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Interview #4
Fulbright and Kennedy
(Wednesday, October 12, 1983)
Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie



Hearing testimony from Clare Booth Luce, April 15, 1959. Behind the dais, left to right, Sen. Frank Lausche (with hankerchief), Sen. George Aiken, unidentified Senate staff member (with pipe), Sen. J. William Fulbright (center), Carl Marcy, Sen. Mike Mansfield, unidentified Senate staff member, Sen. Wayne Morse, Norville Jones (aide to Fulbright), Bobby Baker (majority party secretary) and Sen. John F. Kennedy.

RITCHIE: We were going to talk about Senator Fulbright today, but there was one other question I wanted to ask you from the Green era, and that was how the Foreign Relations Committee became one of only two Senate committees that still has an office in the Capitol Building. I understand that that dates back to the period when Theodore Green was chairman, and I wondered if you could tell me what the story was behind that situation.

MARCY: The story is brief. Senator Green was not about to give up the Committee office in the Capitol, even though his personal office was in the Russell Building. He liked it. He was of the old school. When the new building was constructed, Mr. Green was adamant in insisting that that room be kept for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. As I recall, the Foreign Relations Committee kept the Capitol room and the Committee on Appropriations kept its room. I was delighted myself. My office was adjacent to the Committee room in the Capitol. In thinking back, maybe it was a good thing for my role as staff director because I was rather isolated from the rest of the staff. I was not a constant burr under the staff saddle. I could call up and ask staff members to come and see me, or ask them to prepare a speech or draft legislation or whatever it might be.

So, while I was closely associated with all the members of the staff, I sometimes think they were pleased to have me stashed away in the Capitol Building.

RITCHIE: The situation, from what I understand, was that it must have been pretty uncomfortable. In fact, there was even a newspaper article about how cramped the staff was in their old offices. Senator Green just wasn't aware of the conditions under which people were operating at that time.

MARCY: Oh, I don't feel that we were particularly cramped at that time. The staff wasn't very large. By the time the new building had opened there were large amounts of space available.

RITCHIE: Well, at first wasn't it an either/or situation. You either stayed where you were or you got space over there. And then they finally compromised and gave you one foot in one and one foot in the other.

MARCY: Don, I don't think it was that way, because when people moved into the new building there was a reluctance to move, but we had really very little space in the Capitol Building itself and I don't recall any kind of deal that was made. Perhaps Darrell would be clearer on that, because Darrell was delighted to take over quarters in the new buildings.

RITCHIE: I had a sense that one of the reasons why the Committee got its space in the Capitol was because it hung out as long as it did before accepting space in the Dirksen Building.

MARCY: Oh, I think that's right. Senator Green just did not want to talk about the Committee moving any place else. And neither did I.

RITCHIE: So the squeaky wheel got the grease in this case.

MARCY: I think that's right.

RITCHIE: Some people from different committees have told me that they regretted the move out of the Capitol because up until that point the chairmen of the committees had always been in the office building, and the staff had been in the Capitol, and that meant there was always a five minute lag between the time you got the telephone call and when you had to go in to see the chairmen, but now the chairmen wound up in the office right next to the staff, and they didn't particularly like the proximity.

MARCY: Well, it didn't bother me because our chairmen were located in the office buildings and I was located in the Capitol.

RITCHIE: Did you always work out of the Capitol the whole time?

MARCY: Yes, the whole time.

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RITCHIE: That room is used for almost ceremonial purposes in the sense that there are so many receptions and luncheons for heads of state and others, beyond just hearings.

MARCY: At that time all executive meetings of the committee were held in the Capitol Committee room. In fact, most of the meetings were held in the Capitol. Very few of them were held in either of the office buildings.

RITCHIE: One of the big attractions for moving into the Dirksen Building was that it provided for televising regular hearings rather than just when you met in the Caucus Room. I was wondering if Senator Green, being sort of old school, wasn't as interested in going public with a lot of the hearings as some of the younger, more politically-ambitious members of the Committee might have been.

MARCY: I don't think that was the case. He liked television just like all of them. I never saw any reticence on his part. Usually television cameras would be set up outside the Committee room, which provided a convenient place for meeting after sessions were over. But if there were a significant hearing on a public issue, usually the hearing would be held in the Dirksen Building or the Russell Building. But don't forget, television was in its infancy--not as all-pervasive as today. The press frequently referred to TV as the "boob tube."

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RITCHIE: Did you get a sense that after they moved to the Dirksen Building and they had the larger facilities that the Committee held more public meetings than they did before?

MARCY: I guess so, but I wouldn't relate that to the fact that there were better facilities for public hearings in the new building. With the passage of time there were more public hearings held. It was pressure of the times or the nature of committee business that led to that, not the fact that there were larger, more commodious facilities available.

RITCHIE: That's interesting. You always wonder what was the cause and effect.

MARCY: After we were holding hearings in the Dirksen Building, television news was coming of age, and it was more convenient to have television facilities, I probably got more inquiries from senators: "Are the television people there this morning?" If they were, we were assured of a good turnout. If they were not there, there was a little more difficulty in getting senators to be present. For a time the television facilities senators thought the television people would be there all the time, but they were not.

I may have mentioned earlier, one of the problems I frequently had with senators was that they felt I could persuade television people or press people to come to a hearing, which was not the

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case. You know very well the Fourth Estate manages to decide what is important and what is not important. Sometimes they came, sometimes they didn't; sometimes they were bored, sometimes they missed a good story.

RITCHIE: Just on what the issue was that was being debated.

MARCY: That's right.

RITCHIE: Well, we talked last time about Senator Green stepping down and becoming chairman emeritus of the Committee, and then after a brief lapse of a couple of weeks Senator Fulbright became the chairman of the Committee in March 1959, and then remained chairman until 1974 and became one of the major figures in American foreign relations. You worked with him that whole stretch of time. Could you tell me something about J. William Fulbright and his character, and your relationship with him?

MARCY: I was rather in awe of the man. He was a well-known figure by the time I went to work for the Senate. He had been prominent during the war years in connection with the UN resolution and other activities. The Fulbright name was even then being associated with the exchange programs. He was always business-like. He never seemed to have much time for idle talk. As I say, I stood in awe of him, but I was also a great admirer. I don't recall any particular problems when he became chairman of the Committee. There were some

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kinds of things that I wanted to do. I suppose I wanted to prove to him that we had an effective staff operation. I believe it was after he became chairman that Pat Holt and I did quite a bit of work in trying to pull together, or I should say maybe ghostwrite a book for Senator Fulbright. I still have a lot of the things we pulled together in my files, but he was never much intrigued.

RITCHIE: What was the book going to be on?

MARCY: It was general concepts on foreign policy, the way we felt it ought to be looked at. It dealt with the foreign service, the way it should be organized, and so on. It was not until Seth Tillman became a member of the staff some years later that Seth was able to put Fulbright's thoughts into a form which Senator Fulbright found pleasing and satisfactory. So Seth did much of the ghostwriting for Senator Fulbright. The two of them worked together very closely. Maybe you can twig my memory a little bit with some other events in that early period. I just haven't thought about it for years.

RITCHIE: Well, I looked through some of your memos and one of the things that struck me was that right after Fulbright became chairman you wrote a sort of precautionary note. Apparently there had been a lot of comment in the press that the Foreign Relations Committee had one of the smallest staffs of the standing committees of the Senate and they were putting pressure on him to expand the

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staff. It was interesting for me to read you as staff director saying "Don't be too hasty," that the staff had to grow organically, and there were problems with rapid growth. I wondered if you could talk a little about that, on how you saw the staff and why you cautioned him at that stage.

MARCY: There was at that time, in the Senate, a growing feeling that the Senate lacked expertise. I think it was Senator Humphrey who used the phrase "We need to have our own experts." And there were several articles criticizing the Congress for not having adequate expertise. I felt at the time, and I am still somewhat influenced by the feeling, that in the field of foreign policy to develop independent expertise in the Senate almost inevitably would involve conflict with the executive branch and contribute to a lack of clear direction, or clear signals, on foreign policy issues. If, for example, the Foreign Relations Committee had a first rate expert on the Middle East, I felt that he or she would almost inevitably be in conflict with the assistant secretary or the desk people in the Department of State on what our policies should be with respect to almost any Middle East issue. In a sense, independent expertise almost by its nature implied having a person who either would be more expert than a person from downtown, or at least there would be a need for that person to differentiate or have a different point of view than might be expressed in the executive branch. That was one of the factors that inclined me to feel the staff should be knowledgeable

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but kept relatively small. The experts, as I viewed it, were the senators themselves. They tend to be experts in the larger political framework. The nuts and bolts of foreign policy are extremely important, but a senator does not need to get himself involved in the nuts and bolts of foreign policy to have the instincts or the judgment of the way in which our society should go. When you stop to

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think about it, you know very well that a President of the United States, or a Secretary of State, is not an expert in what I would call the nuts and bolts. Essentially, people in those high positions make political judgments. They take advice from the experts down the line, but it seemed to me that the kind of expertise the staff would provide would almost automatically run into the large volume of expertise that existed in the Department of State. For example, suppose an assistant secretary of state for the Middle East goes to the Middle East on foreign policy business and talks with the foreign ministers of the countries there. What does the congressional expert on the Middle East do? Read the report when the assistant secretary comes back? Or does that person feel that he or she must go to the Middle East to make an independent examination? And if it's the latter then you almost automatically build in a conflict between the executive and the legislative branches of government. Now, I realize our system is based upon conflict between the two, but in a sense it seemed to me that the role of the Senate and the role of the staff of the Senate was to provide overall political

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judgment and not to begin to seek out areas in which there might be different interpretations, where there would be a search for different facts which would lead to different political judgments. By and large, the political judgments that are made are based upon what appears in the newspapers, what had been gathered in a general way, not by some in-depth expert analysis which would disagree with an expert analysis made by someone else.

RITCHIE: Did you find that Fulbright shared your views on that?

MARCY: I believe he did, although I don't recall that he and I ever discussed this. The reason I say I believe he shared my views was that he thought of the Committee as a totality, all of the members. He didn't much like the idea of creating subcommittees, of having subcommittees which would have areas of separate jurisdiction. If an issue was important he felt it ought to be considered by the full Committee. If it wasn't important enough to be considered by the full Committee, I think he questioned whether the Committee should be involved. The Committee had tremendous amounts of significant business to do. It is very difficult to find time to digest the product of experts on its staff. We did, however, from time to time, call on experts outside of the Committee and outside of the executive branch. I think that was probably a better technique than to build up contrary expertise. I think it was Senator Humphrey who insisted that we should have "countervailing expertise" on the

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Committee staff. Now, I could never really be sure what countervailing means, but I interpreted it as meaning that we ought to have experts who somehow

countervailed, enunciated different points of view, gathered different kinds of facts than those that were gathered by either the foreign service generally or by a full-time expert from one of the universities.

RITCHIE: Did you have a lot of pressure from some of the other senators who wanted to be perhaps more independent as subcommittee chairmen, the Wayne Morses on Latin America, the Hubert Humphreys on Disarmament, and people like that?

MARCY: No, the principal problem I had, if it could be a problem, was with Senator Humphrey, who was an extremely active person. Anything that Hubert got involved in became the most important thing to him and to the Nation and he would never drop anything. He had a tremendous capacity to absorb information from all sources. I don't remember that any of the other senators felt particularly left out because they didn't have their own expert. Although I was probably not in a good position to view that. After all, a senator was not likely to come to me and complain that we weren't supplying him with adequate information--al though as time went by more and more of them felt that senators on the Committee ought to have a particular person on the staff who would deal with the subject of foreign relations. Senator Morse, for example, had a very competent lady on

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his staff, Phyllis Rock, who worked very closely with our staff. One of the problems which arose, however, as senators began to put persons on their staffs solely to deal with foreign relations matters was that those staff people wanted to have access to classified Committee information and attend all Committee hearings sitting behind their principals. I resisted that.

I recall one incident which illustrates the problem: I believe it was Senator Symington who had a very competent assistant. Senator Symington came to me one day and said, "Now, I want my man sitting behind me in this executive session with the Secretary of State." And I said, "Well, Senator, we have not done that in the past." "I want my man there," insisted Symington. My reply was "Well, Senator, if you're going to have your aide present, then you must realize that Senator Morse is going to have his assistant on foreign policy, and so it will soon be with every member of the Committee." As I recall, Senator Symington said, "Well, if Senator Morse is going to have an assistant sitting behind him, I guess I will give up my request." So, the point was not pressed. But that's really where the crunch came. If one senator was going to have a subcommittee that had legislative power, then all of the members of the Committee wanted to have a subcommittee that had legislative power. I'm coming full circle to Senator Fulbright's feeling, as I enunciated earlier, that if it was an important matter it was of concern to the full Committee. If it was not a concern to the full Committee, why bother with it?

RITCHIE: In the case of Fulbright, did he have members of his own personal office staff who dealt with foreign policy matters whom you had to deal with, or did he separate out his committee and personal staff?

MARCY: He relied very much on the Committee staff. He did have people on his staff that we worked with very closely. When I first came to the Committee and we were working on the subject of the United States Information program, one of his assistants, a man named Jack Yingling, whom I have mentioned earlier, and I, did go to Europe together. But I think that was the only occasion. There may have been a few instances in which someone from his staff traveled with the Committee staff to a parliamentary meeting or something of that sort. But I don't recall that anyone on his staff got very deeply involved in foreign policy matters. Norvill Jones, I guess, became somewhat involved in foreign policy matters. When we had a vacancy on the staff Pat Holt and I decided that if we could get Norvill on the full Committee staff that would be absolutely great because he was very competent. That 's how he came on. It was not a case of Fulbright saying, "Put Norvill on the Committee staff." My recollection again is that Senator Fulbright didn't much like the idea. He wanted to keep Norvill with him, but he consented to having him come to the full staff.

RITCHIE: Was there ever any concern from Fulbright's staff that actions that he was taking as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee wouldn't leave him in good stead politically in his homestate?

MARCY: I recall grumbles several times from staff members, but nothing pops to mind. Fulbright's staff would take their Arkansas foreign policy political problems up with the senator, not the Committee staff. As you know, Senator Fulbright was very independent. He told me many times that he thought he had a compact with the people of Arkansas. It was that if he represented the people of Arkansas on the issues closest to their hearts, they had given him, as the other part of that contract, freedom to act as he felt he should act in the field of foreign policy. The classic case of where he represented the people of Arkansas right down the line was in connection with Civil Rights.

RITCHIE: Did he ever express his feelings about that position, that he was taking a stand with the Southern senators?

MARCY: Not to me. I often had to defend positions which he took, in the sense that someone would come to me and say, "I cannot understand how Senator Fulbright, liberal, broad-minded, can be like he is on Civil Rights." And I would give the explanation which I have just given to you, and also pointed out that

probably the Fulbright program did more for the international education of minorities than almost any other piece of legislation that came that

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early. Under the program people did go abroad as scholars, teachers, or artists, absolutely regardless of race, creed, or color.

RITCHIE: There was always the issue that Washington was a segregated city and as African diplomats were coming they had difficulty in restaurants and other places. Did Fulbright ever express any concern about what this was doing to American policy towards emerging nations? Did it ever bother him?

MARCY: Again, Don, I don't recall any examples of that. I'm quite sure that we had a number of visitors, I mean official visitors from Third World nations that were received at the Committee. I don't recall any instance when anybody was excluded, whether it was a chief of state or a foreign minister, and it was appropriate for that person to meet with the Foreign Relations Committee there never was any discrimination. Of course, we're talking about different levels.

RITCHIE: Yes. One of the other things that I noticed that Fulbright was interested in doing when he became chairman was that he wanted to set up regular meetings or luncheons with members of the press who were interested in foreign relations. Somewhere in June of 1959 you and he had lunch with James Reston. It looked like this was going to be the first of a series. I was interested in looking over your report on that luncheon. Did Fulbright carry that out? Did he meet on a regular basis in private luncheons with journalists?

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MARCY: I think that was an idea which was started and we may have had two or three such sessions and then it disappeared. It didn't go anywhere. The best I can say is that it seemed like a good idea and it didn't go anywhere. I suspect what happened was that about the time the third luncheon was set up there was a roll call on the floor, or some hot debate issue, or somebody had to cancel at the last minute. The life of a senator around noon in the United States Senate is a bit irregular. If you're a Washington socialite, it's not smart to plan luncheons around having senators there if the lunch is going to run until two or three in the afternoon.

RITCHIE: Senator Fulbright always had a good press. He seemed to have been always admired, at least by the journalists who specialized in foreign relations. I wondered if that was solely because he was doing his job well, or was he really building strong ties to the working press?

MARCY: I think it was because he was doing his job. He did his work. He sometimes grumbled but never turned press people away. He always found time to talk with them. He was friendly. I never heard him upbraid any press person. But he did not go out of his way to cultivate them as such. He as in the Senate for a long time, and developed a good working relationship with them.

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RITCHIE: Did you find that there was a group of journalists who specialized in foreign policy matters, who stayed around the Committee, or did you have a large sea of reporters who came around regularly?

MARCY: It was rather a limited group, maybe twelve or fifteen. People like Ned Kenworthy and John Finney of the *New York Times*, and Don Oberdorfer of the *Washington Post*, and other of that type. There were probably fifteen or twenty, who covered--Murrey Marder--covered most of our hearings. If it was an executive session they were always standing outside the Committee room when the session was over. I.F. "Izzy" Stone seldom came to hearings. But he invariably came to committee offices the day after a hearing meticulously to read the transcript. So he got his stories in depth and with nuances. They were a very skillful group of reporters.

Now that there is so much discussion about leaks, there were certainly leaks at that time, but a good reporter doesn't have to get somebody off in a corner and have that person tell everything that went on. A good reporter will say to one person, "Well, did you discuss so-and-so today." or such-and-such, and the person will say, "Yes, we did, and I made a good point." "Senator, tell us what that point was Well that's interesting." Then the first thing you know the reporter goes to another member of the Committee and says, "I hear the Senator so-and-so said such -and-such. "Ohq did

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you? They can build on from there. I don't recall any instances when there were leaks of the kind that jeopardized the national security. But the good reporter does not have to have some person who is slipping him secret papers to figure out what goes on.

RITCHIE: From time to time there are always accusations that the staff must be leaking documents to the press, but the implication usually comes out that the senators are the major source of that information.

MARCY: Well, I can't remember any time when I gave any piece of paper to any reporter. There may have been some time, but I think I would remember. But on the other hand, if a reporter knew that a piece of paper existed, I would say, "I

can't give it to you, but each member of the Committee has a copy," or something like that. I suppose that might be a quasi-leak, or lead, I guess, one would say.

RITCHIE: Getting back to Senator Fulbright, did you find that when he became chairman that the atmosphere of the Committee changed? Was there any noticeable feeling like that?

MARCY: I can't recall any distinct change. I was greatly relieved because we finally had a chairman who was vigorous and active and knew what was going on, and was a recognized leader.

I divert for a moment to tell a story that you reminded me of: that is that it was only ten years from the time Senator Fulbright

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came on the Committee until he was chairman. That is an unusually short time in that period of history for a person to rise from the bottom to the top of the Committee. He was quite surprised himself, because there were a number of younger people ahead of him who looked like they had firm seats. Senator [Brien] McMahon of Connecticut, for example, died of cancer as I recall. And others were eliminated in various ways. So he became chairman quite quickly.

Did I tell you about the time when Senator Connally wanted to have Fulbright come to a Committee meeting? We don't have this in the record? Well, I will tell it then. When I first came to the Foreign Relations Committee in 1950, Senator Fulbright had just come on the Committee. I was sitting in Francis Wilcox' office one day while he was trying to round up a quorum. Connally walked in and said something like this, "Well, Francis, get hold of that Bill Fulbright, he's the newest member of the Committee and I got him on the Committee. Get him over here so we can get a quorum." Ten years later, I was the staff director, the chairman of the Committee was Senator Fulbright. Senator Fulbright walked into my office one day and said, "Carl, get a quorum so we can do some business. Call up that Jack Kennedy. He's the junior member of the Committee, I helped get him on the Committee and he doesn't come to any Committee meetings." I said, "Well, Senator, Senator Kennedy's pretty good, he comes to most of the meetings." "Well, I know," said Senator Fulbright. "When he comes to the Committee meetings, what does he

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do? He sits down at the foot of the table autographing pictures of himself." A year and a half or two years later, Jack Kennedy was President of the United States. I always thought that he came to those Committee meetings and autographed pictures of himself because he was running.

RITCHIE: That's a nice introduction to Kennedy. He was from 1957 to 1960 a member of the Committee. Did you have very many dealings with him when he was a member of the Committee?

MARCY: Not a great deal, not in an independent way. I had dealings very closely with Fred Holborn, who was on Kennedy's staff, and a few others. But my relationship with Kennedy was, I don't know how to describe it, austere, at arms length. He always called me by my first name, but he had his own entourage, his own people. He always came to Committee meetings very well prepared. Reliable, as far as Senator Fulbright was concerned, they had a good relationship. But I wouldn't say my relationship with Kennedy was close. I had a much closer relationship with Senator Morse, or Symington, or Fulbright, or Wiley, or Hickenlooper, than I ever had with Senator Kennedy.

RITCHIE: How would you describe the relationship between Kennedy and Fulbright?

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MARCY: That's hard, because I didn't see too much personal interplay between them. Within the Committee framework there was always respect. I think that Senator Fulbright thought that Kennedy was kind of a young Brahmin, smart. And I suspect Kennedy thought of Fulbright as an intellectual and not quite of the social class that he, Kennedy, was. It's hard to say. I really can't go much further than that.

RITCHIE: In 1960, it seemed as if half of the members of the Committee were running for president. You mentioned that you had a lot of trouble getting a quorum. Did you find in any way that presidential politics was interfering with, or seeping into the Committee?

MARCY: No, I don't think that there were instances in which points were made in hearings that would support one candidate rather than another. You're probably right, there was a difficulty getting a quorum. Senator Symington was running at that time as I recall.

RITCHIE: Humphrey.

MARCY: Humphrey was running. When did [Eugene] McCarthy? McCarthy came much later. McCarthy came while Johnson was president. No, I don't remember that politics injected itself into Committee meetings.

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RITCHIE: The only political statement that I've seen in the transcripts was a suggestion by George Aiken that the African subcommittee be sent on a three month investigation of Africa--this was in August of 1960--of course, Kennedy

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was chairman of the African subcommittee. Then Wayne Morse proposed that the vice president lead a special study group to Latin America for the same three months.

MARCY: There was always that chit-chat back and forth, and tongue-in-cheek comments, but I trust in looking through the records you didn't find anything of substance that injected a political note.

RITCHIE: No, in fact, I'm surprised how little politics there is, even "behind-closed-doors" sessions, it does seem to be a group that worked together very well, despite the fact that they were clearly political rivals, even within the same party.

MARCY: Yes.

RITCHIE: Well, when Kennedy was elected, there was a lot of speculation that Fulbright would be considered for Secretary of State, and he wasn't. There was some speculation that it was because of his stand on Civil Rights. Was there any truth behind those stories? Did you hear anything or was there any feeling within the Committee about whether or not the senator was even interested in becoming Secretary of State?

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MARCY: When Congress reconvened after the election, and Lyndon was vice president, I encountered him one day in the Senate cloakroom, and he came up to me and grabbed my lapels, breathed in my face, and said, "What's wrong with that Bill Fulbright? I had it set up for him to be Secretary of State and he turned it down." I said, "Well, I didn't know anything about it." He said, "Well, I had it set up, and Bill called Dick Russell and said he wasn't interested. And I had it set up." That's all that I knew at that time.

Some months later, maybe even years later, I told Russell what I have just said, and asked him if that was true. Russell said, "Yes, Bill Fulbright called me when he understood that his name was under consideration and told me that he was not interested, and I passed the word along." Now, who Russell passed the word along to, or whether the Southern issue came into it, or not, I don't know. Senator Fulbright has told me the same thing, that he called Dick Russell and told him that he wasn't interested. So the aspect of this event that I know about had nothing to do with Senator Fulbright's position on Civil Rights.

I am reminded of a related event. Immediately after the election, I had a call from Fred Holburn, asking me if I had any ideas as to who Kennedy might name as Secretary of State. I told Fred my first choice for Secretary of State was Senator Fulbright and my second choice would be Dean Rusk. And I remember Fred Holburn

asking: "Who's Dean Rusk?" I described that he had been an assistant Secretary of State at an earlier time and was president of the Rockefeller Foundation. Holburn said that sounds interesting, and we dropped it. I heard nothing further until Rusk was named as Secretary of State, and then Holburn phoned me and said, "Well, we did it. Since then I have heard many others claim credit, or responsibility, for Rusk. I don't know the full story, but I'm sure if you ask Fred Holburn, who is in town now, that he would probably recall this very much as I did.

RITCHIE: Well, actually there is a memo from you to Fred Holburn in your files in which you cited Dean Rusk. You said that he was "a top-notch man for under secretary and possibly for Secretary."

MARCY: Oh, for goodness sakes.

RITCHIE: And this was in November of 1960.

MARCY: That would have been just about right. Probably, now recalling it, Holburn said something to me, "well, if you think he's so good, send me a memo," something like that.

RITCHIE: What was it about Rusk that made you single him out?

MARCY: I don't know. I had known him in the Department of State in a very casual way. He always seemed like a very decisive person. He was at that level of person who should be considered.

Having seen now some of the things that Mr. Rusk did as Secretary of State, and recalling subsequent disagreements that I had with him, and certainly Senator Fulbright had with him, maybe it was a mistake to have suggested him for the post of Secretary of State. That's on the assumption that my recommendation was the only one that carried any weight, which, of course, was not true.

RITCHIE: Was your feeling of disappointment later on strictly on policy disagreements, or in terms of his character as Secretary?

MARCY: Fundamentally it was on policy disagreements, although somewhere in my files there is a memorandum of a conversation that I had with Dean Rusk at a time when relationships between Rusk and Fulbright were very bad. I recall Dean Rusk saying to me, "That Senator Fulbright is a poor chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. He might be a great college professor or a college

president, but his is no person to be chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee." I'm sure you've seen that memo somewhere.

RITCHIE: I haven't seen it yet, but I'll look for it. Well, when Rusk took over as Secretary of State and when Kennedy was inaugurated as president, how would you describe the relations between the Committee and the new administration?

MARCY: Speaking just for myself, I was rather disappointed, because I thought that with the Kennedy administration there would be

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close cooperation between the Committee and the new administration, and between the staff of the Committee and the new people who were coming into positions of power and influence in the administration. That wasn't the case, or didn't seem to me to be the case. I may have expected too much. Kennedy brought his own people in, his friends, and as I indicated earlier, he had his own coterie of assistants, people who had helped him in the campaign, people who had worked with him in the Senate. He didn't have any close relationships with any member of the Committee staff. I think one could also say that Kennedy didn't have very close relationships with many senators. I don't know that he ever had a buddy-buddy kind of relationship with any senator. My impression is that he was always a little aloof from the rest of the group. He was very close to Charles Ferris, who was at that time, or subsequently, secretary to the Democratic Policy Committee of the Senate. But it seemed to me that the people from the Hill who went downtown for positions in the new administration were relatively few. Those who did seemed to be glad that they were downtown and away from the Senate, glad to get out of this place. From then on the general syndrome developed--I'm speculating now about the executive branch attitude--that the United States Senate was a nuisance. New executive branch officials had to start worrying about it. They had to testify, supply reports, and it took an inordinate amount of new policy makers' time to keep senators happy. That's a characteristic of people in the executive branch, I

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think, whether they come from the Congress as Kennedy and some of his group had, or whether they come from a governorship.

RITCHIE: Did you find basically that the State Department was pretty much the same as it had been under the Dulles-Herter regime, in terms of its relationship with the Committee?

MARCY: Yes. Yes, I thought it was very much the same. Who was Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations when Kennedy came in? Oh, I know, it was Fred Dutton. Fred and I had a very good relationship, but he was part of the

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Kennedy group, came in with the Kennedy group. I don't remember what Fred had done before that. I think he had been an official in California. My relationship with Fred Dutton in the Department of State, and earlier with Bill Macomber, who had occupied the same post of Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, was about the same. We always had a very good working relationship. My comments about general attitudes did not go to those individuals. They worked very closely with the Committee.

RITCHIE: Well, very shortly on in the Kennedy administration, within four months, he had a major foreign policy disaster with the Bay of Pigs disaster. This was a case again where the Foreign Relations Committee was not consulted in advance, although Senator

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Fulbright apparently found out in advance and was the only person to make any kind of a negative commentary or warning against proceeding with the invasion.

MARCY: That's right. I'm a little hazy during that period. What was the date?

RITCHIE: It was mid-April of 1961.

MARCY: I think Pat Holt had been working in that area and got wind of the invasion plans. My guess is that Pat alerted Fulbright, and that Fulbright was not informed independently by the executive branch. Pat would recall that. My guess is that there was not any advance consultation which the administration would, I should think, have initiated in an event of this kind.

RITCHIE: Did you get a sense that Senator Fulbright was disappointed in the way things were developing with the new administration?

MARCY: No. That's about all I recall at the moment.

RITCHIE: Did you feel that after the Bay of Pigs debacle that the administration made any changes in its approach to Congress, was there any effort to straighten things out and to consult with members?

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MARCY: No, I don't recall any great move on the part of the administration to be more friendly and cultivate the Committee. We each did our own thing. They prepared legislative proposals and we held hearings on them. Things seemed to go along pretty well until further down the road we came to the Dominican development, but that was after Kennedy had gone. I gather, at least my impression is that Fulbright and Kennedy had a reasonably good relationship, but not intimate. One reason I say that is because after Johnson became president, for a period of time Johnson turned to Fulbright extensively, calling

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Fulbright "my Secretary of State"--as he had done when he was majority leader in the Senate. I don't know how this went down with Secretary Rusk. Fulbright had a very close and intimate relationship with President Johnson and Mrs. Johnson, as did Betty Fulbright, for a period of time. The very fact that he, Fulbright, was all at once welcomed in the White House by Lyndon suggests to me that the relationship between Kennedy and Fulbright had never been very close. Let me just say, I want to be sure it's understood that I am just speculating about this, and I know that I should probably not do that.

RITCHIE: Oh, no, I'm interested in what you have to say. Yours is an educated speculation.

MARCY: All right.

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RITCHIE: But I appreciate your pointing out when you are speculating as opposed to talking about your direct involvement. Again, I guess a speculation question: Looking back over the Kennedy administration from this perspective, in terms of foreign policy it was a very tumultuous period, from the Bay of Pigs to the Berlin Wall crisis, Kennedy's meeting with Khrushchev in Vienna, the Cuban Missile crisis. Do you think that there was a problem of capability involved there, that this administration wasn't all that it was cracked up to be in terms of being able to handle international relations and situations?

MARCY: I don't think so. That's a personal judgment, but I don't know how the Berlin crisis could have been handled, how the Cuban crisis could have been handled. I don't think either of them were particularly precipitated by actions on the part of the Kennedy administration. It would have been interesting to have seen what would have happened if Kennedy had stayed in for another six years.

RITCHIE: Was there any prior consultation before the Missile crisis in 1962, as opposed to the Bay of Pigs invasion?

MARCY: Yes. I think though, that all of the consultation came with Fulbright being invited to the White House for meetings, to which I was not privy. I've heard the story several times that when it got to the point of how we should respond to the missiles, take them out militarily or order them out, that Senator Fulbright and

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Senator Russell were very tough, and then it was Bobby Kennedy who was the restraining influence. But that's all hearsay as far as I'm concerned. I read about it in the press, and that's it. I don't recall that there was any great discussion in the Committee at the time. You've looked at the transcripts, was there?

RITCHIE: I haven't seen the 1962 transcripts yet, but I'm curious to see them.

MARCY: I think I would remember if there had been vigorous discussion in the Committee. It certainly was an issue that should have been discussed. But I don't recall.

RITCHIE: One other crisis area that was developing in that period was South Vietnam, and I was interested to see that in December 1959, you and Frank Valeo made a trip to South Vietnam.

MARCY: Yes.

RITCHIE: And I wondered if you could tell me about the background to that, and your impressions of Vietnam at that time?

MARCY: Well, there is a report somewhere, because I'm sure we did a report on it, I remember that. Frank Valeo had special access through Senator Mansfield to /Ngo Dinh/ Diem. We had an audience with him. Valeo conveyed some message from Mansfield to Diem. Precisely what that message now, I don't fairly recall. I think the

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American ambassador at that time was [Elbridge] Durbrow. I remember Ambassador Durbrow briefing us at great length about how the North Vietnamese were getting prepared to come down the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and how the South Vietnamese were positioned to take care of that, there would be no danger, this kind of thing. They were talking about the threat from the North. We also talked at that time with a man named Sam Williams, General Sam Williams, who was referred to as "Hanging Sam" because he had been either the general or the colonel in Germany who had responsibility for keeping safe the Nazi hierarchy during the trials. That's where he got the name "Hanging Sam." I think he was head of the aid mission, of all things, at that time in Vietnam. Valeo and I flew to Hue and came back to Saigon by railroad. I think we must have been one of the last travelers on that railroad, which used to be quite an elaborate French rail system. So we saw a good bit of the country. I'd have to go back to the report to refresh my recollections on other than these geographic features.

RITCHIE: I'm interested in your impressions. I know that apparently the main reason for the mission was that there had been a series of articles by a man named Albert Colgrove on the mismanagement of the aid program in Vietnam. And essentially after the Committee held some hearings and looked into it they came to the conclusion that the charges were greatly exaggerated, and while there was some mismanagement it wasn't gross and flagrant. But still it's such a pivotal time in United States -Vietnamese relations, when things

were still going well but just before we began to get sucked in deeper, that I was curious about your impressions, memories that you carried away from that trip.

MARCY: What has happened since that time has influenced my recollection, because, as I try to search my mind for what my attitude was in 1950, I tend to relate it to what happened later on in Vietnam. So in my previous discussion with you I didn't mention the aid program except through the personality of Sam Williams, who was head of the aid program. Now that you refresh my recollection, yes, that is right. During that period there were a series of critical articles about the aid program. It was about that time that there was a growing feeling and a series of articles about the "Ugly American." There was a book that came out about that time. So we were interested in the aid program. It's interesting that while I recall, quite vividly, the discussion about how the North Vietnamese threatened to come across the DMZ [De-Militarized Zone], my recollection of the aid program is rather weak.

RITCHIE: Which was, of course, the justification for having a big aid program in that country.

MARCY: That's right. That's about it.

RITCHIE: Last night Public Broadcasting did the third episode of their Vietnam series, "Vietnam: A Television History," and it was on the period from 1954 to 1963, very well produced episode, unfortunately up against the World Series.

MARCY: I saw it, the Vietnam program.

RITCHIE: The thing that struck me in watching it was how inexplicable it all seemed to everyone involved: Eisenhower trying to explain what was happening in Vietnam; Kennedy seeming more ill-at-ease than I remember ever seeing him on any issue, trying to explain just what our position ought to be in Vietnam. That sense of confusion, I thought, was the dominating theme of that episode.

MARCY: After Senator Fulbright got deeply involved in the issue of Vietnam some years later, he insisted on reading in depth the history of that area, and insisted also on being briefed. So we brought people in. Bernard Fall, for example, "Street Without Joy," who was later on killed in Vietnam. And other people who were knowledgeable in the area. Fulbright immersed himself in that area in a way that surprised me. I recall his saying to me one time, "Well, I guess I'm going to have to pay some attention to the Far East. I've only paid attention to Europe." He'd traveled all over Europe, held been educated in Europe. Now he felt he had to learn about this part of the world. So we got a lot of books for him

from the library and went through the whole exercise, doing everything we could to educate

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him on it. He wanted to be educated. I've often thought that he, Fulbright, probably knew more about the history and the background characteristics of Indochina than say Secretary Rusk, or certainly than Mr. [Robert] McNamara, or Lyndon Johnson. The policy makers were so busy making policy that they had no time to read or to think. Fulbright took time to read and think, but he was not able at that time to determine policy.

RITCHIE: We're at the point where the whole Vietnam issue is going to come up, and I think the best thing would be to spend next week talking on Johnson and Vietnam, rather than trying to start to talk about it at the end of this session. But is there anything else about the Kennedy years that stands out in your mind, that we should cover?

MARCY: For the record, one of the times that I was most embarrassed as staff director of the Foreign Relations Committee was in connection with an item of legislation on which I was presumably the authority. It was in executive session. Senator Kennedy began to ask me questions which I was not able to handle. Kennedy was obviously well briefed, and I had to confess my inability to handle the questions from Mr. Kennedy. One other footnote, my son graduated from Senate Page School the year that Kennedy became president. Kennedy spoke to the graduating class and invited the class to visit him at the White House, along with their parents. So I remember

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going to the White House, by courtesy of my sixteen-year-old son, and going through the reception line, and the surprise with which Kennedy looked at me and said, "I didn't realize you had a son this old, congratulations."

RITCHIE: Did you say that your wife had a job in the Kennedy administration?

MARCY: Mildred was in the League of Women Voters and went to work for the United States Information Agency when Ed Murrow was head of USIA. I guess that was at the beginning of the Kennedy administration. She went to a Civil Service position, and has been with the agency ever since, and is now, what do they call them? SES, Senior Executive Service person. Ed Murrow wanted to have a women's advisor. USIA had a policy planning staff with a labor advisor, a youth advisor, a business advisor, and soon, Murrow asked Mildred to be women's activities advisor. She was at that time working for the Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters. So she was one of those few women who grew up, matured maybe we should say, with the women's

movement. Then she was subsequently in the Department of State and worked very closely with Bill Macomber, who set up a system so that women in the Foreign Service could have advantages which they hadn't had before. Then during the Nixon administration Mildred was executive secretary of the president's commission preparing for Women's International Year. She had an office in the Department of

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State bigger than any office I ever had! Forty people working for her. Helps to have a wife who is intelligent, able, employed. Makes it possible for you to meet the family budget! We probably will want to take this out of the record. If we don't, she will.

RITCHIE: I think it's great.

MARCY: I'll leave that up to your discretion.

RITCHIE: Well, I thank you. I think this was a most interesting session, especially coming right after that episode, looking back on those old kinescopes of Eisenhower and Kennedy, and getting back into that period.

MARCY: I find it very hard to get back into it. I'm very disappointed in myself in not being able to recall events of that period more clearly.

RITCHIE: On the other hand, we've covered quite a bit of ground.

MARCY: Well, maybe for the next session I'll go back and read David Halberstam's *The Best and The Brightest*.

RITCHIE: No, it's just as well, actually, not to be influenced by those things. In fact, one of the problems I think that oral historians face is that sometimes the people they interview have been reading the same books they have! Then you're really talking about

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the author's interpretation. I'm much more interested in your memory and things that stood out for you as important, as opposed to anything that I try to impose on you with my questions.

MARCY: Well, then, I will not bone up before our next session. There is one caveat I should not for the record. That is my propensity to recall conversations which end up in the transcript in quotation marks. I said ". . ."; He said ". . ." These are not actual quotations--they are my best recollection of words exchanged.

[End of Interview #4]