people like Church, - McGovern, Cooper, so on, to be out front on these things in the Senate. Fulbright, I think, was for a long time basically more skeptical of the efficacy of things like the Cooper-Church Amendment. He kept saying, "Well this is a great idea if you can get the votes, but I don't think the votes are there." His approach, I don't know that he ever articulated it quite this explicitly but I have the impression that what Fulbright was doing was--well, first he tried to turn the administration around by persuasion, and it pretty early became evident that wasn't going to work. And then he thought the public is where this battle has to be fought, both in terms of pressure on the administration and in terms of changing votes in the Senate.

Fulbright was always, in connection with this other thing, a great believer in what he called educational hearings. If you have enough hearings which attract enough attention, then people will learn something from them. The whole thing about "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," or "give people the light and they will find their way," or something of that sort. He didn't have much patience for charging windmills in the Senate, offering amendments which were going to get defeated 72 to 10 or something like that.

**RITCHIE:** Did the committee have very much relationship with the anti-war movement outside of Congress?

**HOLT:** Yes. You know, some of them were witnesses at these hearings one time or another. Some of them used to come down and meet privately with Fulbright or other members of the committee. Because of the time pressures on senators there was even more of this done with respect to the staff, Moose and Lowenstein primarily. Some of these people were a source of information. There was a group in New York, I can't remember names, which at one Point actually got some of its people into North Vietnam and the reports on what they found there were useful. They were also a source of ideas, you know, "why don't you do this, why don't you do that." Some of them the committee used, and

some they didn't. I don't remember specifics now. The best sources for the committee's role in this whole Vietnam affair would be Moose and Lowenstein or Carl Marcy. Both Moose and Lowenstein may be more available in a couple of months than they have been lately [Richard M. Moose was assistant secretary of State for African Affairs, and James G. Lowenstein was ambassador to Luxembourg in the Carter administration].

**RITCHIE:** Skipping ahead, but this really covers the period we're talking about, the Pentagon Papers covered the period up to 1969. When they came out did the revelations come as a surprise to you and the members; of the committee, or had you reached the same conclusions?

**HOLT:** As a matter of fact, the Pentagon Papers had come into the committee's possession a year or two before they appeared in the *New York Times*.

**RITCHIE:** How was that?

**HOLT:** Well, somebody gave them to the committee, in the hope, I suppose, that the committee would treat them like the *New York Times* did. Norville Jones, who was also involved in a lot of the Vietnam staff work, looked at them and decided there really wasn't very much there that would be helpful, and in addition to that

the circumstances under which they came into the committee's possession were such that the committee felt some constraints about how it used them. I didn't know this, as a matter of fact, until after the damn things were published and Norville said to me one day, "You know, I've had these in my safe down here for a year or two." Once they were published, a cry arose that the committee do something about them.

We chewed for a while on the problem of what to do and we finally got some extra money, I guess, from the Senate and hired three people to review, the things and write analyses and so on. They worked away for a year or two, not very much really came of it. One of them, a fellow named Bob Blum--who at that point was a graduate student at the University of Texas, doing his Ph.D. under Walt Rostow of all people!--did a report which had to be classified "Top Secret" and I'm not clear now as to why that was, since the damn papers had been published anyway. I guess maybe he had some other stuff in it. And there was a long controversy with the executive branch about declassifying the damn thing; they never agreed to do it and the committee just sort of backed away from fighting about it. The committee did go so far as to have the GPO print a limited number of top secret copies, and I guess they're locked up in a safe around the place somewhere still. You know, at this point I don't even remember the point of the damned report.

**RITCHIE:** One comment by Fulbright on reading the Pentagon Papers was that the only time that Congress was mentioned at all in them in the administration's deliberations over the war was either how to manipulate Congress, or Congress was a troublesome nuisance. Was this just an inevitable outgrowth of past policies, or was this something unique to the Johnson administration?

**HOLT:** No, I think that's fairly constant of any administration. The executive branch historically--in my experience anyway--has always taken the view that Congress is an obstacle to be overcome, either through manipulation or pressure or whatever. That attitude, sometimes subconscious, is inherent in the executive branch approach to the Congress. It is one of the things that inhibits the executive branch from real consultation with Congress because they take the view down there that they don't want to get Congress involved in it until they have gotten all their own ducks in a row and reached a bureaucratic consensus as to what they want to do. Then they approach Congress as salesmen rather than as partners or as consultants. You know, I was amused this morning to see stories about [Ronald] Reagan's visit to the Hill yesterday and how he wasn't going to make the mistakes that Carter had made. Well, my God, at about this time in 1976, or maybe a little bit later, Carter also came up here.

As a matter of fact he did something which was unprecedented in my experience, and Sparkman said it was unprecedented in his, and his goes back a lot longer than mine: Carter as president-elect sought a meeting with the Foreign Relations Committee. We sat down there in S-116 for an afternoon while Carter and the committee talked about the world situation and how things were going to be done and so on. Carter was very eager to establish rapport. He gave the committee his private telephone number in Plains. He gave them his private post office box number where they could get to him without going through the Secret Service opening the mail. And he said that before the Inauguration he would like to spend a whole day with the committee and some other people on the Hill really going over the whole world, a tour d'horizon and so on. He said, "We'll work out a date. I don't know where it will be. I'd like to do it at Camp David, but maybe I can't get to Camp David before the Inauguration." It turned out he couldn't, so in January we all went down to the Smithsonian and literally spent the whole damn day. He had his Cabinet designates there, Brezezinski was there, and there was a very extensive discussion. I don't know of any president-elect who has gone to such lengths, and then sure enough after the Inauguration things started going downhill!

**RITCHIE:** So it's something inherent in the office.

**HOLT:** Yes. I think so. I think probably the founding fathers intended it that way.

**RITCHIE:** There were some interesting people on the committee in the 1960's, and one who is especially identified with the Vietnam war but who is still a very hard person to figure out, is Eugene McCarthy, who came on the committee in '65 and challenged Johnson in '68 and became a major figure in the anti-war movement. Did you work with McCarthy in that period, and do you have any assessment of him?

**HOLT:** Well, you said it correctly when you said he was hard to figure out. Yes, I worked with McCarthy some. I'd known him casually for a number of years, going back I'd guess to when he was in the House. I guess my closest association with him came in connection with his efforts to create an oversight committee to the intelligence community. I drafted the resolution which he introduced on that. It went through several drafts, both before he introduced it and during the committee's consideration of it. Fulbright was also very interested in that, as was John Sherman Cooper, who was one of the few senators who had had direct experience with the intelligence community in the executive branch. Held been ambassador to India. But McCarthy's a very complex man.

In the summer of 1967 the committee's frustration over Vietnam took the form of the questioning and reexamining the authority of the president to get the United States involved in the extent that it was, and as a part of this there were hearings and one of the witnesses was Nicholas Katzenbach. I've forgotten whether he was still attorney general at the time or had become under secretary of State, but in any event he expounded a very extreme view of the president's constitutional powers, relying mainly on his power as commander-in-chief. The committee was really shocked to hear this. I was not present at that hearing, but that afternoon the committee had some piece of legislation on the Senate floor and I was over there helping with it and McCarthy came in and said, not in the Senate but just to me and I guess Fulbright was there, he said, "Somebody's got to take these guys on, and I'm going to run for president." We said, "Well, good luck," or something like that. He has a very sardonic sense of humor and he said, "The Catholic church has now abandoned the doctrine of Papal infallibility. The Johnson White House has taken it up." After McCarthy got heavily involved in the presidential campaign I did not see a great deal of him, casual meetings here or there, and you know he voluntarily went off the Foreign Relations Committee after that, something which I hated to see happen.

**RITCHIE:** I never understood that.



**HOLT:** I never did either. At one of these casual meetings I had with McCarthy, I ran into him in the Monocle down here at lunch one day and he introduced me to his companion. He said, "This is Doctor So-and-So, he was the campaign psychiatrist." I think it would take a psychiatrist to explain McCarthy's behavior after 1968. I think one thing happened might have been that after having come so close--and indeed he did achieve one objective of dethroning the president--after the horror of the Democratic convention in Chicago in 1968., he just sort of withdrew into a shell. You know, he got off the Foreign Relations Committee, he left the Senate, his marriage broke up,. he ran again in '76 in a really quixotic move. I haven't seen him now for quite some time.

**RITCHIE:** To go back, we've been talking about Vietnam in the late 1960's, but you took a sabbatical from the committee some time in the mid-sixties.

**HOLT:** No, no it was earlier, '61 and '62.

**RITCHIE:** I'm sorry, I thought it was later. You published a book about that, didn't you?

**HOLT:** Well, a couple of books. The sabbatical in '61 and '62 was to be a fellow of the Institute of Current World Affairs, a small private foundation

in the business of supporting young people for living abroad, not for formal study. I was forty at the time I became a fellow and I was the oldest one they'd ever had. This idea originated with the Institute and their thought was that they would support seriatim three staff members from the Foreign Relations Committee for living would be so abroad, with the hope that this experience valuable that the committee would pick it up and finance it itself and make it a regular part of sort of mid-career staff training, and indeed that it might spread to other committees on the Hill. There's no reason why Banking shouldn't send one of its people to the London School of Economics. Well, they ended up taking four people from the committee but the seed never flowered as was originally hoped. Anyway, I spent my fellowship in Latin America, most of it in Columbia. The only responsibility of an Institute fellow is to write a newsletter at intervals of approximately a month, dealing with really whatever he wants to deal with. These are circulated to a mailing list of journalists, bureaucrats, academics. Mine came to the attention of Frederick Praeger and after I got back he asked me would I turn them into a book, and I did. That was published in '64. Then later on, Allyn and Bacon asked me to write a high school textbook on foreign policy and I did that. It was published I guess in the early 1970's.

**RITCHIE:** I brought that up to ask about what was happening in the committee concerning Latin American affairs in the late '60's. Vietnam gets the headlines and all the attention. Did the administration and the Congress begin to neglect Latin America again after a period of focusing on it? What was happening on the Latin American front?

**HOLT:** Well, not very much really. I remember fussing about it around here. You never could get any time on the committee's calendar to have a hearing on Latin America. But, oh, I guess around 1969 or so Church, who by that time was chairman of the Latin American subcommittee, decided he wanted to do something about the AID public safety program, which we've talked about, so we got back into Latin America that way.

**RITCHIE:** It seems as though the committee and the Congress only focus on Latin America when there is a crisis there, Cuba or Chile. Is that particularly true of Latin America or is that true of foreign policy in general?

**HOLT:** Congress tends to follow the headlines with respect to its interests in foreign policy. I think it's true generally. You haven't heard anything--at least I haven't heard anything--from up here about Africa in some time, for example. Or even about western Europe,

beyond an occasional something with respect to beefing up NATO, or putting Neutron bombs in western Europe, or something like that. With respect to Latin America, I think this is true also of the upper levels of the executive branch. I don't think Latin America attracts very much attention above the assistant secretary unless there is trouble somewhere. And that also may be true worldwide in the executive branch.

**RITCHIE:** So, wrapping up the Johnson administration at this point, Johnson announced in March 1968 that he wasn't going to run again, that he was going to devote himself to negotiating a settlement in Vietnam. At the same time, two of his Defense secretaries, McNamara and Clark Clifford, both began to reevaluate their positions on Vietnam, and the administration seemed in some respects to be responding to the type of pressure that the Congress had put on it. Was there any kind of thaw in relations between the administration and the Foreign Relations Committee in the last year of the Johnson administration?

**HOLT:** I don't recall any, no.

**RITCHIE:** Things had just gotten too hostile?

**HOLT:** Yes, and there was a feeling up here also that the administration wasn't really pushing those negotiations as hard as it might, that it was too

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sensitive to the views of the South Vietnamese, too accommodating to those views, and that American policy with respect to Vietnam was really hostage to the government in Saigon. You know, the prolonged quibbling over the shape of the negotiating table in Paris just drove people up the wall around the Senate.

**RITCHIE:** Was there much direct contact between the members of the committee and South Vietnam? Did the staff and members of the committee make visits, or were they trying to get around the administration to do any research on their own?

**HOLT:** Well, going back even to the fifties, Mansfield had made Southeast Asia a particular subject of interest and went out there I guess just about every year for a good long time, usually accompanied by Francis Valeo. I don't recall Mansfield going very much after things really got sour, but I don't recall any senators from the Foreign Relations Committee anyway. We tried to persuade some, specifically Fulbright, but he never would do it. He didn't want to expose himself to "brainwashing," for what George Romney got in trouble for calling "brainwashing," although it was an accurate description. But the committee did send staff out there at frequent intervals. In the beginning it was Dick Moose and

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Jim Lowenstein, and then after Lowenstein left the staff in '74, I guess, Chuck Meisner went with Moose. Meisner had served in Vietnam as an Army intelligence officer and was a damned good economist, and contributed a lot. I think by the time of the American withdrawal Moose told me that he'd been to Vietnam twelve times. The Moose-Lowenstein reports were highly prized by the committee. A good many of them were sanitized somewhat and published, and had an impact. To skip ahead a little bit, when things really began to unravel out there, in the winter or early spring of 1975, the committee had before it a request from the Ford administration for something like a billion dollars in supplemental aid for Vietnam, about which the committee was profoundly skeptical. In connection with its consideration of it, Moose and Meisner were sent back to Vietnam for what turned out to be their last trip. They were very excited by-- might almost say horrified by what they found out there, which was that the situation had deteriorated greater than anybody in Washington thought. So much so that they reported back even before they returned home. I'm not clear now whether they did it by telegram or telephone, seeking an early meeting of the committee on their return to consider this. They also talked directly to Mansfield, who I think was the fellow who told me to arrange the meeting.

Mainly in consequence of the Moose-Meisner report, although there were some other things like the media and instincts and so on that contributed to this, the committee in those last days of April 1975 became very exercised that the United States should get Americans out of Vietnam as promptly as possible. One of the things that underlay this position the committee came to was the feeling that Graham Martin, who was then our ambassador in Saigon, had a plan to hang on there until things became so bad that a considerable operation in force would be needed to protect and evacuate the embassy, and that this in turn would provide an entree for the United States to reinject itself into the fighting, notwithstanding that by this point the executive branch was operating under a statutory injunction not to involve American forces. But the thought we suspected was that in order to save Americans this would be waived, and as a matter of fact, Ford had a legislative proposal up here to allow him to do it. This view or suspicion was reinforced by some evidence Moose and Meisner found that Martin was changing some of the reporting that came from his staff before he sent it on to Washington. We felt that in some respects we were better informed than was the State Department and the White House.

As the committee's concern about this grew, it sought a meeting with the president himself, and the president responded very promptly. [Clifford] Case, the ranking Repub-

lican, phoned the White House during a committee meeting and, "Yeah, come on down one morning and the president is at four o'clock this afternoon." So the committee and Moose and Meisner and I and John Glenn, who had sort of injected himself into this, went down there and sat around the table in the Cabinet Room with Ford and Kissinger, and I guess whoever was chairman of the JCS. The members of the committee speaking as individuals were pretty firm in telling the president to get these people the hell out. The president was pretty firm that he wanted to use as much time as he could to get out as many Vietnamese, who had really put themselves at great risk in helping us, out as well. That was the dilemma they faced. You know, in the end, the situation in Saigon just collapsed, but I think this activity of the committee contributed to pushing the administration towards withdrawal.

There's an interesting little post-script to all of this. After the evacuation, Martin was back in Washington and was nominated to be United States negotiator with respect to the status of the trust territories of the Pacific Islands, with the rank of ambassador. The position of negotiator did not require Senate confirmation, but the rank of ambassador did. I guess if Martin hadn't been so sensitive to matters of rank the matter would never have come up, but the committee did not want to confirm Martin. Indeed, even before the final days out there he had done some things that

vastly irritated some members of the committee, particularly [Jacob] Javits. There was one instance in which Martin had written a very critical and sarcastic letter about Javits to somebody who lived in New York. You know, you just don't do things like that if you expect them to come to light. Anyway, the committee had a hearing and then later in executive session began to wrestle with this problem. It was clear that they were not going to confirm him, but neither could they bring themselves to take the step of actually rejecting him. So somebody had the thought that there was something in the record that required further investigation or more information and they seized on this like a gift from heaven and said, "Well, let's direct the staff to provide this additional information and postpone further consideration until we have it." They said, "Is that clear, Pat?" I said, "Yes, it's very clear, and just to make it clearer, I'm not sure how long it will take the staff to do this." Two or three people said, "Oh, don't hurry!" McGovern said "Suppose we say the Fourth of July, 1990."

The press afterwards was very curious about when Sparkman said, "We're waiting for a staff report"--and the press said, "Well, when will you have it?" Sparkman turned to me and I said, "I don't know yet, I don't know how long it will take." They said, "Who on the staff is going to be in charge of it?" And I said, "I am." That was the

last that was heard of that, except that Martin kept pressing the White House and Kissinger to press the committee to move on this thing, and as a matter of fact I had a very private phone call from State asking the question of "if they wrote a letter urging confirmation of Martin would it have any effect?" I said, "Not if you take care to deliver it to me." And they said, "In that case, we will do so." The State Department didn't want the guy in there either, but they had to give the appearance--or felt they had to give the appearance.

**RITCHIE:** To go back to the end of Johnson's administration, when the Nixon administration came in and when William Rogers became Secretary of State and Henry Kissinger became National Security Advisor, did the relations between the committee and the State Department change appreciably?

**HOLT:** Initially. Fulbright went down to the White House to see Nixon and Kissinger to urge them for God's sake to liquidate this mess. As he was leaving Kissinger walked out with him and said, "We're going to end this senator, we're going to end it." And Fulbright felt pretty good about that, but you know it didn't last very long. Rogers had a rather different experience. He also said to the committee that they were going to end it,

and the committee kept taking him to task about it and bringing up things that his predecessor had done, and Rogers found this somewhat exasperating. He said, "Look, you're talking about the past. I didn't do those things. I'm here now. I'm going to do thus and so." But it was bone which the committee was very reluctant to stop chewing on. I remember John Stevenson, who was the legal advisor at the State Department, came up here once to testify on some relatively minor United Nations treaty and ran into a buzzsaw of criticism about Vietnam, which left him totally nonplussed.

**RITCHIE:** I understand that while Kissinger did not testify before the committee as National Security Advisor, he did try to cultivate relations with Fulbright and other committee members through lunches and things like that. Did he make himself available to the staff and to the senators?

**HOLT:** Not to the staff. He, as had Rostow, refused to deal with the committee formally on what I think are spurious grounds of executive privilege. But anyway that's the rule that's been established. But he was amenable to private meetings. Members of the committee and Kissinger, it wasn't a committee meeting, met at Fulbright's house one night, for example. Marcy was there, nobody else from the staff was there. And

there were contacts like that. But they were not very productive and Fulbright never liked them very much because he thought it was an evasion of the ways things ought to work, that Kissinger ought to be over there in the Caucus Room.

**RITCHIE:** It seemed clear after a while that Rogers was not the most influential foreign policy advisor in the Nixon administration, but he was the main one you could get. It must have created a great deal of frustration that the man who really had the president's ear was off-limits for formal questioning.

**HOLT:** Oh, yes.

**RITCHIE:** Was there any talk about trying to change that?

**HOLT:** Oh, yes. I guess that was the genesis of the proposal which has surfaced up here from time to time to make the National Security Advisor subject to Senate confirmation.

**RITCHIE:** But it never was able to gain enough support?

**HOLT:** Well, I think as a matter of fact it passed the Senate once or twice but it always failed somewhere in the House, or in conference.

It's interesting that one of the principal opponents of that thing was Charles Percy, who is now coming to new eminence.

**RITCHIE:** Looking at the whole fabric of the Nixon foreign policy, detente with the Soviet Union and opening up relations with the People's Republic of China, it seems like the committee was in agreement with him on those major issues.

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** But it's just that Vietnam kept bubbling in the pot.

**HOLT:** Yes, I think that's right. You know, after Kissinger became Secretary of State the relationship changed markedly because one of Kissinger's priorities when he became Secretary was to carry out a policy of detente with the Foreign Relations Committee. He came up here with some frequency, both in public and in executive session. There was a new warmth and forthcomingness from the Department. The committee, or Fulbright had argued with Rusk and Rogers for years to get them to validate my Passport to travel to Cuba and they were awfully stubborn about it and finally we just let the damn thing drop after everybody had repeated himself endlessly. When Kissinger became Secretary wereopened the question and Kissinger said Okay. There were things like this happening.

Then in '74, as a part of the unraveling of Watergate, the business of wire-tapping of National Security staff members while Kissinger was in the White House came to light, and Kissinger had that emotional press conference in Vienna, or wherever the hell he was on his way to the Middle East with Nixon, that you know he would resign if the Senate didn't clear him of the scandalous accusations and so on. So we were forced into an investigation of Kissinger's role in this. It was complicated by the fact that one of those whose phone was tapped was Dick Moose, who was on the NSC staff before he came to work for the committee. Another was Tony Lake, whose tap was left in place even after he had departed the NSC staff and gone to work for Muskie in connection with Muskie's presidential campaign of '72, and Muskie didn't like that one damn bit! So we had a lot to do with Kissinger during the summer of '74.

As one of Fulbright's swan songs in the Senate--held been defeated in that Arkansas primary in June--he wanted to have some hearings on detente and Kissinger agreed to lead them off, and they were scheduled for early August. One of the problems we had with Kissinger was that although he always professed a willingness, even eagerness, to appear before the committee, he had great difficulty when it came to finding a time to do so. We had nailed down, or thought we had nailed down this date in August,

and a day or two before Larry Eagleburger on Kissinger's staff called me and said, "The Secretary won't be able to take that date." I just blew it. I said, "For Christ's sake, Larry, we've gone through all of this. It's all set, what the hell is it? He has to." "Well, he really puts great importance on the statement and he just doesn't have time to prepare a proper one." And I said, "Oh, nonsense, for Christ's sake, we won't take that as an excuse." He said, "Well, don't you dare tell anybody, but I think here's something brewing at the White House and maybe the committee won't want to have a hearing that day anyway." That was the first solid information I had that a presidential resignation was forthcoming, and I reported this to Fulbright, without referring to the possibility of action at the White House. I just said, "Kissinger's backed out again." And Fulbright said, "Well, I'm not surprised, I think the president's about to resign."

**RITCHIE:** Nixon's main focus as president seemed to have been on the Soviet Union and China, Vietnam has been described as a "grotesque sideshow" of its foreign policy, and Latin America seems to have been neglected very sharply, with one striking exception. That was what was happening in Chile. I wondered how the committee responded to that and what your role was at that time?

**HOLT:** Let me see, Nixon was inaugurated in January of '69. There was a presidential election scheduled for Chile in September 1970. The problem of Chilean politics at that time was that Eduardo Frei, under the constitution, could not succeed himself, and there didn't seem to be anybody else of comparable stature who would provide Chile with a government in the Frei tradition. The front runner was widely assumed to be Salvador Allende, a Socialist who had come pretty close to defeating Frei in '64. There were some conservative Chileans who came through Washington, I guess in late '69, early '70, who came to see me to express their concerns about the prospect of the election of Allende. Whether they saw any senators I don't know, I didn't arrange for them to. And that's about the only thing that I recall that happened up until September of 1970 when Allende won a plurality but not a majority. Under the Chilean constitution in those circumstances, the president was to be elected by the Congress in October. Historically the Congress had never failed to elect the candidate with the Plurality, although it had the freedom to elect somebody else. Shortly after that election in early September, Fulbright phoned me one time and said, "Have you heard anything about the CIA being up to monkey business in Chile?" And I said, "No, I hadn't." "Well, would you

like to?" he said. I said, "Well, if they are, I sure would like to." And he said, "Well come down to my office." So I did. He had in his possession some Xeroxed



memoranda from various people in the office of I. T. & T. [International Telephone and Telegraph] in Washington, which indicated very clearly that I.T.T. was going to great efforts to *inspire* some kind of activity on the part of the CIA. There was no indication that they were getting a positive response from anybody, but this was pretty startling stuff. Kissinger had reacted in public to the Allende election rather excitedly. Held said something in Chicago about how if Chile had a communist government it would affect Argentina and Peru--anybody who knew anything about Latin America knew that was nonsense, but anyway that was what Kissinger said.

The circumstances under which these documents came into our possession were such that we couldn't really use them, so Fulbright and I pondered what to do about it and decided that the best thing would be for Fulbright to talk to [Richard] Helms. An appointment was made for Helms to come up to see Fulbright. I prepared a list of what I thought were pretty careful questions for Fulbright to ask Helms, which if we got truthful answers I thought would tell us what we wanted to know one way or the other. Fulbright and I considered whether I ought to be present or not and finally decided that the chances for Helms to

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be really forthcoming would be improved if I were not. There was a little trade-off there, because I knew more about the background in Chile than Fulbright did, but any way I think it was my suggestion that I not be there. Fulbright reported to me on the conversation later that Helms was very categorical in denying any involvement and what seemed to make it particularly persuasive, was Helms was very frank in saying, "Look, we don't have any means to accomplish this even if we wanted to." Which it turned out later was substantially what he had also said to Nixon, who told him to do something about it. But we didn't know that at the time.

Well, in point of fact, the concern at that time was over whether or not the Chilean Congress could be persuaded to elect somebody besides Allende. There was an elaborate scenario as to how this might be done, but hell it didn't work. There was no evidence in public that anybody except I.T.T. and some other corporate friends had even tried to make it work. And so Allende was elected by the Congress and took office, and things in Chile promptly began to go downhill. The Nixon administration never made any secret of its dislike of Allende. You know, there was a freeze on aid, there was a freeze on Ex-Im loans, the United States used its veto or influence to stop loans from international financial institutions, private banks cut off credit. As far as the banks were concerned the explanation was that Chile is a very poor credit risk, which God knows was true.

In the spring, I guess it was March of 1972, the Senate Judiciary Committee was having hearings on the nomination of [Richard] Kleindienst to be Attorney General, and the nomination would probably have been handled routinely except for the fact that sometime before Jack Anderson had published some I.T.T. documents indicating some kind of hanky-panky as between John Mitchell and Kleindienst on the one hand and I.T.T. on the other about an anti-trust action. So the Judiciary Committee was inquiring into this, and lo and behold during those hearings Anderson followed up by publishing some of the I.T.T. documents from September 1970 dealing with Chile. At that point there was an enormous hue and cry and the Foreign Relations Committee felt called upon to involve itself in this. Frank Church, for about eighteen months at that point, had been fretting about the problem for American foreign policy posed by multi-national corporations and I had done some preliminary work on this. I'd even gone to a conference in Rome. But neither Church nor I had brought the thin to a focus. Well, the Anderson revelations brought it to a focus and the committee chewed on this for about two months I guess. After much hemming and hawing it created a subcommittee on multi-national corporations to do two things: one was to investigate the specific role of I.T.T. in Chile; and the other was to investigate or study the general role of multi-national cor-

porations in the world at large. The committee was strangely reluctant to involve itself in this situation. Hugh Scott particularly had some qualms about it. I think he was the one guy who voted against it, as a matter of fact. Anyway, the committee brought itself to do this and I set about organizing it, I guess even before the subcommittee was appointed.

In the best Fulbright tradition I rounded up I think it was four academics who had established reputations as students of the multi-national corporation. They came to Washington and we spent an afternoon listening to them say how they thought we ought to go about it and what we ought to look for and so on. The subcommittee was appointed and I spent most of the summer of 1972 looking around for people to staff it. My part in it anyway was done by August. I presented Church with a list-of six names. It had been my thought that he'd choose two of them and that would be the staff. He did interview all of them. He only chose one, namely Jerry Levenson. After that, Levenson and the people he recruited did the work while I was sort of looking over their shoulders. They started with I.T.T.

I went to Chile in December, I guess it was, of '72, as part of a longer trip to Latin America and was aghast at what I found. I have rarely seen a country so screwed up. But the Church-Levenson hearings on I.T.T. were held in March of '73, I guess Levenson was ready to go maybe in

February, he could not have been ready much sooner. They were held up until after congressional elections in Chile in March, because we didn't want to intrude on that situation. The hearings were very well prepared and explosive and spectacular with what they revealed, although the finger was all pointed at I.T.T. Executive branch witnesses all took the position that "we didn't do anything." That was the first time that we had ever been permitted formally to question anybody in CIA other than the director. We insisted and did question Bill Broe who, in 1970, had been in charge of western hemisphere affairs for the CIA. And we questioned Helms. John McCone, a former director of the CIA, who at that point, God help us, was a director of I.T.T., testified. He had had some conversations with the CIA during I.T.T.'s upset about this. Well, the hearings were held and we thought it was a closed book.

Oh, one other thing I ought to mention. Going back to September 1970, even before we received in confidence the material from I.T.T. that I described, I had been tipped off by a newspaperman that Ed Korry, then our ambassador to Chile, was in the words of my informant reacting like a "crazy man" to the September election, and conjuring up visions of Prague in 1948--where I guess he had been as a newspaperman himself. Anyway, this led me to ask the State Department for Korry's reporting from

Chile, and I think we also asked for the instructions that had been sent to Korry, They refused to give it to us, which sort of increased our suspicions. But then Fulbright had that conversation with Helms. As a matter of fact, during this period we had a letter from Korry, which was a little unusual because our ambassadors are supposed to send those things through the Department, in which Korry was expounding the virtues of a policy of non-intervention, and we patted him on the back and said, "That's right, Ed."

Well, all right, back to '73. In September of '73 Allende was overthrown and assassinated and all hell broke loose in Chile. There were the usual charges of covert CIA involvement, which led Gale McGee, who by that time was chairman of the Latin American subcommittee, to think that we ought to do something about it. I'm going to have to stop now, but I think this is a convenient breaking point and we can resume with the long, sad saga of Chile.

**RITCHIE:** Okay, fine.  
[End of Interview #7]

**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Interview #8**  
**The End of the Fulbright Years**  
(Thursday, December 4, 1980)  
Interviewed by Donal A. Ritchie

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**RITCHIE:** When we left off you had been discussing Chile and we had taken the story up to the coup, the assassination of Allende, and Gale McGee's subcommittee beginning, to hear the first stories about CIA involvement.

**HOLT:** Right. That subcommittee held intermittent executive sessions on Chile during the autumn of 1973. The State Department protested total innocence of any United States involvement. Finally, the subcommittee had a session with Bill Colby, who was then director of the CIA, and although Colby maintained that there was no covert intervention in the overthrow of Allende, he did tell the subcommittee a good deal more than we had known before about CIA activities in Chile over a period of years, including the years of the Allende administration. Those activities consisted, certainly in major part perhaps in their entirety--I'm a little hazy about that--in the support of groups who were opposed to Allende. There were subsidies to some of the media, there were subsidies to political parties and opposition groups generally. The purpose, as explained by Colby, being to keep the opposition alive, so

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to speak, with the hope that it would win the next presidential election, which was scheduled for 1976. And in fact, as I recall, the opposition had made some gains in the congressional elections in March 1973, six months before Allende's overthrow.

Well, the McGee subcommittee took note of this but didn't really do anything about it. As a matter of fact, I don't even remember who was present at this session besides McGee and myself. McGee said publicly, as recall, that he had found no evidence of CIA or other United States government covert involvement in this thing, and sort of left it as closed chapter. Well, all right, then we come down to the following spring, which would have been 1974, and in April or May, Colby said substantially the same things but in greater detail before the Intelligence Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee of the House, whose chairman at that time was Representative Lucien Nedzi of Michigan. In about June, Representative Michael Harrington of Massachusetts exercised the right which any member of the House has under the law to look at the records of any committee of the House, read the Colby transcript before the Armed Services

Committee, and became very excited about it. At that time he didn't do anything publicly. He fired off letters to Doc Morgan, the chairman of the House Affairs Committee, and to Senator Fulbright, summarizing

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what was in the Armed Services Committee transcripts and urging a further investigation by one or both of the committees. What Morgan did about this I don't know, Fulbright himself replied in effect that an investigation wouldn't do any good because the CIA would withhold information, and that what was really needed was a congressional committee empowered by law to get at CIA files, documents, and other records. But, Fulbright said, we can't get the votes to establish such a thing.

Fulbright by that time had lost the Arkansas primary and was sort of dispeptic and discouraged about things in general, and I by that time was chief of staff of the Foreign Relations Committee, but I learned of the Harrington-Fulbright exchange when Fulbright's office sent the correspondence to the committee for the committee's files. I had not seen Harrington's letter before Fulbright replied to it, and I was a little surprised that Fulbright handled it that way, although he was prone to do this every once in a while. But I was not particularly impressed with anything that was in the Harrington letter. I thought, well what the hell, this is old stuff. It really doesn't provide any evidence of complicity in the Allende overthrow. Well, there the matter rested until I guess early September when Harrington's letter to

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Fulbright and Morgan (if not identical they were awfully similar) appeared in the New York Times. Harrington later implied publicly that the leak came from the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee. I suspect it came from Harrington. But where it came from was never really determined. In any event, this caused quite a furor, particularly on the part of Senator Church and the staff of his subcommittee on multinational corporations that had held hearings on ITT in Chile. They were storming around saying that Helms ought to be prosecuted for perjury and feeling much put upon, misled, etc. When I produced the Colby transcript from the McGee subcommittee, their wrath sort of was diverted from Helms to me. They felt that I should have told them. Church was particularly upset. Well, they all were, I don't know that Church was any more so than others. In retrospect, maybe I should have told Church, but with respect to CIA briefings of that kind we had always followed the line that senators knew that the briefing had occurred, if they were interested they could ask for the transcript and be furnished it, and in the interests of not spreading that stuff around any more than necessary we weren't going to take the initiative on it.

Well, anyway, the Foreign Relations Committee chewed on this. There were some rather stormy executive sessions about it, and then the matter just sort of, as I recall, dropped, although it was one of the things which led to

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the Hughes-Ryan amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act, which required that covert operations be reported to some congressional committees, including Senate Foreign Relations, and it was also one of the things that led somewhat later to the creation of the Church committee to investigate intelligence operations. That committee later published a great deal of material about CIA involvement in Chile, although at best the direct involvement in the Allende overthrow remains very ambiguous. Helms was, as you know, eventually indicted, not for perjury but for failing to testify fully. I thought at the time and I still think that a perjury charge against Helms would have been difficult to sustain. It was much easier to take the failing-to-testify-fully route, which indeed he admitted he had done. I guess that's the story of Chile.

**RITCHIE:** For about twenty years it seems that the committee was aware that the Central Intelligence Agency was playing a larger and larger role in foreign policy, and from time to time people like Fulbright, and Mansfield and Eugene McCarthy introduced resolutions to have greater Senate supervision, but their efforts never got anywhere. Why do you think that the committee took so long to really react to the CIA's role in foreign policy?

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**HOLT:** There was not support for this, or there was insufficient support, for this view in the Senate. Mansfield started way back in the '50's. Just about every Congress he would introduce a resolution to establish a different, more formalized, hopefully more effective mechanism for Senate or congressional oversight, and the only time he was ever able even to get a vote on it he lost pretty badly. But this itch sort of continued around here and it was provoked mainly by CIA operations that failed, or at least-the interest of the Foreign Relations Committee was provoked mainly by those things. We have talked at some length earlier about the Bay of Pigs affair, even before the Bay of Pigs, in the last year of the Eisenhower administration there was the incident of the U-2 being shot down over the Soviet Union. This led to prolonged but somewhat inconclusive hearings before the Foreign Relations Committee.

Then the McCarthy resolution came along about 1966 or so. By this time congressional concern over oversight of the intelligence community had reached the point that although there was still insufficient support to set up a new committee or change the rules, the oversight subcommittees of Appropriations and Armed Services did invite I think it was three members from the Foreign

Relations Committee to sit with them during their oversight sessions. The arrangement in the period we're talking

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about was a little peculiar because Senator Russell was chairman of the CIA subcommittees of both Armed Services and Appropriations, and I think there was some other overlap on those there, though Russell in effect controlled it. After the debate over the McCarthy resolution, the Senate effectively killed the McCarthy resolution by voting to refer it to the Armed Services Committee, but after that happened, Russell did invite three members from Foreign Relations to sit in with his other group on these things.

If I remember correctly, those three members were Fulbright, who was chairman of the committee Hickenlooper, who was the ranking minority member, and Mansfield, who didn't have all that much seniority on the committee but was Majority Leader. I don't recall that I ever heard any reaction from either Mansfield or Hickenlooper. I did not hear much from Fulbright, but my impression was that he didn't think very much of this arrangement. He still thought that the CIA was not being very forthcoming. The oversight subcommittees of Armed Services and Appropriations were very inadequately staffed. What they called their staff consisted of Bill Darden, who was the staff director of Armed Services Committee. He was allowed to sit in on their sessions, but you know this was in addition to all his other duties and he had no staff assistance, and furthermore--really sort of stretching along the rules around here--Russell forbade

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him to brief any senator who wasn't present. So, I think Fulbright felt that even though he went to this thing he just heard sort of a set speech from the CIA and there was no background material, no very probing questions, and no basis on which to ask any very probing questions. But that arrangement continued in somewhat desultory form. I think it probably was abandoned or fell into disuse even before the creation of the Church committee.

**RITCHIE:** I don't get any sense, though, that the supervision of the CIA was really a priority issue of the committee. It seems to have been some thing that certain senators wanted but they didn't organize a particularly effective lobbying effort for it.

**HOLT:** Well, I think that's right. I think one reason they didn't, or couldn't, was that as I said before there was insufficient support for this in the Senate itself, and you know there was insufficient support for it within the committee up until very, very late in the game. Even as late as '73, when McGee was having those hearings on Chile that I referred to, McGee never explicitly stated it this way but he implied or at least I drew the inference that his objective was not so much in

really finding out what had gone as it was in providing some protection for the administration and the in

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telligence community against the charges that were being leveled at them publicly. The idea being that he could say: "Yeah, we had all these-executive hearings and didn't find anything."

**RITCHIE:** After all the revelations about the CIA started coming out, under the Church committee's investigation, did you get a sense that the attitude of the committee toward the CIA changed significantly in the 1970's?

**HOLT:** Well, the attitude of the whole damn Congress changed. But just going back to what I was saying a moment ago about the committee, you know the Hughes-Ryan amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of '74, I guess it was, which was the greatest legislative step towards oversight that had ever been taken up to that point, didn't come out of the Foreign Relations Committee. [Harold] Hughes wasn't even a member of the Foreign Realties Committee. He was a member of the Armed Services Committee, which indicates some dissatisfaction on his part about what he was learning in that capacity.

But, back to your question, the attitude of the committee changed, the attitude of the whole damn Congress changed. I don't want to attribute too much of this to Chile. Chile was one factor, but it was only one factor, and I don't know that it serves a useful purpose to try to

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weight the various factors. Another which came along a little after Chile was Angola. Another was the series of revelations stemming from Watergate and the Fielding break-in, and the Huston plan, and all of that. The atmosphere around here just changed totally. And another factor in this was the results of investigative reporting by several journalists around town, notably Seymour Hersh of the New York Times. It was Hersh's stories as much as anything which led to--I guess Ford was president by this time--the appointment of the Rockefeller Commission, which was mainly an executive branch agency, to investigate this. You know, some of the things the Rockefeller Commission came up with also contributed to the change in atmosphere up here.

**RITCHIE:** On the same issue of intelligence, but not necessarily on the CIA, I was curious whether you when you were working on the committee ever felt that the committee itself was under surveillance. Was there ever any trouble with telephones being tapped or anything like that?

**HOLT:** So far as the committee was concerned there was never any evidence of it. At one point, earlier than the '70's, there was a brief hubbub in the Senate over



the discovery, or the alleged discovery, that a senator's phone had been tapped. I think this was

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Senator Lehman of New York, who was not on the committee. Mansfield made an outraged speech and sought assurances from everybody in sight and there were all kinds of technicians prowling around and so on. But that's the only instance that occurs to me.

One time when March was away and I was acting chief of staff, the State Department reported to me that they had information that one of the secretaries on the committee was having an affair with an ambassador, and this gave them some cause for nervousness. This originally came to me from their congressional relations people and I promptly escalated it to the level of Assistant Secretary for the part of the world this ambassador came from which was not the Soviet bloc, thank God, but a Western country--and got a little more information about it. I said to the guy, "What would you do if you'd caught one of your secretaries." He said, "Oh, geez, I guess we'd transfer her." I said, "You know, God damn it, were people watching the ambassador or were they watching so-and-so?" He said, "Oh, the ambassador, the ambassador we wouldn't do anything like that!" Well, this was such sensitive intelligence that I really couldn't confront the girl with it. I did share it with Darrell St. Claire, who was then chief clerk of the committee, and sought his wisdom and advice as to what the hell to do, and finally I called her in and put it to her in terms that I had been hearing "gossip." Her first

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reaction indicated that she was thinking "who in the hell has been blabbing this?" And then her second reaction was to deny that it was so. I said to her, "I didn't ask you if it was so. I don't care if it's so. What's important is that it has generated gossip and appearances, and you know if you worked for HEW it wouldn't matter a damn even if it were so, but you can't have this and work for the Foreign Relations Committee." Well, the matter, thank God, was promptly resolved because the ambassador returned to his home country and she married somebody else. I was inclined to take the State Department's word for it that there interest in this had come from the ambassador rather than the girl. Now there were other people around the staff who were more paranoid about this than I was. Some of them would tell you that they thought some of this probably was going on, although there never was any evidence of it. Before sensitive, or presumably sensitive meetings, the CIA or the State Department used to send technicians around to sweep the committee room and check the telephones and all that kind of thing. I used to kid them, were they looking for bugs or planting them? They didn't think that was very funny, but who the hell knows?

**RITCHIE:** You did have a tremendous amount of sensitive material in your files, all those

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executive sessions, and the correspondence, and all the rest of that. Did you have any troubles with that leaking out?

**HOLT:** Well, like everybody else in town, we had troubles with leaks. I think on the balance we probably had fewer troubles with leaks than most people, but you know we had them. I don't know an office in town, and that includes the executive branch and the Supreme Court as well as Congress that is one hundred percent leak-proof. We had pretty good luck with respect to documents. We really did not have a filing system that was all that secure. We had a lot of filing cabinets with combination locks on them and so on, but the combinations to the locks were not treated the way I was taught to treat them when I was in Army Intelligence! The physical lay-out of the place was such that the public-at-large was forever wandering around and through various committee offices, so you couldn't be totally confident of it, but we were lucky enough not very much of that stuff leaked from the committee offices.

There were occasionally leaks that were very embarrassing. These usually took the form of somebody who had been present at an executive session blabbing about it to a newspaperman afterward. I think it was generally assumed certainly I assumed it for a long time, that this was done mainly by senators. Towards the end of my career up here,

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the number of staff members admitted to executive sessions increased so exponentially that I suspect some of the staff members might have done it on occasion. Of course.. nobody ever found out who the hell did any of these things. There are two documents that did leak, that occurs to me, to my great embarrassment. One of them was a report which I wrote on Bolivia, after a trip there I think it was in late 1969, which I classified "confidential" and put a covering memo on to the effect that "confidential" was perhaps underclassifying it, that it did have some sensitive material in it, and circulated it to members of the committee, which was sort of standard procedure. And it appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* the next day and very greatly embarrassed me, the American ambassador in Bolivia, and everybody concerned. I was sufficiently upset about it to complain to the full committee at an executive business meeting. The committee was sympathetic but not nearly as upset as I was. One of them said, "Pat, if you want to find out who did it, think of who around here wants to embarrass you." And I said, "That doesn't narrow the field enough!" But I was sufficiently upset to pursue it with the Ethics Committee, or at least I drafted a letter. I think Senator Stennis was chairman of the Ethics Committee then. I drafted a letter to Stennis which Fulbright signed. As far as I know he never even got an acknowledgement of it.

Another leak, which had to come from Church's office, when he decided that he seriously wanted to pursue the matter of the public safety program and torture in Brazil that we talked about later, I sent him a memo on how I thought they ought to go about it. Within a few days I was chagrined to read most of this in Jack Anderson's column. I complained bitterly to Church and to everybody else in his office that I could talk to. One person said Tom Dine had done it, Dine was then Church's legislative assistant. Dine said Church had done it, and you know where was I to go?

**RITCHIE:** Well, if a senator leaked information there wasn't very much a staff member could do about it, I guess.

**HOLT:** No, except the next time you put something in writing to that senator you were more careful about what the hell you said, and this meant that you were not as useful to him as you would have been otherwise. Some of these things are calculated and deliberate. Many of the leaks, perhaps most of them coming out of the executive branch, fall into that category. On rare occasions I leaked things myself under instructions from senators. I'm not going to talk about specific instances, but these did not involve the kind of documents we've been talking about, executive transcripts or classified memoranda

or materials received from the executive branch or that sort of thing. I think I could even pass a CIA lie detector test with respect to leaking classified information, but I did leak some other things which were calculated to embarrass a third party--under instructions.

**RITCHIE:** I remember that you said when you first came on to the committee one of your jobs was to handle press relations for Tom Connally. Did you handle press relations at all after that?

**HOLT:** Yes, I did for a while. Then as we got--this is sort of curious and paradoxical--as we got bigger we became less centralized about things like this. There was never any formal or explicit decision that I would stop doing it and somebody else would, it was just one of those things that sort of dribbled off. I did less and less and nobody sort of did it as a part of his job. It was whoever was there or whoever knew the most about it, that kind of thing.

**RITCHIE:** Did you have reporters coming to you on a frequent or infrequent basis looking for information?

**HOLT:** Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

**RITCHIE:** Was it sort of a regular beat, or did they follow the headlines?

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**HOLT:** Well, you have to distinguish between the chief of staff and other members of the staff. Before I became chief of staff, reporters came to me mainly with respect to situations or bills or what ever it was that I was doing the staff work on. And they went to other members of the staff the same way. Reporters go to the chief of staff more with respect to questions about the committee's activities in general, its program, what is it going to take up the next session of Congress, or whatever. They were always wanting predictions about what the committee action with respect to a particular matter would be. One of the troublesome things was that they were frequently trying to get the committee staff to do their work for them. This applied to lobbyists as well.

A common pattern would be that a reporter would go to the State Department with a question, let us say as a hypothetical example: do you have a request from Jordan for additional military assistance, and if so, what are you going to do about it? The State Department would not answer them in one of the many ways in which the State Department is adept at not answering questions. And so they would come to the Hill, you know: have you heard anything from the State Department about this? We'll assume the answer was no. Well, could you ask them about it? Or don't you think you ought to ask them about it? That kind of thing. Sometimes I would, but then I never would

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pass it on to whoever it was that had inspired the inquiry. Sometimes they'd be more forthcoming with me than they were with the press, and sometimes they wouldn't.

**RITCHIE:** I'd like to go back a little bit to our discussion of Chile. Do you think that the situation in Chile in any way significantly affected United States relations with Latin America in general? The Chilean situation was sort of a black mark, or at least it was painted up to be.

**HOLT:** I don't think there was any very great effect it had on government-to-government relations with the various countries of Latin America. I think it contributed to the already well-developed paranoia in the Third World about the CIA. But so did a lot of other things.

**RITCHIE:** I would assume that foreign affairs under Richard Nixon were affected by Watergate the way everything else under Nixon was affected. In what ways did you see it changing things from your perspective on the Foreign Relations Committee.

**HOLT:** Well, I don't think of anything at the moment that is specific with respect to which you can say the committee or the Congress did this

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or refused to do that mainly because of Watergate. The effect was more in terms of atmospherics than particular action. We talked about the credibility gap under Johnson, well by the end of the Nixon administration it had grown to cosmic proportions. The prevailing mood around here with respect to almost anything out of the White House was one of cynicism. This had an impact on things. For example, partly as a, or maybe entirely, or largely as a consequence of the brutality which characterized the Pinochet regime in Chile in its early days and months, the House put an amendment on a foreign aid bill introducing human rights as one of the things to be taken into consideration in extending or not extending foreign aid. Kissinger by this point was Secretary of State. I guess as a matter of fact Nixon had already resigned, but we were still in the aftermath of all of this. Kissinger came up to the Foreign Relations Committee with an impassioned plea in the best tradition of Secretaries of State not to tie his hands, that progress in human rights was best promoted through "quiet diplomacy." Well, there's a lot to be said for that argument in the abstract, and I think in the abstract most members of the Foreign Relations Committee agreed with it; the trouble was that nobody believed there had been any "quiet diplomacy." So the amendment which had originated in the House went into law, and it's still there. There is a school of thought which holds

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that the Nixon veto of the War Powers Resolution in the fall of 1973 would not have been overridden except that it followed by two or three weeks the "Saturday Night Massacre" in the Justice Department.

**RITCHIE:** I was going to ask you about that.

**HOLT:** Well, this is one of those speculative questions. My recollection is that the override vote in the House was not all that impressive. I think they had maybe four or five votes more than the two-thirds that were necessary, and there were more votes to override than there were to pass the damn resolution to begin with. The main thing that had changed in the interim was the "Saturday Night Massacre." On the other hand, the War Powers Resolution in one form or another had been under consideration for a couple of years or so. You can chart a steady progression of support for it in the House. There were more members of the House voting for stronger legislation every year than there had been before, and by '73 this support was growing very fast. Of course, by this time Watergate had begun to unravel. You had the Ervin Committee hearings in the Senate in the summer of '73, when the House was considering this, and then you can see other things building up to the "Saturday Night Massacre," but you also had the

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growing anti-war sentiment in the country. In any event, that argument, for whatever it's worth, is

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pretty much confined to the House. There was always more support for something like the War Powers Resolution in the Senate, and the votes in the Senate weren't all that close.

**RITCHIE:** What was, your role with respect to the War Powers Resolution?

**HOLT:** Not very much directly. Seth Tillman did most of the staff work on that for the committee. I was around at some of the hearings, and at some of the sessions when it was discussed, and I sat in on the conference committee, but I had no part in drafting it, or drafting amendments, or anything like that.

**RITCHIE:** The War Powers Resolution is getting a lot of attention from political scientists and historians who are trying to assess it. Do you think that it will ever live up to its expectations?

**HOLT:** Well, it hasn't really been tested. I think whether it works really depends on whether when the test comes Congress wants to make it work. You know, Congress can insist on its procedures, and if Congress disapproves of a particular action the procedures are there for Congress to overturn it. But this won't happen unless Congress insists on it.

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**RITCHIE:** Was the situation in Angola a test of the War Powers Resolution, or more a matter of appropriations?

**HOLT:** No, because we never had troops in Angola. The United States involvement in Angola, the extent that it existed, was covert. That was ended by Congress through use of the appropriation power.

**RITCHIE:** Which in the long term has always been Congress' most powerful instrument.

**HOLT:** Exactly so, you know it's there whether the War Powers Resolution is there or not. The War Powers Resolution, as much as anything was an effort to force Congress to participate in a decision, as distinguished from either acquiescing in it after the fact, or trying to overturn it after the fact. It was an effort to keep Congress from succumbing to the traditional temptation to pass the buck. But, you know, it's awfully hard to force Congress to grapple with an issue that it doesn't want to grapple with. The president, whoever he is in a hypothetical future case, can follow the procedures of the War Powers Resolution

in terms of prior consultation, in terms of reporting to the Congress, and so on, and then if Congress doesn't want to do anything about it, why who knows what would happen? Of course, under the War Powers Resolution, if Congress does nothing, then

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this has the effect of vetoing what the president has done. One can construct hypothetical circumstances in which this would be a very painful thing for Congress to be involved in. But all of the cases which have arisen under the War Powers Resolution since it's been passed have really been so damned ambiguous, border-line kinds of things.

**RITCHIE:** The Mayaguez affair. . .

**HOLT:** The evacuation of Da Nang, and Saigon, the evacuation of Phnom Penh, the Mayaguez affair. There have been some other even grayer, or lighter gray cases in which the president has not reported to Congress. Congressional opinion has been divided as to whether he should have or not. But there hasn't been anything clear cut of the kind that the framers of the resolution had in mind. Now, one can imagine, let us say in the early months of the Reagan administration that you have developing in El Salvador or in Guatemala a situation roughly analogous to that which developed in the Dominican Republic in 1965, with the 82nd Airborne or some other unit moving in. That would be on a scale sufficient to remove the ambiguity from whether or not the War Powers Resolution applies and would provide a test for it. But nothing like that has happened since it was passed.

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**RITCHIE:** The War Powers Act passed in '73 and it was in the spring of '74 that Senator Fulbright was defeated in the primary in Arkansas. Did that come as a shock to the committee and the members of the staff?

**HOLT:** Fulbright's defeat? I don't think it was a shock in the sense of it being a surprise. There had been enough straws in the wind from Arkansas to indicate that Fulbright was in trouble down there. It was a shock in a sense of it being a very great disappointment to me personally, to I think most of the staff, and certainly to some members of the committee. I suppose that there were members of the committee and of the Senate at large who took pleasure in it, but they were careful to conceal that.

**RITCHIE:** Fulbright had the longest tenure of any chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. Looking back over his years on the committee, what would you list as his most significant accomplishments and achievements?

**HOLT:** Well, I think the thing--I hate to put words in his mouth--certainly the most enduring accomplishment, probably both in terms of its inherent longevity as well as its long-term effects, would be the exchange of persons program, which of course was started

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long before he became chairman, before he was even a member of the committee as far as that goes, the original act. But all of this was revamped, and codified, and what-not, in the Fulbright-Hays act of 1960 or '61, which is when he was chairman. But just so far as his impact as chairman, I think he led the committee and eventually the Senate to insist upon a more independent role vis-a-vis the executive branch, and I think this is really more consistent with what the Founding Fathers had in mind when they provided for the separation of powers than had been the case in the glory days of the bipartisanship of Vandenberg and Connally.

I think that was probably his greatest accomplishment and impact as chairman, although in all candor it has to be said that he came to this after he had been chairman for several years, and only under the pressure of very strong disagreement with executive policies. In the latter days of the Eisenhower administration, Fulbright was given to deploring the effects of divided government, by which he meant a president of one party and a Congress controlled by the other. You know, I think I mentioned one reason he didn't want to be Kennedy's Secretary of State was he thought he could be more helpful to Kennedy as chairman of the committee than as Secretary. That was also the period when Fulbright was championing the traditional executive argument for flexibility in administering

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programs such as foreign aid and so on. But all of that changed and we still see the effects of it. Now, it's going to be interesting to observe next year how much staying power those effects have when you once again have a president and a Senate of the same party, and furthermore a much more conservative Senate than you have had in the past. My guess is, as a legacy of the '60's and '70's in which Fulbright contributed substantially, the Senate will continue to assert its independence, but from a different perspective. I anticipate that there will continue to be use of the technique of limiting amendments and provisos on appropriations bills and that kind of thing. They will come from a different direction on the political spectrum, but it will still be the same basic technique and relationship in terms of the executive and Congress.

**RITCHIE:** To some degree the committee and the Congress were even more independent of the White House after Fulbright's tenure. You have the stopping of aid to Angola, the cutting off of aid to Turkey, the cutback on aid to Vietnam



and Cambodia, all took place in 1975, 1976. Would you attribute that as the legacy of Fulbright?

**HOLT:** It was a continuation of the trend which had started earlier, and Fulbright contri-

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buted to the trend. I wouldn't want to suggest that he was the primary or only factor in it, but he was certainly an important one.

**RITCHIE:** Having looked back over his significant accomplishments, do you have any feeling of any disappointments or any regrets over his twenty years as chairman of the committee--things that weren't done?

**HOLT:** Oh, well, there are always a lot of things that aren't done. Nobody can do everything. It I don't off hand think of any examples of things that weren done, but I certainly wouldn't want to leave the impression that everything was done that should have been done. He did not leave a perfect committee or a perfect Senate when he departed in 1975, obviously not.

**RITCHIE:** With Fulbright's leaving the Senate, John Sparkman became chairman of the committee. He had been a member of the committee since the 1940's.

**HOLT:** Or early '50's.

**RITCHIE:** Could you give some assessment of John Sparkman, first as a member--we haven't talked about him that much--and then as chairman?

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**HOLT:** Well, as a member of the committee early--I think I mentioned this--he was chairman of the subcommittee which Connally appointed to handle the nominations to the United Nations General Assembly, about 1950 or '51, '52 maybe, of which controversy centered around Philip Jessup. Then I guess about that same time he was chairman of the subcommittee on the Far East, which I think we also talked about, it had such a good relationship with John Foster Dulles during the negotiation and the advice and ratification process of the Japanese Peace Treaty. Beyond that time in the '50's I don't really off-hand think of anything in particular about Sparkman. I began to have more to do with him in 1961 when we began the series of Mexico-United States interparliamentary conferences. Fulbright asked Sparkman in the beginning to handle that so far as the Senate and the Foreign Relations Committee was concerned, and Sparkman did throughout most of the '60's when he got out of it. I made a number of trips to Mexico with him and dealt with the Mexicans with him, and he was very easy

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to work with, get along with. He always tended to be supportive of the State Department, whatever administration was in power. He was not as aggressive or even combative or as independent as Fulbright. Less self-assertive than Mansfield, Humphrey or whoever. At one point he used to amuse himself at the committee meetings by solving algebraic equations. Some senators doodled, and

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at one time we had a great collection of senatorial doodles. I think Morella Hanson has them now. But instead of doodling, Sparkman did algebraic equations. When he became chairman, he was insistent on the prerogatives of the committee and the Senate and so on, but he was not as assertive or even aggressive about this as Fulbright had been.

Under Sparkman the centrifugal forces within the committee manifested themselves. There was a tendency toward fragmentation. This, however, was part of a larger phenomenon which was occurring in the Senate as a whole at the same time. You had the progression, beginning in about 1975, of actions in the Senate to provide more staff, to provide more minority staffing, and that kind of thing. So in a sense the Foreign Relations Committee was simply caught up in a trend that was evident in the Senate as a whole. I think it possibly was more noticeable in the Foreign Relations Committee because of the change between Fulbright to Sparkman, but another change that occurred at the same time was that George Aiken left the Senate also at the end of '74. Aiken had been a very strong restraining influence on these tendencies on the Republican side of the committee. So both Fulbright and Aiken were removed at the same time, and that I think tended to exaggerate the effects of this.

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**RITCHIE:** Did the subcommittee structure change in the Foreign Relations Committee? Did the concept of the consultative subcommittees tend to be replaced by more independent subcommittees?

**HOLT:** Yes. This had started of course with the creation of the Subcommittee on Multi-National Corporations way back in '72, I guess it was. But one of the things I did when I became chief of staff, or just before when I knew I was going to, was to go around to various selected members of the committee and ask them their views about the staff, what it was doing that it ought not to be doing, what it wasn't doing that it should be doing, and so on. One of these was Humphrey, and Humphrey said, "We need a subcommittee on foreign aid." This was in late 1973. He said, "We don't really give that program the kinds of oversight that we ought to." I don't think I really reacted to that conversation with Humphrey other than to take note of it. As long as Fulbright was chairman it never happened. Right after he left it did happen and the whole orientation of the approach of the committee to foreign aid changed from trying to kill the program to trying to

reform it. That was mainly the work of Humphrey. That subcommittee had a considerable degree of independence under Sparkman, and a considerable staff as well.

Towards the end of 1976 the Subcommittee on Multi-National Corporations was supposed to come to an end.

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Church didn't really want it to, I think he probably wanted to protect the jobs of the staff people and maybe his own position as chairman of it. He didn't really want to have a fight about continuing the multi-national corporation things, so he persuaded the committee to change it to foreign economic policy, or something like that, and so you had that. But in addition to the subcommittee--and at the same time you did have the consultative subcommittees continue not very much different from what they had been--but in addition to that what was noticeable in 1975, again in considerable part reflecting changes that were buffeting the. Senate as a whole, was the development on the part of senators of damn near a mania about having more staff. Furthermore, having more staff which was responsible to individual senators rather than to the chief of staff or to the committee as a whole.

I remember in early '75 I went into the committee with the committee's budget, the annual ritual of doing these things, and what I presented was substantially a continuation of the status quo. I'll be damned if the committee on its own didn't increase that by seventeen professional positions, which was a source of great distress to me! I remarked to somebody that I was the only bureaucrat having an empire built against his will. Well, the Rules Committee didn't go along with it, but this was a part of the movement in the Senate that led to the adoption of

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S. Res. 60 which did give every senator on a committee a staff man for that committee, and so on. Then you had the other things which followed from that. But there was constant pressure to increase staff. The staff did grow, I don't know whether I mentioned this but when I got here in 1950 the staff was eight. When I left in 1977 it was sixty-two.

**RITCHIE:** And the biggest jump you feel was between '75 and '77? What was the staff size in '75?

**HOLT:** Well, I wouldn't want to be pinned down. I guess forty maybe, forty-five. Now, in all honesty, I have to say that a considerable amount of that growth came from me, and consisted of people to run the committee's computer project, which got off the ground about '73 or '74, somewhere in there.

**RITCHIE:** Your feeling about the seventeen more staff members was that they would complicate matters rather than make things more efficient?

**HOLT:** It was partly that. It was also apprehension that this would contribute to the fragmentation and the centrifugal forces which I mentioned earlier. That they would be harder to control and supervise and tend to shoot off in all directions, and it would make it more difficult for me as chief of staff to know what the hell the staff was doing.

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**RITCHIE:** I have a number of additional questions dealing with your role as chief of staff, but I think considering the time we should perhaps cut it off and have one more session.

**HOLT:** Well, all right, but I could stay another fifteen minutes . . . I remember one story in connection with the Democratic Caucus in the days when Fulbright supported foreign aid, before he turned sour on it. He wanted to try to generate some support for it in the Democratic Caucus and had me prepare a lot of material for him, talking points and back up data and figures and so on. I did and I said, "Do you want me to go with you?" Because I always went with him to the Senate itself when he was doing something like this. He thought about this for a minute and he said, "You wait outside. I don't know whether I can get you in or not." But he said, "Wait outside in case I need you." So I sat there in Mansfield's outer office for half the morning and finally somebody came out and said, "Fulbright wants you in there." So I went in. I was allowed to stay about three minutes or so to answer questions and then I went.

**RITCHIE:** Except for the Majority Secretary, they don't allow any staff in there.

**HOLT:** Well, I think that's all right. I'm inclined to think that meetings ought to be

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either open or closed, and there ought not to be any half-way point. You get a bunch of staff hangers-on then you really get a sort of ambiguous question as to whether it is open or closed.

**RITCHIE:** Which I suppose affects how the information is released later on.

**HOLT:** More importantly than that, it affects how senators behave in the meeting. We're not really talking about the kind of information that would appeal to Jack Anderson or the *Post* or the *Times*, we're talking about what the senators say to each other, which is going to be different if they think they're really talking just to each other than it is if they think that Senator X who is not present, has a guy sitting over there who is going to report it not only to Senator X but maybe to his wife or girlfriend and what not.

[End of Interview #8]

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**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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**Interview #9**  
**Chief of Staff**

(Friday, December 12, 1980)  
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

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**RITCHIE:** The last time we had gotten to the point in 1974 when you became chief of staff of the Foreign Relations Committee. Can you tell me how your duties and responsibilities changed once you became chief of staff?

**HOLT:** Well, I never got to work on anything substantive after that. Strangers used to ask me what I did and I said I answered the phone. You know, you're responsible for the operation of the staff, so you spend, or you did then, all of your time giving assignments and seeing that they are followed up, and looking at the results, and trying to keep up with what members of the growing staff were doing on their own. So you never really get to do anything yourself. It's essentially an administrative job, as distinguished from a substantive job as a professional member of the staff. I discovered fairly soon that I neither liked administration very much nor was I very good at it.

When Marcy decided to retire, he decided in the fall of '73, he and I went in to see Fulbright. He had talked to Fulbright privately earlier. Fulbright said to me,

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"Well, Pat, do you want the job?" And I said, "Well, I have no great enthusiasm about the damn job, but if Marcy doesn't have it I don't want anybody else to have it because I'm too damn old to establish with somebody else the kind of relationship I've had with Carl." Then Fulbright said Okay, and the committee said Okay, and that was it. But it was not the happiest period of my service up here, to understate the matter somewhat. Marcy used to complain, I think this was one reason that led him to retire, that he spent half his time practicing psychiatry without a license. I found out what that meant. There are an awful lot of large and fragile egos around this place, and a committee staff director is caught sort of between the upper and nether millstones. He is working for a bunch of prima donnas--senators by definition are prima donnas--and the Foreign Relations Committee staff in those days had a good many people with tendencies toward being a prima donna. So you were caught between these things. It was particularly difficult that first year because Fulbright, facing a reelection campaign in Arkansas, just dropped from sight fairly early in 1974, and was scarcely seen or heard of again until after the Arkansas primary. That left Sparkman as acting chairman, and he was very cooperative and agreeable in this

role but he felt very acutely the fact that he was acting and he didn't really want to assert himself very much. That

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left it pretty much to me if things were going to get done. I was not in a position to assert myself all that much either. There really wasn't any place for me to turn for guidance, for support, or for shoulders to cry on. A hell of a lot of people were crying on my shoulder, but to paraphrase Truman that is where the thing stopped.

Then, after Fulbright lost that primary in Arkansas in June, I guess it was, I talked to Sparkman and he confirmed that the following year he would take the chairmanship of Foreign Relations, relinquishing his chairmanship of the Banking Committee. But he also made it very clear, and he was quite emphatic about this, he said, "Listen, Bill Fulbright's chairman of this committee until the 3rd of January next year and I don't want to get in his way." Well, all right, Fulbright came back from Arkansas eventually and he was here during the summer of 1974 long enough to preside over an investigation of Kissinger's role in wiretapping. Then he went to China in August. In the meantime, his wife had surgery, and that distracted him. Later in the year he had surgery himself, which took him out of circulation for a period of weeks.

So '74 in many respects was a lost year, a year of just trying to hold things together. We were sort of the headless wonder around here. Sometime in the late summer or early fall I did get Sparkman to talk a little bit

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about the transition, and he indicated he wanted to make very damn few changes and very few were made as it turned out. Things got better when Sparkman became chairman in name as well as in fact. But by temperament he's not the activist type that Fulbright was. To the degree that he was activist, he concerned himself with administrative details about the committee and the staff which Fulbright never bothered with. So we had the rather peculiar situation in which the chairman of the committee was concerning himself with how the furniture was arranged in the office, as one example, and leaving the chief of staff to decide what the committee's schedule would be in consideration of the foreign aid program, or some damn thing, and I thought that was getting it backwards. No senator likes to say no when people ask him for something, almost regardless of what it is. One of the duties of a staff director is to be the bearer of bad tidings. If the chairman can do what somebody wants him to the chairman tells him that personally. But if the chairman can't do it, or for some reason doesn't want to do it, he sends the staff director. Sparkman in this respect did not differ in principle from any other senator that I've ever had any dealings with. He did differ in degree--it was more pronounced in the case of Sparkman. Towards the end of my

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tenure up here I had the occasion to say to somebody else that so far as I was aware, I was the

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only person he said no to in the last two years. Well, I could ramble on about this forever, but I think that answers your question.

**RITCHIE:** In connection with the staff of the committee, I read a quote from you in a recent book, Thomas Franck and Edward Weisband's *Foreign Policy By Congress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). They quoted you as being critical of "policy entrepreneurs" on the committee staffs. You said that "staff forget that they don't represent a single United States voter." I wondered if that was a reflection of any experiences you had with the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee?

**HOLT:** Oh, sure, I didn't make that up out of the air! Going back to when I first started to work up here, and continuing uninterruptedly from that point, it was always one of the cardinal principles of staff behavior on the committee to keep that particular point in mind, both because it was a hell of a good way to stay out of trouble with the committee and its members, but also and more fundamentally it goes to the way the American government is supposed to operate. There is supposed to be public accountability, and the staff is not publicly accountable. Well, I think one reason also people around Foreign Relations felt so

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strongly about that was the experience which some other committees had with staff in the '50's. The famous [Roy] Cohn-[David] Shine team of the old McCarthy committee being the most spectacular example of that. Well, as the staff grew it became more difficult to observe this.

The matter was complicated by the centrifugal forces that I mentioned last week that became particularly evident after Sparkman became chairman. I don't want to overemphasize Sparkman's role in this. Those forces were unleashed around the Senate in general at that same time, and early '75 or late '74 was the year that the House went through the revolution of reform and at least the outerfringes of that hurricane were felt at the Senate side of the Capitol. But one of the consequences of this was the proliferation of subcommittees, their growth and their independence, the tendency of certain members of the staff and certain senators to identify with each other, and so far as the staff was concerned this meant looking to a particular senator rather than to the committee as a collegiate body. So the situation became more difficult and complicated than it had been before.



**RITCHIE:** That was the period when the concept of a professional staff which served everybody was broken down. There was a minority staff and then sort of by definition the rest of the staff became the majority staff, I guess.

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**HOLT:** Well, there really wasn't a minority staff at that time. That didn't come until later, after I had left. But there was the beginnings of it in some of the subcommittees, particularly the Subcommittee on Multi-National Corporations. There was also a greater insistence on the part of senators on both sides to appoint people to the staff. Some of the people who were appointed as a result of this were very good people, but you know they felt a responsibility to the senator who had appointed or sponsored them, greater than their responsibility to the committee as a whole.

**RITCHIE:** Do you think that in the long run this is a detriment to the work of the committee?

**HOLT:** Yes, I do. One of the problems the Senate faces in dealing with the executive branch as a separate branch of the government is that there is a very weak institutional or collegiate loyalty in the Senate to the Senate as an institution, as an independent coordinate branch of the government. To a considerable degree this is inherent in the fact that the Senate is an elective body and every senator thinks about his own personal political situation before he thinks about the institutional position of the Senate, and that's perfectly natural. But it does get in the way of building up the Senate as an institution.

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It might be interesting in this regard to trace briefly the development of the staff of the committee. For all practical purposes we start with the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, which for the first time provided for professional committee staffs and said they were to be hired and fired solely on the basis of merit. I think it also said that professional staff members were not to have outside interests, employment, etc. So that their whole loyalty would be to the committee as a committee. Vandenberg, who was the first chairman when that act became effective, took it seriously. Connally, as a matter of fact, voted against the damn thing when it passed the Senate in '46, but by the time Connally became chairman again in '49, he was also taking-it seriously, and George and the whole damn committee did. That's the way we operated, and this was spelled out in some detail in the rules for the staff that were adopted along in '57 or '58, as a consequence of the work mainly of John Kennedy. These rules said that the staff as a whole worked for the committee as a whole. I don't know if this was ever written down, but one of the things that Marcy particularly was emphatic about was that one of the most important jobs of the staff was to see to it that senators on whichever side of an issue could make the best case possible for their side, the

theory being that the more vigorous and informed the public debate, the better policy there was likely to result from it.

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I remember in connection with the first coffee agreement, which was fairly controversial, this would have been in the early 1960's. the committee had a minority view, which was something that didn't happen very often then. I was the guy who was handling the coffee lip agreement and I wrote both the committee report and the minority views. During consideration of the coffee agreement, Senator [Karl] Mundt, who I guess hadn't been on the committee very long at that point, called up and said he wanted to talk to the minority staff man, and I said there wasn't one. That surprised him a little bit, and he said, "Well, I want to oppose the coffee agreement, and where can I get some help?" And I said, "From me." He sounded a little skeptical about that but asked me to come around and see him, and I did, and gave him the case against the coffee agreement, and wrote a speech for him, I guess. He later said to Marcy that he was very satisfied, to his surprise.

During the '60's the Republicans in the Senate generally began to agitate for more formal designation of minority staffs, and a 2:1 staffing ratio, and so on. Carl Curtis, I think it was, offered an amendment to I guess the legislative appropriations bill to provide for this, and Hickenlooper went to him and said, "Look, Carl, if you want to do this for other committees in the Senate, that's okay with me, I'll support you," he said, . . . if

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you leave Foreign Relations out of it. We're getting along just fine with the arrangement we've got." So that's the way we operated until about the middle of the '70's when it began to break down under pressure of all the things that I've described earlier. I resisted this as best I could; got into some trouble, as a matter of fact, by writing a letter to the Rules Committee! But, you know, I was just out of tune with the times.

**RITCHIE:** Well, the Foreign Relations Committee had ranking Republican members like Hickenlooper, and Aiken, and Clifford Case, who seemed to be basically in agreement with the Democratic members. There was a spirit of bipartisanship there, wasn't there?

**HOLT:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** So that reduced the need for a minority staff, than say had the Homer Capeharts been more prominent or ranking members of the committee.

**HOLT:** Well, I think one of the things that contributed to this, so far as the Foreign Relations Committee is concerned, was the irritation of both the Johnson and the Nixon administrations at the staff of the committee. Johnson and Nixon were really irritated by the committee, but they inaccurately tended

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to hold the staff responsible for some of the things the committee was doing. The notion developed downtown that the staff had a whole lot more influence on the committee than in fact it had. You know, the influence was running in the other direction. But this was inadequately appreciated downtown. In '73, I guess it was, Robert Griffin of Michigan, the Republican Whip, came on the committee. He made it part of his interest to do something about the staff. The state of the law or the rules at that time was that when a majority of the minority members of a committee ask for staff, a limited number of them, they were entitled to get it. Griffin inspired a majority of the Republicans to do this. I think eventually all of them went along with him. But this was something which Aiken did not like worth a damn, and resisted it as long as he could.

When he couldn't resist it anymore he compromised with it by designating Bob Dockery as the minority staff man. Dockery got along with Aiken fine, and Aiken was very satisfied with that arrangement. Dockery did some things also for other Republicans on the committee, but they were less satisfied with the arrangement than Aiken. When I became chief of staff, I felt a need to find somebody who would take over what I had been doing with respect to Latin America. Dockery was the obvious choice for this, but I thought that Dockery because of his duties as minority staff was not available for it, and I started trying to recruit some other

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people, and ran a couple by the Personnel Subcommittee, which did not have as high an opinion as I did of the merits of these people, and turned them down. Finally I said, "Well look, what are we going to do about this?" And Aiken said, "Oh, why don't you take Bob Dockery?" I said, "I'd be delighted to take Bob Dockery if you'll let me have him." And he said, "Well, he can do both jobs." So Dockery then moved into Latin America in a big way and he continued on paper anyway to be the minority guy, but that arrangement sort of dribbled off. It was probably unsustainable over a long term, inherently anyway.

**RITCHIE:** Still, I imagine it must have put some strain on the staff to try to wear two hats. You described writing a majority and a minority report for the same bill. It would seem to be easier for a staff member if you were identified with one side or the other.

**HOLT:** Well, I guess that's the prevailing view up here. Certainly as things became more contentious there were some members of the staff who had great

difficulty doing this. I did not. It struck me as a perfectly straight forward exercise of the kind one finds in academia or in the better journalism. You just say, in effect, you embellish it a little bit, but in effect what you are doing is saying the reasons for ratifying the cof-

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fee agreement are as follows; and then the reasons for not doing it are as follows. One of the things that was always insisted upon in the '50's and '60's was that members of the staff ought not themselves to become emotionally involved in issues that were before the committee, that we were supposed to be detached, dispassionate, objective, etc. Well, as the emotional content of issues mounted, primarily in the first instance over Vietnam, this became increasingly difficult to do, even for me, and much more difficult for some other people. It's a matter I think, of temperament more than anything else.

**RITCHIE:** We talked about the Nixon and the Johnson impressions of the committee and the strained relations between the committee and those two administrations. We haven't really mentioned much about the Ford years and the Ford and Kissinger foreign policy, which would have corresponded with the time when you were chief of staff. Did relations grow any better between the committee and the administration at that point?

**HOLT:** Yes. Even in the last year of the Nixon administration, attributable principally to Henry Kissinger becoming Secretary of State in name as well as in fact. One of his first priorities was to pursue a policy of detente with the Foreign Relations Committee, and he had some success with it. To a degree this was

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cosmetic, but anyway it reduced some of the strain that had been evident before. Of course, when Ford became president one of his first priorities was to reduce the strains that had developed throughout the government and indeed the country. And that helped too. You know, differences of policy continued, but things weren't as tense as they had been earlier.

**RITCHIE:** Still, the committee and the Congress handed the Ford administration a number of major defeats on foreign policy issues: the cut off of aid to Vietnam and Cambodia, to Angola, a number of strong slaps on the wrist. Was that a sign that the administration was weak in foreign policy?

**HOLT:** Well, I don't know that I would characterize it as either weak or strong. As a matter of fact, if I remember right, the controlling cut offs of aid with respect to Southeast Asia occurred in the last year of the Nixon administration. Ford had to live with the consequences of this, but they antedated his arrival in the White House. The Angola thing I think was sort of sui generis. It was attributable in part

to the disenchantment with Vietnam, more practicably it was attributable to the Hughes-Ryan amendment, without which Congress never would have learned there was something that needed to be stopped!

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**RITCHIE:** There was cut off of aid to Turkey, too.

**HOLT:** Yes, there was, to the great distress of the administration. But this, too, or at least the seeds of it, antedated Ford. The Cyprus invasion which led to that cut off occurred in the summer of 1974 while Nixon was still president. The irony of that whole thing is that the cut off was required by the law as it existed prior to the invasion of Cyprus. If Kissinger had acted within the executive branch to cut off or suspend aid to Turkey, as the law clearly required him to do, without any further action from Congress, after a decent interval he could have negotiated a resumption of it and a great deal of the steam would have been taken out of the Greek lobby on the Hill. But by choosing to fight the damn thing--by choosing first to ignore the law and then to fight congressional efforts to reaffirm the law--Kissinger just got a lot of backs up, particularly among ethnic Greeks in the United States, there aren't that many of them, but boy there's a Greek restaurant in every God damned congressional district! So you had the long and troublesome debate over that, which ensued. This is speculative, of course, but I think it could have been avoided.

Another defeat, or at least a pseudo-defeat, which Congress handed the Ford administration, was in the early part of 1975 with respect to supplemental aid for Vietnam and Cambodia, as the situation out there was collapsing. I

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said pseudo-defeat because I've never really been sure how much Gerald Ford really believed in what he asked Congress to do at that time, and how much was sort of cosmetic for the sake of the governments in Saigon and Phnom Penh. The situation really did pose a very acute dilemma for the Ford administration. If they had not asked for supplemental aid, they would probably have brought about the fall of those governments sooner than the fall occurred in any event. On the other hand, it was pretty damn clear, from the view up here anyway, that the additional aid would not be decisive in any means anyway. Ford did feel an obligation of some sort towards Saigon and Phnom Penh as a result of long United States associations, to at least go through the motions of trying to help them. Congress felt that obligation to a much smaller extent.

**RITCHIE:** You said that you were reading Kissinger's memoirs now. In dealing with him did you find him to be as impressive a tactician as his public image is? You mentioned a couple of instances where Kissinger perhaps created himself more trouble than he would have had otherwise.

**HOLT:** Well, he's smarter than hell, there's no doubt about that. He's also very witty. But despite the efforts he made with respect to Congress, with some successes, I had the feeling fairly early that

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these were more cosmetic or tactical if you will than anything else. And as I have reflected on this since then, I don't think Kissinger ever really understood Congress as an institution, how it worked, what motivates people up here, and so on. It was something which was largely foreign to all of his experiences. Although he could charm a bunch of senators in personal contact, it sometimes proved to be transitory.

**RITCHIE:** One other question about John Sparkman as chairman of the committee. When I first started to work for the Senate he was the chairman of the committee and my recollection is of often seeing him dozing. It struck me that he was a man who had been in politics for a long time and got the chairmanship perhaps after he was past his prime. Do you think he was too old for the job by the time he got it?

**HOLT:** I'm not sure. I think he was too old by the time he left it. The business of dozing that you referred to was not in his case really a function or reflection of age. He was doing that back in the 1501s! But the last year I was up here it became apparent that he didn't grasp things as quickly or as readily as he once had. You had to go over things more frequently with him and repeat, and that sort of thing.

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**RITCHIE:** Would you say that this is a weakness of the seniority system, that it forces people to wait so long in their careers before they finally obtain such a position, and that perhaps less senior people might have served better than the senior person?

**HOLT:** Yes, I think so. There are other weaknesses of the seniority system as well. These have been ameliorated somewhat in recent years. Seniority doesn't mean as much around here as it used to, and I think that's good. I think serious consideration ought to be given to applying to all Senate committees the rule that applies to the Intelligence Committee for rotating the chairmanship at stated intervals. I've forgotten what it is, two years I think on Intelligence, something like that. Maybe it's not a rule, maybe it's just a custom that [Daniel] Inouye began, but anyway I think it's a good custom. And you might even think about limiting the service of any member of any committee.

There is limitation on members of the Intelligence Committee, how long they can serve. The argument against doing that is that you lose experience and continuity

which can be a very great loss indeed. You know, by sometime in the middle or late 1960's, the senior members and senior staff of the Foreign Relations Committee had been dealing with the foreign aid program a good deal longer than any of the senior officials in the executive branch had been

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dealing with it. This resulted in what in my view was very healthy skepticism when the executive came up here with its recurring proposals to reorganize the damn program. It frequently turned out that we'd been through this at some point before that nobody downtown remembered. Well, people up here remembered it. That particular kind of experience is not something which one would want to dispense with lightly.

**RITCHIE:** We talked about Ford and Kissinger, and in an earlier discussion you mentioned Jimmy Carter's first appearance on Capitol Hill as president elect with his marathon sessions with the Foreign Relations Committee. The Carter administration has gotten a reputation of having poor relations with Congress in general. Did you find that true after he became president, with the Foreign Relations Committee.

**HOLT:** Well, I think so. But I guess I really ought not to talk about it because I overlapped with him a total of one week, I think it was, or ten days. And that is scarcely enough experience to base a judgment on. But from reading the newspapers and talking to people I know up here in the interval since I left, I'm sure that's right. He had terrible relations with Congress, despite the initial efforts he made to have good ones.

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**RITCHIE:** Even though you weren't on the committee at the time, I was wondering that given your long interest in Latin American affairs, what you thought about his legislative handling of the Panama Canal Treaty?

**HOLT:** I think the Panama Canal Treaty is a landmark in the foreign policy of the United States. It was just something that had to happen. Carter brought to conclusion a negotiation that had been going on for thirteen years, for God's sake. I think it's in major part a consequence of this that the Canal is operating today as smoothly and trouble-free as it is. Having said all that about the treaty itself, it is my impression that the Carter administration damn nearblew it in the Senate. The Senate gave its advice and consent to that treaty at least as much in spite of the Carter administration as because of it. That really was one of the Senate's finest hours.

**RITCHIE:** In what particular ways would you say they nearly blew it?

**HOLT:** Well, in sort of complicated ways. The problem which they faced in the Senate with respect to that treaty came down to a group of senators who were not personally or politically strongly committed on either side. There was one group up here that recognized, whether they liked it or not, that this treaty was some-

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thing whose time had come, and the consequences of rejecting it would be unsupportable for American foreign policy. There was another group which believed deeply and passionately that it was a damn bad treaty and that all kinds of disasters would follow upon its coming into effect. In between these two groups were senators who were either open-minded, willing to be shown, or who sort of kept their own counsel, waiting to see which way the wind might be blowing, and one of the criteria they used for judging which way the wind was blowing was what else they could get out of the administration, or out of somebody, else in the Senate for that matter. The administration handled clumsily the whole the matter of dealing with this group of senators. Senators who committed themselves to the treaty early on, complained that senators who held out got more concessions from the administration than the early birds had gotten. Some of these concessions, in the folklore of the Senate anyway, had nothing to do with the treaty, they had to do with public works projects and such as that. Other concessions did have to do with the treaty.

If any one thing almost blew it, it was the president giving his blessing to the [Dennis] DeConcini Amendment towards the end of the debate. After the Senate had adopted that with respect to the security treaty, the most elaborate contortions and negotiations were necessary to find a way to undo it, in effect, in connection with the

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Canal treaty. At this point the matter was largely taken out of the hands of the administration by the Senate leadership and the Panamanians. The compromise on DeConcini was negotiated by the Senate leadership and Bill Rogers, who at the point had the status of a private citizen practicing law in Washington, who was brought in sort of to use his good offices as between the Senate and the Panamanians.

I think it set a bad precedent in that you had senators negotiating directly with foreign governments, not only with respect to how to undo DeConcini, but even earlier Howard Baker went down and talked to [Omar] Torrijos about changes that would have to be made. I think this, as much as anything is what led to the favorable Senate vote on the treaty, but it has to raise the question in the minds of foreign governments about who in the United States government do they negotiate with. I believe very strongly in the prerogative of the Senate with respect to treaties, but the time to involve the Senate in the negotiation of treaties



is during the negotiation, when they can be advisers to the executive branch negotiators. Well, in the case of Panama, you couldn't find a senator to touch the damn thing with a ten foot pole before he had to, and maybe there wasn't any other way to handle it than the way Baker did. It certainly brought a good result, but the precedent does worry me a little bit.

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**RITCHIE:** One other chairman of the committee whom we haven't discussed so far is one you didn't actually work under as chairman but you worked with as a member of the committee, and that was Frank Church. I wonder if you could give me some of your impressions of Church on the Foreign Relations Committee?

**HOLT:** I've forgotten when he first came on it.

**RITCHIE:** 1959, I think.

**HOLT:** He was one of the earliest to express his disquiet about Vietnam publicly, even before the overthrow of Diem, which I guess was '63. Later, of course, he became one of the leaders in the anti-war movement up here, the Cooper-Church Amendment and all that kind of thing. I guess it was '69 he succeeded Wayne Morse as chairman of the Latin American Subcommittee and I began to have more to do with him. He began with that subcommittee by having a series of private, off-the-record meetings with the press corps that is concerned with Latin America, and with various prominent Latinos who were passing through Washington, and so on. That didn't last for too terribly long. And we've talked earlier about his interest in the public safety program of AID, and so on, and the genesis of his interest in the problem of multi-national corporations.

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I had a great deal of trouble with the Subcommittee on Multi-National Corporations, not so much because of what the subcommittee did as because of what it did not do. It confined itself almost entirely to uncovering scandal, which it did very adroitly. I didn't have any problem with that; if there was scandal, uncover it. But I never could get either the staff or the chairman of that subcommittee to focus on what I thought was a more fundamental long-range problem, namely how does the United States, or the world for that matter, deal with this new animal which has burst upon us essentially since World War II, and which I think raises all kinds of questions about responsiveness to political or social control. These are very complicated questions which they never addressed in any fundamental sense. As chairman of that subcommittee, Church was one of the principal of the centrifugal forces that I talked about earlier. I said to him once that "one of these days you're going to be in a position where maybe you want to pull these centrifugal forces back to the center of things, and the way things are going it's going to be awful hard to put Humpty-Dumpty back together

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again." He said in effect, "Yes, I know, we'll meet that when we come to it," or something to that effect. But what he was like as chairman I just don't have any feeling for.

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**RITCHIE:** You once said that not enough time was spent on "thinking and planning" about foreign policy. I was wondering if looking back or looking forward, either way, you have any suggestions about how the Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate could solve that problem?

**HOLT:** Well, there are two or three things, some of which are more practical than others. They could go back to multi-year authorizations for the foreign affairs agencies of the government, State, USIA, AID, which would free them from the annual self-inflicted torture of reviewing these things and reauthorizing them, which takes an enormous amount of time on the part of both the staff and the committee. They could stop shooting off in all directions, reacting to the headlines, having a hearing today on Zimbabwe because it was in the news last week and having a hearing next week on the Persian Gulf because it's in the news this week.

I have suggested somewhere that the things Congress as a whole tries to do are beyond its capacities, either physical or psychological. You know, it takes pretty much a whole Congress to deal with a serious tax reform bill or welfare reform bill. The Senate spent from February to April on the Panama Canal Treaty. If it had proceeded to SALT II, or if it ever proceeds to SALT III if there ever is one, that's going to take the better part of a

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session of Congress. I think Congress would be more effective if at the beginning of every Congress each committee established priorities for itself for the following two years and said we're going to let other things slide. But the temptations to avoid doing that are very great around here.

**RITCHIE:** Do you suggest anything like your own experience of taking a sabbatical?

**HOLT:** I think it would be a great thing. I think it ought to be institutionalized. Paradoxically, in the Legislative Reorganization Act, in '71 I guess, Congress did authorize professional training for committee staff. 'Having done that, it then backed away from it. At one point the Foreign Relations Committee staff wanted to send Jim Lowenstein to a seminar at Harvard, which would have lasted a matter of several weeks or a few months, and put it to the committee, and my God you'd thought we suggested dismantling the dome of the Capitol! But I think it ought to be institutionalized and regularized so, as happens on college faculties,

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a fellow can count on the fact that he gets a year off out of every five or ten or whatever, to do within limits what ever seems reasonable. I know the Foreign Relations Committee got much better analysis of Latin American problems out of me than they would have otherwise.

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**RITCHIE:** You spent twenty-seven years with the Foreign Relations Committee. Looking back, in what ways has the committee changed over that period? How different was it by 1977 than it had been in 1950?

**HOLT:** It was a hell of a lot more independent and skeptical and assertive and better informed, all of which I think was good. It was more fragmented, which I think was bad within limits. I don't want to put too much emphasis on this point about unification, because it can be carried too far too. I think the staff was a whole lot bigger, I think too big. In 1950 the staff was too little. In the process of correcting that, they overdid it. At the time I left I think we had sixty-two people on the staff and I thought then that forty-five would have been about right.

**RITCHIE:** One of the reasons you mentioned why the staff had increased was because in 1973 you adopted a very elaborate computer system. I wonder if you might mention what the reason was for that and how well it's worked out?

**HOLT:** The reason for it went way back, although when the reason for it developed we didn't know what it was going to lead to. The reason for it was that from time to time a senator would say, "I remember

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somebody, I think it was Dean Rusk, one time saying thus-and-so. I don't remember when and where it was, but you find that for me." Well, with the accumulation of committee hearings and transcripts and so on over the years it became increasingly difficult for anybody on the staff himself to remember these things. We'd gotten away with doing it that way here in the '50's, but by the '60's it was getting to be more complicated. So Marcy said, "Gee whiz, we've got to index all this stuff." At one point we hired somebody to index them, and she labored at this for a year or two and wasn't even keeping even with current stuff, and how were we ever going to catch up?

We used to fret over this and have staff meetings about it and chew our nails and so on, and finally the Rules Committee made it possible for us to bring in a couple of outside people, not to solve the problem but to tell us what the problem was and how to solve it. They spent weeks in the bosom of the committee talking to staff about how we were doing things, and came up with a recommendation for computerization. In the meantime, I guess, Morella Hanson and I had a long session with some people from IBM about how it worked--that was really my

introduction to computers. I guess this also coincided with the [Sam] Ervin Watergate Committee, which was the first Senate committee to use computers, or to computerize its data. We thought, by God this was the answer. The Water-

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gate Committee really had a good computer staff and did a good job on that. We talked to them, and the Rules Committee was concerning itself more with this too, thinking of a Senate-wide system. When the Watergate Committee went out of business, the Rules Committee offered us the opportunity to take over their computer staff. We leapt at it because it was something already put together. Well, it didn't quite work that way, but it did get us a little bit ahead of the game. We hired not from the Watergate Committee but from the outside a very bright young woman named Marty Dey to run this thing, and we were using the Library of Congress hardware, and programmers I guess. All we were doing really was abstracting.

There was a problem of interface between the computer staff and the rest of the committee staff. I never could quite reorient the rest of the staff to use the computer as it should be used. There were a bunch of people around who were addicted, as I had been and am again now, to keeping their own files, and by God they would remember a clipping from the New York Times that they had seen last April, and they could go to it in a reasonable time, and they were just a lot more comfortable doing things like this than using the computer. The computer people felt that they were underutilized and underappreciated and so on, and to a considerable extent that was true. At the time I left they had been going for two or three years,

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maybe longer, and I was not totally satisfied with the way the thing was working. What's happened to it since then, I don't know.

**RITCHIE:** Another new program that the committee adopted about 1973 was the publication of its previously closed executive session transcripts. Bob Blum started that first series. Could you give me some of the background as to how the committee got into that project?

**HOLT:** Gee, I really can't. I'm sort of blank about that. My impression, which maybe erroneous, is that it was Blum's idea and he sort of began it, and after we saw it we thought it would be a good thing to continue, and borrowed a fellow from CRS [Congressional Research Service] to do it. We had a little difficulty selling it to the committee. There was some reluctance on the part of members. I remember at one point, after Chalmers Roberts left the Post, this was in the '70's, I guess, he was writing a book and he asked very properly in a letter for access to the executive transcripts of the Eisenhower years. The committee turned him down, mainly because Aiken had the notion that if the committee gave him access

it would be turning over the records of the committee to somebody to write a book which could make money for the author of the book. It totally escaped the other point

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that it would contribute to scholarly research and add to the sum total of human knowledge. However, Aiken's objection didn't apply to something the committee published itself. There was a little reluctance, but it wasn't anything that couldn't be overcome, because the project has continued.

**RITCHIE:** Every once in a while Roberts will write an article for the Post and he does quote from the Historical Series executive sessions. I particularly remember one on the Formosa treaty, which he compared to Carter's actions towards Formosa. He cited Dulles' testimony in one of the executive session transcripts, so he's clearly been using the material.

**HOLT:** Yes. I see him every once in a while and we talk about this, and how valuable those things are to people like him and me.

**RITCHIE:** We talked about how the Foreign Relations Committee changed over the years that you were here. I was wondering what your impressions were of the changes that took place in the Senate as a whole?

**HOLT:** To a degree, the changes that took place in the Foreign Relations Committee also took place in the Senate. The average age of senators dropped substantially over that period. The power

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structure of the Senate changed. Indeed, one can now scarcely speak of a power structure in the Senate, it's so dispersed. The Southern barons who were the subject of so much attention in the 1940's have long since gone. I guess Russell Long is the only one left who would fit that description. I think the changes in the nature of American politics have brought about some changes in the Senate. You know, television has made an enormous difference in the way senators campaign. Court house politicians aren't as important to them as they used to be. Public exposure, public images become more important than personal friendships, contacts, and so on. I don't want to say those are unimportant, but relatively they're less important than they used to be. The growth of air transportation has seriously complicated senatorial lives. It used to be that a senator from California or even Texas would get on a train in January and spend three to five days coming to Washington, and then get on a train again in June or July and go back home. Now the poor devil is expected to get on an airplane Friday afternoon, make a speech in Los Angeles that night, make two or three other speeches, and come back to Washington on Sunday. I remember a professor of mine in the late '30's saying that positions of leadership in the Senate

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ought not to be held by senators from states like Pennsylvania and New York, they were too close

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to Washington and there were too many constituents. Well, that distinction has long since been wiped out. A senator from the West Coast is subject to the same constituent pressures as a senator from the East Coast.

So this has been reflected in the whole nature of operation of the Senate: the proliferation of unanimous consent agreements, the understanding that there won't be a roll call. The practice has grown up that there won't be a roll call before two o'clock on Monday, for example, to give people time to get back here on Monday morning from wherever the hell they've been, that kind of thing. The scheduling of roll calls and the practice that they last fifteen minutes or ten in some cases had grown, and one effect of this has been to put senators on notice that they don't need to be in the Senate chamber. This has had a desultory enervating effect on Senate debate. The Senate used to have some really very good unscheduled debates on the spur of the moment, and that doesn't happen anymore.

**RITCHIE:** So in a lot of ways it's a different institution than the one you first saw?

**HOLT:** The way it operates is certainly different in a lot of ways. But I think it's a more influential institution than it was when I first knew it. It certainly is more assertive. It, and the House too for that matter, have used the legislative veto a whole lot

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more as a device to give them a chance to second-guess the president. I never shared the uniform view of every president since FDR that that's unconstitutional, but I do think the Congress is in some danger or over-doing it, because it has the effect of re-opening a variety of issues, and this is a distraction from doing other things that might be done. It takes an awful lot of time.

**RITCHIE:** Well, I want to thank you very much for this series of interviews. We've covered an incredible amount of territory.  
[End of Interview #9]

**Pat M. Holt**  
Chief of Staff  
Foreign Relations Committee

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