INTERVIEW II

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INTERVIEWEE: WILLIAM H. DARDEN

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Darden's residence, McLean, Virginia

Tape 1 of 1, Side 1

D: Well, again, for historical purposes, you'd have to verify dates in whatever I say. I'll just give you the best of my recollection. One of the undertakings of the Preparedness Subcommittee in 1951, or it could have been 1952, was to conduct hearings on the draft. Among the things that they were trying to correct were the inequities of having called up reservists in the Korean War who had had long periods of service in World War II, and one of their recommendations--whether this originated in the preparedness investigating subcommittee or was added at the full committee level when they reported--was one for a universal military training program. There was some opposition to--substantial opposition to that in the House. They couldn't get it finally approved in 1952 or 1951--I'm not sure which year we're talking about.

G: Well, 1951, I think was when--

D: I think that's when they started, but they did secure approval of a framework for a universal military training program, but the House was so adamant in its opposition, or reservations, that the bill contained a provision that no inductions could be made for universal--for six-month trainees until the Congress had approved a code of conduct for

the trainees and some supplemental legislation, and when that was proposed in the next Congress, it was acted on first by the House Armed Services Committee and then was killed on the House floor and recommitted to the committee, and so the implementing legislation was never acted on in the Senate.

G: There seems to have been a difference of opinion with regard to the desirability of drafting younger men vs. older men, whether you draft eighteen-year olds first or older people.

D: Yes. The military people liked the younger ones, of course, because they're easier to train, and there are less problems in some respect, but the public tended to view it as probably more equitable to take the older first, and I--that's one of the points that your summary reminded me of. I think the Johnson subcommittee had a recommendation that, if you took the eighteen-years olds, you should take the oldest first. I don't remember anything else particularly striking about those manpower hearings except they were very exhaustive. They heard witnesses day after day after day; anybody that had a point of view was given an opportunity to testify.

G: Was there discussion about the--not only the physical but the mental minimum qualifications to pass the examination for induction?

D: To be eligible for induction?

G: Yes.

D: There was discussion of that. I don't remember anything specifically enough to elaborate.

G: Another element of controversy seems to have been the question of drafting doctors to get the necessary medical personnel.

D: Yes, that continued to be a problem throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, and I suppose it still is. The period of--the provision for extra pay for doctors alleviated it a little bit, but as far as I know, they still have problems retaining as many doctors as they'd like. Of course, there's a uniformed services medical school now out at Bethesda that Congressman [F. Edward] Hebert, the late Congressman Hebert of Louisiana, was instrumental in. Critics say it's disproportionately expensive for the number of doctors that it produces. I don't really know. I think that medical--I think that school is still in operation, but I'm a little bit out of it these days.

G: What were the rationales of each side here?

D: On the doctors? Well, as nearly as I can remember, it was just that a physician could make so much more in civilian life that, unless for some reason he happened to enjoy military life and the change of assignment and the travel that that entailed, purely on a financial consideration he's better off in civilian life. Of course, it's always been difficult to--if you accept that argument, it's always been difficult to say, "Well, do you--how much extra pay are you willing to give doctors? Do you bring them up to the average of civilian doctors, or do you go half-way, or two-thirds of the way, or at what point do you attract the number that you need?"

G: The committee also investigated what it regarded as too many able-bodied men in the service holding down desk jobs.

D: I noticed that. I don't think that I was on the committee staff when that was done. I can't add anything to that. I started working for the committee in May of 1951, and I think this subcommittee was organized in late 1950, was it not? And they had quite a few things going before I started, and, of course, for a long time after I started down there, I was learning and I was not privy to a lot of the important things, things that were going on.

G: Was there any significance in your move from Senator [Richard B.] Russell's staff to the Armed Services Committee?

D: It was pretty accidental. I had been offered a job in private industry and decided to take it and told the Senator I was leaving and then decided that I didn't want to take that job, and, in the meanwhile, he had gotten a replacement, and he was going to replace the chief clerk in the Armed Services [Committee], and he called up one day and asked if I would like that, so it was just his being kind to me, I suppose you'd say. That was the only significance.

G: Did it represent his growing seniority in Armed Services?

D: No, I don't think so. He had become chairman of the committee in 1951 after Senator [Millard] Tydings was defeated, and the chief clerk's job at that time was the one job that was looked upon as being the chairman's patronage. All of the other spots were usually left the same under a change of political--and, in those days, the professional staff was not divided between majority and minority members. We worked for both sides.

G: Really.

D: But I didn't start out as a professional staff member. I was the chief clerk, which was the one job that the chairman changed in those days, and then when Senator [Leverett]

Saltonstall became chairman in the Eighty-third Congress, I knew that that was the precedent, and so to save him the embarrassment of firing me, I just--I resigned. But he and Senator [Styles] Bridges and Senator Russell were the subcommittee appointed to interview applicants for the professional staff, and they were nice enough to move me over to the professional staff. Then Senator Saltonstall brought in a fellow named Phil Allen, from Massachusetts, who was the chief clerk of the committee during the Eighty-third Congress.

G: Tell me what you did as clerk.

D: My duties during that period were pretty ministerial. I guess the principal thing that I did was to try to handle Senator Russell's constituent problems relating to Armed Services, or that was one of the principal things. Someone came up from Georgia and had a military problem, and his office tended to refer him to me, and a lot of the mail that he got on military subjects and, in those days, much of it was from reservists who were protesting being called up for Korean duty after having served three or four years in World War II. Technically, I supervised Herb Atkinson, who was the assistant chief clerk, and the clerical force. There were six, I guess, six women in the office there. The professional staff, though, sort of--there were just three professional staff members, but there was a retired major-general from the Army named [Verne D.] Mudge, who was the senior professional staff member, and I didn't attempt to exercise any supervision over them. They were sort of independently responsible to the committee.

[Inaudible] little things. You'd call the roll on votes when the committee was in session, and just sort of provide whatever ministerial services they needed when they

were in session, and other members of the committee would ask if you'd talk to somebody who had this problem. But I guess what I'm saying in a rather wordy way is that I was not--I didn't really work on legislation. I was more on the administrative and political side of the operation.

G: And then in 1953--

D: And then in 1953 I started working on legislation. My first assignment was with a subcommittee that dealt with military construction and acquisitions and disposal of military bases. And then later, when General Mudge retired--I guess 1955--I sort of--I don't know how I gradually evolved to the title of chief of staff, but somebody gave me this. Senator Russell didn't. He never did think about that kind of thing, but apparently he came to look on me as being the chief of staff from about 1955 until I left in 1968.

G: What could you do about the communications that you received from these veterans that had been called up? What was the normal [inaudible]--

D: The principal thing we did was to try to hold out some hope that the legislation that was then being shaped by Senator Johnson's subcommittee was going to try to cure some of the inequities and provide other ways for providing trained manpower, but in the circumstances that obtained then, there was not much choice. If you were going to augment your forces to deal with the kind of things you had in Korea, you didn't have much choice except to use those who had already been trained.

G: Okay. Now let me ask you a general question. How did the Armed Services Committee change during the years that you were associated with it?

D: You mean the whole period from 1951 to 1968?

G: Yes.

D: Well, I had the feeling toward the end of that time in the late 1960s, that as a result of all of the problems of Vietnam that the committee was somewhat less influential than it had been in the earlier part of that period. The 1950s I would characterize as a period of good will in the Senate, not much partisanship or not much political wrangling. You had Senator Russell, and let's see who else: Senator Harry Byrd [Sr.], and Senator Johnson, Senator [John] Stennis and [Henry Styles] Bridges and [Leverett] Saltonstall and [Barry] Goldwater and Margaret Chase Smith all got along well, and there weren't any petty rivalries or feuds, and the committee almost always was unanimous in its action on bills, and its stature in the Senate was such then that the Senate didn't spend a lot of time examining what the committee did. If the committee recommended it, the floor consideration was pretty perfunctory.

G: Yes.

D: But then, starting in 1963 or 1964, things changed somewhat so that--well, as an example, in 1968 on a conference report on the draft extension, it seems to me there was something like twenty-one votes in the Senate against agreeing to the conference report, which would have been an unheard-of thing ten years [earlier]. And just every--as a result of the controversy over oversight of the Central Intelligence Agency--you know, some non-Armed Services members always wanted to set up a separate intelligence committee or to have the responsibility shared with the Foreign Relations Committee, and the power structure in the Armed Services Committee always opposed that, and that created some bitterness and resentment in the Senate, I think.

When I left, there was not yet any drive under way for members to have their own staff persons on the committee staff to do their work, and we still were working for Republicans and Democrats alike. That was a post-1968 development that I sort of deplored, as far as the Armed Services Committee at least. It was--as far as the staff was concerned, it was a very happy arrangement to work for both, and for both to feel that you could do your best for what they were trying to do. They weren't seeking different objectives that often in those days. Occasionally, you would find yourself writing a speech and then writing the answer to it or attacking somebody, but not often.

G: Can you think of any specific instances where you may have found yourself actually in the middle of a disagreement, say, between two senators of opposite parties on an issue?

D: Nothing bitter. I can remember having written on both sides of the questions of whether the--one should deploy an anti-ballistic missile system. Things like that.

G: During the time you were there, did the committee--did the Armed Services Committee tend to get more involved in decision-making that, before that, had been done at the Pentagon?

D: I don't think so and this may be largely a result of Senator Russell's feelings and influence, but I think it's accurate to say that he resisted trying to administer the laws. I think he had a pretty good conception of what the proper role for Congress was in setting the guidelines and in providing the money. I think that generally he felt that the most effective way Congress could deal with these questions was to provide the money or through the money bills rather than looking over the shoulders of the executive branch on

a day-to-day basis, so I think there probably was less inclination to try to manage in those days than appears to be the case today.

G: But there has been an increase somewhere since then?

D: That's my impression, yes, that much more of that goes on today than had gone on.

G: What is the cause of that, do you think? Would you relate it to Senator Russell's death or his taking over the chairmanship of the--?

D: I don't know how that has evolved. I suppose ultimately you would have to say it's just because of decreasing confidence in the way things are being done in the Pentagon. That's not to say that they had complete confidence in those days. I think there was pretty healthy skepticism, but I think the last twenty years have just--for one reason or another--have just been more contentious years, I think, maybe, than the twenty that preceded these.

G: Yes. How did the various secretaries of defense relate to the committee? Now, you had Charlie Wilson for a long time, and--

D: During Senator Russell's time as chairman, I don't think you'd say that there was an intimate relationship with any secretary of defense. He tended to be rather formal and to sort of keep them at arm's length. He didn't get chummy with anybody much in the executive branch. He treated them with dignity and would always hear them out, but it was not a partnership sort of thing. He had a lot of pride in the congressional role even when Democrats were in charge of the administration. So that certainly--there certainly was not any intimate relationship with Mr. Wilson, and then, let's see, McNamara succeeded him? Did Wilson stay there all--?

G: No. He was there, what, about five or six years.

D: Five or six years, and then Tom Gates came in, yes. Yes. And Gates was a little--I would say a little warmer person, a little more inclined to reach out and try to establish a good relationship with the Congress. I would say that the committee probably had a little closer--he was there a short while, but given that, I think the committee felt a little closer to Gates maybe than to--and then McNamara always sort of dazzled them with his knowledge of everything and the way he could just recite figures and dates and forces and that kind of thing, but again not a real close, warm relationship--tended to be rather formal. Strangely enough, I think the committee probably had a little closer relationship maybe with some of the secretaries of the military department than with the secretary of defense.

G: Did they?

D: And maybe that--I hadn't really thought about that a lot, and it may not be a valid observation, but it's just kind of a--something that's just occurred to me--but it may be a manifestation that installations in their states--they happen to be dealing with the secretary of the military department about rather than the secretary of defense or something. I don't know why that's true, but I think it probably is true.

G: You had Robert Anderson as secretary of--

D: Secretary of the navy. Yes. He was well liked and highly regarded. And let's see. [Harold] Talbott was the secretary of the air force under Charlie Wilson, and he got into problems about using the stationery on private business, or something that started out like that. And then the secretary of the army was Robert Stevens. Stevens had a--some of

them had a little difficulty in the confirmation process as a--I'm probably getting into stuff that there's no interest in.

G: It is interesting. Yes.

D: Well, stop me when--keep me on the target, please. But they had some problems in connection with disposal of securities in corporations doing business with the Department of Defense. They finally worked out--the committee laid down a rather strict rule that operated as a real hardship to some of those people, and I think it probably kept some good people from taking jobs in the Department of Defense, in that they required absolute divestiture of anything that did business with the Department of Defense.

I remember Dudley Sharp, a Texan, was an assistant secretary of the air force for financial management, and he had a lot of shares in a mutual fund, and somebody went so far as to say they didn't want the mutual fund to buy any shares in companies doing business with the Department of Defense, and I think he got rid of that, which was really pretty extreme.

G: Well, it must have been a financial sacrifice for Charlie Wilson, too, with his General Motors stock.

D: Yes. I think by that time that Charlie Wilson had all the money that he ever would need as a result of long--he may have not had as much as he otherwise would have had. And in some cases it's worked to the benefit of those who disposed, I understand. Stocks have gone down after they were sold, so that's pretty much a function of the business cycle, I guess.

G: The last time you did talk about the Truman-MacArthur controversy, and these were joint hearings.

D: With Foreign Relations, yes.

G: How did Senator Russell assume the upper hand or the dominant role in that? Do you recall?

D: I don't know. Some--

G: He did emerge as the leading figure.

D: He did, and I don't know whose suggestion it was. It may have been Senator Tom Connally's, who was chairman of Foreign Relations then, I think.

G: Yes.

D: Yes. He was, and I was--I went down--I started working for the committee about the second or third day of General MacArthur's testimony, so I really was not close enough to know exactly how that evolved into a Joint Armed Services-Foreign Relations operation and how Senator Russell was chosen.

G: What was Senator Russell's view of MacArthur? Did he--

D: I'm a little bit presumptuous in trying to state this. I think he respected him as sort of a charismatic military leader and a strong character. I think he, at the time, believed that Truman did not have much choice except to do what he did, but through the course of those long hearings and airing all sides of it, the heat went out of it as a public issue. It was very heated at the time that it began. I think Senator Russell maintained a good personal relationship with General MacArthur, and he had known him since 1933. I believe he was a major [general?] when Senator Russell first came to the Senate. I think

I heard him say--testify before the Appropriations Committee as a major in 1933, so that's about as close as I could come to it, I think.

(Interruption)

G: Let me ask you to assess the work of the Preparedness Subcommittee. How did it differ from other subcommittee activities or other committee activities of the Armed Services?

D: All the other subcommittees that I can remember had a legislative mandate; they had a specific bill or several bills referred to them for consideration. And the charter of the [Preparedness] Subcommittee was just to sort of ride herd on the Defense Department and try to minimize the waste and fraud and abuse and that kind of thing, and I think necessarily that operation--a lot of its benefits are deterrent in nature and really sort of hard to measure, but they issued thirty-odd reports, I think, over a period of two years on such things as construction of bases in North Africa and inefficient utilization of military personnel, that kind of thing. And another difference is that they had a staff of investigators, and most of the other subcommittees would just have a temporary staff. A professional staff member would be assigned to them on an *ad hoc* basis. So, at times, the Preparedness Subcommittee staff was larger than the combined staff of the full committee.

G: Really?

D: I think that was true through most of the [inaudible]. One of Senator Johnson's--idiosyncracies, I guess, is the word that you would describe it--is that he always had a lot of payrolls to put people on, and there never was complete correspondence between what the person was doing and what payroll he was on. I never

could figure that out, to be real honest, but for a while he would have someone on a Majority Policy Committee, or somebody in his office and somebody on a Preparedness Subcommittee maybe were sort of interchangeable, but there was always a lot of personnel actions involving the Subcommittee.

G: Well in terms of Armed Services Committee and Preparedness Subcommittee, was he unique in using the staff the way he did? I mean, other senators wouldn't switch these--the personnel around like that?

D: He was the only one who had the real power, I think. Of, course, that was not true in 1951 so much. Most of the--that was a little bit of an overstatement, but there was a time when he had other staffs in addition to his own staff of the Preparedness Subcommittee. I guess in 1951 and 1952 the only flexibility he had was between his office staff and the subcommittee staff, and there was a lot of switching back and forth on that. But no, I don't think anybody else had quite the same opportunity because he was the subcommittee chairman, and he was really the boss as far as who was to be on it. Senator Russell just went along with what he wanted to do so far as to who was to be on the subcommittee staff.

G: But Senator Russell was willing to give him the investigators that he--

D: Oh yes, yes.

G: --needed?

D: Right. There was never any problem about that.

G: I notice that he had in addition to lawyers--he would hire writers, investigative reporters and people like that sort.

D: Yes. I think maybe George Reedy started on the Preparedness Subcommittee staff--

G: I think you're right.

D: --as among others. Yes. He always had some good writers.

G: Was this unusual to--?

D: A little bit. I think--in those days, not many senators had press assistants. I guess they all have them today, or media assistants, or whatever they call them, so this was a little bit of an innovation.

G: What about bringing in people like Donald Cook from the SEC?

D: I don't know how that came about. I guess that resulted from--I don't know where Senator Johnson and Don Cook first knew each other, but he obviously had the confidence in Don's judgment that he wanted him to be sort of the *de facto* chief of Armed Services, and I think Gerry Siegel was really sort of Don's--at that time he was with Don at the SEC, but I think Gerry really spent more time on the day-to-day functioning of the subcommittee than Don did maybe. And also there was a man named Lyon Tyler. I think I mentioned him to you, and I've lost track of him. He was a former FBI agent from Charleston, and I don't know how he and Senator Johnson got together, but he did much of the administrative work on the subcommittee in its earliest days under Don Cook and Gerry.

One of the things I parenthetically noticed in the material you sent me was that Ed Weisl, Jr., was assigned over there in 1952. I hadn't remembered that, but I remember when he came in 1958 when he had the space investigation. But I didn't remember that he had been on the subcommittee staff as early as 1952. Excuse me for the interruption.

G: Was the committee, the Preparedness Subcommittee, worthwhile? Did it--

D: I think so. I think the general feeling in those days was it had a constructive effect. I suppose a critic could say that it was for Senator Johnson's advancement or aggrandizement, but I think they did some good work, and I don't think there was any resentment or feeling by the Republicans that it was being done for political purposes or to advance his interests.

G: One of the criticisms, I think, was that it--particularly its chairman--seemed more interested in publicity. How do you assess that?

D: It's hard to do it accurately. Nobody in the Senate is oblivious to that consideration, and he was more skillful than most, I think, in sort of managing things that portrayed him in sort of a favorable light, but I don't know. I wouldn't criticize him on that score.

G: Well, if part of the purpose was to provide a deterrent, then perhaps there was a role for publicity.

D: Yes. Right. I think you have to let it be known that somebody will tear you up if you aren't doing right for that to be effective.

G: Do you think that there was significant waste in the military at that time?

D: There was certainly some. There always is some. I don't know whether that particular build up was more wasteful than others. I guess I'd have to say my impression is that it was not, that it was probably better managed than it is today, from what I read. There was a lot of money--this was highly contentious--there was a lot of money spent over in North Africa in building five air bases. A lot of the military people felt that the--or have since told me that they thought the subcommittee was too critical and too harsh and

overlooked that the really important thing was to get those bases in place and that, in those circumstances, that some waste is unavoidable. You can always argue about how much is avoidable, but--

G: There was one in Morocco, particularly, that attracted a lot of publicity.

D: Yes. I've forgotten the names. I saw a couple of those bases in a later trip in 1953. Nua-Sua and Ben Gorrea. I think there were five bases in Morocco and across the rim of North Africa there, and at the time it was thought that they were extremely important, I guess, and you look back at military expenditures of thirty and thirty-five years ago and it all seems pretty wasteful, about like an insurance policy, I guess.

G: Well, there was one time, I guess, on one of these bases where LBJ got into a real gin fizz about one of the colonel's wives--the colonel's wife decorating a place [inaudible].

D: Yes. I've forgotten the details of it. Yes. He really went toe-to-toe with a couple of people. I'm not too sure he didn't have the chief of engineers replaced or something of that sort.

G: Yes.

D: That was a pretty sharp difference of opinion on [inaudible].

G: Was Senator [Estes] Kefauver a rival in the sense of trying to get publicity for himself on the committee?

D: Not so much in an Armed Services sense. He didn't take a big interest in Armed Services matters. He was a member of the committee, and he was a member of the Preparedness Subcommittee, as far as that's concerned. But he spent a lot more time in the Judiciary Committee than in Armed Services, and he didn't really challenge Senator Johnson or

Senator Russell very much. He was a little bit of a dissenting note occasionally but not often, and I had a feeling that he didn't have a great intrinsic interest in military things, really.

G: Let me ask you about Lyndon Johnson's relationship with Styles Bridges during this period.

D: I don't know a lot about it firsthand except I think that they had a good working relationship. Each sort of understood the other and knew what his requirements were and what it took to get along with the other. It seemed to me they did a good job of getting along.

G: Do you think he was closer to Bridges than he was to the other Republicans on Armed Services, or--?

D: It's a guess, but I would guess the answer to that is "yes." And I'm talking principally now of the period 195l-1952 and in through there. Yes. I think I would say so.

G: How about Senator Russell? Who was his closest associate among the Republican members of the committee?

D: Well, in those days, I think Bridges and Saltonstall, I think. Later, it--Margaret Chase Smith became the ranking member, and he always got along well with Goldwater on a personal--

G: Did he?

D: --basis. They had a good personal relationship.

G: Anything on the Goldwater-Johnson relationship during that time?

D: It was good, I think, during that period. It was--yes, I thought--I don't recall any unpleasantness or any different issues that separated them. I think they got along very well.

G: One of the things that the Preparedness Subcommittee focused on was strategic materials—

D: Critical Stockpiling.

G: Yes. Would you talk about this for a minute?

D: I really can't add much to that. I know that there was an issue involving the tin smelter at Texas City. I don't--maybe they did, but I just don't remember that the subcommittee went extensively into the question of what kinds of materials we needed to be stockpiling and in what quantities. It may be that they shaped some legislation in that area, but I don't remember it.

G: How about--anything in particular on the tin smelter--do you recall LBJ's efforts to keep it open?

D: That's principally it, I think.

G: What did he do, do you know?

D: It seems to me at one stage there was at least a bill--whether it became law I don't know--directing the executive branch to continue to operate it for some period of time. And maybe that caused them to do it without the bill's becoming law. I'm not certain about that, but there was some legislation on the subject as well as some press releases, I think.

G: Another related area was what the committee regarded as critical industries, like the watchmaking industry or production of instruments. Any recollections here of the committee's activities?

D: No, I'm afraid not.

(Interruption)

D: In connection with a crisis in the Middle East in the 1950s, General [Dwight D.] Eisenhower sent to Congress some legislative proposals, one including some economic aid for Middle Eastern countries, and there was considerable controversy about the economic aid and reluctance to grant it. And Senator Johnson participated in the committee's deliberations, of course, and he inserted in the bill a requirement that, before the aid could be applied or given to any of those countries, that the executive branch had to come into agreement with the Congress on it or advise the committees. In doing so, he recalled that, I think, the Republican members of the committee had insisted on a similar provision when the Democrats were in power even in connection with acquisition and disposal of minor parcels of real estate, $25,000 or something like that. So I think that his being astute enough to propose that provision and to sort of disarm the potential opposition resulted in favorable action on the president's proposal, even though it was a president of another party.

G: --Right after the signing of the Korean armistice, a group of senators from the Armed Services Committee, as well as Senator [William] Knowland, were scheduled to go to Korea.

D: I had forgotten that. I read that in the summary. I believe they didn't go. I'm sure Senator Russell didn't go, but then I think it was because the Congress stayed in session later than they expected to. I think the summary indicates that.

G: Okay. Let me ask you about the decision to locate the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs. First of all, the decision to have an Air Force Academy, and--

D: I don't know the inside story on that. Ed Bassell probably remembers that with more specificity than I, but getting the authorization for the Air Force Academy was a little bit of a struggle, and I don't know whether [it was] the executive branch or the Congress [that] realized that you couldn't get it if you designated the site at the same time that you authorized the academy. They went through an elaborate site selection procedure with a lot of communities and states having an opportunity to make their case, and I really don't know the story behind the story or anything interesting about how Colorado Springs happened to emerge as the victor.

G: Were you aware of LBJ's interest in having it in Texas?

D: I'm sure I was at the time, but I don't recall or know anything specifically about his efforts to have it placed there.

G: Senator--

D: I think it was Kelly [Air Force Base]. Was it Randolph or Kelly, maybe--?

G: Well, Randolph was one, and then apparently Grapevine, and I think maybe even Bryan and College Station was another area that--

D: Yes. I'd forgotten that.

G: What about a Georgia location? Was it ever discussed, having it located in Georgia?

D: If so, I've forgotten it. I don't remember either Senator Russell's or Congressman [Carl] Vinson's exerting any effort on behalf of a Georgia site. It may be that they did, and my memory is just blank on it, but I don't remember a single conversation on the subject of that. I've forgotten. I think they narrowed it to three sites, and I've even forgotten the two final candidates in addition to Colorado Springs.

G: There was also some question about the architecture.

D: About the architecture of the chapel particularly. That was highly controversial, and they modified that chapel design somewhat although it still is unconventional. I like it. I think it's--have you seen it?

G: No. I guess I've seen a picture of it.

D: Yes. Who was--Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill. Was that the firm or something? Yes, the architecture provoked a lot of controversy and criticism.

G: Did Senator Russell have a view of that?

D: I don't think he took a big role in that.

G: In 1954, the Eisenhower administration was considering sending forces to aid the French at Dien Bien Phu. Do you recall the deliberations that the administration had with Senator Russell on this?

D: The only thing I remember attending was a session over in the Old Supreme Court chamber of the Capitol, and I don't remember why it was in there. The Senate may have been meeting there, but this meeting that I remember, I think, consisted of senior senators on the Democratic and Republican sides meeting with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the other members of the Joint Chiefs, and they were sounding the leadership out

about their reaction to some military action in North Vietnam. And my recollection of that is that General [Matthew B.] Ridgway took a very sharp and different position from Admiral [Arthur] Radford, who was then the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and there was so much opposition expressed at that meeting by the members who were there, and--he probably was there; I don't remember Senator Johnson's participation, but I would bet that he almost certainly was there. Senator Russell was there, and I don't know why I was there, to tell you the truth, but it was just a meeting that I sat in on. I think that that was about the time that Dien Bien Phu was about to fall, was it not? Or just before that, I think.

G: And they did express opposition?

D: Yes. There was so much opposition, and I think that maybe General Ridgway's position sort of solidified what was already a disinclination on the part of the senators to get involved.

G: Do you recall Senator Russell's speaking at the meeting?

D: I don't. He probably did, but I just don't remember what he said. I'm inclined to think that he spoke in opposition to putting troops in there, but I'm not certain of my ground.

G: Was there some feeling that France was simply trying to maintain Indochina as a colony?

D: I think it was more concern about getting large numbers of American forces committed to what seemed to be a losing cause.

(Interruption)

D: --to undertaking between Armed Services and Foreign Relations, and, in that instance, I think maybe Senator [Walter] George presided as chairman of the Foreign Relations

Committee. I think they were joint hearings by Armed Services and Foreign Relations. I know Armed Services members attended. Whether they participated as equal I'm a little less certain--but I'm confident that they did. It was a similar sort of operation without much--it seems to me there was a resolution that sort of indicated that Quemoy and Matsu were important strategic--if that's not too strong a word--points for us, and that we would resist any efforts to subjugate them.

G: During the period that you were with the Armed Services Committee, did you have any insights on what I guess has since become known as the China Lobby, the group that was actively supporting Chiang Kai-shek?

D: Just tangentially. I didn't see any direct observation, but just the issues and the discussion and the witnesses and the persons referred to in connection with the MacArthur hearings. There was a lot of that background covered, but, except for that, I didn't see any manifestation of it in the Quemoy-Mat--in the time of Quemoy and Matsu. It was more or less a rehash of "how we had lost China," I guess, was the phraseology of those days.

G: Was Styles Bridges particularly active here in promoting the cause of Nationalist China?

D: I think it's accurate to say that he was. I don't know that I could document that, but that's my impression, that he often expressed this same kind of reservations or criticisms that they did.

G: Would you reflect on the air force's desire to have a long-range bomber? I notice here that they were lobbying for a--

D: B-1--

G: Yes.

D: --and B-70 and all--

G: Yes.

D: I think the majority of the Armed Services Committee was always sympathetic to the idea of continuing to have manned bombers. I know Senator Russell, I think, supported all those efforts, and I think Congress, as a whole, did, and there was a wavering in the executive branch from time to time as to exactly what kind of bomber or how much bomber or how much money to devote to it, but I think as far as the Senate Armed Services Committee was concerned, it was predominantly in favor of developing new manned bombers.

G: It always seems to have been a question of the air force lobbying against the White House. Was this the case?

D: I think that's right, particularly in the 1950s, in the Eisenhower days, when they cut back five billion dollars or something in 1953 from what had been originally proposed, and the air force felt that it took a disproportionate shot of that cut, and that feeling lingered for several years.

G: Was there ever a situation where you had the Commander-in-Chief telling the air force generals not to lobby for this measure, or how did--?

D: I think there was some--I can't document them for you, but I'm sure there were instances in those days when the feeling was that one or [an]other of the military departments was conducting an end run around established policy, and they'd take various efforts to try to prevent that, but they were always unsuccessful. Military folks could always get their message around. I think particularly that was true in the Defense Reorganization Act of

1958. The President and the Secretary of Defense were kind of unhappy that some of the navy people particularly were trying to sabotage their recommendations.

G: Yes. Well, did the navy have its own sources or allies on the committee? Is that how it would work, or what--how would they be able to exert that independence?

D: Well, through staff members or through members, yes, they could just get their views known. That's always been true and still is today, without their getting caught usually.

(Interruption)

D: --I couldn't document, but I was reminded of from your summary, too, was in connection with the nomination of Mon C. Wallgren to be chairman of the National Security Resources Board. He was strongly opposed by Harry Cain from the state of Washington, and I always had a strong feeling without being able to substantiate it that he succeeded in killing Wallgren by swapping a vote with somebody on the Armed Services Committee. I don't know whether--

G: Oh, really?

D: Yes--it was--on something completely unrelated. "If you'll kill Wallgren, I'll do something on [inaudible] list." Or something like that.

(Interruption)

D: --Lewis Strauss to be Secretary of Commerce was one that Senator Johnson had a lot to do with in those days, and I don't really know the extent of his participation, but the Senate rejected that nomination, as you'll recall, by one or two votes.

G: Margaret Chase Smith--

D: Margaret Chase Smith sort of cast a crucial vote in that.

G: Why did she vote against him, do you know?

D: I don't know. I think the speculation--I really don't know why she did. I think--my feeling at the time, or later, was that Senator Johnson most probably had something to do with persuading her. Maybe not the whole reason but that he had maybe had something to do with her position on it.

I don't remember--it seems to me that after he came back he functioned pretty much as he had before, after his recuperation. I don't remember his being so wounded or not up to full speed.

G: He didn't slow down as far as you know?

D: I don't think so. Not that I remember.

G: If you were going to chart his political philosophy during the period from, let's say, 1949 to 1960, did he change during that period?

D: I'm not the best person to comment on that, but to the extent that I can, I don't think there was any drastic change. I suppose everybody changes a little bit as he matures and has new experiences, but I don't recall any sharp divergence from what I thought was his.. . . He was always pretty--sort of practical, and he didn't always rant and rail about something, even though he disagreed with it, if he knew it was going to occur or happen anyhow. He didn't sort of--he didn't waste his efforts. So I couldn't say that I detected any change in his--

G: Did he have a political philosophy, do you think? Did he have a set of views? Could you, at a given point, pretty much predict where he would stand on an issue?

D: I don't think I could. I don't know how I would fairly try to describe him philosophically or his views. He was a pragmatist, I guess, is what I was trying to express earlier in a lot of words. I had the feeling that underneath, and basically and fundamentally, he was sort of for the underdog, particularly for the economic underdog, but it's undoubtedly true that a lot of his support came from very well-to-do people, but he was skillful enough to sort of manage both pretty well. That was my feeling as to where he stood, but I don't know. He would be pretty hard to guess as to what his position was going to be on an issue.

G: How about his views on civil rights?

D: Again, that's hard to say. I think--my opinion is that from the earliest days that he was more liberal, if I can use that word, on civil rights than the average southern senator, and it probably gave him some distress and conflict as he was sort of working out what he should do at any particular time, as to whether he should try to fight the battle himself, you know, inside or outside the camp. That kind of thing. I know he didn't--in the early days he didn't attend the caucus of the so-called southern senators that would go on in Senator Russell's office, and they were good friends, and I'm sure Senator Russell understood that. He may even have suggested that it wouldn't be in Senator Johnson's long-range interests to do that. I don't know about that, but anyhow he didn't--but yet, he didn't seem at odds with them either, but he was just not in the die-hard southern camp on civil rights, and certainly, his actions as president manifested quite a different attitude.

G: He didn't sign the Southern Manifesto--

D: No.

G: --in 1956.

D: And again, I never did know whether that was the result of fundamental convictions, or whether it was his feeling or his advisors' feeling that it was inadvisable for him to do it, that it might harm any possible future that he might have as a national candidate. I just don't know the answer to that.

G: When did you first get an inclination that he might be interested in seeking the presidency?

D: I don't think that I ever remember having any--I don't remember the point at which I realized that he was likely to be a candidate. He was first a candidate, when? In 1960, wasn't it? Yes.

G: Yes.

D: That's right.

G: Favorite son in 1956 and then ran in 1960.

D: Yes. What did you say about 1956? I'm sorry.

G: Favorite son, just--

D: Oh, yes. Right. I don't know. I guess it was just sort of a general impression that you had in those days from the way he conducted himself on national issues, that they sort of coincided with what would be a good tactic for a national candidate. I don't remember his, you know, a definite point at which he said, "I'm going to be a candidate for nomination in 1960."

G: Was Senator Russell supportive of this type of effort?

D: I think he was. I think he was out of personal fondness for Senator Johnson. They had a very nice relationship. I think maybe some of the things--some of the positions that

Senator Johnson had to take as a potential candidate were ones that Senator Russell disagreed with, and even when he was president he often disagreed with him on some of his--on much of his presidential program--but, in those days, I think there underneath was still sort of an understanding that the other person was doing what he had to do given the circumstances. They did become pretty severely estranged in 1967 or 1968 over a judgeship in Georgia. Senator Russell wanted a judge named Alex Lawrence nominated, and Ramsey Clark had some reservations about him. That went on for a long time to the point that Senator Russell really got annoyed, and they came pretty close to having a final rupture, but that was so late in the day that it didn't affect much. That was in 1967 or 1968, I guess.

G: Well, did it affect Abe Fortas' nomination?

D: You know, it may have. I don't remember that. I'm fuzzy on my years as to whether the Alex Lawrence thing was pending in 1967 or 1968, and what was the year of the Fortas nomination?

G: Well, the Lawrence nomination started earlier, but I think that, because it did drag on for a good while, that by the time the Senate was considering Abe Fortas' nomination, Russell was not in a very--

D: Still unresolved?

G: He was not in a very good frame--

D: Well, he was not in a very good frame of mind in that period anyhow for health reasons, I think. The emphysema was gradually getting to him, and he was pretty irascible, and so

on, irritable, I think, in those years. You know, the inter-relationship of the Lawrence and Fortas thing, I'm not too sure--it may have had something to do with it but I don't--

G: Any thoughts on Senator Russell's view of Abe Fortas as a--?

D: I don't remember. I know he regarded him as obviously a very able intellect. You know, what the other considerations were--I know he liked Homer Thornberry. They had a good relationship. But I don't remember hearing Senator Russell say what he thought about Fortas. I don't remember how he voted on that nomination either.

G: There was an exchange of correspondence, I think, on the Lawrence nomination. Do you have any recollection of that? Russell wrote a--

D: He wrote a sort of a mean letter down at the White House. My recollection, and I don't know whether that's in the Russell Library or not, but my recollection is that President Johnson called up and said something to the effect, "I'm going to appoint this man. You get every copy of that letter and tear it up!" Or something like that. That's all that I remember. Senator Russell didn't tell me that. I think somebody in his office may have told me that. And the irony of the thing is that, I think, once he was appointed, Alex Lawrence was exactly the opposite of what Ramsey Clark feared that he would be. You know, he made himself quite unpopular with some Georgians in the Senate. But that's often the case.

G: There were some other elements too, I gather, that contributed to this strain, and one was a speech that Senator Russell gave with regard to Vietnam--do you recall that?--that put some distance between himself and the administration policy and reflected on the South Vietnamese government.

D: I don't. I had the feeling that maybe all during the Vietnam War when they were conferring often that there were many times when Senator Russell, maybe, was urging a different course from the one that was followed, but it never did really strain their personal relationship, and he still sort of said, "Well, these are my views, but you're the President, and you'll have to make the decision," and he sort of understood when he did. You may well be right about that, but I don't remember any real separation on that.

G: Do you think he was consulted adequately on Vietnam?

D: I think he was.

G: Really?

D: Yes. I couldn't testify [from] my personal knowledge, but I just know from their relationship earlier in the Senate--I just feel confident that he did touch base with him often about what he was planning to do.

G: What would Senator Russell advise on Vietnam? What was his assessment of what ought to be done?

D: Well, I think an oversimplification of it was that we ought to just get in with both feet and use everything we had or get out, that it was the limited nature of it that bothered him.

G: Was this in terms of not being able to win or in terms of acceptability at home, or--?

D: I don't know that I could answer that. I think it was more in terms of being able to win and getting it over with at the least ultimate cost in lives and money.

G: Okay. Now, in 1956 Senator Russell and Senator Johnson attended that NATO Parliamentary Conference in Paris together. Any--?

D: I didn't go on that trip. I often traveled with Senator Russell, but I was not along on that one.

G: Okay. Well--

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview II

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