

ROBERT J. DOLE
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with
BOB LIDTHIZER

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Williams: All right. This is an oral history interview with Bob Lighthizer for the Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas. We're at Mr. Lighthizer's Washington law firm, Scott and ARPS, and today is Thursday, October 18, 2007. And I'm Brien Williams.

Let's start out with your first contact with the senator.

Lighthizer: OK, I was a happy associate at Covington and Burling, which is a great law firm here in Washington, along with Rod DeArment. He and I were buddies in those days and still are. We spent all our time together – all our free time together and I got a call from Bob Saylor, who was a partner at Covington and apparently, he'd gotten a call from Elizabeth Dole saying that Senator Dole was looking for some young, bright conservative people to put on his staff, or at least a young bright conservative person. And since there were nobody - there was nobody in that category at Covington, it was a very liberal operation, he decided I was probably as close as he was going to get. So that's where I got it. He put my name in. He gave -- Bob Saylor gave my name to Elizabeth and then I got a call. The job that they were sort of looking for was alleged director. Met with a fellow named Tim – uh, Kim Wells, who you must have had contact with. He's a just a great person, one of the really terrific guys that I ever met on the hill and one of the reasons why I really, you know, sort of fell in love with the whole Dole operation. Kim was just really, really a classy guy, and he's still a guy I see from time to time. And he and I hit it off and he wanted me to go there. I met with the senator. It was clear the Senator was going to run for election—for President in '80, a couple years away. I tried to organize some people that could be of help – policy people, not money people or important people, but smart people who could help, and I put together a group.

They did offer me a job, as the alleged director, but I really wasn't interested in that. So, I did some volunteer work for the senator, in the policy context and then, towards the end of '78, it was obvious that he was going to be the ranking Republican on the Senate Finance Committee. At that point he asked me if I wanted to put together a minority staff, which was to say a Republican staff, on that committee. That was a more interesting job for me, so I did that. I agreed to do that. I met the senator, oh, probably several times over a six-month period up to being offered that job. And I always enjoyed it. He was much younger then, than I am now. Very funny. In fact, I had dinner with him at one point when I was exactly the age he was when he hired me, and I just said, 'look at this! This is how old you are when you hired me!' But in any event, I, you know, he offered me that job, I took it, I hired – put together a staff—first person I hired was Rod DeArment, because he was my buddy from Covington and he was very smart and could do write well and could do any kind of thing. And then the two of us put our heads together and hired the rest of the people; some off of Dole's staff, like Sheila Burke. A guy named Jack Nutter was another one. And then most of them just, not even, you know, had any real connection and we ended up with, you know, very good people, the kind of people we thought we could hire at Covington. So, we had very good people, very smart people with good credentials from good schools, and who were hard-working.

Williams: Did you bring any particular expertise to this position, or I mean, you've talked about political affiliation, but what about your training and experience at Covington before this?

Lighthizer: Well, I mean that's a good question. The Finance Committee was probably more a tax committee than anything else, although it had a lot of other stuff in it, which we can talk about it

and probably will. And I was clean out a tax lawyer. I did antitrust work, I was a litigator, I'd been there five years, so I was a fairly seasoned senior-associate type, mid-level to senior associate. So, I didn't have any particular expertise in that area.

You know I think what he was looking for was a fresh start. He had his staff's—had always been sort of up and down and he never had a good relationship with his staff, or at least that was the impression. He had some people, he had some people that weren't good. And his staffs were, I mean, he had guys like Kim Wells, who was sort of world class, and then he had a lot of other people who weren't very good. And there was always tension in his personal office. There was always all kinds of things going on, so I think what he was looking for was just an outside person who was smart; highly recommended. And that was the only thing I brought to him.

And in all honesty, devoted to him. I mean from day one, my view was and Rod's view was, and still, I mean, to this day, whenever we're in that position, we were working on something for Senator Dole, it was – our thought was, 'what would he want to do?' You know, I never had any kind of an agenda other than what I thought was his agenda, and I think that's probably what he was looking for too.

Williams: Describe the Finance Committee at that point. When you came on.

Lighthizer: Oh, the Finance – I had to get one of my –in the resolution when I left, you know where they all sign and give you a little sendoff. The Finance Committee, it was then and is now the greatest committee in the Senate. It's full of lions. First of all, it has more jurisdiction than anything else; it's one of the original committees. Originally when it was formed, it was one of

the first two or three standing committees in the United States Senate. In the old days, the very old days, it had banking jurisdiction and veteran's jurisdiction – it had everybody's jurisdiction, everything but Appropriations. But as it matured, it still had tremendous jurisdiction. It spent more than half the money in the federal budget because it had Social Security, and it had trade adjustment assistance, and it had welfare, which aided families with dependent children. SSI. This sort of the security program for people just, you know, with disabilities. So, it had all this spending and then it raised all the revenue either through trade or through – through taxes. And then in addition, it had jurisdiction over trade, it had jurisdiction over the national debt. I mean, it was a tremendous committee and still is. It still has great jurisdiction. In those days it was just top to bottom with the lions of the Senate.

If you look at who was on the committee, everybody who got there, a few said, 'I want to be on Appropriations,' for whatever reason, but basically when they got there, you got on the Finance Committee, you took it, and you stayed there. And they – and the people were incredible. You had, Russell Long was the chairman, was one of my great heroes of all times. I know his – he's really a great friend of Senator Dole's, also, they had a tremendous relationship. Senator Long was – became chairman of that committee in 1965 as a young man. When Harry Flood Byrd Senior got cancer and died. That was the year I got out of high school. So that should tell you how long the guy had been there and he – his, you know, his father was Huey Long, who was just, you know, legendary. Uncle was Uncle Earl Long with all that story, his father and his mother were both in the Senate. And, and he was just an incredibly smart guy. He knew the issues, there was none of this blow dry talk from sound bites. I mean, he was the old world. He was just a consummate senator and one of my real heroes, as you can tell, just by the way I talk

about him. He cared about things, and he fought about things, and he could pigeonhole you, and BS you, and he could just do it all, and talk on the floor for hours and hours and hours.

So, I can go on literally forever talking about Senator, Senator Dole. And he had sort of been committee chairman forever. And in fact, I'm sure Senator Dole's told the story. He told it years and years afterwards. He tells it about how, when they had the first roll call vote, when Senator Dole was chairman, and I'll just repeat it briefly because I was the person that, in addition to being staff director, I was the clerk. So, I called the roll. And I ended up calling the roll for all the Democrats and all the Republicans as we went first, except for Senator Dole, and then all the Democrats, including Long and all of them, then I called Mr. Chairman and Long voted a second time. So, it was actually a funny moment, really quite a funny moment, but understandable. He sat in that committee for decades doing that. He was a tremendous person. He was a, you know, just a wonderful guy. They used to say in the Carter administration that if you could get fifteen minutes with Russell Long or an hour with Jimmy Carter take the fifteen minutes with Russell Long. And that's how important the guy was.

Anyway. Enough on all that. It wasn't just him you had on that committee. You had Bill Bradley, who was impressive. You had Pat Moynihan, who was, you know, just absolutely world class. You had Bob Packwood, who was a chairman of another committee at the time and ultimately became chairman of that committee, had his problems ultimately, but was a smart, really well-developed Senator and – and really a terrific senator. You had Danforth, who was Jack Danforth, who was, you know, really, a world class player. You had John Chafee, you know who was – forever had been secretary of the Navy and was forever a senator from Rhode Island, a democratic state. The problem with going down through these people is you forget, you know, half of them who were important. You had Dave Durenberger, who was on that committee.

Senator Bourne, from Oklahoma, was another president of the University of Oklahoma, was on that committee. I mean, it was – if you just went from front to back, he had some. He had - Gravel was on there the first 2 years I was. I wouldn't put it in that category, but for the most part you went from front to back. It was just a mouth dropping group of people. I mean it was the best that the Senate had to offer with, you know, with three or four exceptions. So, it was an impressive group of people, they had tremendous jurisdiction, and they did great things.

Williams: Now when you came on, Dole was elevated at that point to...

Lighthizer: You know, I mean, the guys who were there before had just left and I was sort of in the transition. Yeah, he was, probably effective January 3rd or something, he was probably the ranking Republican and I came on a week or two before just because of the way the paperwork worked out.

Williams: Did you ever sense in Senator Dole a hesitation or being a little bit intimidated by his new role in that committee, or does that not apply?

Lighthizer: No, I just never – no. I don't think he gives much to intimidation. No, I think he knew what he had to do. I mean he knew it was a big job. I mean, it was a big job and he knew it was a big job, but it's the job he wanted to do and was preparing to do. We put together a terrific staff. I mean just a terrific staff we had people from, you know, at the top of their class, from Harvard Law School and just really smart, smart people. So, you know, we were all learning to some extent. But when he became, when he became ranking, you know, he lost responsibility. When

he became chairman, it was kind of a bigger transition. By then, we had two years of – kind of experience on it.

Williams: This is a naive question: how did he become ranking? Is that something the committee decides?

Lighthizer: It's just – no, it's – well, in theory, the committee decides, in fact it's seniority. And you had two guys ahead of him. Who were they? Like Hanson and maybe Ruska. There were two old guys who were there and – and they were believe me, not cut from the same piece of cloth as Bob Dole. Basically, what – the way the committee operated; you had Russell Long as the chairman. You had a couple of Republicans that were always going to go with him. These two senior guys and then he could get most of his own committees, so he was basically in total control. Well, now he had Senator Dole instead of these two kind of easy going old guys and Senator Dole worked it magically, but it was a different dynamic. You know, there was a new sheriff in town and Senator Dole could hold his own people together.

Williams: Just before we move on to the work of the Finance Committee, you mentioned Appropriations and I would have thought that would have been a plum assignment as well, kind of draw the distinction between finance and Appropriations.

Lighthizer: Well, I mean they're, you know, they're both big, big jobs. I mean there's – you know, if you – first of all, you're talking to a Finance Committee guy, so I'm going to have a better view of it, but I think if you were a real military guy, Armed Services could be, I guess if you were

really interested in foreign affairs, Foreign Relations Committee could be, but you don't really do anything on that committee and there – there's not a lot of liberal legislating. I think that if you really analyze it, most people would say that the power in the Senate is either in Appropriations or Finance. That's where the real power is year in, year out, month in, month out. Between the two, for a variety, it's not even close; Finance Committee has infinitely more variety of jurisdiction. You know, impact on the country, you can make the argument for the most part, the appropriators were reducing their spending during the time we were there. They have a very small amount of their spend that's discretionary. Now they do have this business that they can earmark and put money into special projects and build bridges and post offices in their own state. Now if that's important to you, then that would make that a more important committee. To me, that may be important to an individual or an area but doesn't have it's – it's sort of negative really in terms of the impact on the country. You know, Appropriations is important. Most of what they were doing during most of those years was cutting appropriation, which was hard work and not – not as much fun. Most of them came there to spend. But, you could make the case that Appropriations was equal to Finance, probably. I don't believe it. I don't think it's even close and certainly wasn't when I was there, but it's a real power source also.

Williams: Now for the first two years you were there, Dole was ranking and you were working with the Carter administration. So, tell me what some of the battles were and the big issues and what you remember from that period.

Lighthizer: Yeah, it was very different. I mean, just to sort of put it in context. I'm sure other people will. We were not only in the minority, we thought we would always be in the minority. I

mean it never crossed anybody's mind that we would ever be in the majority. It isn't like now where people are – I mean, believe me. Senator Dole never thought he was going to be in the majority of the United States Senate, and I believe he'd tell you that if you asked him. The White House – we did have the White House from time to time. There's no question about that. But we – we had, when I got there in '78, before the new guys came on who were elected in '78, there were like 37 Republicans out of 100, I mean it was a small number. Now they picked up some in a lot in '78 and then in '80 they went over the top and put in majority. So that's all by way of saying it was very much of a minority kind of a mindset.

Now, what were the issues as we developed through the year? First of all, we had the Dole presidency thing, so we thought about those issues. He always was a problem solver, even when it wasn't in his own interest. Senator Dole wanted to solve problems. You know, even when they were problems that were probably insoluble or problems that – the attempting solution of which would be to hurt him politically. He'd still – Ah, we gotta solve these things. But you know the number one issue was probably taxes. Taxes were very high then, much higher than we think of them as now, and it clearly was a drag on the economy. You know, Carter was, in fact, a terrible president. So there were a lot of things – energy, stuff like. I mean, he – he really, in my judgment, is the worst president about whom I know much. He was just dreadful in all respects, I think, although a nice person, presumably. But there were energy issues, although they weren't directly on our committee, they did come into our committee. I can talk about that a little bit.

There were huge tax issues. Social Security – there was a crisis in Social Security on the horizon.

And then we had the whole thing of Senator Dole running for president, right? I mean, clearly in '79 he was running for president. By early '80, he was out of it. Right? I mean, because it was sort of decided that Ronald Reagan was going to be the President, and that was

the end of it. And then the – so the second year, the 1980 year, it was Senator Dole trying to solve these national problems, but also trying to help the Reagan candidacy. You know, because he's always – that's just how his brain operates. And in that second year, we did something that was quite significant, I think. We reported out of the committee a 10% tax cut, across the board tax cut. Now just to take a step back, part of what Reagan was running on was a 30% tax cut, 10, 10, and 10. And that was his economic plan is something that had been put forward by – by in, in one, in its set of slightly different form, probably by – by Senator Roth and Jack Camp. And Russell Long agreed with it. He thought, yeah, we had our tax cut. So, you had this Democrat chairman willing to put forward a bill like that, even though it was clearly not in the interest of – of Jimmy Carter to do that. So, we worked with him and got a bill out of committee. Now, you know the Democrats had the house, so it wasn't really going to go anywhere, but it was a very significant political event. That one major committee of a Democratic Congress had reported out this tax bill was very significant, Reagan embraced it, it didn't go as far as we wanted, but it was a bit—sort of legitimized, to some extent, Reagan's economic plan and made it kind of bipartisan in a way. So, it was a very significant event in 1980.

In '79, the first thing we worked on was the big trade bill. There was a – Carter had put together what was, I guess, called the Tokyo Trade Round, and so we spent months going through and putting together that bill. Bob Strauss was the USTR at the time. He was only briefed at USTR, but he *was* the USTR during the period we did in committee. And so, we all learned about trade and had you know fun with that for a long period of time. It was an odd sort of a process. The process was so-called “fast track process.” So what you did is you had sort of mock markups with the administration for a period of months. And then—and some other committees were involved, but primarily Finance. And then at the end of a certain period of time

prescribed by statute, they came forward with the bill and said here it is, and it's unamendable, and then that bill sort of worked its way through the Congress. It was quite interesting, different process, so we did that. It was the big trade bill. That would have been '79.

We did some tinkering here and there on Social Security in '79. What else did we do? I'm sure we did spending cuts, because we were always doing that. I'm sure we did some welfare stuff because we were always doing that. Senator Long is very good on that too. I mean very good on it from the point of view of you know, saving the country money and what we would call sort of fiscal conservatism. And he had a terrific staff guy named Mike Stern, who was my, who was the staff director when I was in the minority and was the minority when I was the staff director, who was very much like Long, very smart.

Williams: So how did you and he work together?

Lighthizer: Oh, we worked together terrifically. I mean I, you know, I mean, obviously there was suspicion at the beginning. But we had a good relationship and he basically was a conservative, I thought, on fiscal matters. And in fact, when we became in the majority and we had all these elaborate budget procedures for our committee and we became in the majority, I called Mike up and I had his office now and he had my office and I called him up and I said, 'I want to submit our budget, which you submitted to The Rules Committee,' and then he kind of went through the process and he starts talking about it, I said, 'why don't you just go ahead and give it to me? Write it up and give it to me. You know, just give me what you were going to take and you take what I was going to take,' and he basically came back up a couple days later with a budget and he said, 'well, I need some more money here and here and here because I've got some people that

other guys have to lay off,' and we had a very, very lean budget, it was very lean. Much less than these other committees. And I said, 'fine,' and we signed it and sent it in. So, he basically prepared the budget all while I was there and I just reviewed it. My view was I trusted him; he wasn't going to pull anything.

So we had a very good relationship. He only worked in a few areas. He didn't really get involved in taxes and some things like that, but he was – he was excellent, and we sat together, you know, right next to each other on all the markups. In those days too, in the in the first two days, this is interesting to me, it may not be to anyone else: Russell Long had this odd way he did markups. He, you know, you had the dais, which was set up at the front, then you'd have chairs for a hearing, and then you'd have the seats. And it was a fairly small hearing room, the Finance Committee, which he wanted small. He liked some intimacy. But when we did markups, he took sort of tables like these, these sort of folding tables and in front of the dais just made a little square, and all the senators sat around that square and the two staff people. So, they didn't markup from the dais. We sat around a little chair around this little table. I think he thought he had more control. He probably did, by the way, have more control. And he did our markups that way. When Senator Dole became chairman, we moved back to the dais and that was the end of that.

Williams: Explain why you maintained a small staff in comparison, particularly in light of the amount of work.

Lighthizer: Yeah, that's a good question too. First of all, it was history. It had always been sort of small. Russell Long was not one who wanted to give up a lot of power to staff. He liked to keep

the, you know, what was going on in his own head. We also, I should say, I'll come back to this. We're different in that we didn't allocate our staff to various members. It was all the chairman staff. I'll come back to that. We all, there was also something called the Joint Committee on Taxation, which supplied some additional information on – on numbers and stuff like that and gave some advice. So, there was that. But Senator Long really wanted to have control, and he always kept the staff small. The whole history of staffs on the hill didn't predate my going there by much. See, I got there at the end of '78. And 15 years before that, there wouldn't have been a minority staff. They had just started minority staffs and they were kind of feeling their way and they were, you know, they were a third of what the majority was and they didn't have all these people. And as you went through that process, Senator Long always wanted to keep a small staff. That's part of it. Then you got Senator Dole in there, who was basically a Midwesterner anyway. And there's no way he's going to start spending money on staff if he can avoid it, or anything else. I mean he was basically a fiscal conservative in his soul. So, there was a lot of momentum to keep it – keep it small. Now a lot of committees, including Judiciary, where he was on for a period and – and some others he was on would assign staff to members. So, you had this odd thing where you would have a staff director and some of his staff weren't really hired by him, they were hired by some member of the committee, and people tried to do that from time to time to our committee, and I guess, you know, I just fought it like the plague, and always with Senator Dole as my ally. Because honestly, you know, this was the beginning of the end, you know. You got to – got to be the source of information. You can't have people weaseling around trying to --

Williams: Did your allegiance to Dole create any problems for other Republicans on the committee or...?

Lighthizer: Oh, I mean, I think they all knew that I was Senator Dole's guy and everybody on the committee was. I mean, if they didn't know that they were, you know, they wouldn't have been there, they weren't very smart. But I'll tell you we treated them all fairly. Our view was, you know, we were – we were working for all of them. If it came down to a squeeze between them and Senator Dole, obviously Senator Dole would always win. But we – we provided every service we possibly could to every single member. We met with their staffs all the time. It was essential for us in the minority and then later in the majority, it was essential for us to keep our guys together because they hadn't really been together much before then. Senator Long had a group of Republicans that always went with him and the group Democrats never did, and so we were changing that, both in the minority, and then changing it substantially in the majority. Our view in the minority was that they should work with the minority staff. Not the committee staff. And we got to the majority, it was you should work with the – with the committee staff and not the Joint Committee. And we, I think we did a very good job of servicing our – our people. And in fairness, any senator, on the committee or off the committee, that ever asked me a question, and I think this was, I know it's true of Robin, I think it was probably true of both of them, but if you ask me a question, I gave you the answer. I mean, if it was, if my giving you the honest answer was not in Senator Dole's interest, then that's just the way it was. I – my view was that that was my job, was to tell – if you ask me a question, 'what's the effect of this amendment?' Which I would get 50 times a day, you know, on the floor. I'd tell the guy exactly what it is. And if his reaction was, 'then, Senator Dole's making a mistake,' then that's just for him to work out with Senator Dole. But I never in any way pulled punches or told any senator anything that was even remotely different than what I thought was true. And I think that's also true of Rod, I know

it's true of Sheila. You know, probably created some problems for Senator Dole in the short term situations, but I think in the long term, these people had a lot of confidence in us, and they knew if they went to us that we would, we would tell them. 'What does this do?' If it was Howard Metzenbaum who was sort of a thorn on these issues, kind of a gadfly, you know, against tax, a lot of the tax stuff, but it, but it sort of fundamentally, I agreed with him. And I think by the way, sort of Senator Dole, Senator Dole fundamentally agreed with him. He was against all this special interest stuff and Senator Dole was agreeable, and used him effectively to kind of keep a lot of that stuff down. But if he came to me, asked me a question, which he did a lot, I gave him the right answer. Whatever I thought the truth was, and if it gave him something to argue against somebody about, you know, that's just the way it was.

Williams: During '79 with the tax work, what kind of relations did you have with the White House and how was Finance Committee specifically working with the Carter Administration?

Lighthizer: Well, we worked a lot with them because we had Strauss Entre, right? So we had real pros working with us and they needed us and...I don't remember working much with them at all. Their people, you know, didn't come to see us, certainly at the staff level, not at all. You'll recall the great comment that Tip O'Neill said; he used to call Hamilton Jordan, who was the chief, he used to call him something like 'Hamilton Jerkin' or something and he said he'd never been in his office.

Well, if that's how they treated the Democratic Speaker of the House, you can just imagine how they treated us. I mean, they weren't—I don't remember having any bad relations with them. I just remember having essentially no relationship with them. If Rod or somebody has

a different kind, you know, of view, theirs is probably right. I don't remember him dealing with us at all. I mean, they basically dealt through Long and that was that, other than in this trade context, which dominated a lot of the first year.

Williams: What is your bill of particulars against Carter from the standpoint of the Finance issues?

Lighthizer: I mean, why do I think he's a bad president? Oh goodness. I'm gonna have to go beyond the finance, but I'll do this quickly since it's beyond the scope of this, other than impeaching myself as a witness here. One, I think that the most significant foreign policy mistake America has made – I asked a couple of serious people this, really serious people this, and they agree with me, was allowing flash, almost encouraging Iran to go to the Ayatollah. That happened on his watch, he was party to it, he did it because he thought the Shah had the SAVAK and was not a good human rights guy, and the net of it is we have this cataclysmic change; all negative for the United States. So, I think that by itself would qualify him.

I think he had an energy policy, he got stuck with a bad energy fact pattern, but he had an energy policy that was just horrible. I mean, it ended up with, you know, gas lines and all this sorts of stuff. His economic policy: he had weak people, and they did the wrong things. You know they raised taxes, they did all the things that made matters worse, and we ended up with – with inflation, you know, like you have in Bolivia or something. You remember all this? And I mean just an economic record that was beyond belief. And the whole misery index that Reagan's people came up during the election was true. I mean you add interest rates and inflation and unemployment; you got numbers which Americans have never seen before, and then, even as a

leader, you know, he was – you know, the whole, his whole outlook was one of pessimism and, and sort of that we're on the sort of slippery slope to oblivion. Things aren't going well in the world. He was just, just flat. Didn't have it in foreign policy, didn't have it in economic policy. As I say, I'm sure he was a fine guy. I think he was a sort of a freak of nature that you ended up with this Watergate thing and this is the result of it. But, he wasn't a typical Democrat by any means, he was just a really, really bad president.

Williams: Anything else about his era and your first year there?

Lighthizer: Well, you know, we were always putting together Republican proposals on this and Republican proposals on that, which didn't really go anywhere. Our tax bill did the second, in '80. I got out of committee and [unintelligible] after that, but we were, you know, we were putting together proposals that were putting together stuff for Senator Dole to go off to New Hampshire, wherever, helping him, you know, supply the material. Helping him hire people for various positions, interviewing people.

Williams: So, what was the connection between a staff for a committee of the Senate and a candidacy for President? I mean, that sounds like it's some very blurred lines.

Lighthizer: Well, I think it is a blurred line. I mean I; you know, we didn't use campaign money. I mean Senate money or, or Senate time, we would go and campaign for him on our own time, from time to time. I mean, you know, he was our guy. But we were in, in the areas where, which we knew, which were most of the areas that he knew, we were the intellectual horsepower, and

you would expect us to be. We would write the stuff that he would use in his speeches and whatever, because we were the ones who, who actually knew it, and he was always a real substantive guy, he was never one of these guys who talked in platitudes; that was one of his drawbacks, probably. And he's had a lot of criticism for that. He was always real in the weeds. Senators used to be like that; they're not anymore. They don't know this stuff anymore, but he was always a guy who was, you know, substance was very important to him. And also, there would be times on the campaign trail, or someone said somebody asked him about this or that, he'd say, you know, 'call Lighthizer,' and, you know as a way to just get rid of them. So, we'd get calls from people who had questions about this or that or the other thing.

Williams: During the minority period, how often would you meet with Dole and how often would he be hanging around finance, rather than—?

Lighthizer: Well, when he was running for president, he was – he was gone a lot, right, during that time. But you know, we saw him continuously. I mean, he very – if he had an ag bill that would require some of his time, and that was an every-five-year deal...Judiciary, you know, it would be an hour here, an hour there, but for the most part, we saw him a lot. I mean he was basically centered around the Finance Committee, and we saw him a lot. I didn't hang out at his office; I mean my view was that he would call when he wanted to see me. And what I would do is I would prepare a list of what I wanted to talk to him about, and I didn't call him, unless it was a crisis, I had to. I just didn't call, I waited till he called me – when he was done talking about what he wanted to talk about, I went through what I wanted to talk to him about. That was always how I dealt with him. Sending memos – his, his memo – he liked memos. But he

responded to them in ways that were not always apparent; you couldn't tell, and you'd get Betty and you'd get Jo-Anne, and say, 'what does this mean?' And we'd all put our heads together, trying to decide what he tell—what is this scribble at the bottom of the page. But you know, to be honest, it happens to a lot of people, but you know. So, we – we gave him a lot of memos, we tried to anticipate for him, and we saw him a lot. More in the majority, but a lot in the minority. And I say more in the majority; largely, that was because he was no longer running for president. He was in town all the time and he was here. He was a very, very hard-working guy. Very hard working; he was very focused. Not warm and fuzzy, I would say. I presume you're hearing that from everyone; if you're not, they're all lying.

Williams: Just to deal with mundane logistics here, for a second, you mentioned you had an office and that would have been in which building?

Lighthizer: Well, in the – we were all in what was the new Senate office building. Which—not the Hart building, it's what, what is the new, you know, the new Senate office building, the Finance Committee was there. He had an office, just by coincidence, just to the East of the Finance Committee suite. So, in the minority, we were downstairs in, you know, an office with no windows and had a second office around the corner that was part of the old gym. So, we just had this, you know, horrible offices. And, and I had a little desk and a, and we had kind of a built up area, went about halfway up, and then I had them put plastic the rest of the way up there so you could at least have a private conversation in your office. And then on the other side of this little cubicle was two more little desks, which were Rod and Sheila were. Although Rod spent most of his time in my office, and everybody did what they needed to, because that's sort of like

– my desk was like the conference table. And then there was a real, even a bleaker situation on the other side. So, you kind of walked into this no windowed room. There were a couple of chairs here and a secretary desk, and then there was this sort of partition kind of wall, two-thirds of which was my office, one-third was shared by Rod and Sheila. And when Sheila had an intern, this intern got a corner of Sheila's desk and it's quite full. No, yeah! It was quite, quite crowded.

And then down, you know down was not connected in any way. Down 40 feet was another little windowless thing where we had a couple more people. So that was our deal. And then his office was right, he had a regular Senate office right in the suite that was right next to the Finance Committee suite. And then, the majority office, you had sort of the Finance Committee's hearing room on one side, you had the, the anti-room and then on the other side you had a series of three or four offices, the last one of which was like a Senate office. And that's what the SAC, that's what the staff director said. And when I was in the minority, when Mike Stern was in there, it was, you know, linoleum floor and, and whole, you know, metal tables and metal things and no curtains on the wall. And, and as soon as we took over, I said, 'it's getting redone.' I said, 'I'm gonna have this – gonna put carpet in and put curtains on the wall, I'm gonna, whatever, not new furniture, but whatever they got in stores, I'm gonna put in regular furniture,' which I did. Well, Mike was all concerned, he said, 'aren't you afraid that some senator's gonna see this and take it away?' And I said, 'Mike, I'm not gonna be here that long anyway! If they take it, they take it!' But you can see the difference in mentality between a guy who was a career guy and me. I was, like, somebody can get this away from me and they got it. But that office was a nice office. Once again, it was, it was a big office. It was the same size as a senator's office, but a lot of us. I was the only one in there, but we had a table and we all use it as our conference room, more or less, so it was very nice.

Williams: Did I understand you to say this was in the Hart building?

Lighthizer: No, no, no. It's not in Hart. It's in the, the, oh the middle Senate office building. We have ...

Williams: Oh, Dirksen.

Lighthizer: Dirksen. We have Russell Dirksen. When we were in Dirksen and then Hart wasn't even there at the time. There was no Hart office building. We had offices in the minority also, that's a good point. We had offices in the minority over in the Carrollton Arms, or one of those old hotels, maybe it wasn't Carrollton Arms. We had, you know, with boxes stacked up in an old shower and a bedroom that had three desks in it, or something. We did have people over there too, now that I think about it. I was over there a couple of times.

Williams: But when you were mentioning your minority office and Dole's office was next door, that was his—?

Lighthizer: No, no. My, my minority office was in the basement in this little windowless creature. His, when we were in the minority, he did still have an office next, his basic Senate office was right next to the, to the Senate Finance Committee, just by coincidence. We were down in the basement. And then when he got into the majority at some point he moved over to Hart, and gave up that, and I can't keep – he might have even kept that office somehow, the

office next door. Somehow he kept it. I can't remember, but basically the Senate office moved over to Hart.

Williams: So when you were meeting with him, you were meeting in his regular office.

Lighthizer: I was meeting in his regular office, yeah. Yeah. He wasn't coming to ours, I'll tell you. He'd walk down there from time to time and have some comment, you know. But no, he – we would get a summons, and we would go up and meet him, or in the car going to the airport or something, you know, but, you know, when we were in the majority, when he was in Hart, Hart was finally, pretty sure Hart was finished then. Is that right? Well, I believe I remember meeting with him from Hart, but I'm not sure. It might have been after he was, after I was off the Hill. I can't remember when Hart was finished, but for the most part it was in his office right next door.

Williams: I'm going to take a pause here for just a second.

Lighthizer: OK.

[BREAK]

Williams: OK. At what point did you begin to realize that you were going to be now in the majority?

Lighthizer: Probably about eleven o'clock at night on Election Day. Never occurred to any of us before that. We literally never had a, even a dream that we were going to be the majority. We were worried about Reagan and Dole, it's worth saying that Dole did work hard for Reagan. He

worked very hard to get Reagan elected not only this movement and the Finance Committee, but he did a lot of other things. He was sending him stuff, sending him ideas, campaigning. I mean, it was, you know, something that Senator Dole cared about and worked hard on. That night we had all this slip in the Senate. You know, I think it had been 24 years. Some number like that, since we've been in the majority, and then only for a brief period.

So, 1980 November we were elected and we were all just dumbfounded. Just totally thunderstruck. I was going off to make a speech for some reason, a couple days, like maybe a day or so later, and so I called Senator Dole and said, 'I am going to be the staff director of the majority, aren't I?' And he said, 'yeah, yeah. OK, fine.' Because I didn't know what the hell, how they were even going to introduce me? You know, this is so far from anybody's anticipation. Yeah, we started thinking about the kind of things we'd have to do, moving our agenda, which was essentially the Reagan agenda. Hiring more people for our staff. Gearing up, you know, worrying about what we're going to do with the Democrats, who many of whom had staff to lose. And, you know, there was a lot of disruption, and it was happy disruption for us. But for them it was quite shocking. The, uh, the '94 takeover of the House was more shocking probably, but this was, it's hard to overstate how just sort of cataclysmic this was. I mean these people had never even dreamt they could lose the majority. So I say, you know, two and a half years before it was they, they, it was like, whatever, and they had 67, 63, 63 maybe, 63 seats. So, it was a shocking thing and the first thing we did was, you know, Senator Dole was out of town, wherever he was, finishing up campaigning and probably, spending time in Kansas. He also was elected in '80. So he was, had his reelection that year. And, you know, soon as he got back, we started planning and doing things, and Senator Dole started worrying about who was going to be in the Cabinet, trying to help, you know, organize Reagan's Cabinet. Probably not to, he actually was involved, it's

probably worth saying he was involved in the convention too, the '80 convention. I don't know if the other people have talked about that. We – it was a two-week period. I went to Detroit for two weeks to staff him along with Jo-Anne. I think Rod, and you know, we were running around worrying about the platform and all this sort of stuff. And Senator Dole was involved in all this sort of cuckoo stuff about having Reagan be the president and Ford be the vice president, but really do the forum. Remember, all that screwball stuff? Fortunately, the Reagan people, you know. But I know Senator Dole was in all those meetings and doing all that stuff and it was quite, quite closely involved. So, the whole convention is something to think about at some point.

And then, we wake up and we're in the majority and went to sort of put together a plan. Yeah, you have a few months to do it, because you're not really in the majority until January, but those were heady times. I mean you had all these raggedy people put together, we were going to change the world. We're going to cut taxes and cut spending. And all the tax cuts were in our committee and most of the spending cuts they were out of entitlements for in our committee. So, Senator Dole was very much right in the heart of all that, and then we had that huge tax cut. And we had another Social Security thing, the second year where Reagan's people kind of put together a not very well thought out Social Security package. And the reason I'm pausing, is that one thing in the minority that, that ought to be mentioned, and presumably other people will, but if they don't, they should, was the whole windfall profits tax debate. That, I'll just give you the short version of it because it's something that's significant, quite significant, I think.

In, I believe it was 1980, Carter proposed a windfall profits tax because the oil prices had spiked and the oil companies were making money and he wanted some of that. And this was quite a serious battle. Senator Dole was against it. We, you know, went round and round,

basically spent a lot of time in committee on it, fighting it. Russell Long was in this odd position; he was an oil state guy, but he sort of thought that he had to do something for Carter, and it was a lot of interesting politics. We were on the floor for three or four weeks, just fighting it day and night, and in the committee for weeks before that. Ended up raising money, ended up spending a bunch of money on nonsense alternative energy stuff, all cuckoo stuff like kids at Christmas, badminton, you know. One day we had a time where we sat down; we were spending all this money and everything. Guys would think, 'what about this?' And they'd come up with it. And they'd do it and [unintelligible] And then there was an editorial in the Washington Post that said, 'they all lost their minds!' and they came the next day and said, 'we'll take it all back!' It was a whole funny thing. But the battle itself was a quite interesting battle and it's, it's something that at some point something I think about because it was, it was a major battle; it was Dole leading a filibuster with some Democrats on the floor...ended up losing, but it was a, it was a real battle with a lot of intricate parts and a lot of fun things going on. So that's something someone ought to focus on.

Now to get to the majority, the first order of business was to take care of the tax bill, which had no name, and I'm sure if—did you talk to Rod, or just watch his stuff? We ended up sitting around trying to decide what the name of this thing was going to be, and we called it the Economic Recovery Tax Act, I guess is what it was. ERTA, which we referred to as ERTA from the rest of the history, it was referred to as ERTA. But we had to get that bill through. It was not, I mean, sort of looking back it was one of those things, well, of course they're going to do it, but it was, you know, there was very little support on our committee for this crazy big tax cut. It was not well thought out; it was a campaign idea. But it was a monumental effort on Dole's part to get a major bill out of that Committee. And looking back, you can give the credit to the Reagan

Administration, or you can say that it was automatic, that it was going to happen because of the election, and all of that is wrong. Senator Dole really, and so did we, as staff, but Senator Dole really worked that. It was by no means a foregone conclusion that that thing was going to pass. You aren't going to get any Democrats to vote for it. A lot of the Republicans, particularly the moderate Republicans, the Chafee's and the Dan Force, and others thought it was stupid.

We ended up changing the tax substantially from what Reagan had proposed. We ended up shrinking it down in hours of meetings Senator Dole had with Jim Baker and others. Adding a business component to it, because the fact is you needed that if you're going to spur the economy on. And passing that bill was a major accomplishment. And then, the other sort of hero of that is Rostenkowski on the House side, who came forward and got us to conference, and we ended up compromising and doing a bill. So those two guys get a lot of credit, particularly Senator Dole for, for creating—for fashioning this thing, making it something that can pass, doing all the deals that was necessary. First to get it out of the committee and then to get it off the floor. And it was hard fought and the Democrats did not want to pass that stuff. So that was in, '81 and then in '82 we realized that we had gone too far. We had, you know, they didn't find all the spending that they were supposed to find. Found most of it. Everybody else didn't, and he had the big tax increase bill, which was desperately needed, nobody wanted. And he got that through. So those are two really extraordinary accomplishments. I mean, it's easy to look back 20 years and think that things were going to work out that way, but there was no reason to believe they were. And they were both just extraordinary accomplishments.

Williams: Going back to ERTA, what percentage of the language that finally resulted in that bill came from the White House? Or was it really all Finance Committee?

Lighthizer: Oh, I. Well, that's an interesting question. I, you know that what we did was they had their idea, which was basically 3 lines from a speech somewhere, that they talked about. It was a good speech. We really put it into legislative language. They have legislative people over there. We had the joint committee and then there's something called the Alleged Councils Office, which actually writes this stuff. But even the basic concepts were hammered out with Senator Dole in layman's language, and then we all put it together. I mean the basic concepts were different. We put, as I say, a business, a depreciation component, we did a lot of things that were very different. We staged it in, I mean it was, you know, it was going to cost huge amounts of additional money. It was going to be too quick, I mean...Probably some Reaganites would say we added stuff that we shouldn't have, and there may be some slight bit of truth to that. Basically, we added to it what we had to add to it to get it passed, because it was not going to pass, it wouldn't have got out of committee. It would not have been put out of the Finance Committee. Would have been a huge embarrassment for the President, not to mention my chairman. But Dole put it together, he added what he had to get, got people stuff in there as long as they were in the basic genre of a business stimulating tax because we remember, we—the country was in crisis. The economic situation was, you know, apocalyptic by comparison to what we're used to over the last hundred years, you know, with all these inflationary things. So we needed help. And he put it together and he added people's ideas that he said he had, who, when he got out of the committee and ultimately got it off the floor and got it through Congress. And the president signed it.

Williams: How different was it when it was finally signed from when it left your committee?

Lighthizer: What, the president? Oh, I think it was pretty similar from what it came out of our committee. There were, there was stuff added in. Rostenkowski, had his own ideas and he was going to the conference with nothing. So, he had a lot of flexibility. But he basically was a guy, you know, he was a loud and you know all this, but he was basically, the guy was trying to do what was right for the country and he really was. Was really a solid guy. I'm a fan of Dan Rostenkowski. He was against special interests and he was trying to do what was best for the country. A few things he tried to take care of, like everybody for himself, for his own people. But he – he was a very good chairman and a gutsy chairman to do what he did in that case. But I would say that, the basic concept was a White House concept. The bill was really fashioned in the Finance Committee and altered, I don't know, ten or fifteen percent on the floor. And then another ten or fifteen percent maybe in conference, but...and none of it would have happened if it hadn't been handled the way Senator Dole would have done it. He really was quite remarkable.

Williams: When did you realize that TEFRA, as the '82 bill was, was called, I guess --

Lighthizer: Tax equity and fiscal responsibility act. We came up with that too.

Williams: When did you begin to realize that that was going to be necessary? Or, to put it another way, that, that there needed to be some corrective action?

Lighthizer: You know, I don't remember. I'm just, I'll just assume something you'd never do if you were actually testifying under oath. You know, I think it was fairly soon afterwards that we

realized there was excesses and that there were going to be big budget deficits and the spending cuts, as I say, hadn't been made. That's part of the problem people have overlooked: a lot of the spending cuts weren't made. The idea was a huge tax cut, the spending cut. The end, that was the regular revolution on that side and they got the taxes for the most part, the way we wanted them, the spending, for the most part, we did not get. The Finance Committee did its part on the entitlements, but those tend to pay out over time; Appropriations Committee people really didn't do it. That's my recollection, maybe that's inaccurate.

So, I think fairly soon there afterwards we needed, we had a problem. There was clearly things going on that were out of control. I mean, there were several things. There was something called 'safe harbor leasing,' which was this, just a kind of an invitation to take a wheelbarrow to the bank and wheel money out, and there was a bunch which Senator Dole had to deal with. There were a bunch of things like that going on so, I mean...He realized he had to put together a bill, and we realized we work for him. And that was really a tough battle too, you know, the Democrats wanted a tax increase. They didn't want to bail out Reagan, you know. So, it's pure politics as far as they were concerned. You know, once again you had Rostenkowski who I think was above all that. He had his political side to him, but he realized we had a problem. And he and Dole, you know, worked it out with Russell Long, and they put together a tax increase bill, which recaptured some of the money we had instead of leveled things out.

Williams: With ERTA, explain to me how Dole operated to put pressure on fellow Republicans to vote for it, and who did you really target for persuasion?

Lighthizer: Well, my recollection was first we target one guy. We targeted, it was not a Republican, it was Senator, uh, Sparky Matsunaga 'cause we knew we needed, we had at least a couple of things where we were going to lose a Republican. Only had a thin majority. I think we were 11 and 9. And we had at least a couple of them after losing Durenberger or somebody on for reasons that you know, I didn't agree with. So, we got Sparky by, he had something he wanted to put in it, and he basically could do whatever he wanted. He was in a political situation where he could do whatever he wanted, and he was fundamentally an American. He thought, 'this is what we will need, and this will help my people, so I'll do it.' So he was a crucial vote. But, you know, we met every day with our key staff people to find out what it is they needed to have in the bill. You know, not just for special interest, they were generally against that, but because their boss had stuck out of position, staked out a position on that, he thought this is really important for the good of the country, and then the idea was, if you, if we put that in here and we combine it with the Reagan stuff, are you with us all the way through?

And for the most part, that's the deal that we struck. We did as much as we could at the staff level, and where we couldn't, you know, 'Senator Dole, we have to talk to these people.' But this, senators generally don't talk to themselves, to each other, like normal people do. You know what I mean? They always kind of talk around stuff, and it's never really clear to either one of them what the deal is, but they both kind of know, and they both have some wiggle room. At the staff level, we didn't do any of that. We just said here, this is here. This is what it's got to be. And you know, we could do that. Because there was enough insulation from the members, but, you know, I wasn't privy to his private conversation with individual people, but for the most part, we put in the bill what they had to have. People realized the importance of it. I'm sure that Senator Dole went to Don Regan, who was Secretary of Treasury. And the White House people, Jim

Baker and others, to put pressure on these people to say, 'Hey, this is, you know, we're having a revolution here. You got to be part of it.' I'm sure that's what happened, because this was tough for a lot of these people. That bill was by no means certain and you had, you know, guys like Chafee didn't have any allegiance to any of this stuff. So, and you had to have his vote.

Williams: And one person's name hasn't come up and that's Stockman. Where was he in all of this?

Lighthizer: Oh, he was involved a lot, yeah. I mean, he was, obviously a House, junior House guy who's basically got his seat because his mom was the county chairman. You could do that, Republican district. He went in there. He was a outspoken sort of, pro-Reagan guy in his brief time in the House. Really smart as he could be, and I think charming, although a lot of people wouldn't think so, I thought he was quite charming. I mean, that's because I was closer to him in age, and I had a fair amount of dealings with him then and a lot when I was in the Reagan administration, so I like David Stockman a lot. He's really smart and had a good sense, and he was quite sensible about what we could get and what we couldn't get and what we had to get to get a victory. And he was very much involved. He would go around with his flipcharts and show people the situation, it was a crisis. It was a crisis of Social Security, it was a crisis in the economy, it was a crisis in spending. And he would go through, knew that, think that was influential. He wouldn't be a guy who you would go to for the most part to put pressure on the senator to do something, just because he was young and you know, wasn't probably viewed as being Jim Baker. You know, sort of a Ed Meese kind of close to the president, but you know, I could be wrong about that. You know he was quite impressive, and he did, he put a lot of the

spending stuff together, really. The tax stuff, you know, we worked it out with him, but he, the meetings that Senator Dole would have with the White House, the vast majority of which we did not go to, but some we did. You know, they'd be Baker, they'd be Meese, they'd be Stockman. And if it was high enough, you know the President and George Bush and, who else was part of the economic team? That was probably pretty much the people who are operating on that level, deeper maybe, for some reason or another, but for the most part not. But I didn't go to a lot of those meetings, you know, I mean I went to some, but mostly I didn't go. Nobody from our staff went.

Williams: We've come to the end of this tape so I'm going to stop now for a moment and change.

[Break]

Williams: I think I may close that door.

Lighthizer: Yes.

Williams: Okay. I guess...have we said everything that you want to say about TEFRA or is that...?

Lighthizer: Yeah, I mean, I guess. It was a, you know, great battle. I think he gets a lot of credit for it, took a lot of heat. You know, it's a huge amount of work and I think it was a good thing, so, I don't know what more to say about it.

Williams: Good. You mentioned that when you went into the majority that you sort of tightened up things in a way to make sure the Republicans were all sort of on the same wavelength, or I've forgotten exactly how you expressed it. Did that, was that part of sort of the Reagan Revolution and whatnot that the Republican Party, which maybe had been a little bit more senators independent and so forth, beforehand, became tighter and more organized, or am I imagining that?

Lighthizer: You know, there was probably some element to that. I mean the...If you have a competitive system, I think it's easier to keep the minority in play than it is—together than it is the majority, to be honest with you. But when you have a system which had developed in the Congress, where the Democrats were always in charge and Republicans didn't, they both became sort of independent of their own party base.

So, pulling those people together was important, and I think that the Reagan revolution clearly had an impact. There's no question, a lot of these people came in in that period between '78 and '80, you had at least three or four members of our committee were elected, on our side as well as on the other side. So it was a lot of turnover, a lot of change. And I think the Reagan people did help to keep people together, particularly at the beginning.

Williams: And what about the White House's reaction to TEFRA as it began to form? Because they probably saw it as a threat? Or?

Lighthizer: Oh yeah, no, they were quite negative on it. You know, they were very negative on it, but it's when you said the White House, you have to keep in mind that it's, you know, the White House has got a lot of different mouths. And I'm sure that there were some who realize it made sense. But no, there was a real negative reaction. It was Senator Dole on his own, trying to make the correction. The final analysis, the president went along. His people went along and did enough things that they wanted to make him sign the bill, he didn't have to sign the bill. But there were a lot of people that were upset about that, about that correction and the fact that we were raising taxes, a lot of people. So, it was a haul.

It was very tough, but I think the Finance Committee Republicans for the most part realized there needed to be a correction. If you sort of went down our committee from the top, clearly Packwood was the kind who would realize that in a heartbeat, he wasn't a hard right guy kind of guy. Roth would realize it. Danforth would realize it, Chafee, for sure, would realize it, right? I mean, he was at best a moderate Republican. So that's four right off the top before you get to, you know, and Dole, of course, you know. So, you got a majority of our caucus. Dave Durenberger was from Minnesota. He was a sensible guy.

The people who were probably harder to sell were guys like Wallop and Sims. That were the junior most guys. Grassley, who's the, the junior most guy at that time, is now chairman, or ranking Republican. He would be one who would also see the wisdom of doing it. So you know, we had a few people in there who were probably harder to convince than others. The White House was hard to convince. But there was a lot of pressure. There was a lot of pressure in the financial markets. There was a lot of fear going to having high interest rates, really bad economic consequences and indeed, keep in mind we weren't in, if, if not recession, very close to recession

all the way through '82. So, there were, you know, it was hard, you know, the market was sort of sorting all this out.

Williams: What about the conference on TEFRA and Rostenkowski's role to play in, in that year?

Lighthizer: Well, I mean he was a key guy there too. You know, we sat down there and went to conference with him. I'm trying to remember what he had for a bill. I don't even remember. But I do remember we had a, you know, a tough conference. His problem was keeping his own Democrats in mind, you know, in control because he had, his Democrats were a pretty liberal group, and they hated Reagan and hated the fact that the Republicans had taken over. And really, they really were. And they just disliked Ronald Reagan forever. So, it was impressive that Rostenkowski was able to play.

Now the Democrats, keep in mind, wanted a tax increase. But didn't want any, any benefit of it to go to the Republicans. So, it was a kind of a real partisan thing on their part. They always wanted tax increases, but they just didn't want us to get what we wanted. But there were a lot of specific issues you had to fight your way through where we were trying to protect one part of the economy and they wanted to attack it. There was a lot of that give and take back and forth.

Williams: What recollection do you have about the '83 Tax Act? If anything.

Lighthizer: Well, I wouldn't have much. I left in April of '83. So, I mean, I would have been there maybe for the beginning of it, but I wouldn't have much. I remember Social Security was a big battle in '82. And Senator Dole was on the Social Security Commission, he and Senator Moynihan sort of cooked up the solution, and it's a solution that has lasted for 20 some years. Moynihan was another one by the way, who was, sorry, who was, you know, just a superstar that you had on this committee just a, you know, smart as he could be and broad experience and sort of infinite charm and ultimately became chairman of the committee also. So, he and Dole basically worked their way out of that and got people to go along with it.

Williams: Anything else that you can say about the Social Security issue? Because that was such a big thing at that time and, did you work with that--?

Lighthizer: The Republicans, it was Senator Dole's view and one to which I subscribe, like I do most of his views, that in the '82 election that them coming, the White House coming out with their proposal and Claude Pepper, who was sort of the leader of the, as an old, old house guy from Florida, leader of the, you know the kind of anti-Republican pro-Social Security bat that we lost 23 or 24 seats in the House, that one year. Because we picked up seats in '80 and we lost them all plus in '82 in the largest single issue, in Senator Dole's opinion, and as I say, one that I agree with, with Social Security. So it was a huge, huge, huge issue. We ended up putting off the Social Security bill. I guess we didn't end up doing it until after the election, but the White House did not do a good job the way they came up with that proposal. Their proposal was substantively a good proposal, as I recall, I don't remember the details, but that was my recollection. It was a good proposal, so obviously it made sense, it wasn't handled well. The Democrats were still

fuming over the fact that they had lost in '80, and they played pure partisan politics, and it worked. And then Senator Dole and others ended up sorting out the mess. And through this Commission, and they ended up with a solution that has lasted until now.

Williams: I was out doing a job in California with the Smithsonian and having to do with science, technology and someone mentioned the importance of the Bayh-Dole Act.

Lighthizer: I don't remember it now.

Williams: Okay, it had to do with patenting biotech.

Lighthizer: So from the Judiciary Committee? I don't remember.

Williams: It didn't come through you?

Lighthizer: I used to, there was a time when I interviewed all those people he was thinking about hiring. For the judiciary, for his judiciary staff, and for most of the other staff people, we went through a period where I was basically interviewing everybody before he hired him. Didn't always listen to me.

Williams: Right. So we've mentioned, you mentioned tax issues, Social Security, trade with the Tokyo Round. Anything else in your days in the Finance Committee?

Lighthizer: Well, there were always big spending cut bills. I mean, and the budget bills were a huge factor, and it would go through the Budget Committee, the budget process, we'd get a number and then we have to figure out ways to whack the budget to do it. That was always a huge factor. Never, never easy. We talked about the windfall profits tax and the minority. We talked about trade in the minority. In the majority, I guess I would say the two big trade bills, I mean, two big tax bills, Social Security and then these perennial huge spending cuts.

Williams: Where would you take aim for the spending cuts most typically?

Lighthizer: Well, you know, we had a huge amount of the budget. As I said, we had more than half the budget in our committee. So, you had welfare, I mean basically what we talked about was, you know, fraud and abuse, you know. But you know, there was plenty of that, but Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security around the edges, there were almost a few funny things about Social Security that we had to fight about. There was one issue. I don't remember it. Maybe Sheila will remember it if you haven't talked to her, when you do. But there was one issue where people were qualifying for Social Security who had worked at like the post office and doing it in like 18 months in some odd kind of way and then be paid off for another 25 or 30 years. It was a huge loophole and that, a few things like that we had to correct. But basically, that's what it was. It was always hard work. I mean you, there was always some needy case, but then a lot of greedy people, and it was almost always in those areas of social entitlement programs. But it was a big number. And you had to do it every single year, otherwise you wouldn't get a budget.

Williams: You haven't mentioned hearings at all. How much? How much time?

Lighthizer: Oh, we had a lot of hearings. Yeah, Senator Dole was big on hearings. Yeah, I don't know quite what to say about it. Yeah, we had a lot. We had them, we had them on taxes, we had them on every conceivable issue. I mean, he was basically, if he saw something in the newspaper or had an extra 30 seconds in his schedule, he'd want to have hearings or a meeting, or something. You know, just the way he was. He'd go through the newspapers in the morning and whatever he read, three or four newspapers, and any kind of problem he thought within his jurisdiction, he'd want to solve the problem, work our way through these problems.

So we had a lot of hearings. Had hearings, we had them Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday in the morning. And subcommittees had hearings but could not markup. All the markup was done, and this is different than most committees, all the marking up was done in the full committee, all the marking up was done in concepts, not legislative language. So, if a member said, 'I've got an amendment here to offer,' they'd say, 'okay, tell us what it's about.' And then once it was described, we would draft it. We'd never had anybody give us a draft legislative language. And we'd go back and run it by the guy. That's what you wanted to accomplish, but we never had these goofy things where people are, you know, have lobbyists writing amendments and giving people, and they're offering that amendment, none of them knows quite what it means, we...that wasn't an innovation of mine. That's how it was when I got there, and we kept it that way. I don't know whether it's still that way or not.

Williams: Back on hearings. Were there any moments of high drama? That you recall.

Lighthizer: Oh. I guess nothing jumps to mind. I'm sure there were plenty of them, there had to be, but you know it's one of those things that kind of...Senator Dole's, you know, his style is not to try to get some guy and embarrass him. Not his style. It'd be more likely to be arguments between members, or something like that. Clearly, when we were the majority, the witnesses would tend to be our administration. So Dole's tried to be good to them. On the other side, in the minority, I don't remember a lot. I just, you know, I guess I remember sitting there for hours and hours and hours. I had to be there for the most part. I didn't go to all the subcommittee hearings, we had to be there, for the most part, but you know, there was probably plenty of them, but I don't remember them.

Williams: Anything to say about the subcommittees? We really haven't talked about them at all.

Lighthizer: Well, it was an interesting thing, the way it worked. Basically, every majority member had a subcommittee. So, the first thing you'd have to do is negotiate what they were going to call it. You know, and everybody wanted to call the same things and you had a pecking order and you know you're going to have trade, you're going to have taxes. But we had to have eleven of them, so there were all these crazy, I remember Senator Matsunaga's was tourism and sugar. Tourism and sugar! That's what mattered to Hawaii. And you know, Social Security, health, some of them more obvious. But we were, you know, manipulating the names in ways. You can get them out of that, history of the Finance Committee book, the subcommittee names are in there. And basically, if you were subcommittee chairman, you could put on your letterhead and you could have hearings, but that was it. Any markup, anything like that all was full of committee and as I say, none of it was legislative language.

Williams: Rod talked about the importance of Paul Volcker and a bargain he made with Paul Volcker with TEFRA. Does that come to mind?

Lighthizer: Oh, I guess sort of vaguely, but I don't remember it. Yeah.

Williams: What about relations with the Federal Reserve? Is that...?

Lighthizer: Oh, you know the Federal Reserve... Yeah, I would say, my reaction was they weren't all that close. I mean, they're not supposed to be close, and they weren't that close. I presume that, you know, Volcker would agree to not tighten credit if we would agree to make sure our bill got through and cut taxes, and I mean, cut spending and reduce the deficit. I, you know, there was always that tension. Dole from time to time would meet with Volcker and his successors. But I mean, I don't remember that as being a particularly important role in what we did.

Williams: Were they regularly giving testimony or appearing in your hearings or not?

Lighthizer: It's clearly not regularly. So. From time to time, maybe, but clearly not regularly.

Williams: When you look back on your time with the Finance Committee, do you see certain things as being real achievements that you're personally proud of?

Lighthizer: Oh yeah. I'm proud of all of them. I think first of all, I think that we assembled a staff that was on a level that was way above any other committee staff there. You know there was essentially no cronyism at. Senator Dole never said, 'I gotta have guys from Kansas or Aunt May's kid.' I mean, there was never any that. I hired Rod as my first hire. Pretty easy, as we'd been working together for five years. He was on the law review at Virginia, and he and I sat about hiring guys from the top schools who were smart. They didn't all figure out the Hill, you know, you have some good, but they were all smart, they were all technically really very good. They've all gone on to have great careers.

So we put together a staff first in the minority and then the majority that I think was beyond comparison. I mean, the Joint committee had all the real expertise when we got there and when our staff was assembled, no one thought their people were better than ours. So, we had by far the best staff, I think on the Hill. So, I'm very proud and I think that really served Senator Dole well. I think he had less than an ideal relationship with his staff, his personal staff, particularly early on, because they were uneven. As I say, some great ones. But on my staff, they were all good, all really, really good people. So I'm proud about that, I'm proud about the, you know the fact that we helped Senator Dole get, he could have stumbled. This was a big step for him to do that and he did and then we got him over the, you know, we helped him get, get to where he got. So, I'm proud of that. I'm proud of all the parts of the Reagan Revolution. You know I think we really did have an impact. Both set up the election. I think Senator Dole and his staff had a good part on that. So, I'm happy about all that. I mean, I wish that we had done better in '88. I mean I think the '88 was Dole's year. You know, '96 was, you know, just something that happened. But--

Williams: I want to get to the politics in just a moment. One other thing I wanted to finish up with, with the Senate. What about your relations with his personal staff?

Lighthizer: Oh, you know, I never had bad relations [unintelligible] but just about everybody, it was a very funny staff. It was all kind of bickering, and my sort of rule was that you don't do anything in my area and I won't do anything in yours. And I just would not tolerate anything in any, any other area. You know, I mean I basically got all the information, so it was hard for anybody to cross me. And I think we ended up early on, there was a lot of sort of a devouring of people who were in jobs like mine. When I got there. AA's and people have a lot of, you know, devouring of those people. And I realized that I, because I had a big advantage in Rod too, keep in mind, you know, having a buddy who was right there was a huge asset. But, for whatever reason, you know we were, I don't know, scorpions in a jar or something. We ended up, I ended up not really having trouble with them.

Williams: You mentioned to me that when you and Rod came into the Senator's presence--

Lighthizer: No, it was more me and Kim. Kim actually. Kim Wells actually mentioned that and I, I think it was right. You could sort of see he had a Kim. I remember Kim telling me that you could sort of see he would be sort of grumpy and feel sort of annoyed when staff would come in. For whatever reason, just the way he was, he's really not that way at all anymore. But he was that way then, you know, stress and whatever, who knows what it was. But then he had a different reaction when Kim and I came in, Kim had made that comment and I always said it was true

where he sort of, I'm not saying he threw his arms around us, but, but you can see he had a different attitude than he did with most of these people.

Williams: Do you think given the opportunity to choose that he would have preferred to be with Finance staff or with his own people?

Lighthizer: No, I don't even question about it, Finance. Yeah, there's no question about it, Finance. Now, I was gone so I can't comment on that, but I'll tell you right now. He loved the material. He loved the intellectual challenge. It's where his reputation was going to be made and the other stuff, you know, went along. When an ag bill came up, he had to do it. He did some stuff from time-to-time, Judiciary had to do, but in my judgment, he wanted to be, he wanted to do Finance. He liked Finance. He was the man. Yeah. And he, and he studied and learned the stuff. It was hard stuff, and he learned it.

Williams: Tell me what prompted your move.

Lighthizer: To, the what? To the right?

Williams: To the, when you left. Why did you leave the Finance Committee?

Lighthizer: Oh, well firstly, I'd been there long enough and it was time, and Bill Brock was the US Trade Representative and he was looking for a general counsel at USTR. And he called me and offered me a job and I said, 'I want to be general counsel.' And then a little while later, he

called me and said, 'well, would you be deputy?' So I went to see Senator Dole and said I have an obvious job as deputy and, and he said, well, just don't do anything right now. He said, 'Elizabeth has been offered this job as Transportation Secretary, so I'd rather have you go work for her.' So, to make a long story short, I went and saw her. She was going on a trip. She wanted to think about it, the time sort of passed, and I went and became Deputy U.S. Trade Representative.

I mean, it was a great job. It was time for me to go. You know, I was an ambassador; I flew around the world and I negotiated, I sat in cabinet meetings with Ronald Reagan. And Bill Brock is not Bob Dole, but he's a great mentor and a really fabulous guy. So, I got lucky with both of these guys. They'd all done a lot of interesting things and. And the net of it was, you know, I'd have been crazy to have turned down deputy USTR at that time in my career. I mean I was, I was an ambassador at like, I was 34 or something, so it would, all would have been stupid to do anything else. And you know, I was always, I was never one that was worried about having a successor. As I say, my first guy hired was my successor. And I knew that Rod would do as good a job as I would. He has different personality and different traits and different strengths and different weaknesses. But, you know, I knew he could do a terrific job, so I didn't feel like I was letting Senator Dole down at all.

Williams: Let's finish up with the political side of Dole's career and you mentioned that the first time you were involved was the 1980 --

Lighthizer: In '80, yeah. You know we supplied substance for the machine. '80 was, if you look upon it was an unbelievable year. With the people who were running it just, unbelievable. I

mean, Ronald Reagan and you had George Herbert Walker Bush and you had Bob Dole and you had Howard Baker, and God, who am I forgetting? Kemp, obviously, was running. It was just, you know, really, a world class crowd of people. Just off the charts. Much stronger than either party has had before or since, in my opinion. So many more than we have now. But you know, Ronald Reagan was going to win that. He had run in '86, he had real followers, he had more money, and he was Ronald Reagan, so that was going to happen.

Williams: You said he ran in '86. You mean '76?

Lighthizer: I mean '76, Yeah, I meant '76. [unintelligible]

Williams: So, how was Dole as a campaigner and--?

Lighthizer: He was always...and I, you know, I didn't ride around the plane with him, so I don't want to give the impression that I did, but I was close enough to know what was going on. I think he was undisciplined, certainly in the early years, more so in the late years. He second guessed people all the time, was hard to schedule. Hard to schedule is not actually fair. He was impossible to schedule. You know, he was just, he had personality quirks and...he was never afraid of hard work. He was always the hardest working guy around, but he would do enough stuff himself that wouldn't means he wasn't going to...It's not fair to say he sabotaged it because he didn't, but he wouldn't give you the...he would make decisions and unmake them in ways that meant you weren't going to get a maximum return. But in '80 it didn't matter, because in '80 he wasn't going to win anyway.

Williams: And where were you during that campaign? In the field, here?

Lighthizer: No. Well, a couple times, Rod and I went out and did volunteer work. Yeah. You know, we were in New Hampshire, wherever, but basically, we were working full time for him back in the Senate Finance Committee, and that's who we were. We kept the fires burning. Did what he had to have done substantively as well as keep the committee running. So that was really our job.

Williams: But in terms of the campaign activities, what were, what were they?

Lighthizer: We would help to organize lawyers' groups and policy people. And we would do all substance, you know, on a variety of areas, our own areas. We have a lot of other areas we would help to supply through volunteers as well as our own staff. The substance of the committee, actual policy papers and the policy views that would go into policy speeches. So that's basically what we did. And we organized lawyers, you know, volunteers.

Williams: And did those policy papers get used?

Lighthizer: I'm sure they did, yeah, in part, some of them were, some of them weren't or probably never were read and you know. But yeah, they were used. We contributed to the substance.

Williams: So, would those go to speech writers, or would they go directly to the Senator or what?

Lighthizer: Oh, everything would go directly to the Senator Dole. But the speech writers would then write speeches, with some of them I presume we put out as policy papers. Just here's a policy, we're from the campaign to media or whatever.

Williams: Were you in New Hampshire with the microphone situation?

Lighthizer: You know, I don't think I was actually there. That was one of the great stories. I don't believe we were there. I think we were here? Why, did Rod say we were there? No. Because I don't remember. My recollection is that we were not there, but I don't remember precisely. It was something I've seen it so many times that I, you know, you start to blur. I don't think we were there. It's really one of the great scenes of all time.

I do remember being in on the whole discussion about, you know, they wanted, you know, just to be Reagan and Bush, and Bush was trying to make it just a two man race and get rid of everybody else, and Reagan wasn't having any of that. I remember being in on all those discussions, and 'do we go or not go?' And I remember that, but I don't think we were actually there. Was really one of the great moments in American history. Maybe I'll say I was there from now on. I went to a lot of debates though, over the years. A lot of them. Of his debates.

Williams: You said '88 logically would have been, should have been his year.

Lighthizer: Yeah, '88 was clearly his year.

Williams: So expand on that.

Lighthizer: Well, I mean, you had Reagan was up, you didn't have a real heir apparent yet, George W Bush. Dole had been around a long time, he'd had a lot of successes, he had a fair amount of money. He ran a good campaign, I mean, as good as he was going around, he had his own same sort of issues of second guessing and all this sorts of stuff. But that's just part of his personality. He won in Iowa. We were ahead in New Hampshire. If we had won New Hampshire it would have been over. The Bush guys will say, 'well, we would have won South Carolina,' but I don't know if that's true or not. I sort of doubt it. We didn't, we weren't organized enough to have anything in the can. You know, we should have had stuff in the can and got on the attack. I remember sitting in a room with Rod and I...Rod and I, in '88, spent some time going out, watching Bush give his speeches, and then reporting back what he's saying. And it was clear this whole senator flip flop stuff and all this kind of thing was having an impact. They went on the air instantly. Our guys took the position: one, that you couldn't buy time, well, they did. Two, that we couldn't get anything done, but the other side, they put together ads in a short period of time. And then the third drag in that crucial weekend was that our pollster said, 'we're ahead and gaining.' So why go negative? And the fact is it was wrong, and we flipped and we lost that thing, and then Dole made the famous comment quit line about my record and...he just doubled out of control. If he'd have won New Hampshire, I think he'd have won South Carolina, and he'd have just rolled. We had nothing going on in Florida, for example, and after we won Iowa, we went up in Florida. Just pure bounce. So, you know, that was his year. He was younger. He was

in his absolute prime, and if he'd have won, believe me, he wouldn't have been beat by Bill Clinton four years later, you can go to the bank on that! That wasn't going to happen. So, it's too bad '88 was the year. Not that George Herbert Walker Bush was a bad president. I don't believe that, I think he was fine. But, you know Dole would have been a good president, and that was his year. You know '96 it was he got the nomination and it just, you know, it was hard to beat a sitting president. He could have beat him, but he made what I consider to be at least, errors.

Williams: Let's talk about '96 in a moment. In '88, do you think he could have beat Clinton too?

Lighthizer: Well, he wasn't running against Clinton in '88.

Williams: No, that's right. That's right.

Lighthizer: No, but oh yeah. No, I think he would have won. Yeah, yeah. He would have been elected president. Yeah. I mean, yeah, of course we were going to win that. I mean, that was Ronald Reagan's third term, right?

Williams: Right.

Lighthizer: That was Ronald Reagan's third term. So, there's no question in my mind that we would have. Now you know, you can argue that, but that was Ronald Reagan's third term, George Bush did a nice campaign and won, but Dukakis was a very flawed guy. And he was way

out of the mainstream. And it's a horrible choice by the Democrats and Bob Dole would have won Reagan's third term, and then he'd have been reelected.

Williams: You were the policy development head person on that campaign.

Lighthizer: Yeah, I was. I was technically vice chairman. At least that's what my cards that they gave me said. But I did policy, I did basically the same thing on all of them. More or less. I did policy. Everybody would come to you to do policy because they thought you were Dole, you were close to Dole. That's what they wanted, that's what people interested in, people who are volunteering, they want to volunteer through somebody who's close to the candidate, Otherwise, what's the point of it? Someone who, if you win will remember you were there. And not take credit for it, 'cause I didn't have any reason to take credit for it. So. And I've been around for, you know, God forever. So, I'd help organize the policy people and the lawyers. And I keep coming back to the lawyers because we organized hundreds of lawyers, literally hundreds of them. And they became the kind of volunteers in all of our states. They were the people who were doing the volunteer work. And I had, I mean, I still probably have around here somewhere, maybe I sent them off to Senator Dole, lists of all our, I had all this organized by state, a guy in charge, and books of it, still hear from people who say, 'oh yeah, I was one of your guys.' You know I can't even remember which election.

Williams: Were you close to the management of that campaign in '88, where there was a lot of churn and turnover?

Lighthizer: Oh, there was a lot of problems, no. No, not really. I was never that close to the management of any of them, you know. I did what I what I could do in my area, which was basically policy and organizing people. And a lot of times I would send direct stuff to Dole. I sent a lot, probably (expletive) people off, but I sent a lot of direct stuff to Dole. My thoughts. And, but actually sort of organizing the campaign, was never, you know, I was never that much involved.

Williams: Were you concerned?

Lighthizer: I mean, I remember I was a Brock guy, and Brock was ultimately the guy that came in '88. So, I had a kind of a connection to Brock through that, but. Well, I consider about how it was run. Yeah, I mean, yes. But I think they're all poorly run. All of them. And the only ones you know are poorly run are the ones you're involved with, think they're all poorly run. I think it's all a mess. Were Senator Dole's worse run than others? You know, I don't know enough about everybody's to know, probably, but I wouldn't. If somebody argued, I wouldn't argue with him. I think they were all a mess. Everybody's campaigns are a mess, and they all have been fighting and nothing ever goes smoothly and then somebody wins. And then everybody says, 'God, what a great campaign!' when it really wasn't. That was always my view.

The one thing I do fault him in '88 is I do not think that they planned what they were going to do in New Hampshire and I think that is something for which they ought to be horse whipped. And that's not Dole. And it's not me and it's not Rod. But the rest of them ought to be just horse whipped for that. I can remember sitting around that table. Not really a table, chairs in Dole's suite with Dole and Brock and Rod and me and our numbers guy, and, it was, you know,

we thought we're going to win. And I can remember saying, Rod and I saying, 'they're going out there, he's really attacking on this flip flops.' All he's doing is negative. Total negative. You know, it was out. That's how those guys live. Jim Baker, all those guys, they were all negative. Whole Bush crowds always been, you know, number one negative. And we're telling them that and we're saying, 'can't we get some ads over the weekend?' Because we had Bush, remember he'd flipped on the tax cut, he'd flipped on abortion. He flipped – he had three major flips. Can't we get something done? And they're all saying, 'no, technically, we didn't buy the time, and we can't get it, takes 48 hours.' You know, all this garbage. And if he'd had a real quick ad that went on, he might have been president. But that's just, you know, that's one man's view. Maybe it's wrong. That's what I gig him on, that kind of stuff. The fact that everything was all screwed up in the campaign. And I'm sure it was. My guess is that's how most campaigns are.

Williams: Where did Brock join the campaign?

Lighthizer: He became like the chairman, towards the end. If I had to guess, you know Senator Dole, liked the idea of bringing the big guy in. And that was part of his mentality for whatever reason. Let's bring the big guy in. You know, it was Rumsfeld and the second one. It was always, 'just bring the big guy in.' You know, if we lost it all in say, January, he probably came in in October. He was there. He was there a while, he didn't come until the last minute. I think. That's my recollection; I could be wrong.

Williams: So, he also is somewhat liable for the New Hampshire.

Lighthizer: Oh no question. Absolutely no question about it, no question about it.

Williams: So '96, you say that was sort of--?

Lighthizer: Yeah, I mean we, I think Senator Dole could have won. I think Clinton was vulnerable and he certainly had the whole corruption thing and all that. You'd have the economy doing well, going for him, and I don't think we ran a particularly good campaign. But you can make the case that '96 was already late. You know he was pretty old. You know. So yeah, I think '88 was a better shot for him than '96. But he did get the nomination, and it was it was fun. He certainly worked like a dog. He had, you know, some good ideas. I think he made some crucial mistakes. Well, I mean, I would say first of all, picking Jack Kemp as a vice president was, you know, I mean, Jack Kemp's a good guy, he's a good speaker, but he didn't bring in any help anywhere. I mean, not a single vote in the entire country. So that didn't make the slightest bit of sense.

I think quitting the Senate was a huge mistake. It's huge. I mean, it was a one-day story and he made that decision all by himself somewhere or maybe with Scott Reed, his campaign manager. But I certainly didn't know about it in advance and would've told him I thought it was insane. Know the one-day story didn't help him any. He, Scott Reed did not think was a good camp—He wasn't a bad choice, as campaign man. He just didn't, for whatever reason, couldn't handle the, the infighting or the whatever, but he was not a good campaign manager. That was a mistake. Those are probably the three biggest mistakes I'd say he made. But once again, it's just my point of view.

Williams: And your role there was treasurer, then?

Lighthizer: That I was treasurer of the campaign that didn't really even matter. I, you know, I was treasurer of the campaign. That sounds like a big deal believe me, it's not a big deal. But that was essentially the same role I always had. We had all; we got all the volunteers. Through the lawyers' committee, we organized the policy stuff. Then he had some good guys inside. I sent stuff directly to Dole, went to a lot of meetings. That was basically what I did.

Williams: I read one article which speculated, this was before the election, that you were probably going to be chief of staff.

Lighthizer: There are people who speculated that, yeah. I don't remember.

Williams: Did you, did you share?

Lighthizer: No, I, who knows it was going to be. No, I. There are plenty of people who thought I would be. I was kind of like the oldest, real Dole guy and had broadest experience, but who knows. He didn't, he wasn't into picking and choosing staff before the election. He was.

Williams: And it never came up in discussion with him?

Lighthizer: No, no, no, no. Nobody ever talked about it. The fact of the matter is no one would talk about it. If you thought you were going to win, you wouldn't talk about till after the election.

It just is not something you're talking about. So no, there was speculation, but people didn't believe that. But, who knows?

Williams: Right. I have a few other things here, just sort of jumping around a little bit here. Rod said when we first started it was you, myself, Sheila Burke, Jack Nutter. And I think that was it. And we all occupied one office and we pretty well described that in detail. He also said Dole wasn't the kind of guy you could have a give or take or brainstorming session with, something like that. Is that true?

Lighthizer: Oh, it's quite true, yeah. He was intimidating and I think he went through a development. I think, as I've sort of alluded to this, I think he had staff, first of all as a personality that's difficult in those days. He was edgy and he was trying to do 49 things in the amount of time, you know, that he had to do 10. And you know, there was a kind of a toughness, almost a bitterness, about him. And he did not get a history of not getting along with staff. So it was natural that when we came in, he would fold us into that same kind of thing. He had a history of sort of hiring people and then very soon sort of not talking to them anymore. We never went through that; we were always treated differently, partially because we were smarter, I think, than some of them and also because we had the information, you know. I mean the rest of them were all operating in an area where he knew more than they did. We're operating in an area where we knew more than he did, so we had a different relationship.

But he was clearly not a guy that you'd sit around and brainstorm with. And I think he is, I think he became that kind of guy later on, but he clearly wasn't in those days. We would sit around, we would brainstorm, we would get our best minds together. We would decide what we

think he wanted to do; it was never what we wanted to do. And then we would go to him and say, 'here's what and why.' Usually if I had my way, I'd do it on a piece of paper. And I mean one side of one sheet of paper. So then when he called in to talk about it, we were starting off knowing what we're talking about. But we didn't get in there and you know, and spend fifteen minutes on, 'how's your mom' and you know, 'how the old Jayhawks did.' There was none of that. He came in. He was, you know.

Williams: Would you say he was intimidating?

Lighthizer: You know, I never felt intimidated, I don't think. Partially because I never viewed it as more than a one-year job anyway and you know, and partially because I just, by my own personality, don't intimidate that easily, so I wouldn't really say I was intimidated. I get annoyed. There are a lot of times you walk out of there (expletive) at him. He just didn't think he was fair or treated you right. But I, you know, I didn't have the impression I was, you know, that I was dumb. But he would clearly intimidate people. Yeah, I think that's probably right. I never felt that way.

Williams: And did he (expletive) you off too?

Lighthizer: Well, there were times when you walk out of there annoyed, yeah. I feel like times he—when I walked out there, he was (expletive) too, by the way. I'm sure there were plenty of times, but yeah, there were times he was (expletive). Yeah, he'd be short with you, wouldn't talk to you or wouldn't you know, really engage on something. But, you know, you figure out pretty

quickly that's everybody's got their own way and that's how they are and you learn to deal with it and operate with it and, you know, he was working hard. He was trying to do the right thing for the right reason, and you can't ask too much more than that. He'd have bad days.

Williams: When I interviewed Bill Armstrong, he talked--

Lighthizer: Senator Armstrong, he's great, I told you, he's one of my heroes.

Williams: Right. He said that – he talked quite a bit about 'super egos' in the Senate and how he didn't feel comfortable with that and didn't like it, and that was one of the reasons why he decided to leave the Senate. Would you characterize Dole as one of those super egos?

Lighthizer: I guess I don't really know what he means by that. I mean, I don't know what he, you know, I'd have to talk to him, get some sense of what—what's a super ego?

Williams: Well, sense of privilege, sense of entitlement. Being spoiled by all these people just hanging on their every word and working through the night because the senator's in his office and so forth.

Lighthizer: Oh, I mean it was – I don't know. I, you know I guess I wouldn't necessarily subscribe to that view. I, you know.

Williams: Rod made, has an interesting recollection, he said, 'I remember Bob' and I sort of said to Dole, 'so who are we going to support in '96?' And Dole said, 'well, how about me?'

Lighthizer: Well, that's probably right.

Williams: You and Rod went up to see him when he was in Walter Reed Hospital.

Lighthizer: Yes.

Williams: What was that, what was it like?

Lighthizer: You know. Actually, I've done it a couple of times over the years. You know, one of the things you have to admire about the guy, and by the way, I worked for him forever before I even knew any of the details of any of this stuff, you know you sort of knew it, but he literally never talked about this stuff. You know, I don't know what do you say... You felt a kind of an intimacy with him that you hadn't felt before being in that environment with him, you know? You know, sympathy, obviously for – because of his physical situation, he was sick then. And, but I suppose you probably felt closer to him than you had before. You know, that would be kind of the reaction you'd have. I mean, you know, I say all this about him being difficult, we really did like him. I mean, we really had a lot of affection for Dole and do now. I mean all the way through we were very, really felt a lot of affection for him. So that was probably – it was probably a moving time for us.

Williams: How do you think he'll be remembered, long term?

Lighthizer: The fact that he will be remembered is enough, probably, right? Because most of us aren't going to be. You know, I think he'll be remembered as a, you know, as a really, really good legislator. He's, you know, he's a person who's trying to solve problems. You know, do the right thing for the right reason. But if you said, 'what's the one thing?' He was a genius legislator. If you said, 'as a legislator, name the top ten in the Senate history,' you'd have to have Dole on the list. I've talked to smart people about that, Al Hunt and others. They all have him in the top five. I mean, he was just a great legislator.

Williams: How do you think he came by that?

Lighthizer: I think it's like great negotiators, like ninety percent of it's just instinct, just pure instinct, just born with it. One of the things he taught me, and I still tell my kids this, is he didn't tell me this, but I learned it from being with him, is: you don't make decisions until you have to make them. And I try to tell my kids that, just never make decisions. Your instinct is to make decisions. He would, just didn't. Decisions that didn't have to be made, he didn't make. And ones that did, he did. And that was a horrible thing, by the way, in like scheduling him, right? Because he realized we didn't have to make that decision, but in legislation, so many problems go away. So many things change. You can make a better decision if you wait.

He was just a genius legislator. He had a sense about talking to people, getting them to go along with what he'd want, getting them to think they were going to get something out of it, giving them as much as they actually needed, and getting the damn thing done. Not always the right answer, you know, we made mistakes, but basically getting the bill done, getting done as

fast as you can and getting 51 people, and then a majority of conf—and getting the president to sign, again, he was just a genius at it. And these weren't like Appropriation bills where you kind of have to sign them every year, these were bills you had to kind of, you had to get the country behind you, you had to get the senators behind you, you had to get the House to do it, you had to get the White House behind it. And he did it year after year. Just, and then did it on four or five different things at the same time. Just walk in there and click, he would just, you know, even stuff he didn't quite understand. He knew enough about how to talk about it, that he could get the next guy to move on. You know, he was really a genius at it. And to me, that's what he'll be remembered as, if people are fair. That he really was one of the great, regardless of party, one of the great men at legislating.

Williams: Were there any others in the Senate during his time that have that level of skill?

Lighthizer: Well, I mean, yeah. I mean, if you say, 'who's on my top ten?' Well, you'd have to put, during his time is a long period. First of all, I got Russell Long on my list, right. You've already figured that out. You'd have to put Richard Russell on the list. You'd probably have to put Lyndon Johnson on the list. And then you'd want to go back, because you're so, that's what, those are the guys of that period. Yeah, there are a lot of other people you can come up with, but to me, those are the people who are great legislators, you know. Mansfield probably, but I don't, I know he was there a long time and leader for whatever, fifteen years, but I don't know, you know, that much about his history. I know a lot more about Johnson's. But that's, you know, that's pretty good company. There are a lot of guys who passed through there, and a lot of guys in the House, you know, obviously. Rayburn would be one, Wilbur Mills would be one. I mean, these are guys

that just knew how to just get an idea and get it signed. So that's pretty good company and that's, that's why, I mean I think that's his legacy and you know if the Dole Institute teaches people anything, that's what they ought to teach them. You know, try to – A, try to solve problems. Yeah, because that's what he was just, you know, he was just obsessed with that. And even, we would have bills on the floor. And it was very different then than it is now. We'd be on the floor for weeks, literally for weeks until way late at night. Week after week after week. You'd be sitting with them on the floor trying to get your stuff worked on and come out of the floor, and there would be like forty-seven amendments. He'd say, 'we got to work through some of these amendments,' and I used to say, 'Senator, you can't work through them because there'd be 47 more. It's unlimited. We're working against the clock. We're not working against anybody,' but he could never understand. 'Work through these amendments, get these amendments worked through,' you know, if I'm out there talking to people, trying to work our way through it.

It was just his mentality. He just wanted to just solve problems. You know, just incredible, you know. Interesting and had a basic conservative philosophy but was not overburdened with – I was far more philosophical, I think, than Senator Dole was about these things. I don't think he...he was a solid basic Senator, but he just wanted to get things done. Move it forward. Let's do the best we can to solve that problem and then find the next one. Yeah, he read the newspaper with that in mind. Just, I don't know what it was and what you know, I don't know enough about the psychology of how he was raised or how his family was or anything, but that's really how he was. Just a hard working guy and basic conservative, but just wanted to solve problems. And he was a great, great legislator and never should have quit the Senate.

Williams: Should we quit there? Or is that--

Lighthizer: Pardon me?

Williams: Should we quit?

Lighthizer: That's good, that's as good a place as any.

Williams: We said all that needs to be said?

Lighthizer: Oh, all that needs to be said.

Williams: OK. Thanks.

Lighthizer: Probably said it twice.