

Carl M. Marcy

Chief of Staff

Foreign Relations Committee, 1955-1973

Preface

by Donald A. Ritchie

Senator J. William Fulbright holds the record as the longest serving chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (fifteen years--from 1959 to 1974), but Carl Marcy served even longer as the Committee's chief of staff (eighteen years--from 1955 to 1973). For most of that time their service overlapped, and Marcy's recollections are in large part the story of Fulbright's impact on the Committee. These were dramatic years, from Lyndon Johnson's intervention to remove Theodore Francis Green as chairman, making way for Fulbright, to the presidencies of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, and to Senator Fulbright's break with President Johnson over American policies toward the Dominican Republic and Vietnam. It was a period in which the bi-partisan consensus in foreign policy unraveled and the gap between Congress and the White House steadily widened. No longer completely trusting the executive branch as a source of information, the Committee expanded its staff and pursued more vigorous oversight of the policy makers. The Foreign Relations Committee, when Marcy left it, had become a strikingly different institution from the one he joined in 1950.

Born in Oregon in 1913, Carl M. Marcy graduated from Willamette University in 1934 (LL.D., 1960) and from Columbia University (LL.B., 1939; Ph.D. in international law and relations, 1943). He was a lecturer and instructor in economics, international law and relations, and public administration at Columbia and the College of the City of New York from 1935 to 1942 when he joined the Department of State as assistant legal advisor and legislative counsel. At the invitation of Francis Wilcox, the Committee's first chief of staff, Marcy joined the Foreign Relations Committee staff in 1950. When Wilcox left the staff in 1955 to become an assistant secretary of state, Marcy succeeded him as chief of staff, a position he held until his retirement in 1973. Wilcox and Marcy also published a book together in 1955, *Proposals for Changes in the United Nations*. Earlier, Marcy had also published his doctoral dissertation, *Presidential Commissions* (New York, 1942).

"Although I understand the reasons, I deeply regret Carl Marcy's retirement," Senator J. William Fulbright commented in November 1973. "He has contributed immeasurably to the work of the Committee through some extremely difficult years. He has been thoroughly non-partisan in his management of the staff, in his approach to the issues of foreign policy, and in his devotion to the constitutional principle of the separation of powers in the American government. The insights which he has brought to his job will be sorely missed." After leaving the Senate

staff, Marcy worked for the Council for a Liveable World, and served as co-director of the American Committee on United States-Soviet Relations, which later became the American Committee on East-West Accord.

In preparing for these interviews, the interviewer had access to Carl Marcy's files in the papers of the Foreign Relations Committee at the National Archives. These were copies of all out-going correspondence and memoranda during his service as chief of staff. They should prove an invaluable resource for students of American foreign policy during these pivotal years.

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 had published several articles on American political and economic history, a book, James M. Landis: Dean of the Regulators (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), and has edited the Executive Sessions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (Historical Series for publication by the Committee. He has served as an officer of both the Oral History Association and Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region (OHMAR), and in 1984 received OHMAR's Forrest C. Pogue Award for distinguished contributions to the field of oral history.
