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Secretary of the Senate, 1981-1985

Secretary to the Minority, 1974-1981

Administrative Assistant to Senator Hugh Scott, 1969-1974

Assistant to Senator J. Caleb Boggs, 1961-1969

Interview #2: With Caleb Boggs

(Thursday, March 28, 1985)

Interviewed by Donald A. Ritchie

Ritchie: I wanted to go back and talk about the Clean Air Act, which you mentioned before. That was the first big piece of legislation that you worked on, or at least [Boggs](#) was associated with it. I wondered if you could tell me about the type of work you did on that legislation, how you got started in the whole process.

Hildenbrand: Well, since he was ranking on the committee, and in those days, in the early '60s -- what was it? '63 maybe? I guess it was -- we did not have the legislative assistant support that members have now, where they have a legislative assistant separate for each committee on which they serve, plus a legislative shop that does all their other legislation. In those days, in small states like Delaware, we had a legislative assistant period. We were on three committees: Agriculture, Environment and Public Works, and Post Office and Civil Service. I did all three of those committees. Agriculture I didn't know anything about at all, and the other two I learned. When he became ranking on that subcommittee, I took on the full responsibility of doing whatever had to be done in terms of the legislation.

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I did all of the Clean Air Act legislation along with the Democrats, in formulating it, in getting his positions, whatever they were, pretty well known within the committee. He and [Muskie](#) had been former governors at the same time, came from primarily the same size states, small states. While the air in Maine might have been a little better than it was in Delaware, we had portions of Delaware which also had pretty good air. So they thought pretty much alike in terms of what it was they wanted to do in terms of Clean Air legislation.

Ritchie: That was a pretty uncharted course. There really wasn't very much in the way of legislation before that. What did you do?

Hildenbrand: They had a lot of hearings, and brought in all of the groups that wanted to testify, and brought in all of the industries that would be affected, and tried to get some sort of a determination as to what impact it would have, and how would it affect them. How do we proceed? What do we cover? Do we do it at the smokestack? We talked about ambient air quality standards and air quality standards. Because we were not sophisticated at that time and because it was a

new field, we went to sort of single air quality standards that were easily definable. We did not worry too much about the so-called ambient air, as to what total affect it would have in the atmosphere, because we really didn't know. We knew that

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certain pollutants in parts per million would be dangerous either to somebody's health, or would soil clothes and do stuff like that.

We looked at it more in the situation of doing air quality standards rather than trying to do ambient air quality standards, because the air throughout the United States was different. What you might need as a standard in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, for example, which is heavy with oil refineries, in order to clean that up, you would need a totally different standard than you'd need in Vail, Colorado, for example, or even Denver. So to affix a national standard would have been totally unfair to the people in Maine, and Minnesota, and places like that that do not have the concentration of industry that a Marcus Hook had. We had to look at it in terms of devising standards that could be applied all over the country without causing problems. So we stayed away pretty much from a national standard for pollutants, because it just didn't make any sense.

Then, in addition to that, we began to fool around in the automobile exhaust areas, with carbon monoxide and those hydrocarbons, and here again we ran into the same kind of a situation, because in Los Angeles, because it's inverted, because it sits in a valley heavy with automobile pollution, whereas some other places that had good circulation of air would not be faced with the same kind of problems, or did not have the amount of traffic. That was another problem that we had to look at in terms of establishing standards that would not

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again be unrealistic in some areas, and would cost an awful lot of money to solve a problem that wasn't a problem. We made trips into Detroit and went through the plants to see the kind of things that they were working on to hold down pollution from their exhausts, and things like that.

Ritchie: Did you find it an educational experience?

Hildenbrand: In terms of environment I learned an awful lot about air and water pollution that I certainly didn't know before. I can't say that it stood me in good stead since that time, but it's a knowledge that I now have, even if I never use it.

Ritchie: Well, did you find that your views changed as you studied the issue?

Hildenbrand: No, not really. Basically my views were conservative in terms of applying government controls. I guess my political philosophy was based on Eisenhower's idea that government should only do for people what they cannot do for themselves. That's the way we sort of looked at this pollution thing: that we ought to involve ourselves in it, but at the same time we should not just try to take it over. Because we also realized that we could conceivably shut down plants, which would have cost countless jobs in given territories. In those days, a device which was called an electrostatic precipitator, which you put on the top of a smokestack in order to

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control the pollutants coming out of a smokestack, cost a million dollars. They were made in Germany. So, if you sit there with a steel industry burning coke or soft coal, and you have eight or ten smokestacks, you've got ten million dollars invested which you can't get back. You're not going to make anything from it. We always tried to look and see whether there wasn't some way of taking the potash, or whatever it was that we were collecting in those electrostatic precipitators and reselling them into something else, but that was hard to do.

Ritchie: There was a lot of industry opposition, and I wondered, with Delaware being a state identified with the chemical industry, if you or Senator Boggs felt pressure from that industry?

Hildenbrand: Well, I think that they -- and maybe I'm treating them unfairly -- but I think that they believed that they could bring pressure to bear on Cale because the DuPont Company was a member of what was then called the Manufacturing Chemists Association. They sent to testify a DuPont employee, William Connors. He was the witness who came in on behalf of the chemical industry to testify. But he was a DuPont employee; he was a solid, rock-ribbed Republican; his wife was big in Republican state circles; he eventually became New Castle county executive. I never thought about it before, but in retrospect, looking back on it, maybe they thought that that was one way, if they brought in somebody from Delaware, to make the

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presentation. But it was a very bad presentation, and as I indicated in a book that the Library of Congress wrote on the Clean Air Act, it was a very bad presentation, and I told the chemical industry in no uncertain terms how bad I thought it was. But, maybe they did; I don't know.

Ritchie: But Boggs wasn't the type of senator to bend to pressure?

Hildenbrand: No. Boggs had been under more pressure than they could conceivably think about bringing. The National Association for the Advancement of White People had its seeds in lower Delaware, and they fought him on the court order for desegregation of the school system. So he was used to pressures. And by that time he'd been governor for eight years and in the House for six. That's fourteen years. He knew all about pressure. It didn't bother him.



Senator Caleb Boggs (R-DE)
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: The interesting thing to me about the Clean Air Act was that in the House there was a lot of debate over it when it got to the floor, and a majority of Republicans in the House voted against it. In the Senate there was practically no debate. When it got to the floor they all stood up and said what a wonderful bill it was, and they adopted it by voice vote. Why was there such a difference?

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Hildenbrand: I think that's a basic difference between the House and the Senate anyway. With a small number of people you have a tendency to trust your committee system, and trust the people that are on the committee. And you take a broader view of an issue. It's not quite as parochial, as it is if you're sitting, for example, as the congressman from Chester, Pennsylvania, and you've got nothing but that Marcus Hook staring you in the face, with all of that pollution -- and there's an awful lot of it in Marcus Hook. It's much harder to get 219 votes than it is 51. I think, if I remember, we went first with that bill. I think we passed it before the House passed it. [Muskie](#) was well respected; Boggs was well respected; the members of the committee were well respected. It was a reasonable approach for the first step in attempting to control air pollution, and I think that's why the Senate just decided it was a good piece of legislation.

Ritchie: I wondered if some of it had to do with Boggs' and [Cooper](#)'s persuasion among Republican members of the Senate, since there was no Republican opposition, while it was strong in the House?

Hildenbrand: That may have been part of it. Both Cooper and Boggs were extremely well respected within party circles. But I just think it was a good piece of legislation. You couldn't find very much fault with it.

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Ritchie: It was fairly impressive for Boggs as a freshman member, who had been in the Senate only two years, to be so involved in passing a major piece of legislation.

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: You mentioned Muskie briefly, as a well-respected man. What was your impression of him, working with him as a staff member?

Hildenbrand: Well, I became fairly close to Senator Muskie in those days. We worked together quite a lot. And still to this day we are good friends. We see each other on the golf course from time to time. He's always been one of my favorite people. I liked his staff, I was close to his staff. [George Mitchell](#), who is now a senator from Maine, was his AA, so I knew George in those days. He was up-front. You knew where you stood with Muskie at all times. There was nothing behind the back, or anything like that. You may not agree sometimes with him, but at least you knew where he was coming from. He'd listen to your side of the argument, and he'd just tell you it was the dumbest thing he ever heard, but at least you knew where he was. I enjoyed our relationship. And as I said, Cale and he had been governors together and they had a lot of respect for each other.

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Ritchie: He also had a reputation for having a monumental temper.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and that grew as he became older. He became more and more frustrated, and was more apt to fly into temper tantrums than he did originally. I've seen him scream and holler, but not any more so than any number of other people. He did have a temper, but it didn't last very long.

Ritchie: All of this was taking place in the context of the [Kennedy](#) administration

Hildenbrand: The closing days of the Kennedy administration, that's right.

Ritchie: Although they didn't have a bill on Clean Air, they had endorsed Clean Air, and were interested in what was going on. But I wondered, from your perspective as a Republican staff member at that time, what you thought about the Kennedy administration's congressional relations?

Hildenbrand: Well, I thought then -- although I must admit, I did not know how to evaluate congressional relations. I had only been with Cale for three years in the Senate, and while I had been a congressional liaison officer, I didn't necessarily know that the way I acted was the way you were supposed to act. And I certainly didn't know about White House liaison. So I'm not sure that at that time I

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thought very much about the administration and its relationships with the Congress. Since I now have twenty-seven years or so to look back on, they probably, along with [Lyndon Johnson](#), had the most expertise in dealing with the Congress. But there is one other factor, I think, that has to be put into that in order that it doesn't sound as if everybody that came after that were dodos, because that's not the case. There was not the animosity and the adversarial atmosphere between the Congress and the White House that exists today, and that began to exist from the days of the Haldemans and the Ehrlichmans of the early [Nixon](#) days. That presented a totally different atmosphere in dealing with Congress.

While in looking back, the Kennedy and Johnson people I thought were outstanding, there were others in later years who were also outstanding in the job, but the atmosphere had changed by that time. Dan Tate from the [Carter](#) administration was one of the better ones. Max Friedersdorf was outstanding. But they were dealing from a different deck than the Bryce Harlows of the [Eisenhower](#) days, Kenny O'Donnell, Mike Manatos in the Johnson days. It was a different atmosphere. Lyndon Johnson would call up [Everett Dirksen](#) and say, "Ev, I'm coming up." And he'd show up in Dirksen's back room and sit down and have a drink, with that big, ugly dog that he had, and the Secret Service people. Well, Nixon never thought of doing anything like that. So the atmosphere changed.

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Ritchie: Both Kennedy and Johnson came out of the Senate

Hildenbrand: So did Nixon.

Ritchie: But Kennedy was so frustrated in his dealings with Congress. He wanted to move, and as you said the Congress was deliberative, slow, took its time. He just couldn't get it to start.

Hildenbrand: A lot of that was youth. With youth there's always an impatience, and I think that this was Jack's. He was young, and he had such great ideas for moving this country, and he just became very impatient. The Old Bulls up here could not see what it was he wanted to do. They weren't used to that kind of pace. They weren't used to having somebody move that fast. He was younger than most of them, and so they just wanted to take their time to make sure that whatever he was doing it was the right thing to do.

Ritchie: Do you think that members of the Senate have difficulty in adjusting to one of their colleagues becoming president? Is it harder for them to accept another senator as president than a general or a governor?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I don't think so. Those who liked him still like him. Those who didn't like him don't like him anymore because he's president than if he was just a senator. I don't think it has any impact one way or the other.

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Ritchie: Things after 1963 changed very quickly. A lot of legislation that had been bottled up for two or three years was passed in a huge rush in '64 and '65.

Hildenbrand: The early days of the Johnson presidency.

Ritchie: Did it seem like an avalanche from your view?

Hildenbrand: No, not really. Of course it began to change with Johnson's going into the presidency, with Barry Goldwater running, and what became a strong conservative-liberal fight. That permeated into the activities on the floor. What really got the legislation moving as fast as it did was the fact that we lost so very many members. If I remember, I'm going to have to look this up, but I think we were down to like 32 senators in '65. You look at 68-32, we couldn't even stop cloture! I mean, if 68 Democrats wanted to stop a filibuster, they could do it. They moved it because they had the votes to move it. There was no way we could stop it. It wasn't until the election of '66 we picked up four or five more seats and got to at least a point where we could wage a filibuster and they couldn't stop it. But in those days, that's what happened more than anything else. Also there was a feeling that this man has taken over in such tragic times, and in such tragic circumstances, we don't really want to add to his burden by not trying to help him with his legislative program.

Ritchie: You mentioned when Johnson would come to Dirksen's office. Did you or Boggs ever get to see or feel the "Johnson treatment?"

Hildenbrand: No. You know, there are all sorts of stories and rumors about Johnson, and about how Johnson treated people when he was majority leader as well as when he was president. But I don't ever remember us being involved in anything. By that time we were small potatoes. They didn't bother with Republicans, and certainly not first-term Republicans.

Ritchie: You mentioned earlier that you were involved in the Civil Rights Act of '64, and Boggs came out in support of it.

Hildenbrand: '65.

Ritchie: Well, the Voting Rights Act was in '65.

Hildenbrand: Or whenever it was. I wasn't involved in the ones in '64 and '65 as much as I was in the one of '70, which was when I was in the leader's office with [Scott](#). He was on Judiciary, and he and [Phil Hart](#) had the counter bill to John Mitchell's bill. I was much more involved in that.

Our involvement -- Cale Boggs' position on civil rights was well known because he was governor, as I said, at the time of the Supreme Court decision in 1954, when they desegregated schools, and he

applied that throughout the state of Delaware. So his views were well known in terms of civil rights, and he did not take a very active part. He just voted whenever the bill came up for passage.

Ritchie: Republican support was really critical for the '64 act. Dirksen swung over behind it, and William McCullough in the House, and [Thomas Kuchel](#) was a major force behind it.

Hildenbrand: Who was the Whip at that time.

Ritchie: Yes. And yet [Goldwater](#) voted against the bill in '64. Since he was going to be the party's presidential candidate, did that undermine the Republicans' identification with the passing of that bill?

Hildenbrand: No, because the ones that we've mentioned, the Kuchels and the Boggs' of the world, and the [Jack Javits](#) and the [Ken Keatings](#), were people that

were going to stand for civil rights. Goldwater was not their leader, and so it didn't make any difference to them what he did, or what his position was. They realized that the conservatives had taken over the party and were trying to establish their own programs, and it certainly wasn't their program. It was a wedge that was driven into the party, in so far as the Senate was concerned that lasted for a long, long time, until the [Louis] [Wyman](#)-[John] [Durkin](#) debates of 1974 before it finally healed. But it was there a long time.

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Ritchie: Why do you think the Wyman-Durkin debate healed it?

Hildenbrand: Mainly because it was so outlandish that they [the Democrats] would not seat this guy, it went on for three months, that the Republicans stood together as a party and as a group of senators in opposition to cloture, so that they [the Democrats] could not get a vote. [Cliff Case](#) and Jack Javits, who had never in their lives voted against cloture, stood there time after time after time and voted against cloture. The Democrats kept going back with cloture because they believed that sooner or later Javits and Case would just decide they could not vote against cloture any longer, but it never happened. I think that when they did that, they stayed together so long and the Democrats could not do anything, that they realized that if they stayed together as a party that they became a very vital force within the Senate.

From that time on, if you look at the effectiveness of the minority, you will find that it was effective. [Howard] [Baker](#) gets a great deal of credit for that, as he should, but also he traded on the seeds that had been generated in '74 when the Republicans suddenly figured out that "Hey, we stay together we can do a lot of things." So they did. But from '64 until that time there were almost two wings of our party every time there was a vote, and the Democrats could always count on that. The Democrats would lose a lot

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of their Southern Democrats, but they could always pick up a block of seven to ten Republicans, always.

Ritchie: Even the Republican leadership was divided, in the sense that Dirksen represented the conservative side and Kuchel represented the liberal wing.

Hildenbrand: Yes, and was defeated by a conservative, as a matter of fact.

Ritchie: Rafferty.

Hildenbrand: Max Rafferty, exactly.

Ritchie: Could you tell me about your observations of Dirksen and Kuchel as leaders?

Hildenbrand: Dirksen was -- I did not know him too well. I knew him the last nine months of his life more than I did in any other time, because by that time we had become Whip. He wasn't very happy that we had become Whip, but he at least recognized who we were. He never knew who we were before, but at least he could say hello to you. He didn't do that too often, but he could if he wanted to. Prior to that time, he was the silver-throated orator of that body and I can remember anytime we knew that Everett Dirksen was going to make a speech, why those couches in the back of the chamber were always filled. In those days they allowed you to sit on the floor,

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so we used to come over and sit on the floor and listen to him. It was a great thing to hear him speak. He was probably the last of the orators that we'll see -- in that chamber, certainly -- with the kind of style that he had. There may be people that are very good at public speaking, but there's never going to be anybody that's going to come close to the theater that Dirksen brought to that chamber whenever he made his speeches.

He was conservative, but at the same time he wanted to do what was right for the country. His Civil Rights vote, I think, proved that. That was not a popular, conservative position that he took. But nevertheless he felt that it was right. If I remember, he said that it was an idea whose time has come. He believed it. Then his son-in-law got elected in 1966. The first crack out of the box, the first thing that came down the track, his son-in-law went against him on "One Man One Vote." You know, Dirksen lived and died against "One Man One Vote," and Howard Baker just came out flat on the opposite side of that issue. But it never bothered Dirksen. He understood those kinds of things.

Kuchel always was in the shadow of Dirksen. Kuchel was a nice guy. Always liked to tell funny stories, and always was telling jokes. He was a little bit like [John Pastore](#) from Rhode Island, in that he always wanted to get the vote over with. He could not put up with all these long-winded speeches. He'd sit there and under his

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breath you could hear him mumble: "Vote! Vote!" It was quite a loss when he was defeated by Rafferty. From the liberal to moderate wing of the party, they lost a good champion.

Ritchie: How would you define the Whip's role, and the way Kuchel and others filled it?

Hildenbrand: The Whip's role is whatever the leader wants it to be. The Republican Conference rules do not spell out any defined role for the Whip, other than to say it's whatever the leader wants it to be. You've had different types of Whips. Dirksen liked the floor, liked to spend time on the floor, but at the same time gave a lot of it over to Kuchel. Scott, when he became leader, didn't really like the floor. He liked legislation and those kinds of things, but he didn't like the nitty-gritty of floor business, so [Bob Griffin](#) spent a lot of time on the floor and did a lot of the floor activities for the leadership: the nitty-gritty things, the consent agreements, open the session and close it, all those kinds of things. Scott didn't like it. He just liked to go down to his office and page through his catalog of Chinese art, jade and stuff like that.



Senators Hugh Scott (R-PA) and Everett Dirksen (R-IL)
Senate Historical Office

When Baker came along, he was somewhat like Dirksen: he liked the floor and he wanted to spend a lot of time there. And he did, so [Ted Stevens](#) was relegated to a role of not having much to do. Then when Baker became majority leader he really spent a lot of time on the floor because while he had learned how to be the minority leader,

now he had to learn all over again how to be majority leader. So there again he took over a great deal of time on the floor, and Stevens again was relegated to being somebody who would close or open, whenever Baker couldn't be here. It won't go down in history: "He was a great Whip." I don't know what a great Whip

is. And the Democrats changed theirs periodically. [Edward] [Kennedy](#) took it away from [Russell] [Long](#), and then two years later [Robert] [Byrd](#) took it away from him. So there was no rhyme or reason for the Whip. Whip was just something that if you had a conservative leader, and if you had enough votes, you got yourself a moderate Whip. It didn't make any difference because he didn't have any impact on the leader anyway.

Ritchie: I wondered how much grumbling there was in the party ranks when someone like Kuchel would fairly consistently take positions that were against the majority of members of his party?

Hildenbrand: Oh, the conservatives would grumble. They thought that you ought to vote the way the leadership wanted you to vote. But they didn't have the votes to do anything about it. They didn't have anybody else. [Roman] [Hruska](#) was Dirksen's hand-picked successor as Whip, but if Kuchel had not lost they would never have tried to challenge Kuchel, because they could not have won. Kuchel was doing a good job. The fact that he voted on positions -- nobody said that you have to take a vow of absolute party loyalty when you

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become Whip. They understood that he represented California and that he couldn't very well vote the same way you voted in Nebraska or in the Dakotas.

Ritchie: Is the position of leader as flexible as the position of Whip? Does the personality make the job, or does the job carry definitions with it?

Hildenbrand: I think the job carries definitions with it. I think that you have a responsibility in the leader's role that you don't have, certainly, in the Whip role. You have first a responsibility to your president, if he happens to be of your same party. That causes some problems from a leadership standpoint, because many times your own personal political philosophies are in contradiction to the policies of the president. But as Dirksen would say, and as Baker after him would say: you go in there understanding that, and you're a good soldier. When you find yourself in a situation where you just cannot be the leader under those circumstances, you do what Baker did in the Panama Canal debate, you just step down and let [Paul Laxalt](#) carry the debate in opposition to the treaties, and work behind the scenes with Bob Byrd to fashion a compromise that could be passed.

Hugh Scott, when he was minority leader, voted against [Clement] Haynsworth, when Haynsworth first came up. He made a commitment to the president that whoever the next one was, he'd vote for him. It

turned out the next one was even worse than Haynsworth. We found out about it, and Don Riegel and Paul McCloskey came over to see me from the House. They said: "You have got to get him to change. We've got to beat this guy. You cannot let Scott out there saying he's in favor of this guy." I told them what Scott told me to tell them, and that was "Look, he made a commitment to the president of the United States, to his face, that he would support the nominee. And he's going to do it. I don't care if he raped his grandmother, he's going to support him." And he did. So there is that kind of thing.

And if you are the majority leader, in Baker's case, you now have even added burdens, because in addition to the White House you've got all of the committee chairmen who are yours and who want their bills scheduled today -- or yesterday, if you could get it done. You don't have much of a life of your own in that leadership role. You have so many people pulling at you to do so many things, and you're responsible to so many people.

Ritchie: How much does the leader actually exert leadership, in the sense of trying to shape the Conference?

Hildenbrand: Well, that depends on who the leader is. Scott, because he came from a wing of the party that was minority, did not have as much of an impact in shaping things as say maybe Dirksen did. It would be unfair to try to class Baker with any of them, because they were never majority leader. So it's unfair -- I don't

know what kind of a majority leader Hugh Scott would have been. My guess is he'd have been pretty much the same kind of a leader as Howard Baker, because for all of his liberal tendencies, he was greatly respected. He was a gentleman to the very end. Everybody respected him, although they may not have liked his views.

He gave [Dick Russell](#) a pair when Russell was sick or something, on a Civil Rights issue. [John Stennis](#), who had been a roommate of his at Virginia Law School, came to him and asked him if he could give Dick Russell a pair, and he did. It was 1960, I guess. Was there a Civil Rights Act in '60? On some issue he gave Dick Russell the pair, and the conservative Southern senators, Democrats, never forgot that Hugh Scott had done that for one of their own -- particularly their guru, as Dick Russell was in those days. They always remembered that, and he got a lot of things down the line, as he became more and more prominent, from the Southern Democrats that he might not have gotten, just from the fact that he had done that for Dick Russell, which they knew was against everything that he stood for, because of his own views. So he might have been a good majority leader, but since

none of them ever served in the majority it's hard to classify them. You have to take Baker out of that mix because he was majority leader.

Ritchie: It sounds like you are saying that the personal qualities outweigh the ideological factors.

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Hildenbrand: Oh yes. I don't think you can be a very strong ideologue and be a good leader. Your own views are going to get all mixed up in all of these things that you have to involve yourself in. That would tear the party apart, and you apart, and everybody else apart. I don't know if there is any way you can do that.

Ritchie: How much more difficult is the party leader's job now when party loyalty doesn't seem to be as strong as it once was?

Hildenbrand: Oh, I think it's much more difficult now than it was in those days. In the first instance, you have individuals now, more than party loyalists. In the days of the late '50s and the '60s it was a party-oriented group of members, except for a couple of members. They had party positions, and they took those party positions. Now, on any given piece of legislation, it fragments itself. One day you may have a guy who's your party loyalists, and the next day he may be totally off the reservation.

Baker, probably more so than anybody -- well, as I say, it's probably unfair to classify the rest of them, because they didn't have the same problem -- but he managed to keep that group together. He did it mainly on trying to get them to do it for the party or for the president. And also he was the kind of a person that they respected and that they would do things like that for. But now it's difficult to be a leader, because you don't have any control. There's nothing you can do to anybody. If they tell you to go to hell, what are you

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going to do to them? Take away their committee assignments? Of course you can't. You have nothing to do to them. Only thing you can do is persuade them that they ought to do what you think is the right thing. That's where Baker was very, very good. His powers of persuasion were absolutely excellent.

Ritchie: We've been talking about the Republican leaders all this time. I wondered if you could give me an evaluation of [Mike Mansfield](#) as the Democratic leader?

Hildenbrand: Mike was so much different than Lyndon Johnson in every respect. He came from a different part of the country. He was mild-mannered.

His background -- he'd been a history professor. He just treated people totally different than Lyndon Johnson did. He was a strong leader. My guess is he was as strong as Lyndon Johnson, but he wasn't as flamboyant as Lyndon Johnson. What he got done, he got done in a different way, but he got it done. I think he was greatly respected on both sides of the aisle. His word was his bond, and he would never go out and try to do something to you for a political gain. He might do something because he believed in it, or because his party wanted him to do it, but you always knew where he was coming from. He had great respect for the institution and for every member of the institution, even though I'm sure there were some he didn't like at all. He said it so many times on the floor, he said:

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3 "I'm just one of a hundred senators, and everybody here has the same rights I have." He used to say that all the time -- he believed it.

Ritchie: You mentioned that he was respected on both sides of the aisle. I gather that he had close friends among Republicans. He and [George Aiken](#) used to be very close. Apparently he was able to persuade a lot of Republicans to vote with him. Do you think by comparison with other Democratic leaders, would you say that he more respect from the Republican side, or was it about the same?

Hildenbrand: Yes, I guess that he would, but then here again you must remember the times were beginning to change in the closing days of Mansfield's tenure. When [Byrd](#) became leader it was a different Senate than when Mansfield left. The membership was different, the leadership was different. Mansfield and Scott got along exceptionally well, as did Mansfield and Dirksen. It was a different atmosphere; Watergate was behind us, and all of that business. But he knew where the votes on our side were. From a philosophical standpoint, he knew exactly where our people were on given issues. He would play upon those.

He was, as you said, a good friend of George Aiken's. They had breakfast in the Senate cafeteria. When I was with Caleb Boggs, they used to sit at the next table. They sat there for years, until it got written up in the papers. It got to the point where lobbyists and people like that would go down there, because they knew the two

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of them would be there, with Lola [Aiken]. So they got smart and started to meet then in the Senators' Dining Room in the Capitol. For the last seven or eight years, I guess, they had breakfast every morning in the Senators' Dining Room, and that stopped the business of people bothering them. But that was worth your weight -- you could have sold that to almost anybody if you were able to sit next to the two and hear what was going on at breakfast. Lobbyists would have been

quite surprised to find out it had not a damn thing to do about legislation most of the time. But he and George were very, very close, as he was with some of the others on our side of the aisle.

Ritchie: That certainly doesn't stand with the stereotypes that many people have of political leaders fighting against each other all of the time.

Hildenbrand: Mansfield was a partisan, but he wasn't reared in politics. It wasn't his life. He didn't live and die in the political arena. He had those basic Democratic tenants, but beyond that why he was just like everybody else. In terms of getting things done, he was an institutional man. And he also had a deep feeling for his country. He was in a safe seat. Nobody was ever going to beat him in Montana, so it didn't make a damn bit of difference what he did.

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Ritchie: From '61 to '64 the Democratic Whip was [Hubert Humphrey](#). He was the Democratic floor leader for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and took the lead in a lot of issues

Hildenbrand: And that was also Mansfield's decision. He stepped aside to let Humphrey do that, because he was not totally comfortable, I think, with leading that kind of a fight. And I think he also recognized that Humphrey, who had lived and died Civil Rights from the time he was mayor, would do a much better job.

Ritchie: What was your evaluation of Humphrey, as a senator and as Whip?

Hildenbrand: Well, he had the flamboyance of an Everett Dirksen. If the two of them had been leader at the same time it would have been something to behold, because he was every bit as vocal and every bit as good on his feet as Everett Dirksen was. Their philosophies were May and December. He was "hale fellow well met." He had an exuberance about him at all times. We went to Russia one time on a trip in '75, I guess, when he had come back to the Senate. About thirteen members went over to meet with the Russians. We went to the Hall of the People, or whatever it was, in Russia where they hold all these things. When we came out from a morning meeting -- we had about two meetings a day, a morning meeting and then we'd break for lunch -- when we came out there were a whole raft of people on the sidewalk across the street from where we came

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out of the Kremlin. Hubert went right across the street and started to shake hands with every one of them as if they were going to vote for him the next time he ran for reelection. He always was campaigning, no matter where he went. He never stopped campaigning.

Ritchie: Does that tend to diminish a senator, in the eyes of his fellow senators, if he seems to be campaigning constantly?

Hildenbrand: He did it in such good grace that nobody ever got mad at him. You know, there were cat calls and jeers from the other members: "There he is out campaigning." "Hubert, they can't vote for you!" Hubert just laughed and they all laughed. They had a good time. It didn't bother anybody. He really was extremely well liked in the Senate, if you get beyond the views which he espoused, which were pretty liberal, certainly for most Republicans.

Ritchie: Humphrey had a much more ideological image than Mansfield did. Did that create more of a barrier between him and the minority?

Hildenbrand: No. Here again, everybody knew where Hubert Humphrey was coming from. He made no bones about where he was. He had a long track record, so everybody knew where Hubert would be on almost every given issue. Again, he was well liked. Where members have a tendency to get in trouble along those lines is that if their personalities are such that they're not well liked by other members,

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then they run into trouble when they begin to espouse views and pass legislation. Members just sort of take them on simply because they don't like them. Whereas, with Hubert Humphrey, everybody liked Hubert Humphrey. If you opposed him, you didn't do it with a great deal of fervor. You just voted no and that was the end of it. You didn't really get up there and try to embarrass him, or anything like that.



U.S. Senate Historical Office
Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) shares a laugh with Kenneth Keating (R-NY)
Senate Historical Office

Ritchie: Can you give me an example of the type of senator who is ideological but unliked?

Hildenbrand: I don't know that I want to. I won't name any names, but there are some senators -- on both sides of the aisle, as a matter of fact -- who will lose votes simply because they offer an amendment. I don't care what the amendment does. When I was on the floor, and was in the leadership, and somebody would come on the floor and ask what was going on, I merely had to say "It's so-and-so's amendment," and some of the members would never ask any more than that. They'd just say no. They didn't have to know anything beyond that. On the Republican side there are people that are in that same kind of a category. Whether it's personality, whether it's because they think they want to be something that they're not, or are only doing this to embarrass somebody, or whatever the reasons, there just are some members that other members will just not support

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anything they introduce. They could put up the Ten Commandments and they'd vote against them if it was somebody's amendment.

Ritchie: But Humphrey's endorsement of a bill wasn't enough to convince somebody to vote against it.

Hildenbrand: No. But Humphrey was so strong from a philosophy standpoint, and everybody knew his philosophy so well, that if you voted against it because it was Hubert Humphrey's, you voted against it not because it was Hubert but because you knew damn well that if Humphrey put it up it was a bad amendment from your philosophical standpoint. As far as Hubert himself, they liked him. It was just his philosophy they didn't like.

Ritchie: I was thinking again of the Civil Rights Act, and the fact that he was able to work so closely with Dirksen on that. He must have learned how to bend at some point, or at least make some people think he was bending.

Hildenbrand: And the same was true of Dirksen. Here again, when Dirksen made the decision, Humphrey was the consummate politician and he knew exactly how to take advantage of Everett's decision to go ahead and support Civil Rights. He also knew that it would be very difficult for some Republicans to now take a different position than their leader had taken. That's the way that worked.

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Ritchie: In a book on the Civil Rights Act I came across a statement that Boggs made that the fact that Dirksen supported the bill made it a lot easier for him and other Republicans to cast their votes for it.

Hildenbrand: Oh, I don't think there's any question about that. In those days, Goldwater had just been defeated

Ritchie: No, the campaign was just getting started.

Hildenbrand: It was just getting started. But Dirksen was the darling of the conservatives within the Senate, so when he took that kind of position it made it extremely hard for the others to take a different position. For somebody like a Boggs, who wanted to be there anyway, it got the conservatives off his back. They couldn't be screaming at him for voting for Civil Rights. He'd say: "Well, Dirksen did it, what do you want to do about that?" And Cale was also looking in two years when he was going to have to run for reelection. He had had opposition in the '56 campaign from the conservative side of his party, when he ran for a second term for governor. I think that in a way he was looking at that possibility and he realized that while he would never have not voted for the Civil Rights bill, he realized that this sure made it a lot easier for him from that standpoint.

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Ritchie: Delaware went big, as everybody else did, for Johnson in '64. Did Boggs begin to worry that that was going to carry over into '66?

Hildenbrand: No, because they went for Kennedy in '60 and he won in '60 when Kennedy carried the state. That was the first time a Democrat had carried it since the turn of the century. He withstood that, so he wasn't concerned. He was running at a time when there was no president to have to worry about. Cale always worried. Cale was a born worrier. His approval rating was 82 percent and he figured he was in trouble. He just ran scared all the time, which is good. That's why he won as big as he won.

Ritchie: Did you work in his '66 campaign?

Hildenbrand: Yes. I spent three months I guess in Delaware during that time. It was a much easier campaign than the '60 campaign. In the '60 campaign we spent \$18,000 to get elected. In the '66 campaign we spent \$30,000 to get reelected. And I paid off every debt the morning after the election. We did not owe a cent the morning after the election. But it only cost us \$30,000. I think in the losing effort that he ran in '72 against [Joe Biden](#), he spent over \$100,000. So the cost of campaigning had gone up that much.

Ritchie: Mostly television costs?

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Hildenbrand: No, because we don't have any television, unless you buy Philadelphia or Salisbury, Maryland. We bought some of that, but not a great deal. The most effective thing that we did in that '66 campaign was the *Life* magazine ad. *Life* magazine, which was very popular in those days, came up with -- somebody in their advertising department figured out a way that they could sell *Life* magazine regionally. What they did then was they sold advertisements that were aimed at just this. I don't remember how we found out about it, but somebody came to us and for \$500 we got a full page in *Life* magazine that looked like a story that they were doing on Caleb Boggs. You had to go way down to the bottom to find: "This is a paid political advertisement." We had more people commenting about this: "Did you see Boggs? He's in *Life* magazine." Well, you know, it was a paid ad. He won by 32,000 votes, something like that. He had no trouble in that '66 campaign at all.

Ritchie: When you came back you were still working for Boggs. Did you expect that you would stay with him in his second term? There was never any question . . .

Hildenbrand: There was never any question that I would not stay with him. I had not begun to look around for possibilities. He had not made a decision about what he was going to do in '72. We had just gotten out of the reelection campaign and were beginning to put things together. He wanted to get on the Appropriations Committee.

He had some things that he now wanted to do. I had no thoughts about leaving him at that particular point. Then he made a decision, maybe in '68 or somewhere in there that he wasn't going to run. He decided he didn't want to run again.

About that same time he became the campaign manager for Hugh Scott to run for Whip. So when Scott got elected, I happened to be in the Dirksen Building in a line waiting to sign the register and go in to a reception for [Mac Mathias](#), who had just been elected in that '68 election from Maryland. Mac and I had been friends since 1954 when he was the district attorney up in Frederick, Maryland, and I was a program director of the radio station up there, so we knew each other from that period of time. I went to the reception, and I was standing behind Gene Cowan, who was Scott's AA. Cowan said: "You know, we're looking for somebody to head up the Whip office." I said: "How about me?" He said: "You're kidding, of course."

I said: "No. I'm thinking of making a change, and I would be interested in doing something like that." He said: "Well, Scott would never go for that. Christ, Boggs was his campaign manager." He said: "If Boggs will call Scott and tell him it's OK, we'd like to talk to you." So I went back and told Cale. Cale said: "Sure." He picked up the phone right away and called Scott and said he had no problems. They interviewed me, and decided they wanted me to come with the Whip. So that's how I got over to the Capitol.

Ritchie: I wondered how you made the change.

Hildenbrand: If I hadn't stood in that line, I don't know what I'd be doing now. I'd probably be unemployed.

Ritchie: It pays to go to receptions.

Hildenbrand: I guess so. But that's how I got there.

Ritchie: Had you worked at all in Scott's campaign?

Hildenbrand: Yes, because Boggs was so involved. Why, then I got involved too.

Ritchie: I was going to ask you how that campaign worked. It's sort of surprising even looking back on it now that Scott won. I would think that the numbers would have favored the conservative candidate.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but here again, as we found in later races, you get into a situation where personalities play a very major part in some of those things. You're never going to be able to make your philosophy the philosophy of the members, or vice versa, and they know that. So whatever you are philosophically, they're not that concerned that you're going to bastardize them, or anything like that. But Dirksen had made such a point of hand-picking Hruska that everybody recognized that he was being picked to be Dirksen's successor. Dirksen was sick and everybody knew that Dirksen was sick.

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We had no idea that he would die in nine months, but we knew that he was not well. He made no bones that he wanted Hruska to be the next minority leader. Some of the members said, you know, he ain't pickin' his successor. We're going to vote whenever that time comes, but he's not going to tell us that we've got to make Hruska Whip so that Hruska automatically becomes leader. So they voted against him. I think Dirksen was more surprised than almost anybody else that it turned out that way. But that basically was the problem. It wasn't a philosophical one so much as it was that the ties were so close that they just wanted some independence. The way to do that was to vote for Scott. They figured what the hell, if we don't like it we can vote him out in two more years, no big deal.

Ritchie: I wondered how much the party image entered into it? The leader was going to be the spokesman on television and things like that.

Hildenbrand: Well, maybe to some degree. But television wasn't even as big in '69 as it is now in terms of image. Image wasn't as great then as it is now. But that might have been some of it. And it might have been some that we needed some balance within the party. Nixon had just been elected. He was not certainly a Goldwater conservative, so members thought that maybe we ought to get some balance. Scott presented that kind of balance.

Ritchie: Did Hruska rub some people wrong as well?

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Hildenbrand: I don't really know that much about his part of it. We were just involved in our own side of it. I could see where Roman might do that, but I don't know that he did.

Ritchie: What does it entail, being a campaign manager or floor manager for a candidate in a party caucus? What types of things would Boggs do to try to promote Scott's candidacy?

Hildenbrand: Talk to members, spend a lot of time talking to members. Of course, we talked to staff and things like that, and he talked to members. He'd talk to a member and the member would say, "Well, you know, I'm thinking about it." Maybe I can do that." Then he'd send Scott to talk to him. Scott always took the position when we ran -- we ran against Baker twice, we ran '69 the first time and beat him and then again in '71 -- both times when we took out our list and started to go down it, unless Scott had talked to that senator and that senator had said "Scott, I'll vote for you," we would not put him down. So we went in to both of those meetings we knew exactly how many votes we had. As it turned out, we had one more in both instances. Somebody lied to somebody, I don't know who it was, but we got one more vote than we'd ever counted for in both cases. But we knew exactly where those votes were. He had all the faith in the world that if a guy looked at him in the face and said "I'm going to vote for you," he had no problems with putting him down on the list. That's pretty much the way he ran his own races, so he knew

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pretty much before they had that vote that he had the votes to beat Hruska. Hruska didn't know it, but he did.

Ritchie: You can't always count on that, though, because Teddy Kennedy walked into the Democratic Conference thinking he had enough votes.

Hildenbrand: Yes, but you don't know how Teddy Kennedy got those votes. Unless you tell me that Teddy Kennedy spoke to every one of those people, then I'll say that something's up. But if Teddy Kennedy just let his staff, or let some friends or something like that say "Oh, I think he's going to be with you," that doesn't do it. Baker thought he had the votes too, but he did exactly the same thing. He had staff running around, and other members running around, and that don't do it. It's easy to lie to a staff person. It's hard to lie to another member.

Ritchie: Is it that it's hard to lie, or that you lose some of your credibility in the institution if you go against your word?

Hildenbrand: Well, in a secret ballot you couldn't ever tell who it was anyway. It wouldn't make that much difference, but I guess if you had a friend who had been a friend all of your life, and you didn't want him to be leader, you're not going to sit there and tell him you're going to vote against him. Most people aren't, I guess. Some people would. You say, "Oh, yeah, you're a good buddy,

and I'd be happy to support you." But in that secret ballot you're never going to know who it was. Griffin always felt that he was lied to, when Baker beat him by one vote, but he'll never prove it.

Ritchie: There's not very much a candidate can offer in return, is there, running for Whip?

Hildenbrand: You can't promise anything, there's nothing. Even in the case of the leader, in our particular case, simply because of the way our rules are written. Except for the select committees and the boards and the commissions, you can't promise them anything. Byrd, in his situation, can say to you: "I'm going to put you on the Finance Committee." And he can do it, because he holds the Steering Committee in the palms of his hands: it's his Steering Committee. Baker can't do that. We've got a Committee on Committees, and we go by seniority, and we can't give you a damn thing.

Ritchie: Is that just a historical development, or does the party very consciously keep power divided?

Hildenbrand: It's been that way as long as I can remember. In looking back through the minutes that I looked through, back when they began to keep minutes, it's always been based on seniority. Until Scott became leader we never had what I called "shared leadership." Dirksen was the leader, and that was it. But when Scott came in, because he was a minority leader, because philosophically his

party was not the same as he was, so he was leading a group of people who did not agree with him philosophically, he went out of his way to share that leadership and to bring people into the councils, to make the decisions so that they became a part of it. He put that kind of leadership group together, and then Baker just continued it. Dirksen made his own decisions, he didn't worry about anybody else. There wasn't any leadership, so far as he was concerned, except him.

Ritchie: You wound up working for a senator from your home state

Hildenbrand: Yes.

Ritchie: Having started out with a Delaware senator, you came back to Pennsylvania. Had you known Scott very well? He was on the Public Works Committee, wasn't he?

Hildenbrand: Yes, back in the early days. I got to know Hugh Scott, and the reasons I think that we became friends -- two reasons: one, he knew I was from Pennsylvania, and he knew Cale Boggs, of course. Many times on the floor, if his LA wasn't around or anything on a given issue, he would talk with me, because I knew enough about Pennsylvania that I knew the impact of whatever it was on Pennsylvania. He always used to call me his unpaid legislative assistant. Then in 1964, before he got ready to run, he was being torn apart by Medicare -- medical care for the aged. It was a big issue.

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He was sympathetic to it, but he didn't particularly like the bills that were coming over from the House, or the proposals of Lyndon Johnson's. I had been at HEW, and I had been involved in [Eisenhower's](#) proposal for medicare for the aged in the late '50s. So I took a part of that, with somebody else's help, and we put together a bill which he introduced and which he used throughout his campaign as his answer to medicare for the aged. So he sent me a set of glasses with a note to thank me for doing that. We knew each other, to that degree.

Ritchie: He was obviously someone that you felt comfortable working for.

Hildenbrand: Oh, yes, because philosophically Boggs may have been a little more conservative than Scott, but that's because Scott came from Philadelphia and Boggs came from Delaware. But their voting records would not be that far apart. Boggs may vote for a few less spending things than Scott, but otherwise they would be pretty much together.

Ritchie: Could you give me a general characterization of Hugh Scott?

Hildenbrand: Affable. Somebody called him urbane. Witty. Tremendous mind. Very, very articulate. Very much a gentleman. Live and died with positions that he had to take; anguished over

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things which had a bearing on the country or on people in the country. Word was his bond; if he made it he stayed with it, and it made no difference what the situation was. It was a fascinating period in my life, working with him. He had such great respect among both Democrats as well as Republicans. He took an awful beating around the head and shoulders over Vietnam, and over the [Nixon](#) Watergate thing. It was a terrible time for him, a terrible part of his life during

that period of time, because his sympathies were maybe other than the positions that he took relative to Vietnam, Cambodia, but he stayed there like a good soldier and fought those fights, and did the same in Watergate till they lied to him. Then it sort of came apart. And he never knew that they lied to him. When they went out that December afternoon and gave him those transcripts, he did not know that there was a piece of that transcript missing. He went on the basis of what they gave him, and he made all of his statements on that basis. It turned out, he was lied to. As Goldwater stood up in the policy luncheon one day and said, "Nixon has lied to me for the last time," just before he went down and told him to get out.

Ritchie: I'd like to spend the next time talking about the Hugh Scott period, but I have one last question, not to forget about Caleb Boggs even after you left his office. How in the world did Caleb Boggs manage to get defeated in 1972?

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Hildenbrand: Cale made a decision not to run. The powers in the state -- the governor and the mayor (who was Hal Haskell, my first boss) -- got together and said: look, we can keep the governorship, you can get reelected, but we have to have you at the top of the ticket. He'd already said he wasn't going to run. He changed his mind and said OK, I'll run. His heart wasn't in it. In July of the election year, he did not have one billboard up in that state. So the Democrats let it be known that Cale Boggs was only running so that he could keep the seat. Then he was going to resign, and the governor was going to appoint Haskell. That's all they needed to hear. That, plus Cale's reluctance to do any campaigning, since his heart wasn't in it. He didn't want to come back down here. Those things, plus [Joe](#), who was young, had a beautiful wife and kids, was articulate, was a fresh face on the horizon. Cale had been before the electorate for what, seven times statewide. He was old hat. All of those factors played into the ultimate defeat of Cale.

And also Nixon never did one thing to help him. There was [Jack Miller](#), [Margaret Chase Smith](#), [Gordon Allott](#), and Caleb Boggs. He was asked repeatedly to go and help them. He would not do it. He flew over Delaware on his way from Rhode Island, where he was helping [Chafee](#), to North Carolina where he was going down to help [Jesse \[Helms\]](#), and wouldn't even sit down for an airport stop for Caleb Boggs. He did the same thing to Jack Miller. He flew from wherever he was out to New Mexico for [Pete Domenici](#) and wouldn't stop for Jack

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in Iowa. And that didn't help, because Cale didn't lose by that many votes -- I don't remember how many it was, but it wasn't that many.

Ritchie: Why such a cavalier attitude toward somebody like Boggs?

Hildenbrand: Nixon? Oh, that was Nixon's style. Nixon didn't believe he needed anybody really but himself. He certainly didn't think he needed anybody in the Congress. That was just their attitude.

Ritchie: Could you repeat that story about [Lee Metcalf](#) calling you aside one day in the Senate chamber, about Boggs?

Hildenbrand: Oh, we were in that little lobby off the floor, and he wanted to know how I thought Boggs was doing -- this was in '66, I guess. He wanted to know who his opponent was and how he was doing. I said, "Oh, I think he's doing fine. The fellow has a name in Delaware that's well known, so he's going to be formidable to that degree, but Cale's going to be all right." Lee said, "I'll tell you, if they were going to vote in the Senate for Cale Boggs, he'd get 99 votes. And if he voted for himself he'd get 100."

[End of Interview #2]