

Leonard Ballard

Inspector, United States Capitol Police (1947-1984)

Interview #7

(Thursday, October 20, 1983)
Interviewed by Richard A. Baker

BAKER: I'd like to begin by asking you about the problems that public demonstrations on Capitol Hill create for the police. I know you have been involved with planning for them.

BALLARD: Well, there's not much planning you can do for a demonstration. Of course, you have men equipped with riot gear. We've had to use it once or twice. You know you get a trigger happy policemen in every crowd. On one occasion, we were on the West Front and he released some gas.

BAKER: What kind of gas?

BALLARD: Oh, I don't know, it isn't nerve gas, but it is close.

BAKER: Like tear gas?

BALLARD: Yes. It has an effect. Of course, it caught the chief (Laughter). It caught the representative of the FBI. They were affected more than the demonstrators. Well, we started curtailing the use of gas then. The demonstrations themselves are hard to handle up here for the simple reason that you have members of Congress involved. You have to be very careful what you do because there's the member standing right there.

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(Discussion of a Demonstration)

BAKER: Did they have a permit?

BALLARD: No. You don't need a permit. A member can bring any group he wants out onto those steps. That's his baliwick. He can bring a band out there and start playing, if the member's with them. That's just a custom. If they are on their own turf, don't bother them.

BAKER: They don't need to make reservations or anything.

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BALLARD: Nothing. If they come up there with a group and there's a group already there, then you have to say, "Congressman, just hold your group over here until he finishes." There are times in the summer when you do have a holding pattern.

dealings with members. As they are on their own baliwick, don't bother them. It doesn't make any difference what they are doing. You can always cover that. Or you can walk away. That's a good idea. I've walked away many times. I had trouble with [Representative] (deleted). He was out there at a demonstration and he pulled a girl--she was just a tourist--he pulled her off a car pretty roughly. And I told him, "You do that again, and I'll lock you up." He says, "You can't lock me up. I'm a member of Congress." I said, "Yes, I can. I can lock you up for breach of the peace."

BAKER: Just like anyone else.

BALLARD: That's right. That's one thing you can lock them up for right in the House. A breach of the peace. I said, "One more time." Well, the next Wednesday . . . they had demonstrations every Wednesday in those days on the center steps [of the Capitol's West Front]. Well, the next Wednesday, I got a call back to the chief's office that Mr. Dunphy, the [Senate] Sergeant at Arms, didn't want me to lock up the congressman. He said the congressman called him that morning and asked him to interfere. He said that I'd threatened to lock him up. I said, "Well, Mr. Dunphy's my boss." Well, we gathered out on the steps as usual. The press was there. The congressman was there. I was there. And, of course, to make his point, he said to me, "You are not going to lock me up today, are you?"

Before the press, you know?" And I said, "Well, I doubt it." But, I had to bite my tongue to keep from saying, "If you hadn't interfered through my boss, I probably would have." (Laughter) But I couldn't say that [before the press]. It turned out later that we got to be good friends. I was over at the House side one day and he came out of the chamber and he saw me--that was long after the demonstrations--and he came over. It was a new session of Congress and he was glad to see me back. We visited and every time he would see me, he'd stop and make a point . . .

BAKER: "You're not going to lock me up today!"

BALLARD: That's right. (Laughter) We do make too much of a show out of demonstrations. We call too many people [police] for a little job. We'll have a demonstration on the West Front and we'll know that they are not going to create any disturbance, but we'll bring out three or four hundred men, which . . . That is we'll have them on duty. We don't have them showing outdoors. Now, when the farmers were here, that cost the taxpayers millions of dollars. What were you going to do. Sit down there in a [police] bus and watch the farmers! Because they weren't going to do anything. And Metropolitan had 'em circled. They couldn't get out. We still had men in the guard rooms, in the locker rooms standing by. It is just a waste of time and money.

Now, we used to have a couple of fellas who promoted demonstrations. One of them was called "the Mole." We nicknamed him the Mole. When he'd bring demonstrations up, you could tell what kind of a group he had out there. He would organize anything. If he came up in a overall jacket, you might have some trouble with him. But if he came up in a suit of clothes, a necktie and the whole business, he was going to have senior citizens. He always gave himself away by his dress. Now, he was the son of a doctor in upstate New York. They kept him here in Washington. They kept him away from home. He spent his time organizing groups. All you had to do was call the Mole and say, "I'd like to have one hundred students." Mole would get you a hundred students and demonstrate with them. Then he had a buddy, we called him "Tiny Tim." He walked on crutches. Now, when you saw Tiny Tim and the Mole casing the Capitol Building--watch out! You were going to have a demonstration. We were down there on the West Front once. Now this was a mob. They had about 16,000 who walked up by the Grant monument. Well, the Mole had on a suit of clothes, so we didn't do a thing but retreat right up to the Capitol, because we knew there wasn't going to be any fight.

BAKER: So your strategy was based on how the Mole was dressed.

BALLARD: How the Mole was dressed. So we knew there would be no trouble, so we retreated up to the Capitol, the doors were open,

we got in there, and we talked to him through the door. And finally, he decided to take his group and go. He's made his point; they've made their point. They got their pictures. We knew they were not going to burn the Capitol. Back several years ago, before we had a lot of men, we'd have a demonstration on the Front. And I would always exaggerate the number of people for the simple reason it made us look good. The press would always come by and ask, "What kind of a crowd do you have?" Well, this is where you let 'em have it. One time we had maybe 1,500 or 2,000. I went home and was talking to the wife and she said, "What kind of crowd did you have?" And I said, "Well, not a whole lot, but the *Washington Post* in the morning will say 5,000." So sure enough, the next morning the *Post* said 5,000. I told her we'd be in a devil of a fix if these newsmen ever decided they could estimate crowds.

BAKER: Does that still go on today?

BALLARD: Oh, yes. Sure it does.

BAKER: By Metropolitan as well?

BALLARD: All police forces do it. It makes them look good. And if they have spent some extra money, they can answer for the money.

BAKER: In addition to the Mole and people like that as sources of advance intelligence, or intelligence on the spot, what other sources of information did you have in preparing for a demonstration? Did you get FBI reports?

BALLARD: Oh, yes. You get FBI, you get Secret Service, and then you have members of the party who expect to demonstrate. They'll comment. Now, they have a habit of exaggeration. We have a group in the basement down here. They handle all of those things. Crowd estimate, demonstrations, they'll take the information. They have a habit of believing these people. And I'm always down there after them. What I used to do, let's say a captain would come to me with the information, "We've got 500 buses coming out of New York. Well, it doesn't take you long to call the FBI. They have contacts in New York. They'll call you back and say "They may have 500, but there's only 100 released." Well, you knock off 400 right there, because the bus companies learned the hard way to have the money in advance before the bus pulls out. At one time, they'd get stuck, especially the small companies. Then they put in a policy, "Money on the barrelhead before the bus moves." Then the bus will stay in Washington only so long. It won't wait. They are notified, "We pull out at 5:00 o'clock. If you are on it, okay, but we'll go back." You have to sift the information. You have to develop your own sources of information. You can't depend on what these people come in and tell you all the time. 'Cause they have a way of exaggeration.

We had the gays here about three or four weeks ago. Well, the estimate the boys in the basement got was 20,000. Well, I was working that weekend and I asked, "What are you basing it on?" "That's their figure." I said, "Well, how many out-of-town buses?" "Well, two in Philadelphia," you know? And I said, "You are going to have a time getting 20,000 people on those two buses." So it ended up that there were about 500.

When I first came here though, demonstrations didn't faze Captain Caveness. I don't know why. In those days, we kept the office open from 9:00 to 5:00. Now, regardless of what demonstration was going on, at 5:00 o'clock the office closed! We went home! (Laughter) He said, "What can you do with them? There's a member in the crowd of every one of them and I am not going to fool with a member." And that's exactly the idea he had. Many years ago, transportation was by rail. That was it. Buses weren't used much. We had 3,000 Brooklyn shipyard workers come down here. Now, they were rough! Because they were going to close down the shipyard. I thought surely we were stuck. Five o'clock came, and the captain said, "What are you waiting on? Let's go home." We left 'em all over the front out there. Now the Saturday night that the Rosenbergs were electrocuted, we got word of a demonstration on Capitol Hill. I lived on Second Street then. I drove down in the car, on my own, to the East Front and parked. They were all over that Hill, all over that front of the Capitol and the steps and all. There wasn't one

policeman in sight. Not the first policeman. Of course, we only had one assigned to the East Front, but they'd apparently pulled him. They stayed up there until 9:30 or 10:00 p.m.

BAKER: Was there any evidence of any Metropolitan police? Off to the sides?

BALLARD: Oh, no. Nowhere near. In those days, Metropolitan wouldn't come up unless you invited them, and nobody invited them. They were afraid of legal tangles if they got involved. That was one captain that didn't believe in interfering with demonstrations!

We've gotten ourselves in trouble on several occasions. It is a bad policy because there's members involved. They arrested eleven the day before yesterday in a Pennsylvania senator's office for illegal entry. You take them downtown to the cell block. It is usually \$10.00. They are back on the street before you've got the first sheet of paper filled out. You see our men are working into the night filling out the forms.

BAKER: The real prisoners are your own men. The other prisoners are long gone.

BALLARD: That's right. I had an occasion one time where we had ten or twelve in Senator Everett Dirksen's office who wouldn't leave. In the Capitol in the minority leader's office. We locked them up late in the afternoon, after the building had closed. Then we could

charge them with unlawful entry. The very next morning, we all go to court and we get down to the corporation counsel's office, and we get a call that Dirksen is not going to press charges. So, "Goodbye you all."

BAKER: He controlled that place, so the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate can't press charges.

BALLARD: No. That's his office and he wasn't going to press charges, so there was nothing we could do. They were released and so were we.

BAKER: The whole question of permits to hold a demonstration. I'd like to know something about that.

BALLARD: Now, the permits are just a matter of form, that's all. They come down here and get a permit, but say some fella is in defiance. He 's got a group up there. No permit. Didn't bother to come down to the basement to get one. What do we do? We prepare one for him and take it up and give it to him.

BAKER: So there's no time requirement that they have to have a permit twenty-four hours in advance. Or anything like that?

BALLARD: No. We do warn them about transportation. No parking. That's all. You see, we've had a fella in court now for about four years and he whips us every time we turn around. A fella by the

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name of Stacy. I've forgotten his last name [Abney]. He came up there and decided to demonstrate and then sleep at night up there. He's been in and out of court with us. We've locked him up, I don't know how many times, for no permit. We have to give him a permit. Civil liberties lawyers represent him. Frequently, you'll see a car up there at 2:00 o'clock in the morning, up on the Front. A couple of civil liberties lawyers sitting in there watching to see what we're doing.

BAKER: Is he the fella that is still up there who lives under that arch of the East Front steps?

BALLARD: That's right, that's Stacy. They even have a "Stacy law." They passed a law, but it didn't affect him. The judge threw it out.

BAKER: And what did it provide?

BALLARD: That "sleeping is demonstrating." But the judge threw it out because it was pointed directly at him and you can't make a law pointed at one person. Stacy's still there.

BAKER: He lives there--he uses the toilet facilities inside?

BALLARD: He has a beef against the Veterans Administration.

BAKER: But, he doesn't seem to demonstrate actively any more.

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BALLARD: No, not any more. He just decided to stay here. There are a lot of demonstrations on the East Front steps. But they'll cooperate with you. You ask them to keep half the steps open. And they will do that. And handing out literature is limited, but most of them hand out what they want to.

BAKER: Limited in what sense?

BALLARD: As to size and content.

BAKER: Who reviews it?

BALLARD: The boys downstairs.

BAKER: But in practice, unless there's some obscenity or whatever, they don't fool with it?

BALLARD: No, no. If you do, you're going to get involved [in a civil liberties dispute]. Nowadays, you can't even censor four letter words. Courts won't let you. The courts are pretty liberal now.
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But you see, this police department is an awful lot of politics. In fact, it is all politics.

BAKER: Has that situation changed over the years?

BALLARD: It is worse now than it was under the patronage system.

BAKER: Why?

BALLARD: Because everybody's trying to angle. When you had patronage, each man had his own man and went ahead about his business. That man controlled him to a certain extent. If he wanted him to run errands, he ran errands. But now, everybody is trying to play politics for their own advancement. And you can't do it now. That day is over.

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The police force itself costs about \$32 million a year. If that figure was out in a municipality, they'd skin the council, the chief of police and everyone else. For 161 acres of land! And that's what we have here. But you can get by with it. You couldn't get by with that in patronage days, because they would say, "This is not a police force. This is made up of patronage employees that help us, and we help them. We don't want to hear anything about police business." And they didn't. That's how I grew up [in the force]. That's the reason I've never been a policeman. Now we have an elaborate training facility down in Georgia. They go down for eighteen weeks. The cost of that is [tremendous] . . . the expenses of the school, the transportation.

BAKER: Do other police forces in the Washington area use that training school [at Glynco, Georgia] as well?

BALLARD: Not in Washington. Secret Service used it some. Interior [Department] park rangers, but they only go two weeks! Ours go eighteen!

BAKER: Why?

BALLARD: Why? I've never been able to get that answer. (Laughter) And, after that, they come back up here to our training facility in what we call "Rayburn V in the Rayburn Building for four more weeks!

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BAKER: That's before they ever hit the streets?

BALLARD: That's right.

BAKER: It's hard to believe.

BALLARD: It is. But, you see the chief can go before the powers that be and say, "Well, our officers have twenty weeks of training." And these people that he's talking to know nothing about [the day to day security operations on] the Hill, although they work here and got elected, but they know nothing about it and they think that's great. "Highly trained professional people!" And what do you need a highly trained professional person to stand out here on the street and be sure that the person parking has a permit for the space. And that's what it amounts to.

BAKER: Someone must keep track of the record of people who go down there for training and come back here. Some stay on the force and some leave. Does anyone evaluate why they leave and where they go? Do they use that training to get related jobs?

BALLARD: We lose very few people.

BAKER: You do? Is that a sign of the employment situation in general?

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BALLARD: Yes. We have some that think that the grass is greener and they go. But, they come back shortly. And the boys in the locker room say, "I told you. This is Heaven."

BAKER: And it is pretty easy for them to get back on the force?

BALLARD: Well, unless they have a record. Here is 161 acres that closes down completely at dark. And yet, we have probably 300 men on duty. It's just a waste. All it is, actually, in my book, is a front--and a phoney front. And I can't see that. I just can't see that.

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BAKER: Well, the Commission on the Operation of the Senate in 1976 had some very specific recommendations about the force. Basically, the recommendations were that the force was too large at almost 1,200 men, and that it ought to be reorganized. I gather that nothing ever came of those recommendations.

BALLARD: Of course not. You go along with it. "That's good, that's great." But just wait a few days and it will pass over.

BAKER: Just one other question about the demonstrations. Sometimes we see people out on the Capitol steps who are there day after day. A woman who has manikins, or statues of Christ and whatnot. Does she have to get a special permit every day?

BALLARD: No, not every day. She gets a permit and it can be for as long as she wants to stay there.

BAKER: And that allows her to play music and all that?

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BALLARD: That's right. On the permit it will say "Can hand out literature." The memorandum that we get, the bulletin board notice, it will state that. "Literature, music, and so forth."

BAKER: So, the question of setting limits is up to the police board. If she wants to have huge loud speakers out there playing offensive music, or music that might be offensive . . .

BALLARD: Then, they can curtail that [on the grounds of] "interfering with Congress." And to my knowledge, we have never had any problem about that. If we had a problem about that, they'd take us into court so fast--because during the summertime hardly a day passes but that we don't have a high school band out there. And they are pretty loud. Now, the Civil Liberties Union came up there and taped a high school band. Now, they use that in court. We don't do it any more. We used to bring in the noise that they made on the front. We learned better than that, because Civil Liberties played a tape of the band. You know, you're fooling with smarter people than you are.

BAKER: Yeah. They've had a lot of experience at it.

BALLARD: They know their angles and, of course, we don't. That goes back to my idea of always playing it by ear.

BAKER: Well, you mentioned the 18-week training program in Georgia. Is there anything in that program that provides the new

members of the force with the kind of political sensitivity that you have and that you and I have been talking about during these interviews?

BALLARD: No, sir! They come back here and get assigned to a relief. And their first night on duty, they end up in the Senate subway in the old building leading to the Capitol on midnight. Now, if you don't have a disappointed soul there!

BAKER: Right.

BALLARD: And he is going to have that for a couple of weeks. Now, my idea has been, and will always be, "on the job training." That's the answer for the Capitol. Because you don't have business houses, but you have doors and committees and that sort of stuff. Take a man working with a man. He'll learn a lot more that way . . . They don't even have a class in answering the telephone! Now, I used to do that.

BAKER: That's important.

BALLARD: It's extremely important that you let the people know when they call who they are talking to, where you are, and who you are.

BAKER: Does that lead to disciplinary problems. You have a large force. Just on the face of it. Twelve hundred people. Somebody's going to get into trouble.

BALLARD: Of course it does! We have sort of a policy of smothering those disciplinary actions. We transfer the person around. On the book the man has to serve a year's probationary period. But, I don't know of a case where it was enforced. They transfer him around. "He's not fitting in here." You'll find out that if he doesn't fit in here, he won't fit in over there either. If he's going to foul up, he is going to foul up no matter where you send him. When I was in the Capitol Building, I'd try to get rid of them, but I found it was just like butting your head against the wall. I used to bring him over to the chief and say, "Here he is. Now you do anything you want with him, because I'm not taking him back." In a few days I'd get a form that he'd been transferred to another relief. Then, it won't be long before you'd see that he was transferred somewhere else. He's one of those that goes forever.

BAKER: A tourist on the force. Traveling around.

BALLARD: Right. I always had a reputation for being fairly strict. I was. You had to have discipline. That's the first thing you have to have in a police force or for any person who wears a uniform. They always said that I was fair, regardless of who it was.

If a man wanted to do a job, it was all right with me. If he didn't, I didn't want him. And I'd tell him so. "Put in for a transfer."

BAKER: And that person would know in advance that it was how you worked.

BALLARD: Well, like the boys used to say, when a new man was assigned to the Capitol detail, the older men would call him aside and tell him, "Don't try to screw up over here. The old man in there has pulled every trick in the book himself. He knows them all . He'll catch you and it will be rough on you." Now, I had a certain requirement in haircuts. They had to have a haircut and had to keep their hair trimmed. I didn't mean a Marine haircut, but a certain haircut. Harry Grevey, [a police clerk] brought a fella in one day with hair down to here. I said, "I don't want to meet him. Take him to the barber shop." I knew the barber and the barber knew me. The boy started to tell the barber how to cut his hair. The barber said, "Let me tell you something. You are going back down to Ballard and unless you want to pay for another haircut, you'd better let me cut your hair, because you are going to have to come back up here." That was one form of discipline. I kept my hair cut that way. Since I've been over here [in my current position] I don't. I let it grow down to my collar. Pay no attention to it. But, when I was over there, every week I had a haircut.

BAKER: Is there a sense that the Capitol detail has to be sharper than the others?

BALLARD: I always thought so, because you see more public over there than you do here in the office buildings. Of course, you see visitors in the office buildings that are going to the members' offices, but it is not like the Capitol Building where you are exposed to the public all the time. I was a stickler for courtesy, too. If I got a [negative] report, I'd go right into it. The people are entitled to a courteous answer. It may seem foolish to you, because you live here, but to them it is a question. And they are entitled to an answer. If I happen to be in the background and hear them give a bad answer, I wouldn't say anything, but I'd correct him later. They're paying your salary.

BAKER: But almost anyplace a man is stationed, he is likely to run into those kinds of challenges.

BALLARD: Yes. I always believed in working the same men in the same posts. Then they get to be familiar with who passes through there. It helps. It won't get you embarrassed. I had the same man in the press section all the time, so he would know the members of the press and the ones who you could get along with. We used to have one over there who worked for the *Denver Post*.

It was sprinkling rain and she was on the East Front. She wanted to park next to the Senate steps. Of course, the boy was directing her back to the press section, because she had a press sticker. She got out of the car and started crying. She put that bit on. And she was going to report him to Captain Ballard. Well, it frightened him [the officer] a little bit and he came down. He let her park. He got relieved and he came down and said, "I suppose I'm in trouble with you." He described the car and the woman. And I said, "Ooooh (Laughing), you're all right. You just ran into (deleted). She pulls that on all the new ones." He was new. "You're not in any trouble with me. That's a good way to handle it." That's her style. She always carried two shopping bags of clippings. And after the bomb went off [1971] in the Capitol we tightened up on the doors. We searched packages and so forth. The fellow on the Senate Door would go through the packages, the shopping bags full of clippings. He knew there was nothing in there. He knew (deleted). She would stand there, "Hurry up! I've got a deadline." I was talking to the old superintendent of the Press Gallery, Don Womack, one day. And he said, "Yep, that's her old story. The other day she was going down through the office here and passed the ladies toilet and there she was shaking the door, "Hurry up, Grace, I've got a deadline!" (Laughter)

BAKER: She's one of the Capitol's characters all right. I passed her in the old document room the other day. She had [then]

Captain Mike Morrison cornered and she was telling him this and that and "Can you get that for me from the chief 's office by 5:30." (Laughter) She was really doing a number on him. He was being very polite.

BALLARD: Oh, Mike. Mike would bend over backwards for her. He probably knows her!

BAKER: You mentioned the bombing in 1971. I wanted to talk to you about your involvement in that. That is one of the major events in the history of the Capitol Police, without question.

BALLARD: In fact, we got 400 men after that. Well, it went off about 1:30 in the morning, and it was set in that toilet, where there is a tile false front. And it was put behind that. There were very few people who even knew that toilet was there. They'd pass it every day. It was built for Mrs. Caraway, Senator Hattie Caraway [who came to the Senate in November 1931], the first woman elected to the Senate. The only other toilet facility was the senators' toilet up there adjacent to the Senate floor. But they put a little retiring room down there for her use.

BAKER: On the ground floor.

BALLARD: Very few people knew it was there. Now, I knew it was there because I used to sneak in there every morning and read my paper. I used to like to read my paper first thing in the morning

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and the lieutenant never did find me. He left here not knowing it was there. What surprised me was how they found the room.

I read a book by a lieutenant who used to be on the force in New York. He wrote a book on bombing. They were having them up there hourly. In there, he said that the experts [in bombings] didn't want to destroy real property and they didn't want to cause casualties, because that brought too much heat on them. Well, these people must have read the book for the simple reason to let that go off at 1:30 in the morning, there might be one chance in ten million that an officer would be in that area, and then he would be walking by. But at 1:30 there are officers on the House and Senate doors, but nobody else. No building patrol. And then, the only thing they brought down was brick and mortar. Say they'd gone over to the Senate wing. The Brumidi paintings . . . never be replaced. It was all just a pattern. I think it was detonated from an automobile, probably on First Street.

BAKER: But someone would have had to have gotten in there before the building closed.

BALLARD: They had to. During the day. Let's say they got in there at 4:00 o'clock. Now they could leave after 4:00 o'clock and nobody would pay a bit of attention to them. As I say, the choice, the place, the time, everything worked out so professional. Now,

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they arrested a woman on the west coast, but that was all I . And that was because there was so much heat on the FBI. They had to grab someone.

BAKER: The Weather Underground claimed credit.

BALLARD: Yes. With Leslie Bacon. But I don't think they ever indicted her.

BAKER: That bombing brought in the FBI and Metropolitan?

BALLARD: Brought in the FBI. They took over the investigation. They took our door sheets, in and out, and were checking [the employees]. I said to them, "You can eliminate the employees. If it had been an employee, he'd have set it off in the dining room! (Laughter) Because they hate that dining room! Everybody complained about the food. They never did tell us the results of their investigation. They sealed it off. They gathered up what they called evidence . . . they were in there a month combing through the debris.

BAKER: And the Capitol Police had no role whatsoever in the investigation?

BALLARD: They wouldn't even let us in there and they never told us what they found.

BAKER: Was there any political pressure from the leadership of the House or Senate to bring you in?

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BALLARD: No. Because we are not that professional, especially when the FBI steps in. We can't compete with the FBI, so we just stayed out. They told us to stay out.

BAKER: And that didn't bother you?

BALLARD: It didn't bother us a bit. We were glad to get rid of it. Of course, everybody wanted to get a brick. Ah, hell. A member from Georgia, I've forgotten who he was, came over on Saturday, and I told him that there was not a brick left. But, I said, "I can take a paper bag and go in there and get a lot of scraps." And I did. He put them in Lucite blocks with a little note that it was from the bombed section of the Capitol. He sent me over one of them. But, we got 400 additional men as a result of it.

BAKER: What did you do with those 400 men that was related to the bombing?

BALLARD: Put them on the different details. It was just a chance to grab them up.

BAKER: If you'd had those 400 men before the bombing . . .

BALLARD: It wouldn't have made a bit of difference. Because that was a carefully planned job.

BAKER: That area contained a barber shop.

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BALLARD: The rest room was right across from the barber shop. In other words, you'd walk straight into the barber shop and you'd make a right turn for the rest room. And a little corridor down there and some offices. Senator [B. Everett] Jordan had an office back there. It did an awful lot of damage to those offices. And to the barber shop.

They called me at home and I got up here at 2:00 o'clock [a.m.]. When I walked in the Senate door and down the corridor, the chandelier in the small rotunda was down to the cleaning position. I said, "Who dropped that chandelier down?" No one. The concussion brought it down to the cleaning position where it locked.

BAKER: That's amazing. Was there any damage to the chandelier?

BALLARD: Not a bit. If it had dropped down three more feet, it would have been completely ruined.

BAKER: I understand that the statues on the second floor by the entrance to the old Senate chamber were moved, by the force of the explosion, about six inches.

BALLARD: It moved them some. There's a small chandelier that hangs in front of the entrance to the old Supreme Court chamber. That chandelier down there wasn't even touched. Not even a bulb was

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broken. Right outside the barber shop! It broke out a couple of windows in the Senator's Dining Room and broke the picture in there and knocked some china off the tables.

BAKER: The George Washington Memorial Window?

BALLARD: Yes. Of course, it's funny what a concussion does. There's no way of following it.

BAKER: There must have been a mob scene when you got there at 2:00 o'clock in the morning. Reporters and so forth.

BALLARD: Yeah. They were all out on the front. Larry Krebs. I always used to accuse Larry of setting fires. Larry and I were good friends.

BAKER: Who's Larry Krebs?

BALLARD: Larry is with WMAL Radio. Regardless of what's going on in town, Larry is reporting from there. He is the fellow who tried to get Wilbur Mills in his car and Larry would take him home the night that he got in the ditch down here with his girl friend.

BAKER: The Tidal Basin?

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BALLARD: Yes. He heard that on his police radio. Didn't know what it was, but it was an accident. He went down there and recognized Wilbur Mills. He tried his best to get Wilbur to get in his car and he would take him home or to his office. But, Wilbur was all loaded and wouldn't go.

Well, Larry was there at the door. And I said, "Larry, did you set this thing off?" I used to accuse him of setting fires and causing wrecks, so that he would have something to do. Of course, the press worried the devil out of us for weeks. But there wasn't anything we could do. We had nothing to do with the investigation. We couldn't tell them about it.

BAKER: Then you were probably happy to get rid of the investigation. Just to avoid the political flak from the leaders of the House and Senate.

BALLARD: Of course. That's right. It's like the recent narcotics investigation. I tried to get the chief to call in an outside agency. Because, I said, "Chief, there's nothing you can do. When you are investigating your own bosses, there is nothing in front of you but trouble." But, he wanted to do it, so he did. He got himself involved.

BAKER: Do you see that as part of an effort to prove that this is a real police department from top to bottom. To be able to

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say that there is nothing that our department cannot do? The department has evolved from a little guard force all the way up to a large force with a canine unit, plain-clothesmen . . .

BALLARD: That's true, but there is not that much for us to do.

BAKER: But is there a sense that in case of trouble this department ought to be able to do anything.

BALLARD: That's true. It should be, but we don't train 'em that way.

BAKER: Is that the chief's goal for the department to be complete in every way?

BALLARD: Naturally. But he just doesn't go at it in the right way.

BAKER: But, is that a relatively new attitude in your experience?

BALLARD: Yes. I suppose so.

BAKER: Before the 1971 bombing, for instance, did any chief of this department really think that the department could do everything?

BALLARD: We had a chief here by the name of Charlie Sullivan. He was from downtown. He always said that this should be developed

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into a police force with no outside help. Of course, his health got bad and he had to quit. In those days, we had Metropolitan up in the galleries. Chief Powell was one of them. As a plain-clothesman. Sullivan always said they had no place here. Which was true. He said this should be an organization on its own without any help from the outside. Now, we have made a lot of good moves. The chief has made a lot of good moves. He has done a lot for the police force. But, he tries to stay ahead of the hounds in the wrong way. That's what I blame him for.

I've always said we [the police] should have someone here to handle the press, because we have the worst press in town, I don't care what organization it is. We had a congressman hit a car over on the southwest drive. The patrol car came by and issued him a ticket. They wanted to know why the man [officer] who was there first didn't handle it. [Captain] Mike Boyle in the chief's office, speaking for the chief, said he wasn't trained in traffic investigation. Now that came out in the Washington Post! Now you've got twenty weeks of [formal] training and the man's been here about ten years, and you haven't trained him to write a traffic ticket? It looks bad. And that's what they pick up on you. They don't pick up the good points.

BAKER: It is a dull story when you have the good points.

BALLARD: That's right. In fact, there shouldn't have been a ticket issued. That's another thing. That's one trouble about this

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patrol [detail]. If I had my way about it, I'd break up that patrol in five minutes. We have fifty-two vehicles. Fifty-two vehicles! And all they do is ride around and issue tickets, and mostly against staff members, 'cause who else are you going to write them on up here?

BAKER: Not the tourists.

BALLARD: No. There is not a space on Capitol Hill for tourists. Not the first one! We used to have a few on the front, but they are all taken up now. It is all staff. When you write a ticket, you don't make friends writing tickets. But they don't have anything else to do. When I was in [charge of] the Capitol detail, I never allowed any tickets to be written in my jurisdiction. If you had a bump /accident/ you'd just settle it among yourselves. And if they didn't want to, you could usually say, "Well, one of you will be charged now. Let's charge one of you." And whoever was at fault would usually agree. I was there twenty years and in my time we never had the first pedestrian hurt. I thought that was a good record. Now, we had a policeman hurt. A fella drove over him. Deliberately, in the southeast drive. The fella was in a hurry and didn't have a parking permit and the officer wasn't going to let him park. And he said, "The hell I won't." And he drove over him and broke the boy's leg. Of course, he got in a barrel of trouble over it.

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BAKER: I'm sure he did! (Laughter) That's attempted murder.

BALLARD: That's right. I think he settled it out of court. The boy didn't file a charge. But we were always very careful about pedestrians. And you laugh, but there are these boy scout troops that come up here each spring by the thousands and they have all been taught to help old ladies get across the street. When they get here, they spread out like geese and come through every automobile [in the parking lot].

BAKER: Let's go back to the suicide of Senator Lester Hunt in 1954. Were you involved in that at all?

BALLARD: I was the fella that was involved . . . strictly. I was the sergeant on duty that Saturday.

BAKER: Is that so? Tell me about that.

BALLARD: It was a Saturday morning and I got a call from Mike Manatos.

BAKER: Hunt's administrative assistant.

BALLARD: That's right. To come up to the office. I came up to the office and they took me back in the senator's office and the senator was stretched out on the floor dead as a door nail with a .22 caliber rifle beside him. Well, it seems as though my boy on the door there in the courtyard [of the Senate Office Building] had

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carried it [the rifle] upstairs for him! Well, he came in with a lot of packages and the rifle. [The senator] Being from Wyoming, the boy thought nothing of a rifle. He wanted to know if he could help him, and the senator said yes. After he left [the boy] didn't think any more about it.

I said, "Mike, we have to get hold of homicide." And he said, "Well, I'll have to prepare a statement of some kind and I'll have to have some time." I said, "I happen to know a fellow who lives in Springfield [Virginia] named Jack Frost, a detective." I called Jack. He called me back and I told him what I had. Jack told me to meet him in front of our guard room. He and his partner arrived and I took them in and down the corridor and up to Hunt's room and introduced them to Manatos. They said, "We'll call Gawler's [funeral home] and get a flower truck up here. Nobody will be suspicious of a flower truck, because there's always one parked there delivering flowers. And they did send one. It wasn't very long. I went downstairs and told the boy, "You get out there in the street [First Street] and if there is a car that starts to come in here, tell them there's something wrong with the gate and direct them around. By the time they ride around the block, we'll be all right." You didn't expect many people in there on Saturday, but if just by chance somebody might. So he did. [We] Brought him down the elevator and put him in the flower truck and took him to Gawlers. In the meantime Mike prepared the story and gave the release to the papers.

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BAKER: So, it was all handled pretty quickly.

BALLARD: Nobody knew it until he gave out that press release.

BAKER: What a shock!

BALLARD: Yes, it was. Hunt was a very affable, friendly man. He had a son on the [Capitol] police force that caused him all this trouble.

BAKER: I didn't realize the son was on the force.

BALLARD: Oh, yes. He graduated from college and was here four years on the police force. Drew Pearson and some of them threatened to expose him [for alleged homosexuality] and the old man couldn't take it.
[End of Interview #7]

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