

Steve Silver: Okay, we are here with Mr. Ed Behrens for the Bryce Harlow Oral History Project. Thank you again for talking to us.

Ed Behrens: My pleasure. It's a privilege to be here.

Steve Silver: Let's start by having you tell us a little bit about your background in corporate/government relations, and then we'll get into the stuff with Bryce.

Ed Behrens: Okay. An interesting question, as you and I were just talking about the paper I had done concerning functional changes to corporate Washington office over the past several years.¹ My coming to Washington was perhaps symptomatic of the need for some of those changes. Perhaps somewhat peculiar to more conventional Washington office backgrounds, I do not have a legal, a political science or other similar background. I have a graduate degree in chemical engineering. However, I also have a Master's Degree in business with an emphasis on economics.

Steve Silver: Yeah, I was going to ask you about that.

Ed Behrens: Basically, I had been a process chemical engineer and later a technical brand manager with Procter and Gamble in Cincinnati for the first some 14 years of my career. In 1975, P&G offered me the opportunity to come to Washington to begin to help represent the Company's technical interests at the policy-making levels of the federal government. I began this change in career on a commuting basis, which subsequently resulted in a transfer here in early 1976 to begin to work directly with Bryce Harlow. So my active relationship with Bryce would perhaps go back to early 1975.

Others will have recorded Bryce's history better than I can. He obviously was a well-established, well-recognized individual long before I came on the scene. He had opened the Procter & Gamble Washington office in 1961, after being hired by former P&G President Neil McElroy who served as Secretary of Defense during the last year of the Eisenhower Administration. Bryce served as Counselor to the president in the Eisenhower Administration. When Neil McElroy left as Secretary of Defense, he went back to Procter and Gamble as CEO, and saw advantages for the Company to have a Washington office. He retained Bryce as Director-National Government Relations, a new corporate function.

¹ Behrens, E. L.: THE FIVE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS OF A WASHINGTON OFFICE (AND HOW THEY HAVE CHANGED); *Chemical Trends and Times*; The Journal of the Chemical Specialties Manufacturers Association: April 1, 1999; pp 33-36

So, as we go through some of the functional evolution that is discussed in the paper, it begins already in 1961 with the recognition that a non-defense company had reason to have a presence in Washington.

Bryce had headed the Washington office for almost 15 years before I came. (The office had also been headed for a few years by Mike Manatos, a former Senate staffer and a member of the White House staff under President Johnson.) Bryce had left Procter & Gamble on a leave of absence to join the Nixon Administration for a few years, but was back at Procter & Gamble in '75 and '76 when I began to work with him.

So with that as quick background, I'll just offer a couple of comments about Bryce, because I think they exemplify a significant mark of the man. Bryce had started the P&G Washington office, but he was already a well-established Washington presence with a tremendous reputation from his years in government. He had further enhanced his reputation for leadership as corporate head of P&G's Washington office long before I came on the scene.

I have no reason to believe that he particularly asked for help from corporate at the time. My assignment came about because of new circumstances involving environmental, safety, health and other somewhat technically esoteric issues affecting both corporate America and government. The Company perceived a need to become more directly involved in policy matters related to these new emerging interests.

If you look back to the early 70s, what was changing? Well, the EPA was a brand new agency. OSHA was a brand new agency. The Consumer Product Safety Commission was a brand new agency. FDA had increased authoritative scope and powers. All of these involved new regulatory responsibilities principally dependant upon science and technology.

The Company had years of political, legal, and commercial experience with agencies and departments such as Treasury, the SEC, the FTC and many others. But these new agencies were technically based. P&G perceived the need for a technical presence in Washington to begin to help represent the Company's environmental, health and safety policy interests, as well as to advise the Company concerning emerging issues at the political and policy levels of the federal government that could potentially impact Procter & Gamble.

I was asked if I would like to go to Washington to begin to represent those interests. Well, of course, that meant I would be coming to Washington and working with Bryce Harlow. It was a matter of genuine pride to have been asked to do that. Actually, it was the first time that an individual from corporate had been asked to come to work in such an assignment, regardless of professional background or expertise.

Steve Silver: Political assignment.

Ed Behrens: I knew of Bryce principally by reputation. I had some limited interactions with him on an issue-by-issue basis during the preceding year. However, I did not know him well or him me. I have since looked back at it and asked, "Well, how did it look from Bryce's standpoint?" While it was a matter of pride for me, the fact of the matter is that he probably did not initiate the request for a person from corporate headquarters in Cincinnati to come to Washington, although certainly he would have been involved in discussions related to the desirability and the nature of the assignment. He might have felt that he didn't need such a person. But that was not his reaction.

Steve Silver: Could you talk about his reaction to you?

Ed Behrens: Yes, that's what I'm leading up to here. It was a measure of the man as to how he reacted. He could have looked at it that he didn't need this person and reacted accordingly. The fact of the matter is he welcomed me. We hit it off on a very personal basis right off the bat. In addition, of course, I quickly became familiar with Bryce's many attributes. Everybody knows about his integrity, but he was also a good strategist, communicator and corporate adviser. He was also a man of humor.

I remember an occasion when my wife first came to town to start looking for housing. One of the first things I wanted her to do was to meet Bryce, so we visited the P&G office. It was the first time they had ever met. He said, "So you're gonna move to Washington? Well, that involves a big change – but change is good."

He said, "You're looking for a house, I understand?" She said, "Yes," to which he responded facetiously, "I'll sell you mine, for hundred thousand cash (or whatever the number was)." Wanda quipped, "You mean you wouldn't take a check?" Bryce looked at her for a long moment, and then he got a twinkle in his eye.

Steve Silver: She took it a step further?

Ed Behrens: Yes. He got this twinkle in his eye and with a big smile he said, “Young lady, you and I are going to get along just fine.”

And that was really the nature of the relationship that I had with Bryce. Particularly in the early years, he was a mentor, as well as a friend. It was an educational role, informal or formal, that he always played. I had full and informal access to him any time I had a need.

But more importantly, Bryce’s reputation helped me early in my career here in Washington, recognizing that at the onset I had no status or standing in Washington. For example, I had never met a congressional representative before I came to Washington. Bryce’s and the Company’s reputations in town were tremendously helpful to me in facilitating my entrée to Washington. I don’t remember that I ever asked him to set up a meeting. But if I asked for a meeting with a governmental principal, identified the substance and said “I would like to come in to discuss P&G’s point of view,” I am unaware that I was ever refused a hearing. As I say, I think it was due, in large part, to both Bryce’s reputation and that of the Company. So I benefited personally from both.

Steve Silver: I wanted to ask you, since you knew Bryce’s reputation, obviously before coming to Washington, when you first met him, did the reputation fit the man?

Ed Behrens: Well, it did, but I have to express a bit of my personal reaction to Bryce’s reputation. I saw the book on your desk, Mr. Integrity. I have to admit that coming from a farm background in northern Wisconsin and from Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati, integrity was presumed. It was part of the woodwork. It was the way Procter & Gamble did business. And so this emphasis here in Washington on an individual being “Mr. Integrity,” I don’t think I fully grasped or appreciated why any special significance should be attached to the attribute.

It’s not that I saw corruption after I arrived. That’s not what I’m suggesting.

But I was not struck as much by a man’s being singled out for his integrity, because I would just presume – I was raised to think that a person’s word was his or her bond. When I came to town I quickly recognized that that was the nature of the reputation that Bryce had with everyone around town. I never saw anything in the

period of time that I was with Bryce to have changed that characterization or perception. So I came to realize that, while integrity may not be an unusual attribute, what was unusual is that so many in Washington viewed it to be so.

Steve Silver: Of Bryce Harlow?

Ed Behrens: Of Bryce Harlow.

I mean he clearly was a man of integrity. What I realized when I got here is that the community's expectations concerning integrity were maybe different from at least mid-west corporate or rural America.

Steve Silver: And did you see evidence to justify that while you were here?

Ed Behrens: Maybe the best way to characterize that are a couple anecdotal stories.

Steve Silver: Sure.

Ed Behrens: Shortly after I came here – and again this will reflect the mentoring and the humor of Bryce in handling a situation – whenever there was an opportunity he'd try to make a point, an educational point. I don't remember the circumstances at the time, but he told me once, "And now that you have come into town, by the nature of Procter & Gamble, you're going to be a leader in the issues in which you are involved. That would just be an expectation. Now you need to understand that in Washington, it doesn't make any difference what the issue is. It doesn't make any difference if it's a defense issue, if it's environmental issues or a tax issue. There are probably only about 35 people in the leadership cadre of that issue representing all sides. There are going to be a few from the environmental community, for example, a few from the corporate side, a few on the political side, etc., etc."

"So," he said, "regardless of the issue, probably only about 35 people will be involved in the top leadership roles. It's a very small community. And they're also here for long periods of time pursuing their interests. So if you ever screw up, if you ever ever mislead, you'll only do that once. The community will remember it, and you will never have the trust of that community the rest of your career in Washington, D.C."

And so that was stressed as a matter of that's part of doing business, partly because that's the way I (Bryce Harlow) do it;

partly because that's the way Procter & Gamble does it, but from a pragmatic basis that's the attribute you need to recognize or you will fail.

Steve Silver: So he was stressing about how long a memory people have?

Ed Behrens: Yes, and the need for honesty and integrity up front. If you ever violate that, you've damaged yourself and you'll never have effectiveness in the city again.

Bryce was then able to underscore the point with a bit of humor. He said, "So for God's sake, Ed, if you're ever going to have an affair, have it in Baltimore!"

(Laughter)

Steve Silver: But it makes a substantive point.

Ed Behrens: And of course that was the time of Wilber Mills and Fannie Fox, and a lot of the other stuff that was going on around town. But I mention it because it was typical of Bryce.

Now a couple of other things that I will say about Bryce in the area of integrity. Yes, Bryce was a man of integrity, known for integrity. But what I knew of Bryce, he had three equally important values that guided him: 1) integrity, 2) honesty, which is somewhat different, and 3) loyalty; three fundamental values. Now the interesting thing is you generally think of them as harmonious, but they're not. They can be in conflict. And going back to Bryce having come out of the Nixon administration, I saw two conflicts that he was attempting to reconcile within himself: 1) honesty vs. loyalty and 2) loyalty vs. integrity.

Over the period of time that I knew Bryce, even after he retired, I don't think he ever quite reconciled them; that is, conflicts in his own personal value structure. The first one, the question of loyalty vs. honesty; he had great admiration for President Nixon as an intellectual leader, as a political leader and as president. But Bryce was not blind. He could see flaws in the man; he could see flaws in what that Administration was doing. Again, using humor, he expressed to me one time that, "After I left the White House, they couldn't even do wrong right." So he saw that.

It was always very, very difficult for Bryce, though, to reconcile his personal views of Nixon the man in contrast to his view of Nixon as President. Bryce's view, if I can attempt to express, was

that the Office of the President is so important institutionally that it commands and requires loyalty. And yet, Nixon the man wasn't honest. That posed a conflict within Bryce.

Steve Silver: And he saw that?

Ed Behrens: He saw that, and he struggled with that. How did he actually view Nixon as president? On the one hand, as a man with some fundamental flaws serving in the Office of the President, which he believed had to be accorded an aura of supremacy or perhaps virtual infallibility as fundamental to the stability of the country and the government and everything. I'm sure he's written and spoken of that himself.

The other one was the conflict between loyalty and integrity. I can offer a specific case in point. Some readers may not be familiar with an event known as the infamous Saturday Night Massacre. That night, October 20, 1973, President Nixon fired Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox. At a certain point in the Watergate investigations, Nixon directed Attorney General Elliot Richardson to fire Archibald Cox as special investigator. Richardson refused the directive and resigned. The president then asked Deputy Attorney General William French Smith to dismiss Mr. Cox. He also refused -- and then either resigned or was fired.

Bryce struggled with that. He knew the flaws of the man, but the actions of the two men posed a conflict between their personal integrity and their loyalty to the president. A struggle between the integrity of the two men faced with a directive from their president that in principle they could not support. They chose to act based on their personal integrity, rather than to submit to the demands of loyalty. Bryce never could reconcile his feelings towards the two individuals. He respected them as individuals, but disdained and could not condone their choice. He felt that ultimately what they did was wrong, because what they did in his view was damaging to the Presidency.

Steve Silver: So did he feel the loyalty trumped integrity?

Ed Behrens: Good word, because my own words at the time we discussed this were something along these lines. I think in a situation like that, personal integrity has to trump loyalty. You have to be honest to yourself, rather than loyal to somebody else, especially if there are questions involving fundamental principles and moral, even historical (if not legal) consequences involved. Bryce never disagreed with me. He just never quite got there himself. It was a

serious, serious struggle, but in no way reflected on any lack of integrity on his part. That's not what I'm suggesting.

Steve Silver: Sure.

Ed Behrens: He was such a principled man, that when his fundamental principles were in conflict, and his sense of history concerning the presidency was so strong, it was very difficult for him to reconcile them.

Steve Silver: Was he worried, being in the Nixon White House, how history would judge him?

Ed Behrens: No, no, I don't think so. I think that the one thing that I always sensed with Bryce, he had a tremendous sense and confidence in his own presence, probably because he was guided by such absolute standards of integrity, loyalty, and honesty. I never had a question about that.

Interesting in light of recent events involving the disclosure of "Deep Throat" from the Watergate years, there were rumors at the time that Bryce was Deep Throat. He would never admit to it, nor would he deny it, nor would he even suggest that he knew who Deep Throat was or wasn't, as the case may have been. It was just a topic that he wouldn't really address, at least never with me.

And I just presume based on things I have read in the papers the last few days, he probably didn't know.

But no, in response to your question, I don't think he had any question of how history would view of his role. If you read the contemporary biographies, written by Kissinger and others who knew him at the time, Bryce is always treated with respect. I don't think there was ever a question or blemish, any suggestion of his reputation or involvement. So, long answer to a short question.

Steve Silver: But it's an important answer. Did Bryce recognize – I guess you addressed a little bit with the idea that men can be inherently flawed in the Office of the Presidency, probably shouldn't be, and he held that up to such high regard. Did he ever talk about the fact that – I guess what I'm asking is what do you think bothered him the most about that whole chapter?

Ed Behrens: Oh, I think the record of history is that it was flawed, that the Administration was deeply flawed. I think he saw that. But I think he still struggled to rationalize the source of the flaw. (Sometime

later the Washington Star published a letter from Bryce suggesting that the institutional role of the presidency should be re-examined – that it had been becoming increasingly imperialistic since earlier in the century.²)

The interesting side, again anecdotal, but I'm saying he had feelings for the person, the man, great esteem for Nixon as a person in many respects. And I think when I last knew Bryce in any ongoing basis, I think that he still had respect, if not affection, for the man. And the reason I bring this up is one time I walked into Bryce's office on some matter, and he was sitting there pondering something. He had just gotten off the telephone with former President Nixon at the time, and he said, "You know the man is still really struggling. He's really down, struggling." (*These are not intended as direct quotes, but they reflect the essence of his comments.*)

I have always enjoyed history. That was one of the things that I found attractive coming to Washington. I always enjoyed history, had a sense of perspective about history. I said to Bryce, "Well you know the one thing that strikes me is that he's a president who survived his war. Presidents who survive wars don't do well, because during the period of the war antagonisms build up. By the nature of war, the public's reaction to a president is somewhat muted and they may feel their ability to respond politically is stifled. But once the war is over a lot of this pent-up negative feeling can come out and be expressed – and has come out." I said, "Look at Winston Churchill. He was the greatest figure of

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The so-called Watergate episode essentially reaffirmed an old truth - that eternal vigilance remains the price of liberty in this country. The presidential bloat which started in New Deal days and swelled until the early 1970s came to threaten the constitutional checks and balance system. "Now we know once again, from the Watergate years and before, that the possibility for abuse and distortion in public service, and the seductivity of power for its own sake, are never securely protected against.

We can all agree that the disciplines recently applied by the Congress and courts have served to return the presidency to an approximation of what the Founding Fathers so soundly conceived.

To me, Watergate is more of an evolutionary event than an isolated tragedy. Some administration just had to be toed in sooner or later. That had to wait, however, until the political ambience of Washington allowed it. Not until a journalistic-Congressional complex coalesced in the 1970s did a power larger than the presidency develop. Had it developed pre-Nixon, an equivalent of Watergate would have come earlier. Had it been only the press or only the Congress outraged in Nixon's time, the corraling of the presidency would have been deferred still longer.

But during the late '60s or '70s, a reconfiguration of the presidency had become inevitable. I am thankful that mostly conventional types of derelictions brought on the holocaust, rather than things far worse, as easily could have been the case later on.

I think the country will disserve itself if it fails to understand that basically, far more than any one president, it was the presidency that had become grotesque after four decades of imperializing. If we rivet on that truth, we will stay vigilant against similar or worse transgressions in the future.

Bryce N. Harlow Washington, D.C.

(NOTE - Mr. Harlow was an administrative assistant to President Eisenhower and a close friend and counselor to President Nixon.)

WASHINGTON STAR: 06/16/1977

World War II to the British people. He was in the midst of negotiations with Truman and Stalin to settle the war at Potsdam when Britain held an election. They kicked Churchill out of office right before the end of his war and elected Clement Attlee as Prime Minister. Look at Woodrow Wilson, he survived World War I, but didn't survive the presidency well after that. Roosevelt died a hero, but Truman left under a cloud. Our heroic Lincoln didn't survive..."

Steve Silver: Didn't survive at all.

Ed Behrens: Didn't survive his war. We don't know how he would have been viewed in reconstruction and what not.

I remember his reaction to my comments because I was flattered. I'm an amateur in this, and Bryce said, "Do you mind if I share those thoughts with the President?"

Steve Silver: Would you mind? Do you mind?

Ed Behrens: I was flattered, but I never received any feedback. I don't know if he did or not, or what the President's reaction was to it. But I felt (Bryce had that capacity to do that), that I was involved in a moment of history. Again, it was the measure of the man.

Steve Silver: Well it's funny; you used the word amateur in describing yourself. Apparently Bryce didn't see you certainly as an amateur if he wanted to take your thoughts to the president.

Ed Behrens: I don't know.

Steve Silver: I guess we'll never know.

Ed Behrens: Yeah...

Steve Silver: It certainly sounds like it. Let's talk a little bit about Procter, to take it back there. What kind of impact did Bryce's recommendations and ideas have on the sway of the Company? Like how was he seen in the corporate culture of Procter?

Ed Behrens: Well, of course that whole history of him coming onboard in 1961 was at the CEO/President level of the Company. I didn't start with the Company until June 1961. So Bryce's first day with the Company started at a different level of involvement than mine did. I had no reason to interact with him until probably '74 or '75 when

certain issues that we were working in Cincinnati began having a national policy profile in Washington.

Bryce was helpful to me upon my arrival. The article that I've given you touches on this. I think of the many heads of Washington offices in those days, and Bryce was clearly viewed as preeminent among them. He had such a unique background.

He was a staffer on the Hill in the depression years. He served the Armed Services Committee, so when the war started he went over to the Defense Department to serve as legislative liaison to, I think it was General Froome, if I recall Bryce's characterization of the name, who was heading the public affairs function for the Department of Defense at the time. And of course that put him in a unique position, working directly with General Marshall, and for which in the course of things he became acquainted with General Eisenhower.

So he's working on the Senate Arms Services Committee, and by virtue of that assignment he got to know the legislative processes and Senate leadership; he was involved during the war working with the Defense leadership; then when the war was over and General Eisenhower became President Eisenhower, and because he knew Bryce through his military legislative liaison roles, he invited him into the White House at the onset of his new Administration to serve in a legislative capacity for the Executive Branch. And as you know, he did that for a few years and later served as Counselor to President Nixon for a few more years, but more importantly as far as his corporate career, he began that in 1961, again at a very high level. It was this combination of varied experiences, all high level, all successfully handled, that made his background so unique. Procter & Gamble undoubtedly engaged him for his background, but more importantly, one would think, for his political wisdom and counsel and because of the man that he was.

So the role of Bryce, especially in those early years, was probably typical when I think of Washington offices in those days. That is, he served as both a political gatekeeper and a high-level advisor to the Company. Importantly, Bryce knew many people around town; nothing unsavory in that – I'm not suggesting that.

It was a simple fact that Bryce knew a lot of people around town. That was a major part of his effectiveness. They knew him and they respected him. He was honest, he communicated well (a straight shooter) and he understood the value of networking. In short, he was the consummate Washington "insider."

Remember, concerning his serving as counsel to top people in the Company, Neil McElroy engaged him to form the national government relations function for P&G when this was an evolutionary, if not revolutionary thing; that is, that a company like Procter & Gamble even needed to have a presence in Washington.

When I came here in 1976, I had to address some of the same questions that I imagine Bryce had to fundamentally address at the onset. “Okay, now that you are a ‘corporate rep’ in Washington and you’re representing the Company at the policy-making levels of the federal government: 1) What are your objectives, 2) Who or by what process are issues selected for action, 3) how are their importance and priorities determined, 4) what guides your activities, whose interests are you representing and who are you accountable to, 5) with what intensity or frequency is the issue to be pursued and importantly, 6) backed by what resources?”

Bryce had established an understanding that guided my involvement within the Company as well. That is, the Washington office should report to the highest level individual within the Company for the matter of interest – and that lines of communication should be direct for reasons of clarity and expediency and not be required to follow traditional lines of authority. Further, the Washington office should have direct access to any resources within the Company necessary for the pursuit of an issue.

Bryce had to create the profile and set the tone for Procter & Gamble’s Washington office – and that legacy remains. He is viewed as legendary to many in Cincinnati yet today. With respect to profile, he once told me, “If you ever make the Washington Post, consider that you have failed!”

[End of tape one]

[Beginning of tape two]

Ed Behrens: Let me pick up again just momentarily, going back to the question you had raised about Bryce’s perception of me as an amateur. I can’t really address that, because I never used those words with him, or he to me, and I never really engaged him on that as a topic. However, a couple anecdotes might provide some insight.

He clearly would have viewed me as inexperienced in the ways of Washington. And again, reflecting the mentoring role that I said

he played, I remember one occasion, in particular, maybe the second or third day that I was in the Washington office.

Gerald Ford was president. I had reason to walk in to Bryce's office to discuss something with him. He was on the phone, but he waived me in. Bryce was always very relaxed, so I have this picture of Bryce leaning back in his chair, feet on the desk, smoking and talking. As I listened, he chatted substance, which led him to something humorous or called to mind a joke that he shared, which reminded him of some bit of gossip, which led back to substance.

After a very few moments it was clear to me he was talking to the president of the United States. He was talking to Jerry Ford, and here I am in Washington about three days, listening to a conversation with the president of the United States. I started from my chair to leave, feeling I was intruding. He just pointed me back into the chair. So I had the pleasure that day of sitting for several minutes listening to this privileged conversation.

Now, I obtained tremendous insight during that conversation. He thought he was teaching me something, and I'll tell you what he intended to teach me. But that wasn't the lesson that I got out of that phone call at all.

When he hung up, I said, "Bryce, I really appreciate you're letting me sit through that. It was clear to me that you were talking to President Ford."

He said, "Yes, I was, and I'll tell you why I wanted you to hear that." Again, it goes back to this integrity question, because he proceeded to say, "I wanted you to listen, as I want you to know that I will never say anything over this telephone that I wouldn't want someone else to hear. Further, I would never let anybody say anything to me over the telephone that I wouldn't want somebody else to hear."

So again, this was intended to be a fundamental teaching exercise concerning integrity and honesty, and all of that.

But that isn't what I got out of that conversation at all.

Steve Silver: What did you get out of it?

Ed Behrens: What I got out of the conversation was, "How do you speak to the president of the United States?" You speak to him like you speak

to anybody else. There was a relaxed informality and an apparent sense of mutual respect, combined with a friendly collegiality that actually enhanced the communication of an otherwise substantive matter.

It gave me tremendous insight as to how to be effective in discussions with leading governmental and other principals as well. I believe that he extended that opportunity to me – because he viewed me as inexperienced.

Steve Silver: But not to the extent that you couldn't sit there and listen to him talk to the president of the United States?

Ed Behrens: Right – which also implied a level of trust in me.

Steve Silver: I was going to ask about that.

Ed Behrens: Yeah, ---

Steve Silver: Can you talk a little bit about that?

Ed Behrens: Well the interesting thing is that it just occurred me literally now as I spoke of that incident. I never really thought about it before. Bryce and I had a very good, informal relationship, and yes, I appreciate that it was based on trust. I think that's probably the way he approached people. There was a presumption of trust.

Steve Silver: Did he ever – you know nowadays when you work, especially in sensitive positions, but even in non-sensitive positions, you have to sign agreements all over the place, nondisclosure.

Ed Behrens: I don't recall ever having signed anything with Procter & Gamble. I don't know, presumably as a new employee I might have, in sensitive areas, in technical areas. Perhaps it wasn't required in those days; there certainly was an informal bond between the Company and the employee. That's one of things that are probably changed in the complexity of the world today.

Steve Silver: Do you think Bryce enjoyed the mentoring role? Not just of you and Procter, but also in other government relations professionals, did he have a sense that they were embarking on something a little bit different, and they needed somebody to help guide them. Or was he, he didn't even see it that way?

Ed Behrens: Yes, but maybe not necessarily as clearly in a mentoring role as I was, because I was a direct employee. But Bryce enjoyed a

leadership role in the corporate community in Washington that was well respected. And he understood it for what it was. I learned by just observing his dynamics in meetings with his peers (or as he once facetiously said, “I have no peers!”). I don’t want to suggest any association with political personalities, one way or another, but Bryce had a communication style that if I had to look at contemporary Washington, one might compare it to what I perceive to be Vice President Dick Cheney’s style. That is, he would set the agenda, then principally listen – and then speak conclusively -- last, not first.

When he spoke it was always analytical and very organized; always spoken quietly, but authoritatively, and to the extent that it helped his communication, with some humor. But he could also be firm, if not stern. And I think it fair to say that when a Washington-based meeting was over, people all left substantially influenced in their planned outcome by Bryce’s approach involving his insight, his perceptions, his planning, his communication style – and in deference to both his senior status within the community and his unique background.

Steve Silver: Did he ever talk about a conflict or any potential or current conflicts between representing Procter & Gamble and serving a function in policymaking?

Ed Behrens: No, because I think in Bryce’s mind if he ever sensed there was a conflict he would have not engaged in the conflict, but would have sought first to resolve the differences. Ultimately, he would have told the Company, “I can’t do this.” Or he would have been upfront to a policy maker saying, “Procter & Gamble has some clear interests in this area of which you need to be aware.” But it is hard for me to visualize a situation that would be allowed to deteriorate to the point of confrontation.

For example, I can’t visualize the Nixon/Elliot Richardson situation where the Company would ever have directed Bryce to do something that he would have been against in principle. It just – that wouldn’t have occurred. That’s not the way the Company operated then, and I expect that I can still say with near certainty that is not the way the Company would operate today.

Steve Silver: If Bryce were around today, and could see that state of corporate representation, what do you think he would -

Ed Behrens: I don’t know. When I look over the two dimensions that I see as significantly different from when I came here a quarter century ago

is the hostile bipartisanship and the battle between the extremes on the far right and the far left, so to speak. The other involves the huge outlays required for campaign financing and the impact of fund raising on politics and corporate public affairs.

As to the first, I believe Bryce saw government's role to resolve problems and make things happen. I don't have any direct anecdotes on it, but we had enough discussions and interactions that I know that's how he viewed government. I know he saw and was concerned about certain zealots in his day. But they did not characterize the mainstream of how politics was conducted. I won't name names, but there were some around at the time.

Republican – and Bryce was Mr. Republican – I wouldn't say he viewed people on the extreme right with disdain, anymore than I think he felt uncomfortable with people on the extreme left. Now, having said that, I perceived that he had ultimate respect for moderate leadership on both sides of the aisle. I think, particularly from the Senate, that's more the way the Senate did its business in those days. He expressed his admiration for both Senators Mike Mansfield (D-MT) and Hugh Scott (R-PA), the Majority and Minority Leaders at the time – and later great affection for both Howard Baker and Bob Dole.

I recall a story that he told about Mike Mansfield. Now I've only heard this story once, and I heard it from Bryce in maybe my first year, so my recollections as to the details may not be fully correct, but I think the essence of the story is about right. As I said, he had great deal of respect for Mike Mansfield, the Democratic leader of the Senate. Bryce narrated how he was a Hill staffer, or may have been working for the Congressional Research Service for the Library of Congress in the 1930's. He had come up from Oklahoma, and had this job; but he didn't view it as a career. He saw there was a position opening at the University of Montana, and it was, as I recall, going to be a scholarship/fellowship/teaching assistantship leading to a graduate degree in either history or maybe political science. Now scholarships and jobs were both hard to get during the depression years, so this was a real opportunity. You would go there, you'd get this fellowship, you'd be there for three or four years, and then you'd leave with either a Master's Degree or PhD. But it was an academic situation.

Bryce applied for it and he traveled to Montana for his interview. And he interviewed with what was probably the History Department at the time or Political Science, perhaps. And after a full day of interviewing and being exposed to the department,

Bryce really felt good. This was an exciting job and a real opportunity. At the end of the day he sat down with the dean and the dean said, “You had a very good day with us. You did very well in your interviews. But Mr. Harlow, we’re not going to offer you the position.”

Bryce was stunned. He said, “I went all the way out there. It looked exciting. I thought we had a good day, and then he told me they thought it had been a good day, too, but they were not going to offer me the position.” He was crushed.

The dean went on to say, “Let me tell you why – because times are tough. If we offered you this position, you’d probably take it and come out here to Montana. But we can tell where your interests really are. You belong in Washington. It would be a mistake for you to come here. So, go back to Washington and make your career there,” – or words to that effect.

I’m recalling this from a single conversation from years ago. But that dean was Mike Mansfield, whose own career path again crossed that of Bryce’s in Washington when he later became Senator Mike Mansfield and even later as the Majority Leader.

Steve Silver: Right.

Ed Behrens: Senate leader. He and Bryce apparently had enjoyed years of mutual respect and high esteem while he was in the Senate. And he had friends like that all over town, and on both sides of the aisle. I would continue to run into them later on, years after Bryce had retired.

With respect to campaign financing, I can’t really comment. It was simply not a matter at the time that we ever had occasion to discuss. Clearly, Bryce was pragmatic in his approach to politics – he knew what it took to win. On the other hand, he was a man of compelling ethics. I just can’t say where they would have come out in the balance.

Steve Silver: What do you think is – of course it’s hard to narrow it down to a single contribution or lesson, but students or aspiring government professionals today – what do you think they should take away from Bryce Harlow? What’s sort of the top tier?

Ed Behrens: That excellence, honesty and integrity are the way of doing business regardless of what business you’re in. And that

government service, whether you're serving corporate America or government itself, or labor, or whatever, is honorable service.

Bryce helped found an organization committed to furthering those goals for lobbying. Again, it goes back to the peculiarities of integrity here in town and perceptions about it. I believe I'm correct in saying that Bryce was one of the founding members of the American League of Lobbyists that was founded to enhance the role of the advocate, but also to educate the public on the constructive purposes, as well as the ethics of lobbying.

That is, there's nothing wrong with lobbying per say. As Bryce used to say, it serves an educational role critical to the functioning of our government – and one that is recognized by the constitution (e.g., one's right to petition government).

One can have serious questions on occasions about how it's done, but there's nothing unethical about the function, per say. And so I think that Bryce would highly endorse, regardless of where or what you are engaged in that process. It is an honorable function and provides an important national purpose. Good people should find a call for such service both honorable and worthwhile, again regardless of the legitimate interests to be represented.

[End of tape two]

[Beginning of tape three]

Ed Behrens: My mind keeps bouncing back to interactions with Bryce, and you'll see there's a pattern and consistency through all of them. It was the mentoring role, the teaching role, and sometimes as I say, what I learned wasn't always what he thought he was teaching. But there was one instance where I think, again, of your earlier question, "How did he perceive our relationship?"

I think he enjoyed it. And here is the anecdote that I would offer for that. Early on, early during that experience, there was federal legislation that involved an matter of concern to P&G. Our interest involved a small, but important issue that required a legislative fix to both the Senate and House versions of the bills that had passed the respective chambers.

Steve Silver: It was really important.

Ed Behrens: We had been successful in educating Members and staff on the Hill that there was something in the legislative language, as it's prone to be, that was a little bit short and maybe not quite as

descriptive and definitive as one might like. We sought a small bipartisan legislative refinement to clarify the intended interpretation.

I was working with Steve Lawton of Congressman's Paul Rogers' (D-FL) subcommittee staff in the House and Ellie Parker of Ohio, Senator Bob Taft's (R-OH) staff in the Senate. It's funny; I remember these names going back almost thirty-years to the late '70s. I remember them because they were good.

Steve was an impressive and very able staff person on the House side, and Ellie was an equally able and responsive person for Senator Taft. I believe Paul Rogers was actually the Health Subcommittee Chairman of the House Commerce Committee, working health issues, and on the Senate side, Senator Bob Taft was on the Health and Human Resources Committee. We had all worked out preferred language, so when the bills were going to go to conference, it was all worked out between the two legislative principals that the revised language would be included as an amendment to the final conference report

So, this was a big victory. We had it all set up. We were going to go to the conference and Rogers was going to say something, and Taft was going to say something, and "done deal!" Well, as you may know of congressional conferences, Steve, Ellie and I showed up, but virtually none of the Members did at the designated time. House Commerce Committee Chairman, Harley Staggers (D-WV), chaired the conference. He looked around and he said, "Well, I understand we have a completed conference report. Are there any objections to the report?" Bang! No Members were present to respond, so the gavel came down and the Conference Report was approved -- without objection. Defeat was snatched from the jaws of victory!

(Laughter)

Ed Behrens:

Senator Taft never showed up, Chairman Paul Rogers never showed up, and of course our statement never made it in for the record.

I remember reeling, going back to the office, straight in to see Bryce. I told him what had happened, that it was over before it even started. But, I said, "Coming back from the Hill, I was wondering, could we get Senator Taft to engage in a discussion on the Senate floor as the conference report goes back for final passage, offering a statement clarifying the intent and maybe have

Paul Rogers do the same on the House side to support what Senator Taft was doing?"

Bryce grinned and with a twinkle in his eye, said, "Yes, we could do that. That's a good idea. As a matter of fact, it's called a 'colloquy'." I think that he was pleased with and enjoyed that brief interaction. "Good idea. -- It's called a 'colloquy'."

Naively, and with some desperation, I had independently arrived at what was, in fact, a long-standing legislative tradition. More importantly, it worked. P&G's interests in the matter were resolved

[End of tape three]

[Beginning of conclusion]

Steve Silver: Ed Behrens just wanted to thank you again for all of your thoughts and insights into Bryce Harlow and for talking to us on this part of the Oral History.

Ed Behrens: Again it was my pleasure and if you have any questions on follow-up don't hesitate to call.

Steve Silver: Will do, thank you.

[End of Audio]