

## THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

### Interview #1

Thursday, April 17, 2003

**RITCHIE:** I'd like to start at the beginning. The most unusual item I noticed in your bio was that you were born in Venezuela, and I wanted to ask, how did that happen?

**RYNEARSON:** Well, my dad worked for Carrier Air Conditioning Company in their international division. When he was in his twenties, my dad was offered an engineering job in Colombia assisting the man who served as Carrier's liaison to the local Colombian distributor of Carrier air conditioning. He worked in Colombia during World War II and then returned to the States after five years and married my mom, and then they were reassigned to Caracas, Venezuela. I was born a couple years after they were there. Unfortunately for me, I left after a couple of years. In fact, I initially left after eight days because I needed to see a doctor in the States. At that time, I believe I was the youngest person to have ever flown on Pan American Airlines. This was in April of 1949. But I returned to Venezuela after a few months and then returned, finally, to the States after a couple years. I have no memory of my time in Venezuela.

It did play a major role in my life, though, because some of my earliest memories are of my parents telling me about South America, showing me slides, showing me maps. I think it really played a role in getting me interested in international affairs. Also my dad had so many business friends and associates from all around the world that when they would come to New York City on business, he would have them up to our house in Crestwood in Yonkers, New York. I would get to meet very interesting people from all over the world, but particularly from Latin America. Dad also worked for a short time in Brazil and Peru. He had friends in Argentina. The whole South American continent was well represented by his friends. It was a great learning experience for me.

**RITCHIE:** Were your parents both from New York before they went to South America, or did they just move there when they came back from South America?

**RYNEARSON:** They just moved there after they came back. My dad is a country boy, who grew up in Flemington, New Jersey, which at that time was quite small and largely agricultural oriented. My mom is a city gal. She grew up in the heart of Philadelphia. I

don't believe she had ever been out of the country until she met my dad. I got quite a range of experiences from the two of them.

**RITCHIE:** Did you ever live abroad? You said your father had business in other South American countries. When you were growing up after you came back from Venezuela, were there other opportunities for living abroad?

**RYNEARSON:** After Venezuela I never lived abroad except for one summer when I was in law school, I had an opportunity to participate in a study program in Guadalajara, Mexico. I lived with a Mexican family during that summer. That was my only other time as a resident overseas. My mom and dad took me overseas on short little vacations from time to time, so I did have those experiences.

**RITCHIE:** Did they speak Spanish?

**RYNEARSON:** Yes. My dad speaks quite well. When he went to Colombia, it was 1940, and he was assigned to a little historic town on the west coast of Colombia, Popayan. Dad had studied French in high school and knew no Spanish when he arrived in Popayan, but in Popayan, there were virtually no English language speakers. He had to learn Spanish as a necessity in short order. He learned quite well. My mom never equaled his proficiency in Spanish, but she had to learn enough Spanish to get around in Caracas to do grocery shopping and looking after basic needs. At one time, her Spanish was very good, but then she lost it.

**RITCHIE:** Did you pick any up when you were a kid?

**RYNEARSON:** My dad tried to teach me a few words. I remember at an early age, I could count to 100 in Spanish. I learned a few other words. I ended up having to study Spanish beginning in ninth grade. I had an unfair advantage over the other kids in the class in that I had had some introduction to Spanish. I should say that I loved Spanish and I still love Spanish. It was my best subject in public school. I took some in college as well and did pretty well with grades in it. I love the sound of the language and I've often wondered whether, as a baby, just having some people speaking Spanish in my environment, if that had anything to do with my proficiency, or whether it was simply the enthusiasm of my parents that got transmitted to me.

I loved Spanish and considered majoring in it in college, but unfortunately my college had a poor program in Spanish. Being a small college, there were only two professors, at the time, in the entire Spanish department. They were transient professors, at that time, and not entrenched in the college. I thought to major elsewhere.

**RITCHIE:** I'd like to know about your education. You mentioned you went to public schools in Yonkers?

**RYNEARSON:** That's right. I did all of my education through high school in public schools. I went to an elementary school called P.S. 15, which was located only about a long city block from my house. Then I went to Walt Whitman Junior High School, which was four or five blocks away. Finally, I went to Theodore Roosevelt High School on Central Avenue in Yonkers. That was an older school dating from the 1920s. I had to take a school bus to get there. That was about a mile from where we were living.

After that, I went to Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, of which I am extremely fond. After graduation at Hamilton, I worked for a couple years in Washington and then did my law degree at the Cornell Law School in Ithaca, New York.

**RITCHIE:** Could we back up a little bit? I'd like to know how you decided to go to Hamilton College.

**RYNEARSON:** Sure. Well, my mother took the lead in getting me interested in college. I had a little bit of feeling I wasn't sure I wanted to go to college. I had not really known anyone who had a college degree. Neither of my parents graduated from a college. I was unsure whether I was going to like going to a college. My mother, on the other hand, thought that I should look at small colleges. I had had excellent grades all through public school and was really a prime candidate to go to college, but I just didn't have much initiative, as a late teen, to do the spade work necessary to investigate the schools. So my mother took the lead in that and she came up with a bunch of small colleges for me to look into. My dad also thought that I ought to look into Syracuse University since his company, Carrier, was headquartered in Syracuse.

We took a summer trip. I guess this was the summer after my junior year in high

school, although it might have been the previous summer. I can't remember at this point. We drove to upstate New York, which was a distance of two hundred, two hundred and fifty miles from where we were living. I visited Syracuse University and I visited Colgate. After visiting Colgate, my mom observed that we were just twenty miles away from a small college that a neighbor boy was attending. That college was Hamilton. She thought that since we were in the neighborhood we ought to take a look. We dropped by on this beautiful summer day and the campus was just gorgeous. We ran across a student who was quite helpful to us and gave us an improvised tour of the campus. Then, later on, a student proceeded to correspond with me knowing that I was interested in applying. I was very impressed with the personal attention that the college gave to my interest in Hamilton.

I also applied to five other colleges, all small colleges with one exception and that was the State University of New York in Binghamton. I was lucky enough to be accepted at all six colleges, but I felt that Hamilton was the best of the six. I never seriously regretted my decision to go there.

**ITCHIE:** On one hand, Hamilton helped you make a decision because it didn't have a Spanish department to speak of. Were there professors and courses that began to interest you when you were there?

**RYNEARSON:** Well, I wasn't sure exactly what I wanted to do, but I had a strong feeling that whatever I wanted to do would have an international bent to it. I wasn't sure whether I wanted to be in the Foreign Service or do some other government work. I also had some fleeting ideas of doing some archeology work. I've always been interested in pre-Columbian cultures in the Americas. I knew that whatever I took in college, I wanted to explore subjects that I had not been exposed to in high school. Hamilton had a very strong history department and a not as strong government department. But I felt that there were enough international-related courses between the various departments that I could be quite happy studying there. I really didn't know what the quality of the Spanish department was until after I had arrived, so I still held out hopes of possibly majoring in Spanish when I applied.

As it turned out, Hamilton did not have any international relations major per se, being quite a small college with a limited faculty. But I effectively devised an international relations major by taking courses among the different departments. It was never recognized

as such. I was taking Latin American anthropology, diplomatic history of the United States, Asian history, introduction to international relations in government and political modernization in the developing world. So after it was all done, I had had quite a smattering of courses in international relations.

**RITCHIE:** I noticed you also had some association with the Root-Jessup Council.

**RYNEARSON:** That's right. There was only one organization at that time that was really a public affairs organization on campus, and that was the Root-Jessup Public Affairs Council. [Elihu] Root, a secretary of state and a United States senator and also, I believe, secretary of war, was a graduate of Hamilton. We like to think of him as our foremost graduate. The Root family sent several generations to Hamilton. In fact, I knew a Root student contemporaneous with my studying at Hamilton. [Phillip] Jessup was also a graduate and quite famous as a law professor at Columbia University in international law. I believe he was on the World Court as a judge. He has written some of the major treatises in international law.

I got involved in the Council early on. For a long time, I was involved in running a film series that we would show at no charge to students, more or less travel logs of interesting countries. Then in my senior year, I served as president of the Council and brought some major speakers to the campus. We had the Georgia State Representative Julian Bond speak. We had the controversial attorney for the Chicago Seven defendants, William Kunstler, speak. We had the communications director of the Nixon White House, Herb Klein, speak. And we had Ralph Nader speak. I have great memories of interacting with those individuals. I have the unusual distinction of having driven Ralph Nader fifty miles from Hamilton to the Syracuse airport one morning so he could catch a return flight. I spoke to Herb Klein briefly about the Vietnam War, which was ongoing, about which I had some views I wanted to get off my chest.

Unfortunately, Hamilton had to pay speakers quite an enormous sum of money to appear and speak. One of my responsibilities was to generate enough interest on the campus that we could cover the cost of the speakers by charging the students. I believe we had to charge the students about six dollars to hear each speaker, which was regrettable. We never came up with enough to cover the costs, but the trustees made up our deficit. But since we had a very small student body, to cover the cost of a speaker, we would have to have an

attendance of several hundred to make it financially viable. That was my main responsibility as president of the Council, but we also had other public affairs activities that we ran. I was pleased to be involved in it.

In the spring of my senior year, I had the honor to introduce Judge Jessup when he returned to the campus. I'll never forget the opportunity to have done that. My government professor and my mentor, Professor Richardson, advised me to make my introduction short. I didn't quite manage that. It was my first real public speaking opportunity. I'm afraid I took the opportunity to write a little speech, which was quite eloquent, but largely unnecessary. I hope I've learned my lesson. It was a great honor to introduce him.

**RITCHIE:** The time period we're talking about here is 1967 to 1971, and the Vietnam War was going on. There were a lot of international events that must have shaped your earlier thinking. What was the mood on the campus at Hamilton in that late Vietnam period?

**RYNEARSON:** Hamilton is situated in a quite remote country setting. I believe that had something to do with a general apathy that existed on the campus. That tended to get my dander up. I've never believed that people should be apathetic about current events. On the other hand, I was hardly a radical for my time. I never participated in any of the anti-war demonstrations, partly because I was offended by displays of the North Vietnamese flag and the Vietcong flag. I didn't want to be, what I felt I would be, tarnished by association with people whose views I didn't fully share.

I was opposed to the war. This was a sentiment that came to me over time. I had been reading about the war beginning in fifth or sixth grade in elementary school when we received newspapers on current events. The newspapers were tailored for children. They were not adult newspapers. I read about our advisors that were in Vietnam under Eisenhower and then later Kennedy. I was not a novice to the Vietnam issue when I arrived in college. It was while I was a sophomore in high school that the war escalated dramatically when President Johnson sent in regular ground combat units of the U.S. armed forces. I was initially supportive of our efforts in Vietnam but, by the fall of '65, I was beginning to have serious doubts about it. I did a lot of reading and certainly by the time I was in college, I felt that the war was a mistake and we were going about it incorrectly and I just couldn't see how we were going to get ourselves out of it. I always retained a little bit of an ambivalence on

it. I had no love of communism. If we could have achieved a military victory that would have enabled South Vietnam to retain its independence as a non-communist state, I would have been all for that. Even in college, I remember staying up late at night listening to radio reports about our military activities in Laos and Cambodia, hoping that we would actually bring a closure to the war successfully. But my predominant view was skepticism that we could win militarily.

What I felt was most important was that at Hamilton we not ignore the war and that we have debates on it. I was briefly a member of a debating club at Hamilton. I remember getting up to make some debating points about the war and how it was being opposed now by Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement. This would have been about 1968. I did believe we ought to have a full discussion of the war on campus and I believe later on while I was at Hamilton there were some demonstrations at the student union. Perhaps what hit home to me the greatest at Hamilton was in my junior year when I roomed with three other men, one of whom was a senior, and I learned of his anxiety about possibly going to fight upon graduation. I remember particularly hearing the conversation between him and another senior about their feelings on the war and I remember it because I had been looking at the war from a fairly academic point. I remember being struck by how immediate it was to them.

Then, also as a junior, the lottery system for choosing draftees was instituted and I received a fairly low lottery number. In fact, it was number ninety. The numbers corresponded to the number of days in the year. I had to go to a draft board and take a written exam and take a physical to see whether I would be drafted. This was in the spring of my senior year at Hamilton. The war did achieve an immediacy to me then. The first few years my views on the war were completely academic because I never envisioned that the war would go on so long that it would have an immediate effect on me. I personally did not feel a lot of anxiety about possibly fighting in war until quite late in my college experience.

**RITCHIE:** You mentioned that when Herb Klein came to the campus, you had a few words with him about Vietnam. Do you remember what that was about?

**RYNEARSON:** Well, the setting of that conversation was that the president of the college had invited me and some other students who were largely responsible for Mr. Klein's

appearance to the president's house for dinner and a chance to meet him before his speech. I remember while we were standing around during a cocktail hour—I was a teetotaler, I was going through the motions of being sociable at the cocktail hour. I remember speaking to him in a polite way, but I remember it was an abrupt change in the conversation. The gist of my remarks, I believe, were to impress upon him that most of the students at Hamilton were opposed to the war, that feelings were strongly against the war. When I look back at this, I'm sure that this was nothing that he had not heard previously, and it was probably quite tame to some things he had heard since passions were quite high in the country at the time. For me, it was a big deal because I was always taught to be polite and non-confrontational, but I felt an obligation to speak up since I had such a high ranking member of the administration within earshot. That was my little contribution at that time to the anti-war movement.

**RITCHIE:** It's interesting because Klein had a reputation of being one of the more moderate people in the Nixon administration, especially in terms of media relations. Reporters thought he was more approachable than most of the hardcore Nixon team. But even he got his defense mechanism up at the hint of opposition.

**RYNEARSON:** One of the students in my class had interned in his office during our Washington semester program of which I was a participant. Probably the fact that my friend, Bill Monopoli, had interned with him kept me from being even more blunt with him. It was still a big deal to me to speak up in that way. This was prior to my law school training, so I do remember the moment quite vividly.

**RITCHIE:** You said you came to Washington on the Washington Semester Program? When was that?

**RYNEARSON:** My college started a semester program in Washington in my junior year. I was on the first program of the college. Previous to that, the college had sent one student each year to participate in a program run by Colgate University in Washington. My year was the charter program for Hamilton College. There were about fourteen, fifteen students participating and one of my government professors, Eugene Lewis, was the professor who was assigned to accompany us to Washington and teach us while we were interning. It was an absolutely great experience for me and very significant in my life. I had an excellent internship on Capitol Hill in the House of Representatives for two months with



a congressman from Illinois, Paul Findley, who represented, I believe, the 20<sup>th</sup> district of Illinois, including Springfield and Quincy, Illinois, a district which, to this day, I have still not had the opportunity to visit, but about which I know a bit. It was a great internship. His staff were very personable. They tried to get me doing things that were educational for me. The congressman was a former newspaper editor and was an excellent writer. I appreciated having the opportunity to do some writing for him and to have him edit my work.

Subsequent to that internship, I interned at the Agency for International Development which, at that time, was physically located within the State Department building. That was also an educational experience, but not as impressive to me as my congressional internship. The fact that I had had such a better internship in the House and not quite as useful internship in the State Department did affect my views. I also felt that when I was in the House, I was doing more matters of responsibility than while I was an intern at AID. Rightly or wrongly, I concluded from that that an individual could easily get swallowed up in the bureaucracy of the executive branch. That did influence my views subsequently.

**RITCHIE:** This was 1970 when you were in Washington?

**RYNEARSON:** No, it was actually the fall of 1969. A lot was going on in Washington at that time. President Nixon had not been in office for very long. He was inaugurated in January of that year and was instituting his Vietnamization program in the war. We had just landed on the moon with Apollo 11 on July 20 of that year. The Apollo 11 astronauts were in quarantine until about the time of my arrival in Washington in September of that year. I had the opportunity to see President Nixon officially greet them on the South Lawn of the White House that fall. He gave them the equivalent of a head-of-state reception on the South Lawn. As a young man of twenty years of age, that was quite impressive. It still is impressive to me.

Senator [Everett] Dirksen, unfortunately, passed away the first week of my internship in the House of Representatives. Since my member, Congressman Findley, was also from Illinois, he had the opportunity to attend the official ceremonies for Senator Dirksen in the Rotunda of the Capitol. He permitted me to accompany him. I'll never forget his asking one of the Capitol policeman if I could stand in the doorway and observe the ceremonies. I did witness those ceremonies and witnessed the president of the United States coming to the Rotunda to pay his respects to Senator Dirksen lying in state.

I had some unusual events that were never duplicated at any time in my Senate career. Sometimes I've felt that interns get to see more than the regular staff members of the Senate and the House. At least it's a theory I have.

**RITCHIE:** Were you there during the moratorium, the big protests?

**RYNEARSON:** I was there during, I think, two of the big demonstrations. I remember one occurred in October of '69. I believe the crowd size was in the two to three hundred thousand range. It occurred on a Saturday, as I remember. I was still interning on Capitol Hill for Congressman Findley. As a conscientious intern, I felt that I needed to work that day in the Library of Congress on a research paper relating to the war powers of the president. It was my major research project for the congressman. The dilemma I faced that day was how to get from Foggy Bottom, where I was in a rental apartment, up to Capitol Hill, without getting tangled up in the demonstration on the Mall. I remember taking a taxicab ride that went circuitously through Washington to avoid the demonstration and get me up to the Library of Congress.

I also felt strongly that I should not be at the demonstration lest I embarrass the congressman in any way. The congressman's views, as best I can describe them, were mildly opposed to the war. He had skepticism about the war effort and how we had gotten involved in the war through the Gulf of Tonkin incident. I don't know to this day to what extent he would have been embarrassed had my photo appeared in the demonstration. But I wasn't about to take any chances so early in my congressional career.

Instead, I contented myself with working on this research paper, which was methodically dealing with the interaction between the executive and Congress on war powers issues through history. I felt that that itself was a contribution to the anti-war effort, in that I believe that Congress had not fully asserted its powers in the war area to regulate presidential conduct. Of course, the president did have the Gulf of Tonkin joint resolution as a basis for authorizing his war effort, but it was largely perceived in the anti-war movement, at the time, that Congress had not done enough, that Congress had abdicated its responsibilities. What I was doing in the research paper, which was requested by the congressman and was not something foisted by me on him, was to detail the history of the interaction between the two branches. I tried to do that in a way that kept my personal views out of the paper.

**RITCHIE:** Do you remember his reaction to your paper when you finished it?

**RYNEARSON:** Well, it took most of my internship to complete the paper, and then I was later told by his administrative assistant that he had been able to use some of the material in testimony before hearings that were held. I don't know to this day whether the paper had much of an impact on him or his views. This was, however, before the enactment of the War Powers Resolution. The congressman did introduce his own legislation dealing, I believe, with presidential obligations to report to Congress on his introduction of forces overseas. But whether my paper had any real influence on the eventual writing of the War Powers Resolution is highly doubtful since the congressman was a minority member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House. However, the War Powers Resolution does contain a reporting requirement that is drawn at least partially from the House legislation that was in conference. To what extent the congressman influenced that piece of legislation, I just don't know.

**RITCHIE:** Was this your first visit to Washington, when you came as an intern?

**RYNEARSON:** No, I had come with my parents at least once before. I believe it would have been about 1960 that I had come on a sightseeing tour of Washington. I was eleven years old at the time. I remember going to the Smithsonian and seeing the Wright brothers' plane. I remember taking some photographs on the Mall. I remember seeing the Capitol at various times from the outside. I don't recall whether I was in the Capitol Building, although I imagine that I was. It was during the summer, and I just remember that it was a pleasant sightseeing tour. It was not the only stop on our vacation. I believe we were also at Williamsburg on the same trip and that made quite an impression on me. I always loved history and I knew a lot of American history. I suppose that Williamsburg made more of an impression on me than Washington did.

Also, I should say, that before I began my internship, I did a little bit of a scouting trip in Washington to line up a rental apartment. I had a very good friend at Hamilton, Kim Williams. His full name is Glenn Kimball Williams. He attended high school in Annandale and lived on the same floor of my dorm in my junior and senior years at Hamilton. His parents very graciously put me up in the summer before my internship so that I could go into town and interview in different members' offices and line up my rental apartment for the fall.

Before I arrived in September of '69, I had some familiarity with the city. I also remember buying a book, *Washington, D.C. on Five Dollars a Day*. It contained a lot of useful tips on Washington, some of which I still use, although the price is certainly not applicable. I learned how to find my way around. I have a distinct memory of drawing the major streets in Washington in the sand while at the beach in New Jersey the summer before my internship in order that I would have the city clearly laid out in my mind so that I could get around. Even though I had lived just ten miles outside of New York City, growing up, I was always somewhat intimidated by cities. I had a certain anxiety level, a mild anxiety level about being thrust into the city and having to get around on my own. I did a lot of preparation before I arrived.

Once I was in Washington, I found that I just loved the city and had no fear of it and thought that Washington compared in many ways favorably over my knowledge of New York and Philadelphia. It seemed to be a more manageable city and quite a bit more beautiful. I really fell in love with Washington right from the very beginning. It didn't hurt one bit that, in the fall of 1969, Washington enjoyed an unusually protracted Indian summer with a great deal of nice, warm weather, which conveniently coincided with weekends. I have a memory of floating down the Potomac River on the Gray Line cruise to Mount Vernon in November 1969, sitting out on the deck of the boat and getting a mild sunburn. Of course, Hamilton, at the time, was having snowfall. I felt I was in paradise. I felt that this was it, really a great place. If I had anything to say about it, I was going to find a way to return to Washington after my college years or higher education, however that would turn out. I wanted to return to Washington.

**RITCHIE:** When you graduated from Hamilton, you spent a brief period as a newspaper reporter in Syracuse. How did that come about?

**RYNEARSON:** Well, in the summer of my junior year in college I was looking for a job. I should say, as background, my parents had moved from my childhood home in Yonkers, New York, from the community that we called Crestwood. They had moved to a suburb of Syracuse called DeWitt in October of my freshman year at Hamilton. In other words, I had applied to Hamilton and been accepted in the spring, thinking I was going 200, 250 miles away from home only to find one month into my college career that I was at a college thirty-five miles from home. I was not entirely pleased with that. Being an only child, I was a little bit relishing the idea of getting away from home. As it turned out, it

didn't make much of a difference except to make things more convenient for me when I did return home during breaks.

Although my dad's company was headquartered in Syracuse, he worked for the international division that was headquartered in New York City. The reason for the move was that the new president of the company decided in 1967 that he wanted to bring the international division up to Syracuse and basically gave the employees in New York the choice of having their careers wither on the vine during a transition period while he phased out the New York office or joining the company in Syracuse. Of course, my dad opted for the latter.

It turned out that when I went home in the summers, I was going home to Syracuse, an area with which I had no familiarity. My dad tried to help me out. He knew someone at Carrier who had a friendship with an individual down at the newspaper in Syracuse, the *Syracuse Herald Journal*. I applied for a job there and sat for an interview. I believe I mentioned my dad's Carrier friend's name. The result was that I was offered a very low-paying temporary job at the newspaper in the summer of my junior year.

I performed two jobs that summer. The one job was to help the entertainment editor of the newspaper, Joan Vadeboncoeur, who did all the movie reviews for the paper, to help her with her filing. Joan was a marvelous film reviewer and entertainment reporter, but she had a filing cabinet that had way too many glossy pictures of stars for the capacity of the cabinet. Nevertheless, my job was to somehow or other squeeze these glossy photos into the cabinet, and I would come home with my fingernails all bloodied from working with the photos. The other job that I performed was in the newspaper morgue where I assisted a nice elderly lady who had been crippled from a horseback riding accident, to help her with filing in the newspaper morgue. Later, when it appeared that I was a conscientious worker, I was given the job of preparing copy, in some way that I cannot clearly remember, but it was a ministerial function. I had to do some stamping or preparation of newspaper copy and I did that on the night shift of the paper. That was my experience at the paper in the summer of my junior year at Hamilton.

After that, the newspaper offered me a job as a starting reporter upon my graduation from Hamilton. I started out, I believe, at the salary of ninety dollars a week. I was to work on the night shift of the newspaper, where I would be doing stories that related to the

outlying areas to Syracuse, some of the country areas. This was because of my having gone to Hamilton and having some familiarity with those areas.

I was offered the job largely because I had struck up a very nice relationship with the night editor of the newspaper, Mario Rossi. Mr. Rossi was a major figure in the newspaper and also in Syracuse, generally. He had run for mayor of the city unsuccessfully. I believe he was defeated in a primary. But he knew the city like the back of his hand. He wrote a column for the newspaper, which was widely read. He was a beautiful writer. Studying his columns, I learned some writing tips. He promoted my career within the newspaper. He invited me to his apartment in downtown Syracuse, where he was a great fan of Italian art and opera. He made quite an impression on me as being a real Renaissance person. He is more responsible than anyone else for my getting the starting job as a reporter. However, my job was on his shift of the paper. He was the night editor, and I would go into the paper at about 4:30 in the afternoon and work until midnight or later. Of course, I was not real thrilled with those hours, but as a young man, I was a lot more tolerant of them than I would have been later on.

I enjoyed my job, but I worked there for just a short time, six to eight weeks max, because I did receive a job offer at the Library of Congress while I was working as a reporter. The job offer was not entirely unexpected. I had interviewed at the Library of Congress in the preceding January, the January of my senior year at Hamilton. The Library staff led me to believe that they did want to hire me. They did not have a current vacancy, but would keep me in mind.

The Library job was much more of what I had in mind for myself than the newspaper job. But I never regretted working for the paper. I did learn some things during my short stint on the paper. I feel very fortunate that I had so many great experiences preparatory for what I would later do in the Senate. I feel as if many individuals are not able to fully tap their earlier experiences for the benefit for their later careers. I pretty much milked my early experiences for all they were worth and got a great deal out of them to assist with what I would later do.

**RITCHIE:** I was very interested to see that you came to the Library of Congress or the Congressional Research Service right out of college, other than the few months you were with the newspaper. That was a plumb job to get at that time.

**RYNEARSON:** It was. I had a little bit of help. When I was applying for a job in Washington in my senior year at Hamilton, my dad suggested that I look up the daughter of a longtime friend of his from Flemington, New Jersey. This daughter was working at the Congressional Research Service. She was in the Education and Public Welfare Division of the Library, which I had no interest in since I had no real background in that area. But I made contact with her, and she knew the assistant chief of division of the then-Foreign Affairs Division of the Congressional Research Service. In fact, the two divisions shared the same floor in the old building of the Library of Congress, which we referred to as Deck A because it used to be a floor reserved solely for housing books. She took me over to meet the assistant chief of the division, Warren Johnston. Mr. Johnston and I got along well and he took an interest in having me join that division. I remember that he took me around to meet some of the longtime analysts in the division when I was not even yet hired.

What Warren said to me was that they did not have any current vacancies, but they expected that they would and that they were going to seriously keep me in mind for a vacancy. I don't really feel that he was doing this out of friendship to my dad's friend. I think there must have been something in my resume that caught his eye, either the fact that I had been an intern in the House or that I had done a fair amount of writing, and my international background made me a good candidate. In any event, I feel that I was a good candidate on my own merits.

That July, I received a call in our home in DeWitt, New York, in which Mr. Johnston announced that, on account of the division having to do a major research project on the so-called Pentagon Papers, the division was in need of additional help and that he could offer me a job, which initially would be, I think, what they called "temporary conditional" and then it would be regularized to a full job. I wasn't sure about the distinctions. In retrospect, the distinction was that I was not paying into the Civil Service Retirement System in the job as it was initially offered to me, but I later had the opportunity to pay in and get credit for it. In any event, it was a full-time job in terms of what was expected of me. I had regular hours and performed, more or less, the same duties as other people in the division. Then the status was changed so that I would actually be paying into the Civil Service Retirement System.

I was a little disappointed initially, however, to find that, having been lured to Washington with the mention of the Pentagon Papers, my duties did not involve the Pentagon Papers in any way, shape, or form. I was merely freeing up other people to devote

more time to that work. The division was involved in some sort of compilation and excerpting of the Papers to produce as a congressional document. It did become a public document.

I started working and doing reference work, which meant usually that a congressional office would call in and want background information on a subject. I would go about xeroxing the appropriate articles, whether they were in periodicals or in books, to provide them with the background information they needed. However, as a result of the Congressional Reorganization Act of 1970, my responsibilities got to be a little more sophisticated than that. The 1970 act charged the CRS with devoting more of its resources to assisting the congressional committees. So we had a greater amount of committee work than we had had previously. We also were doing more original research.

The Congressional Reorganization Act of 1970 changed the name from the Legislative Reference Service to the Congressional Research Service, and that change in wording was quite deliberate and was intended to have functional consequences. The Legislative Reference Service had been doing some research previously, but the 1970 act was designed to institutionalize that. The short answer is that the Foreign Affairs Division began to get more and more committee research work, and as I proved my mettle in the division, I was given more pure research assignments.

I also had the assignment from time to time to write canned speeches for Members of Congress, where you would write a speech, for example, in favor of foreign aid or against foreign aid for a Member of Congress that the member could either give verbatim or try to work with. I always enjoyed doing creative writing, so I enjoyed doing those speeches, although I certainly don't know to what extent they were ever used verbatim.

I was doing quite a bit of work, initially, on State Department-related issues. At that time, one of the big issues in the State Department was the lack of an appeals procedure within the Foreign Service to take care of grievances. I remember working on that issue particularly and attending a hearing in the House chaired by Wayne Hayes of the House Government Operations Committee, as I believe it was called at the time. He was considering legislation to require a grievance procedure within the State Department.

The widow of a Foreign Service Officer, Mrs. Thomas, attended that hearing. I've



forgotten whether she testified or not. She was lobbying in favor of the procedures because her husband had been tragically separated from the Foreign Service through a bureaucratic mistake. As a very well educated man, he had difficulty finding work once he left the Foreign Service and eventually committed suicide, I think, believing that the insurance policy would kick in for the benefit of his wife. In any event, I remember her lobbying Congressman Hayes, who did not appear that sympathetic to the problem. I also remember Congressman Lee Hamilton giving testimony, I believe, in favor of having a grievance appeals procedure. I believe he had legislation on the subject.

Later on, the Foreign Affairs Division realized that my greatest interest in international affairs was in Latin American affairs. They permitted me to assist the chief Latin American affairs analyst, Barry Sklar, who later would become an employee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I assisted him along with another lady in the division, Virginia Hagen. Barry and Ginny Hagen were very nice persons with whom to work. We worked on any Latin American issue, reference or research, that came up. I did that for more than a year. One of the things that I did was to prepare a chronology of events on the Allende government in Chile, which was later printed as a House document. People told me for more than two decades afterwards that that chronology was something that the division was able to circulate to offices in Congress and use quite a bit.

I also got to know a little bit the chief Latin Americanist in the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. At that time, in the case of the House, it was a very nice man called Mike Findley. In the case of the Senate, it was a very nice man by the name of Bob Dockery. I also assisted another great staffer on the Foreign Relations Committee, Bill Richardson. Bill, of course, would go on to greater things as cabinet secretary and ambassador to the U.N. and as governor of New Mexico. I was always pleased that I had gotten to assist him and I later assisted him from my position in the Legislative Counsel's Office for a brief period of time before he departed the Foreign Relations Committee.

**RITCHIE:** Could you describe what the Congressional Research Service was like in those days? Was it a large or small operation? What were the working conditions at CRS?

**RYNEARSON:** CRS was a medium-size organization that was expanding as a result of the new responsibilities given to it under the Congressional Reorganization Act of 1970. It was divided functionally by subject matter, so you did have an Economics Division, an Education and Public Welfare Division, a Foreign Affairs Division, a General Government Division, and there were some others. Each division had perhaps thirty or more employees. Eventually, it got up to, I think, more like sixty employees. During my time there, it was somewhere in the thirty to forty range. The division had people who were quite talented and were very good at getting information so quickly. It was amazing they could get congressional staffs information quickly. If called upon to do research, however, they could be involved in very long, drawn out projects, some of which, I'm sure, the congressional staffs felt were not timely when they were received but it was difficult to do that with original research.

The Foreign Affairs Division seemed to have a split personality. It seemed to have some individuals who were librarians by training or by temperament. They just wanted to bury their heads in books. Sometimes they were not terribly social people. They lived for books. Of course, part of me has that temperament, and I can certainly understand it. The other half of the division were people who were more interested in the political side of things, in the current events, who might be using their job as an initial job to go on to something else. They were very easy to socialize with but, perhaps, did not stay at the division for as long a period of time. As it turned out, a number of my friends at the Foreign Affairs Division made lifelong careers of their jobs. I remember more than twenty years later, in fact, close to thirty years later, there being several individuals whom I initially got to know who were just retiring from their jobs at the Foreign Affairs Division.

The Foreign Affairs Division performed an essential role and was very helpful, and is very helpful, to both houses of Congress. I was pleased to work there and occasionally I think about what it would have been like to have made my entire career there. It would have been a very good career, I feel, if I had stayed there. But I don't regret going on and doing what I did. The Foreign Affairs Division was great training for what I would later do because the division was under the charge of being professional and non-partisan. By and large, the division did do that. I do remember that there were some individuals in the division who put up presidential campaign bumper stickers on their cubicles in those days, something that I would never have dreamed of doing and did not do then or later. There were individuals with very strong views on current events, who were chomping at the bit to

express them. But I think, overall, that they contained themselves and constrained themselves and behaved professionally in terms of their work product.

**RITCHIE:** Did you ever find it frustrating to not take a side on an issue that you had some feelings about?

**RYNEARSON:** No. I had strong feelings on current events, and I still do, but I always felt that we were serving an important role in the process by providing information and data and letting other people decide what conclusions to draw from that data. I felt comfortable in that role.

I never believed that what I was doing there or in the Senate promoted any great moral travesty. In other words, I never felt that I was a party to something that was totally beyond the pale morally. I felt that reasonable people could differ on what they did with the information we provided. I felt comfortable in that role.

**RITCHIE:** I think it's always been a problem for some of the people in the CRS, who chafe at the notion that they have to present the other point of view, as well as the side that they agree with.

**RYNEARSON:** I found it more to be an intellectually challenging thing, particularly when you're writing speeches, to be able to write a speech on both sides of the proposition. I tried to make whatever I wrote very heavily laden with facts so that it had very little of me, if anything, in the speech. In fact, ideally, I would be trying to have none of me in the speech and all of the congressman, but sometimes it was hard to know exactly what the congressman's point of view was.

I shouldn't overemphasize the speeches. I only did a handful of those. What I did, mainly, was the reference work and also some of the original research that I was called upon to do. Typically, in the Foreign Affairs Division, there would be some research paper that would be required, that would be divvied up among the analysts. I would write just a small part of a larger document.

I did have a large research project involving the brain drain of foreign scientists and doctors to the developed world, especially the United States. This was a project of particular

interest to the assistant chief of the division. The division was under a request to prepare a study for Congress on the subject, and I was given the task to do the initial research on it and write it. I wrote what was for me then quite a long document, of fifty pages or longer, on the subject. I got quite interested in it, particularly the immigration aspect of it. In the course of researching it, I came across the name of a Senate staffer who was involved in immigration matters, who I later got to meet and became very good friends with.

That's a little bit of a digression. The gist of what I wanted to say is that the study I did in its initial draft was sent to a senior analyst in the Science Policy Division to review. He did not care for the way I had written this study. In fact, he took a lot of pot shots at my writing, which really hurt my ego. In retrospect, it's hard to know whether he was coming down hard on me because of that or because he felt he should have been involved more. I don't know what the politics of it was.

The upshot was that the assistant division chief tried to introduce me to some additional writing guidance. There was a man who had written extensively on how you improve your writing by being aware of the fog index. His tips for writing, which I found useful, boiled down to this: In the English language many of our words are, of course, Latin in origin, coming to us from the Normans. Those words were to be avoided at all costs because they tended to be a little more pretentious, multi-syllabic and just harder on the English ear. Instead of using the word, "canine," you would use the word, "dog." You would go with the Anglo-Saxon equivalent. I found that theory to be amusing and useful. I tried to follow that in my writing thereafter.

In terms of the person I met doing my research, it was an aide to Senator [Jacob] Javits, Mary McFerran, who was a caseworker, specializing in private immigration cases. She had been involved in some reform of the immigration laws dealing with exchange visitors to the United States, the so-called "J" visa visitors. I called her up having seen her name in the *Congressional Record*. I wanted to interview her for my research project. We met for lunch over at the Supreme Court cafeteria, a place I had never been. We struck up a lifelong friendship, which ended about three years ago when she passed away at about age 81. She proceeded to get me more interested in immigration matters. That was an interest that continued to grow with me throughout my career, but it really had its origins in that research project that I did for the Foreign Affairs Division.

**RITCHIE:** Would the division work more with the House or with the Senate, or was it split fairly evenly? What were your experiences?

**RYNEARSON:** I believe that it worked a little bit more with the House than the Senate. Its responsibilities were equal, but it appeared that we received more requests from the House, perhaps that was because of the smaller size of congressional representative staffs needing assistance. That was my recollection. We did more requests that were derived from House members and from House committees than from senators and Senate committees.

**RITCHIE:** Well, the Library of Congress is also a wonderful place to be able to do research. I assume that in those days you had access to the stacks?

**RYNEARSON:** We had total access to the stacks. I really enjoyed going into the stacks to find books for research. It seemed as if every time you looked for one book, you would find so many more that were interesting. Also, as I recall, the stacks had marble floors, and in the summer, the Washington summers, they were delightfully cool. Our division was not much on appearances. It had a linoleum floor, which really was best suited for employees wearing roller skates because it was a fairly large expanse of area, but I don't recall anyone having done that. I do remember some people wearing sneakers, although I never did. I was always dressed with a tie on and came to work in a sports jacket or a suit.

There was an old elevator that ran up to Deck A, which was the top deck in the building. There was an elevator operator. The elevator was quite small and slow, and there was no way to actually walk up to the deck. It was probably a fire hazard. I do recall that the Library of Congress had quite a few fire engines come to it during the time that I was there but, fortunately, nothing that occurred in our area. It was also somewhat dusty and probably a bad place for me to work in terms of my allergies. I have quite significant allergies.

The people in my old office were very friendly, very helpful to me. It was a great experience in terms of how to behave professionally vis-a-vis the congressional staff and also it gave me a great, basic introduction to the resource materials in the international area to the extent that college did not introduce me to all of the appropriate materials. I really got a great introduction at the Library of Congress. I worked there for two full years. Afterwards, I went away to law school.

In the summer of my first year of law school, I came back and worked on a contract basis, doing a project for the Library of Congress. That project was even more helpful to me in my later career than what I had done while an actual employee of the division.

**RITCHIE:** What was that project?

**RYNEARSON:** That project involved reading 1700 pages of the major foreign relations laws of the United States that were bound in a GPO printed document called the *Foreign Relations Laws of the United States*, and preparing an index, the very first index ever done for that annual compilation. As a result of that, I became familiar with laws that I would later be called upon to revise by drafting amendments. It was absolutely an invaluable experience for what I would later do, although the indexing itself was somewhat of a tedious ministerial job. I did do some research on how to do an index. I did that index and I worked with the Library of Congress staff on how this index would be printed.

I had some of my contract work inside the Library building, but most of the work I performed in an apartment that I rented on Capitol Hill where I worked all day long reading these laws and preparing index cards to be used. It was the summer of 1974, and the hearings were being held in the House on the impeachment of President Nixon. I remember listening to the radio while I was doing this index to keep abreast of the charges of impeachment that were being leveled at the president. The House Judiciary Committee, I believe, held the executive meetings on the impeachment—executive may be the wrong word, they were probably open to the public. In fact, I thought about going over there to see it, but I was dissuaded. I felt I would never get in because of the sheer number of people who wanted to witness it. I remember hearing the impeachment votes on the separate charges on the radio, while also trying to get my index project done. I also remember eating a lot of ham and cheese sandwiches the last two or three weeks I was in Washington because I had fallen behind on my progress in doing the index and I was really trying to crash at that point. I also remember not being able to look at a ham and cheese sandwich for months and months afterwards. [laughs]

That project served me so very well later on. In drafting legislation, I needed to draw upon my knowledge of the foreign relations laws on a daily basis and I kept the *Foreign Relations Laws of the United States* at my desk as my Bible. Those 1700 pages of *Foreign Relations Laws of the United States* have now expanded to become a five volume set of laws,

which must number in the thousands of pages. For the project I did, there was only a single volume involved, but it was about the maximum number of pages that GPO could bind.

**End of the First Interview**