

**Francis R. Valeo**  
Secretary of the Senate, 1966-1977  
Secretary to the Majority, 1963-1966  
Administrative Assistant to Senator Mike Mansfield, 1958-1963  
On loan from LRS to Foreign Relations Committee, 1952-1958  
Chief, Foreign Affairs Division of the Legislative Reference Service 1950-1952  
Foreign Affairs Division, Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, 1946-1950

---

**FROM CHINA TO WASHINGTON**

Interview #1  
Wednesday, July 3, 1985

---

**RITCHIE:** I've been doing these interviews in a biographical, chronological framework, beginning with people's backgrounds, their family life, where they grew up, the schools they went to, and what they did before they came to the Senate. I wondered if you could tell me a little bit about your parents, who they were and what they did?

**VALEO:** Yes, my father came as an immigrant around the turn of the century, at the age of sixteen. He worked as a shoemaker, or shoe repairer, and then in a shoe factory; eventually became a foreman of the factory. My mother was born on Hester Street, on the Lower East Side, also of immigrants who had arrived a few years earlier. Her family grew up in Brooklyn. They moved there at a rather early date because there was a large shoe factory there called Wickett and Gardens. Her father, something of an entrepreneur, had opened a series of small businesses, starting with a barbershop, and then a bar, and a grocery store, things of that sort. She went to work at the age of nine in the factory. She had only three years of schooling. My father had perhaps five. Both recognized the value of education and were insistent that I get it. So that's where it began.

I can't say too much positively about the Brooklyn public school system. It was an extraordinary experience, especially for immigrant kids, of which many in that area were. They came from maybe twenty different countries. They were very dedicated people in the school system.

**RITCHIE:** So you went through the public schools?

**VALEO:** I went through the public schools in Brooklyn, and I think learned in that experience a sense of the United States, which you could get no where else. After that it was relatively routine. I went to NYU [New York University], and then graduate school at night. Worked in the daytime at Brooks Brothers, the clothier, went to school at night. I came here in 1942, on invitation of Ernest Griffith, who had then recently become head of the Legislative Reference Service, which as you know evolved into the Congressional Research Service. I came down on a temporary job. I had just finished my master's at night, when I came down. I stayed at the Library for about eight or nine months and then went into the army, and eventually wound up in China, which was where I wanted to go in the first place. I got there almost by accident, but I got there.

I spent a good portion of my military service in China, traveling really from one end to the other. We flew the Hump to get in. That was the wartime route from India. Actually, it was

an extraordinary voyage. We left from the port of Los Angeles, went all the way around Australia in a troop transport, and then came up into Bombay, escorted on that side by Australian warships. We had about five thousand men on the ship. From Bombay we went across India by troop train, which took four or five days, to Calcutta. And then from Calcutta we went also by train to northeast India, to a place called Chabua in Assam. That was the Indian terminal of the Hump—our route into China. There was no road route into China at the time, you had to go in by air. The air force flew the Himalayas into Kunming, in Yunnan Province in western China. Then from there we moved as a group eastward towards Canton. The master strategy was to bring the Chinese armies in that direction to Canton, with allied naval forces supposed to land troops in Hong Kong. Well, the war ended at that point. After that I went to Shanghai, waiting for a few months to come home, and then back to the Library, where I was raised from a GS-5 to a GS-7, on the basis of my wartime experiences.

**RITCHIE:** Could we backtrack a little bit? I wanted to fill in some information. I was interested in the fact that you went to NYU, and that was during the Depression. It must have been difficult getting out of high school then and deciding to go to college.

**VALEO:** Well, you know I knew so little about it. Ironically we had only one other person in our family who had ever

graduated from college. He was a medical doctor, who had married my mother's sister. That was the basis for our connection with him. But at that period of time, among immigrant families, the stress was on education. Nobody really knew why, but it was. Again, it may have been the product of these Brooklyn schools. It was picked up in a way by mother, and to a lesser extent by my father. She had gone to the same school that I went to, P.S. 35, but only for three years. So she recognized the importance of education and was very determined that I get an education, if not my brother who had seemed to show little inclination to go in that direction. Without her, I don't think any of this would have happened.

The normal pattern would have been maybe to have graduated from elementary school and then perhaps do some high school at night. But then go to work at about the age fourteen or fifteen, get something they called working papers, and go to work. That was basically the pattern of that area. But she was very determined and so she went wherever she could get information about schooling. They were very thrifty people and saved enough money to pay a tuition, which was not excessive in those days. And then later, of course, I paid for my own when I began to work. But they started it off, basically, and they were determined that it would work that way.

**RITCHIE:** How did you happen to pick NYU?

**VALEO:** Only because it was a subway school. You could get there for five cents, and back for five cents.

**RITCHIE:** And when you got there you majored in political science, how did that come about?

**VALEO:** That came later, actually. I went, groping vaguely I think at the time. Again, you always come back to this pattern of immigrant families. Immigrant families wanted you to be a professional. That meant—in the order of importance—a doctor, a lawyer, or a teacher. I guess I was scheduled for law, maybe I was afraid of blood, I don't know exactly what. We already had a doctor in the family, and that had taken so long. I don't know, it just happened that they sort of set on the law for me, and that's the way I got involved. I didn't really find myself that comfortable with the law, and once at the university my interests widened. I became interested particularly in theatre. And as Walter Lippmann has very wisely pointed out, there's a very close relationship, as we see now, between theatre and politics. From that I gravitated towards government. I should also mention that when I was in high school I was voted the class politician. I have not the slightest idea why, except that once I got up and said, "I rise to a point of order," at a school meeting, a student meeting. In the old yearbook it shows me as the class politician. So maybe these things have deeper roots than we realize. That was about it. Did you have any other questions about background?

**RITCHIE:** You said during those days you worked at Brooks Brothers.

**VALEO:** Yes.

**RITCHIE:** What did you do at Brooks Brothers?

**VALEO:** I was an accountant. So I never was afraid to add two and two, as so many members of Congress are. They have great respect for accountants. As far as I can see, members of Congress that I have known, most of them, have had great respect for either accountants, or writers, or both. Of course, many members of Congress have difficulty with mathematics, and all of us have difficulty with writing.

**RITCHIE:** Well, when you finished in 1936, did you have any idea what you wanted to do at that stage?

**VALEO:** Yes, I wanted to work in government. This was the New Deal period. Young men or women who had any real inclination toward service looked toward government. It was kind of a salvation for the country. It had, in theory if not in fact, rescued the country from a Depression. Roosevelt had inspired a lot of people. I actually graduated in '42, the war had come at that point too.

**RITCHIE:** I was wondering about when you graduated from college, before you went back to get the master's degree.

**VALEO:** Oh, I decided that I did not have it for the theatre. That was not my forte, and that I better stick to my major, which was government in undergraduate school, and that this would probably give me the most satisfaction and also be one of the best routes to get a job. That being time of the Depression, getting a job was extremely important.

I began at that time to get very interested in China, when I went back to graduate school. A fellow student in one of my classes in graduate school was from China. I began to help him with English and he said, "Would you like to learn Chinese in return?" I said that sounded all right. But unfortunately he was Cantonese, so he didn't really know the principal dialect of Chinese, which now prevails in China. "I know Mandarin," he said, "but I don't know it very well." And he said, "So I'll teach you Cantonese and in any event you can always talk with the laundry man even if you can't go to China."

My thought at that time was probably the best place to start a working career was either to come to work in Washington or to go abroad as a teacher. In the latter connection, I thought of China as the place to teach. We had still not gone into the war, and China at that time was resisting the Japanese invasion. It had inspired a lot of people to want to support what they were doing, and I happened to be one of them. I thought I might do

something useful by going to China at that point. Eventually I did, but it was in a different context.

**RITCHIE:** So was international relations your specialty in the master's degree?

**VALEO:** Yes, it was. I wrote a thesis for the M.A. called "The Japanese Techniques for Promoting Manchukuoan Nationality." The Japanese had established in Manchuria a country called Manchukuo in the old, classic pattern of the Forbidden Emperor. Actually, it was an attempt to restore the original Ching dynasty family descendants in a new, puppet government. They used a number of fascinating public relations techniques to try to produce that. There was something called the Kwantung Army, which really ran Manchukuo almost as a separate entity from Japan. It was really an army enterprise from beginning to end.

In graduate school I was first introduced to the books of Owen Lattimore, who later figured in the McCarthy period, but who at that time had fascinated me as being probably the most interesting of all the people I read on China. His books on Inner-Asia, the whole area around Mongolia, into Sinkiang and that area, are probably the most authoritative books that were produced in that period. There was a lot of exploration being done then by people like Sven Hayden, and Stern, who were essentially archaeologists, and some of them were collectors, I think. But



Lattimore really understood the area, and really immersed himself deeply in it. So I used him for a good deal of the authority of the thesis at the time.

**RITCHIE:** Were there any professors at NYU who were especially influential?

**VALEO:** Yes, there was a fellow named Hodges, Charles Hodges. Hodges had been fascinated by the League of Nations and had worked for them briefly and had been totally disillusioned in the process. He was a cynic with a marvelous sense of humor. He was probably more responsible for my thesis than anyone else. He knew I worked during the day and went to school at night. I don't know how you feel, there were maybe three or four teachers in your whole life who really influenced you deeply, and he happened to be one. It was his sense of human survivability, I believe, that impressed me most. It was during the period of the Nazi ascendancy in Europe. I guess the war had already begun at that point, or it was on the verge of beginning, and the Nazis had gone through Czechoslovakia and other places already.

He used to look very discouraged when he'd come to class and he had two phrases which always stuck in my mind. One was, he said, "I'm determined to organize a society for the presentation of suicidal weapons," and he had a number of people in mind, including Hitler, that he thought should get these weapons. The

other one was that he didn't really care how serious things would get, and how much men would destroy each other, because he said the survivors would always plant potatoes. Now, this was before nuclear weapons. I don't know what Charles Hodges might have thought after nuclear weapons, but up until that point he felt that the world would survive the Hitler period in some way, and of course he was right.

He had traveled, interestingly enough, the Trans-Siberian railroad, and had come down through Manchukuo. He gave me a lot of fresh material that he gathered en route that I used to write my thesis. He said, "You work. I'll never use this material. Why don't you just take this? You don't have time to go to the library very much. Take it and write it up. See what you can come up with." And that's how I did the thesis with him. He was my advisor on it. He was very important in that period, and very inspiring really.

**RITCHIE:** You said when you got your master's degree you were invited to come down to the Legislative Reference Service.

**VALEO:** Yes, the story behind that's a rather interesting one. I had taken the Foreign Service exam, studied for it myself. At that time it was a three or four day exam, a very complicated, complex exam. You could take it in several parts of the country. I took it in New York. Passed it, but there were two sections to

it. One was the written, and then there was the oral, which was given in Washington. I passed the written one, not high up. I was maybe, oh, three or four points above passing. I came down for the interview, and I wasn't accepted.

But Ernest Griffith, in trying to build up the Legislative Reference Service, began looking everywhere for what he felt were people who would be useful in doing this. One of the things he hit upon was to take the list from the Foreign Service exam and find the individuals who were not accepted for the Foreign Service and interview them and see whether or not they might fit into the Legislative Reference Service. So that's how my name came to his attention. He sent a fellow named Ray Manning to see me in New York. He was head of the new economics section that Ernest had set up. I talked with him about an opening in the economics department. Because my mark on the economics part of the Foreign Service exam had been particularly high, he was interested in me. But he didn't hire me. He went back and then Ernest Griffith later offered me a job in connection with another section of the service. I came down, and that's when I started to work. That's the background of how I got to the Library of Congress.

**RITCHIE:** Was that your first visit to Washington?

**VALEO:** No, I'd come down for the Foreign Service exam, and I'd come down as a twelve-year-old with my class, like kids still do. CI was noticing it on the steps today.

**RITCHIE:** I was wondering what your impressions were of Washington in 1942?

**VALEO:** I stayed at a hotel at 14th and K, it's since gone.

**RITCHIE:** The Ambassador?

**VALEO:** The Ambassador. It seemed appropriate since I was trying to get into the Foreign Service to stay at the Ambassador Hotel. It didn't help.

I didn't have strong impressions. It seemed crowded and bustling. When I first came down to work it was a twenty-four hour town. People were up all night because you had different shifts working in the government. But it was still essentially a small town. I lived in a rooming house near 14th Street, way out on Decatur Street somewhere, where I was asked to leave after being there for two weeks because I insisted upon opening my window and coal was scarce. The landlady said, "I can't have anybody who opens their windows." So I was asked to leave. Then I roomed with a Chinese chap over on North Capitol Street. He was here studying with the Census Bureau, and he was going back to help reshape the Chinese census system. We decided to join forces

and we roomed together, again in a furnished room, not too far from the Library. I used to take trolleys, there were a lot of trolley cars in Washington then, it was the way to travel. The winters were just as bad, just as inimical to traffic as they are now.

**RITCHIE:** What was the Legislative Reference Service like when you first got there?

**VALEO:** Well, I guess the best way to tell you that is to tell you a story about it. I'm now talking about 1946, which was really the beginning of the growth of Legislative Reference. In the 1942 period the La Follette-Monroney bill had not yet been passed, so it was a vision that Ernest Griffith had, more than anything else. The service had been in existence, but it was essentially a library reference service for members of Congress. Members would call up and they'd send a book out. There was very little writing done over there, bibliographies perhaps but not much more than that. In '46 the La Follette-Monroney bill was passed, it made a large place for the Legislative Reference Service in the reorganization of the Congress. That's when the service really began to take shape as a research organization. It still was in its infancy, and all of the researchers—I guess Francis Wilcox was the only senior specialist at the time—all the

other researchers were grouped together in a couple of large sections, one of which was general research, the other I think was legal research.

General research was headed by a fellow named Doc Knight, a nice man. He was a Ph.D. from I don't know how many schools—more than one. It was his job to make assignments. When I came back from the war, it was known generally that I was interested in Asia since I'd just been there as a soldier, so they made a point of giving me any inquiries that came in connected with Asia. I had mentioned that to Knight, and he said, "Oh, sure, I'll send them down." So he got one on some Indian tribe in North Dakota once and he said, "Here, give this to that fellow Valeo back there, he's interested in Indians." So it was not very specialized. We did what we could. We did almost any kind of request. I remember there were many assignments to me having nothing to do with Asia, internal problems in the United States. I also started writing statements for use on the floor of the two Houses.

Once the difficulties began to develop in Eastern Europe, one of the consistent requests was to write short speeches statements for members to put in the *Record* on national day for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. I don't know how many statements I wrote on Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania! If they had had computers in those days they could have been done mechanically. But to do them day in and day out, maybe a dozen a day until Estonian day, was

a real challenge, to come up with something different for each one of them. One statement was a speech draft for the then Vice President Alben Barkley to use in Chicago. He sent me a commendatory letter in return. But that was the way a good deal of that early period passed.

Actually, my first significant request came from Mike Mansfield, which was the beginning of the relationship with him. I remember because Ernest was very happy with the work I was doing, not happy with the fact I didn't have a Ph.D., but he was happy with the kinds of things I was turning out, because he was getting good comments from the people that he brought them to. He came in one day and he said, "Come quickly. I want you to meet a congressman." I'd never met a congressman before. He said, "It's a congressman from Montana, his name is Mansfield. He's had some problems getting what he wants from the service. I want you to listen and find out exactly what it is he wants and do it for him." So I went to see him in what was then the Congressional Reading Room.

He was a sort of gangling figure. He looked like he'd been clothed at J.C. Penney's. He was sort of raw-boned. He had had a deep interest in China, and his name had a good ring to me because he was one of the congressmen who had passed through China after the war. In Shanghai, he had said we're going to get these fellows out of here and get them home as soon as we can. So that

meant he had very high credentials on a personal basis with me, because I was one of the fellows he was going to get out and get home as soon as he could.

I listened carefully to his request, and I did two or three research papers for him on the questions which he had raised. They had mostly to do with Asia. One was on what was happening in Japan in the early occupation period, and another was an evaluation of the situation developing in China, and so forth. I did these studies for him, and never got any comment from him. Then about six months later he called me and he asked me to come over to his office. Again, I guess it was the first time I had ever been in a congressman's office. He said, "I liked those papers you did for me six months ago." He said, "They were awfully complicated, but you answered the questions I was trying to get answered." He said, "I'm going to be on a program with General Marshall (who was then secretary of state), and I want you to do a statement for me." I guess it was on China, as I recall, on the China situation. "This one," he said, "I want you to make much more conversational than the others."

All things fit together in a way. This was my first real attempt at a substantive speech. I'd done a lot of small potboilers, but this was the first real thing. Then the early interest in the theatre came very much into play, because again, the relationship, as Lippmann pointed out, particularly in speech



writing, is very closely associated with theatre. You have to have a speech that builds up to an inevitability, and then you come through with a conclusion that follows logically from it, much the way a play goes to a climax and then a denouement. So I did that speech.

From that we established a fairly solid relationship. We're now talking about 1951-52. Meanwhile I went on writing lots of speeches for other people and doing a lot of research papers for other members of Congress. He ran for the Senate in that '52 campaign, and it was a particularly dirty one. He was being accused of supporting the Chinese Communists and so forth, not for any of the speeches I'd written for him, but as a result of a report on one of his China trips which he had given to either Roosevelt or Truman. I don't know what the origins of that report were, but it plagued him in that campaign. But he was very popular in Montana, and even though Eisenhower had a landslide in that election, Mansfield came through. He was one of the few Democrats that ran against the Eisenhower tide, even though it was the first time he'd tried the Senate.

After he moved into the Senate, and then I began to have a good deal of contact with him. By that time I'd already gone over on loan to the Foreign Relations Committee, and he didn't know anyone else on the committee staff, so he came to see me and talked with me, asked me about who the people were and who he

could count on for what. I was still on a loan arrangement, I was still with the Library. I don't know whether you want me to go on on this point or not?

**RITCHIE:** Well, what I'd like to do is go back again and fill in on some things that I'm curious about. I wanted to go back to your being in the army. You had been down here for a year. Did you get drafted in '43?

**VALEO:** Yes, that's right.

**RITCHIE:** And then when you trained, did the fact that you had studied Chinese have something to do with your assignment?

**VALEO:** It's very interesting how that worked in the army. My interest was listed on the initial entry papers. But there was never any reference made to it at all in the ensuing months. Then I applied for an ASTP unit, Army Specialized Training Program, for the study of Chinese. I was selected for that, and I went first to the University of Illinois and then to the University of Washington, where they had a special course for people who were training in Chinese.

It was an interesting experience, because the group I was with were all Cantonese, immigrants or children of immigrants. None of them spoke the northern dialect. They spoke a variety of Cantonese, usually village dialects. These were fellows out of

New York's Chinatown or San Francisco's Chinatown, or elsewhere. They spoke a variety of village dialects—well, I have to digress a bit to give you some background on this. Most of the Chinese in the United States come from two or three villages about fifty to a hundred miles from the city of Canton, and most of their families came to the United States by way of Macau or Hong Kong, as indentured labor of some sort. They spoke only their village dialect, didn't even speak the Canton city dialect, which is actually a court Chinese of the Tang dynasty, it's like Old English would be to present day English. So at this ASTP unit they wanted these people's linguistic skills to be useful, but to be useful they had to have some of the northern dialect, or the Mandarin as it was then called, or national speech. And because I knew some Cantonese I was thrown in with them. I was the only Caucasian in the group, the rest were all overseas Chinese.

So we got training, using Cantonese as the medium, in the northern dialect. Many of those people did go to China, but I was not among those scheduled to go, for some reason or other. I was scheduled to become a pole climber in a communications team going to the South Pacific. At the very last minute, one of the Cantonese fellows on a team that was scheduled to go to China came to see me. We were then in Missouri near Joplin, a place called Camp Crowder, which was a Signal Corps Camp. He said, "We have a group that's about ready to go to China and one of the people is

sick. " He said, "I know you always wanted to go to China. Would you like to go?" So I said yes, I'd be delighted to join the group. That's how it happened. I went out with about a week's training in what they were doing, to fill out the complement.

We went as a group. We were an eighteen or nineteen man team, about half of whom would have been overseas Chinese, and I guess I would have had to be included in that number. The rest were Caucasian radio operators, code clerks, and that sort of thing.

**RITCHIE:** What was the mission?

**VALEO:** This was just about the time that [General Joseph W.] Stilwell got into a knock-down, drag-out fight with Chiang Kai-shek. One of the reasons why was that Stilwell didn't believe any of the intelligence reports he got from Nationalist sources. He always thought they exaggerated what they wanted to exaggerate and underplayed what was important. So after the Stilwell-Chiang fight, [General Albert C.] Wedemeyer came over, the first thing he was determined to do was to get his own sources of information on what was going on at the front. He organized these teams which would parallel the Chinese army organization down to company level. But we would only, of course, be a mock-up organization, a skeleton. We would have maybe two men out at company level just

to see what was going on, to see if we could get a more accurate picture of the actual battlefield with the Japanese.

On route to China, we sailed around Australia to Bombay and then went by rail to Calcutta. We got as far as Chabua, in Assam, and we were waiting around on Christmas eve for a flight into China. I remember when the Japanese launched their last big offensive. No one knew whether they were going to take Chungking or not. There was nothing to stop them, but their lines got very extended and I guess they decided at that point they'd better not go any further. They were trying to really knock China out of the war before the United States got into full power, and they failed. So they had to pull back. We waited there, not knowing whether in the end we would go to China or not, because if Chungking had fallen there would have really been very little point in it. But they didn't take Chungking, and then we flew in to Kunming, and with the Chinese, began the countermovement towards Canton.

**RITCHIE:** Well, having studied China, what was it like to get there?

**VALEO:** It was fascinating. The most amazing thing, I think, was to see it from the air, when you came in from India. You had—I don't know how to describe it exactly—you knew the moment you had passed the borderline, more or less, between China and India, because you saw immediately the impact of human beings

on the land so much more clearly in China than you would see it in India. In India the human beings faded into the landscape, particularly in the rural areas around Chabua. But the minute you were over Yunnan Province and nearing Kunming, you began to see what you had imagined it would be like, the terracing of the fields and a great greenness, which was lacking, as I recall, on the Indian side. It wasn't until later that you began to see deeper, the poverty and the terrible human exploitation. Yunnan Province had not yet been touched very strongly by the war. It was a center for dispatching Americans elsewhere. It was also on the receiving end of American supplies, so that it was in somewhat better condition than the rest of China. It wasn't until we moved into Guerzhou Province by road that we began to see what the war had really done in the way of devastation to the country.

**RITCHIE:** Did your teams ever follow the Chinese armies?

**VALEO:** Yes, we set up an organization. We did function, vaguely, the way we were expected to do. It was hard to say how much really the language training had done. It was certainly useful in traveling around from one place to another. But in terms of how much greater insight it gave us into what was going on, I don't know. It's very hard to say.

**RITCHIE:** Were you able to file reports on what the Chinese army was doing?

**VALEO:** Yes. We sent them through regularly. We would encode them. But we were always receiving them from people still further out. I don't know who they were, or where they were, but we had some units out with the actual Chinese army, working with the Chinese army directly. They would report to us, and we in turn would file these reports. These were American reports and the reporting got more accurate in that period. That was the function, and to that extent the teams fulfilled the function.

**RITCHIE:** And you were there through '46?

**VALEO:** Through the early part of '46, in Shanghai after the war—and the city was just about what you would have expected.

**RITCHIE:** When did you go to Shanghai?

**VALEO:** I actually went to Shanghai on V-J Day, which was in September of 1945. We flew in from a place called Luzhou, in Kwangsi Province in the south. There weren't many of us; there were several thousand of us, I guess, in all, when we were finally filled out. I was billeted at the YMCA building on what was then called Bubbling Well Road. It was right in the heart of what was then the foreign settlement in Shanghai.

**RITCHIE:** Were you in China long enough to get any sense of the politics of China at that stage?

**VALEO:** I really wasn't that alert to it. It's interesting, when you're in the army you don't really have time to think much about politics. Yes, you got it in the press. There was an English language newspaper in Shanghai. There were one or two English weeklies. One was run by a fellow named Powell, whose family had been there for a long time. This was the son of the original publisher. He took a very militant anti-Chiang position, although never separating himself from the government, but he was one of its strongest critics. It had already begun at that point, and later on it became stronger and stronger. You had the feeling that it was a country that was obviously terribly impoverished by the war, and with a government that was not really capable of doing very much about it. There wasn't much more than that that you could see as a soldier in the area. Basically, that was it. You know, people would die on the streets. That was true not so much in Shanghai, but during the war there were so many refugees that people would die almost anywhere. It was a very rough, rough time.

**RITCHIE:** I wondered how that experience shaped your view of China and the Far East in later years.

**VALEO:** Well, what it did mostly was make me realize how far they've come when I saw it for the first time again in 1972, about the time of the Nixon visit, but we can take that up at another time. My own personal feeling at that time was—and I



don't know if I bought the official line or what—but I kind of accepted our own policy that the only way in which they had a chance of coming out of this would be by staying united around Chiang Kai-shek. I did not accept the view that he couldn't do it. I just refused to do that, because all I could see was a return to warlordism if he didn't do it.

I had no idea of the real appeal of the Communist Party at that time in China, which was enormous, as we found out later, but which at that time was still very remote. We're talking about a time when Chou En-lai was still trying to negotiate. He was in Chungking himself trying to develop some kind of rapport with the National government. We're talking about the time just before Pat Hurley went over there as Roosevelt's special emissary, to see if he could bring "Moose Dung" and "Shanka Jack" together, as he would call them.

**RITCHIE:** When you came back, China became a big issue very shortly after.

**VALEO:** Very quickly, and I was astonished that it had become that much of an issue. From being in China, I didn't see the Communists as a major factor at that point. At the time I left they still did not appear to be a major factor. It was not till about 1948 that their full strength—it wasn't so much the Communist strength at that time, it was the weakness that existed

under the Nationalist government, quite apart from mistakes of strategy and everything else. China needed a revolution. It had no choice, I don't think. I saw that in retrospect. I didn't see it at the time. But in retrospect, the weight of the past was so heavy, and the social decay so deadly, that they probably could not have reshaped it without a thorough-going revolution.

**RITCHIE:** Did you find yourself in demand for the congressmen and the senators who were particularly interested in China?

**VALEO:** The truth of the matter: there were very few who were, I mean, who really were deeply interested. It was only after it became a political issue, after the collapse of the Nationalist government, that congressmen really began to get interested in China. It was still pretty remote. You had a man like Walter Judd and a few others who had some experience in the situation, who were anxious to have the United States do something, or not do something, either way. Mansfield was another because of his experience there as Roosevelt's emissary as a young congressman, as a teacher of Asian history, and the fact that he had been a Marine there in the '20s. He knew the country. There were a few like that, but they were very few. Walter Judd never asked me, or never put a request into the Library which was assigned to me, and that's probably because Walter Judd probably did know a lot more about the situation at that point than I did.

**RITCHIE:** There were practically no speeches at all about China before 1949.

**VALEO:** That's right.

**RITCHIE:** But in 1949 the *Congressional Record* was packed with them.

**VALEO:** Well, it became *the* issue in '49 because that's when the Nationalists collapsed and it became a major issue in the United States. I remember people saying at the time—very good Republicans, saying: Wasn't it terrible what those Democrats did with the "Malta" Agreement, meaning the Yalta agreement, of course. But it was terrible what they had done, obviously given China away in the Malta Agreement.

**RITCHIE:** Did you then, after that, find that you were in demand?

**VALEO:** Yes, the demand went up very quickly at that point. I'm trying to remember. I was still at the Library of Congress. I was then chief of the Foreign Affairs Division, which had only been organized for about two or three years. I would say from about '49 on the interest rose very rapidly and I did a lot of work, although I can't remember now the particular members for whom I did requests.

I remember only one incident, almost deadly incident, that occurred when [Joseph] McCarthy's office called me. He had a research assistant who later became his wife, her name was Jean Kerr. She used to call me all the time for bits of information, a date or something like that. I had specifically requested that McCarthy's inquiries be referred to me, because I felt they had to be treated very carefully. At that time it was the custom in the Library to answer things by phone, you didn't have to have a memorandum on everything you did.

She called me one day about Owen Lattimore, the name I mentioned earlier. She wanted to know more about him. She said, "Is he a doctor? I mean, is he a Ph.D.?" I said, "Well, I'll check and see what I can find on him." She said, "He's out there saying he's a Ph.D. from a university." So I got out whatever information I could and I went to see Sergius Yacobson, who knew about the university that Lattimore had gotten the degree from. He said, "Well, it's not a Ph.D. in our sense of the word, but it's the equivalent." So I passed this back to Jean Kerr, but it came out "He's no Ph.D. at all" on the Senate floor, that Lattimore was a spurious character masquerading as a Ph.D. when he wasn't!

There was a senator from Rhode Island at the time, [Theodore Francis] Green, who was a stickler for detail. He asked, "Well, where did you get your information from?" McCarthy said, "It came from Mr. Valeo in the Library of Congress." I didn't know any-

thing about what was going on. I got a call from the Librarian, and he asked me to come in to see him. I went to his office, and he said, "Did you just give McCarthy some information?" I said, "Yes, I gave his office some information about Owen Lattimore." He said, "Senator Green is challenging that information, and he wants to know whether we actually supplied the information or not." He said, "I've told him that we are not at liberty to say whether or not we were the source of the information. However, I said if he wanted to he could ask us the same question and we would answer the question."

So I answered the question again, as I had answered it to Jean Kerr, perhaps even a little more carefully this time. And that went to Green, who then put the other matter in the record. I got a call from Jean Kerr the next day, she said, "Got you in a little trouble yesterday, didn't we, Mr. Valeo?" She said, "We'll make it up to you." She said, "I'm going to send you a copy of the senator's new book, autographed to you personally." It was *General Marshall: Ten Years—or Twenty Years—of Treason*, or something like that. I still have that book somewhere. After that, any information that went to McCarthy's office went as a memo. Nothing went on the telephone anymore.

**RITCHIE:** What about Senator Knowland, who was known as the senator from Formosa?

**VALEO:** Interesting guy. Oh, he'd call occasionally for minor things, but never anything significant. I have funny feelings about Knowland. He was a very distant man. The only time I ever really found myself in a kind of human exchange with him was out in Denver, Colorado. We'd been there on some kind of hearings. We were sitting in the airport, waiting for a plane, and he was there on some other matter, I think. He came and sat in the waiting room, and then the snow started to fall. It was a spring snowstorm, and about eight inches fell in an hour or two, so we were snowbound for a period of time. Carl Marcy was there too. That was the only time I ever saw Knowland take on some human dimensions, in that one little incident.

I always had the feeling that he really disliked intensely being in public life, and that some kind of force for better or for worse was pushing him in that direction all the time. Of course, Tom Connally of Texas used to give him a hard time. I'm sure Pat Holt probably gave you this sort of thing, but Tom Connally used to call him "The senator from Formosa." He would never call it Taiwan. He would always call him "The senator from Formosa."

**RITCHIE:** At the same time, a lot of these senators who were giving speeches on China were getting information from what was called the "China Lobby," headed by Alfred Kohlberg.

**VALEO:** Very much so. I went up to see Kohlberg in New York, as a matter of fact, in response to one inquiry that we had. Griffith said, "You'd better go up and talk to him personally in New York." So I went up to see him. He had a linen business. He used to ship linen from Ireland to, I think, Swatow, or to some of those port cities in South China, mainly to those in Fukien Province, where they had a lot of hand skills. They'd do a "put out" system. They'd put the Irish linen out to the rural areas to have work done. The peasant women would make them into magnificent tablecloths, and napkins, and handkerchiefs, and whatnot. Then he'd sell the finished product elsewhere, usually in the United States. It was an early example of what we've since tried in many parts of the world.

I had a talk with Kohlberg. He was convinced that everybody who opposed Chiang Kai-shek in any way was obviously influenced by the Communists in some way—he didn't even say influenced, just obviously were Communists. I mean, there just was no question. I found out later he had lost a son to the Communists somewhere along the line. One of his own children, at least that was told to me—I think he himself said it to me at the time. He said, "I know what they're like, because my son went off with them," or something like that. I've often wondered how much that might have influenced him. But he was feeding McCarthy a lot of information. He spent all of his spare time in the public library on 42<sup>nd</sup>

Street in New York, researching this information, all of his spare time. I think he neglected his business, he got so obsessed with this question, and he would feed it all to McCarthy or later on to Pat McCarran of Nevada.

**RITCHIE:** Do you feel it really was a political issue?

**VALEO:** It was a political issue only because the other issues weren't more important. There was a country of great surplus, when these questions arose. We had escaped unscathed from the war, except for those families who had lost people in it. We came out of a depression into prosperity. We were sitting on top of the world in every way, in almost any way that you could imagine. I think that that explains why it could become an issue. We had time to think. China, which had been our particular missionary field for more than a hundred years, more so than any other place abroad, kind of regarded as our special thing because we'd never taken any extraterritorial rights. Although we sat in the British compounds, we'd never taken any territorial rights ourselves. We'd always defended the Open Door, and the integrity of China, including Manchuria. We could not accept the fact that the course we had followed might have possibly been wrong. There had to be a devil somewhere.

I used to think that in a way we were a little bit like missionaries in China, as a nation—not simply those who actually



were, but as a nation—and like missionaries one of the things that is the hardest to accept is when your charge grows up and doesn't need you anymore. I think that underlay the whole thing. It was the point of a major transition in a relationship with China which had gone on for more than a hundred years. We had to accept the fact that it couldn't go on in the same way, and it was very difficult for us. I think that underlay the problem. It's the main psychological factor, there were obviously specific things that were involved.

But incredibly the aid program that originally went into China, in connection with the Marshall Plan, that was Walter Judd's doing entirely. The Senate actually tried to throw it out at that point. They didn't want to put any more aid into China. Walter Judd had written this in. I remember hearing him in exchanges with George Marshall at the time in a hearing. It was apparent that Marshall thought it was a total waste of money, but it was one of the prices he paid to get the Marshall Plan set up for Europe, which was what he was mostly concerned with. Marshall was smart enough to say that if you really wanted to have an influence on the China situation you were thinking in terms of three or four million men, and even then of dubious influence on it.

Marshall, I think, was probably the profoundest military brain of World War II, much more so than Eisenhower, who had other positive characteristics. But I think the depth belonged to

Marshall. He understood the situation more deeply than anyone else. In a way, so did [Douglas] MacArthur. MacArthur did not want a war in China unless he could use nuclear weapons, and he would not have been averse to using them. That was very clear from some of the statements he made. But he would never think in terms of a conventional war in China. MacArthur, like so many others, was carried away by the idea that we were the ones that had *the* bomb and that should give us the right to dictate just about anything we wanted. Well, it was a very short period of time that we had the bomb.

**RITCHIE:** When you came back to Legislative Reference in '46, at that stage it had been set up by the Reorganization Act, and Francis Wilcox was still listed as the senior international affairs specialist.

**VALEO:** Yes, he was on loan.

**RITCHIE:** He was on loan sort of permanently after that.

**VALEO:** Yes, and the same thing happened to me, actually, because I went out on loan in '52. I was head of the Foreign Affairs Division, which was a group of maybe a dozen researchers. We'd built it up over the years until that point, and it was doing some awfully good work, and getting good responses from the Hill, from both parties and from various sources. Then a request came in for me to go over to the [Foreign Relations] committee to help

them. It also had something to do with the McCarthy period, because McCarthy had started his inquiry into the information program. Senator [William] Benton of Connecticut thought that he was really going to destroy the Voice of America, which was Benton's particular pet. He had set it up, or had something to do with the establishment of it. He and Chester Bowles had something to do with the establishment of the information program, and he didn't want to see it destroyed by McCarthy. So his response to that was to get, I guess, Connally to go along with setting up a similar investigation in the Foreign Relations Committee. He was successful in doing that, but then he was defeated in the next election, and the new chairman became [J. William] Fulbright.

I went over when Fulbright was chairman of that subcommittee, and [Bourke] Hickenlooper was the ranking minority member. They were having trouble getting it off the ground, and they needed somebody who could do an analytic approach to it, so I went over to design the basic studies. This was an early attempt at oversight in foreign relations. It had never been done before in systematic fashion. It became known as the "good committee" on the information program, as contrasted with McCarthy's "bad committee." This was the way the *[Washington] Post*, looking around eagerly for anything to hit McCarthy over the head with, would constantly refer to the work of this committee. This became especially true when Bourke Hickenlooper became chairman [in 1953]

because he was a very conservative Republican and he didn't want to tangle with McCarthy. He didn't like what McCarthy was doing, but he didn't want to get in the middle of it, as so many Republicans felt at the time.

Hickenlooper kept me on; he wanted me to stay on because I had traveled to Asia with him, in connection with the study when it was under Fulbright. That was the beginning of a very long, and very close relationship between Bourke Hickenlooper and myself. He had taken me on the trip to Asia under duress. Francis Wilcox insisted that he take somebody from the committee. He wanted someone from New York, a lawyer that he knew, who had been associated with him for a long time. Wilcox finally said, "Well, you can take him if you'll also take Frank Valeo." "Who's Frank Valeo?" And so forth. Well, he took me, under duress, very irritated by the fact, which made my job almost impossible. It was the first time I had traveled abroad for the committee after the war. But in the course of that trip, somehow or other he developed some respect for me.

By the time the trip was over, and I'd done a report, he took occasion, when he became chairman of the committee in the next Congress, because of the shift in the majority in the Senate after Eisenhower's landslide in '52, he took occasion to say that he would take that subcommittee on the information program only on one condition: that he could have Frank Valeo on the staff. He

was very glowing in his praise. It came out of the blue. I happened to be there, and got red while he was saying it. I knew that he had changed his mind somewhat about the value of having somebody from the staff along, but I didn't think it had gone that far, because he was a rather taciturn man. They used to call him the "gloomy pragmatist." I think the *New York Times* called him the "gloomy pragmatist." But I had a lot of respect for him and while we had differing political views I was very comfortable working with him on that study. He had admonished me: "Stay clear of McCarthy. Don't get drawn out into a fight with him. You just proceed in your own way and stay away from the McCarthy thing completely," which I did. I took the advice and we kept it that way. Even McCarthy used to identify us as the "good investigation!"

**RITCHIE:** I was struck by how many people from the Legislative Reference Service wound up working for the Foreign Relations Committee.

**VALEO:** It started with Wilcox and Morella Hansen, and then me. I brought over other people, because they didn't have a large professional staff. That fit in with my view of the La Follette-Monroney bill in its original concept. Partly out of discussions with Ernest, partly from my own vision, I saw the main source of research being lodged in the Legislative Reference Service, while the staff on the committees would be kept to an absolute minimum.

I think it's a disaster the way it has gone. I think it is a disservice, this huge expansion of Hill staff structures under the committees. Much of what is done is redundant with the Congressional Research Service. Then there was also the expansion of the GAO [General Accounting Office], which at that time was not into this at all. They audited government accounts and that was it. But there was one Comptroller, I think it was [Joseph] Campbell, who felt that there was great growth potential in a bureaucratic sense in the GAO, so then they began to develop these other aspects of GAO which could have been handled by Congressional Research. As I saw it, originally that was envisioned for the Library of Congress.

I thought that senators would become increasingly less effective the more they had the research people right under their noses; that with that sort of thing they would be bound in by their own staff people. How can a chairman of a committee control fifty staff people in any meaningful sense?

**RITCHIE:** What were the prime functions that the Legislative Reference Service set out to do in those early years?

**VALEO:** I think Ernest wanted—and one keeps coming back to Ernest Griffith, because I think he's the key person in this. Luther Evans had it for a while, but it was not quite the same thing. Luther Evans was interested in much more flamboyant

things. Ernest, when he took it over, was a scholar. What he was trying to put into the legislative process, as I understood it, was a major contribution from what was produced by academic scholarship. Basically that's what he had in mind. What Ernest did not fully grasp was that you could not put this directly into the legislative process, that most congressmen had neither the time nor the inclination to deal with scholarly treatises, which were not written primarily with legislation in mind. So somewhere you had to have a bridge—and the way I saw the role of the service was to act as an intermediary taking essentially the fruits of scholarship, redesigning them in a form which would fit into the legislative process, into realities of the legislative process.

One of the reasons why the Foreign Affairs Division at the time was successful was because we put great stress on that. I used to take papers done by researchers and I would spend hours trying to understand the point that was being made. Well, I could do it because I'd be willing to stay till eight or nine o'clock, and I would have nothing else to do anyhow, so I would do it. But then I would reshape those papers so that when a congressman saw them he would be able to grasp the salient features from the point of view of legislation in twenty minutes or a half hour, or how much time he could give to it. But Ernest never fully understood that that was an essential point if you were going to do the

service that the Legislative Reference Service could do. I have noticed that the output in recent years from Congressional Research has been much better, much closer to that kind of thing, but it's been a long time getting to that point.

**RITCHIE:** It has to understand its audience.

**VALEO:** You have to understand the audience, that's precisely it. And Ernest didn't quite understand that, because he had really very little exposure to Congress. He had a father-in-law who was in Congress, I think, but that was his major exposure. Ernest was essentially an educator.

**RITCHIE:** And people like Thorstein Kalijarvi went from LRS over to the Foreign Relations Committee, and Sergius Yacobson went over to the committee.

**VALEO:** Yes. Now, I did not bring them over. Those are people who went over independently. Yacobson, I guess, came considerably later. He went, I think, more to the House side than to the Senate side. But Kalijarvi was a special arrangement. I don't know the details. He and I were not close friends by any means. He was brought in for the first time from a political source, I don't know all the details. But there was something else in the case of Kalijarvi. He later became an ambassador during the Eisenhower administration.



**RITCHIE:** I was looking down the list of names of people in the LRS and realized that they were the same names that I had seen on the staff of the committee in the 1950s, and was surprised how much fluidity there was between the two.

**VALEO:** I brought Ellen Collier over to work on the information program. Charlie Gellner came over. There were a number that we brought over at that time, when we set up the subcommittee on disarmament, the first disarmament subcommittee with Hubert Humphrey, I think Ellen and Charlie both came over.

**RITCHIE:** You said earlier that Ernest Griffith had trouble because you didn't have a Ph.D.

**VALEO:** Yes, there's a story connected with it. It's interesting, most of the Ph.D.s he had on his staff were pushing him to appoint me to the job, people like Howard Piquet and I guess Francis [Wilcox], among others. There were a number who said: you've had this young fellow working here for a year and a half as an acting chief; don't you think it's time you gave him the job? Well, he wasn't quite sure. He had to check out a few more people first. I must say, I don't know whether Ernest would concur in this, but it had gone on for a long time, and he had tried out somebody who later went out to the House committee. Sergius Yacobson, who started, didn't really want the job, and he

left it to go back up to the Slavic Division of the Library, so I was the acting chief, and it went on for at least a year and a half, maybe more.

Finally, there was a fellow named Charlie Dean, he was a congressman from North Carolina. Charlie Dean was very important to Ernest, because he was on the House Administration Committee, and the House Administration Committee handled the Library's budget. Charlie Dean was somewhat skeptical of money going into the Library for these purposes, so he at one point asked Ernest to send over somebody to help him on a foreign policy matter. Ernest said, "You'd better go over and talk with him." So I went over to see Charlie Dean, who had only been out of the country once in his life. He had gone on a trip by request of Harry Truman, who was then president, and he'd gone to Asia, all over Southeast Asia.

He came back very much inspired by Burma, of all places, because the Baptists from his hometownCa fellow named Abonerim Judson had been the principal missionary in Burma. So he had a great, warm feeling for Burma and the new government. He thought they were doing very well as an independent state. U Nu was then the president of Burma. Dean said, "What I'd like you to do, President Truman asked me to give him a little note on my travels out there, and I'd like for you to help me write that note." I said, "Sure, I'd be glad to." So he gave me whatever he could and I filled it out with whatever else I could pull out of the blue,

and we wrote a report for him to go to President Truman. It went to the president and Dean got a personal call from President Truman telling him how useful that was and how good that report was. So that had raised my stock with Charlie Dean very high. Ernest again thought it must be a freak: how could you do that without a Ph.D.? But after that, Charlie Dean was very friendly to the Library's budget, and especially to the Legislative Reference Service's budget.

In the meantime, a fellow named [Gordon] Seagrave, who had been a medical missionary in northern Burma, was arrested and charged with treason because he'd given some medical help to the Kachins and some of the other rebellious tribes in the north, against the Rangoon government. So they had arrested him. Seagrave had a very colorful history out there. He loved Burmese women, that was the story that I got, anyhow, that he was crazy about Burmese women. His wife didn't stay out there with him, she lived somewhere in Baltimore. He was well known in Burma. He was part of the Burma of that time. You couldn't really grasp Burma in that period without knowing Seagrave.

He was sentenced to death for treason. Well, nobody in Burma really thought he was going to be hung, they just thought they were punishing him for a while for his behavior, which had displeased U Nu. Instead, Congressman Dean took it very seriously. He called me one day and he said, "I want you to write me a

statement and tell them they must not harm Seagrave or we're going to send the navy over to get him out." He said, "Just lay it on heavy. If we have to send the whole navy over there, we're going to get him out. I want you to write me a statement and I'm going to make it on the floor tomorrow." I thought about this. I pondered it. I tried to write the statement, and I couldn't write it. I felt that that approach would probably sign Seagrave's death warrant. I just couldn't bring myself to write a statement of that kind. I just knew what the effect would be on the Burmese. So I called Dean up at home.

It was about eight o'clock at night, and I hadn't even gotten by the first paragraph on this thing. I called him at home and I said, "You know, Congressman, I would not normally do this, but I just have great difficulty writing this statement along those lines. I'm afraid it may actually have very serious consequences for Dr. Seagrave." He said, "Well, you know, I've been thinking about it too. Maybe you better not. Besides, I just talked to his wife in Baltimore." He said, "I think you better do it just anyway you think it ought to be done." So I did, I wrote a very conciliatory statement. I wrote a letter for him to go to the Burmese ambassador to transmit to U Nu, whom he had met and whom he had liked and gotten along so well with. It was a very conciliatory thing, asking him to reconsider what they were doing.

Well, to make a long story short, Seagrave got sprung, but at the same time, Ernest went over to get his budget worked out with Charlie Dean and just at that time comes this beautiful letter from Charlie Dean about how this fellow Frank Valeo—Francis Valeo, as he used to call me—had just done so much good work for him, and he just thought he ought to have some kind of a letter over there. That was the thing that made Ernest make up his mind. Finally he dropped the acting and left me as chief. After that happened, I only stayed in the job for another year or two before I began to be loaned out to the committee.

**RITCHIE:** In the early years, the Foreign Relations Committee didn't have substantive subcommittees. They had consultative subcommittees.

**VALEO:** That's correct, and even then they didn't have that for a long time. All they had was this special subcommittee which was set up on the information program, and then at a subsequent point we put another one up—Carl Marcy and I worked that one out—on disarmament. I don't know if he told you the story of that, but that's a classic, too.

**RITCHIE:** I'd like to hear it.

**VALEO:** We'll get to that. The State Department came up with the idea of having consultative subcommittees. It originated with State. With some reluctance, because they didn't like to break it up into units, the committee decided to do that.

**RITCHIE:** Maybe at this point, since we're beginning to talk about the Foreign Relations Committee, this would be a good time to close today's interview, and we can start with the committee next time.

**VALEO:** That's a good idea. I was just going to suggest a break.

End of Interview #1