

*Steve Silver:* Okay we are talking here with Larry Harlow who is part of the Bryce Harlow Oral History Project. Thank you so much for talking to us here.

*Larry Harlow:* Happy to do it.

*Steve Silver:* Let's start, I guess, by having you tell us a little bit about what you do these days, what your career is and then we'll get into the stuff with your dad.

*Larry Harlow:* I run a consultant/lobbying firm known as Timmons & Company and I've been here since 1991. Immediately preceding that I spent ten years in the Reagan administration and the Bush '41 administration, leaving public service as Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Treasury. Before that, I did some private sector work and then I was in government for a while before that. I started off with Howard Baker in 1969 in his office when he was a freshman on Capitol Hill.

*Steve Silver:* And you are Bryce's youngest son and only son correct?

*Larry Harlow:* Yes.

*Steve Silver:* Okay. And did you grow up mostly in D.C. or a little bit in Oklahoma, too?

*Larry Harlow:* Mostly in D.C. A little bit in Oklahoma but mostly in D.C.

*Steve Silver:* Mostly in DC, okay. What was it like? Did you feel like you had the typical childhood growing up with your dad in the White House or did you kind of feel like it was unique for what most people were growing up, I guess?

*Larry Harlow:* Well, I think it was an atypical childhood because I really didn't see my father during the week, but had intense experiences on the weekend to substitute for that. Those experiences consisted, mainly, of either spending time at the White House on the weekends or going with him to various Civil War battlefields across the Commonwealth of Virginia and other great states of the South and searching them for relics.

And the two weekend activities ended up merging in a way because, of course, the Eisenhower White House was comprised of military officials, all of whom had studied the Civil War as part of their academic requisites to graduate from West Point or from the Citadel or wherever. So it was a subject of immense interest in the

White House by all of these military folks. And they became quite impressed with my knowledge of the war because, before my father would take me out on these excursions, I would be forced to learn the battles that we were going to. So as a result, I became a great authority on the war at the very young age and it impressed all of these folks in the White House and kind of became one of them as a result of it.

*Steve Silver:* Sure. Actually, I wanted to ask you a little bit about your father's sense of history that was very well known, of course. Can you talk about that a little bit?

*Larry Harlow:* Sure. About his history?

*Steve Silver:* Sure. Just his overall sense of history.

*Larry Harlow:* Oh, his sense of history.

*Steve Silver:* Yes.

*Larry Harlow:* He was fascinated by the War Between the States or the Civil War or the Great War or whatever we want to call it. And obviously, he had had a lot of the same military training just from the ROTC and given what was topical in that time in America with the two great wars and Korean War and then working so closely to General Eisenhower. He worked for George C. Marshall at the Department of War. So, he was around these two great figures of military expertise and a lot of that rubbed off on him.

So he had a great sense of history about the war and he also had a great sense of history about the significance of the place where he was working and what he was doing in the town. He told me when he first came to Washington, which I think was in 1933 to work for Congressman Disney – I could be wrong about that, but I think that's right – that he put his suitcase down – I guess he came into Union Station and walked across and put his suitcase down and just sat in front of the Capitol totally in awe of the Capitol and what it meant to be in Washington.

And I think that that type of appreciation and fascination with American government and the symbols of American government influenced everything he did – and that carried over to his sense of history, as well.

*Steve Silver:* Do you think he ever intended to raise the family in Washington?

- Larry Harlow:* Oh, I know he didn't.
- Steve Silver:* He didn't. That's what I thought. He would have preferred, I guess, to go back to Oklahoma?
- Larry Harlow:* Yeah. He and mom had planned for this to be a very – first of all when they moved back to Oklahoma they thought they were going to stay. They only came back after the president-elect finally got through to him and insisted upon it. And his father, my grandfather, had told him he had to go because the president had asked him directly. But they never expected to go back and, as a matter of fact, they went back to Oklahoma, I think, for my birth and planned to be there for the rest of their lives. So, no, he never expected to be here and always wanted to get out. If he had his druthers, he would have been home in Oklahoma.
- Steve Silver:* Yeah. Did he ever talk much about his early days, working – I believe he worked in the House Library as a library assistant?
- Larry Harlow:* No, he worked – I don't know if he worked in the House Library. He worked in the Library of Congress.
- Steve Silver:* The Library of Congress. OK. Maybe that's what - did he ever talk much about that?
- Larry Harlow:* Oh, yeah, he talked a bit about it. He also did a thesis. He did his master's thesis on the Ways and Means Committee. I don't know if you have a copy of that or not. You may –
- Steve Silver:* I believe we do.
- Larry Harlow:* Get one through the foundation. He spent a lot of the time while he was working at the Library of Congress working on that thesis, as I recall. But it was an interesting experience because the Library of Congress, at that time, was purely patronage and you didn't have to have any skill at all to be there. And he worked under, evidently, a huge bear of a man, who was also somebody who really enjoyed his lunch hours. In essence, he had a free reign to do whatever he felt was important to do because this guy would be passed out in his office after one o'clock in the afternoon, day after day after day. And so what he would do is go down to the House floor and just learn the House. He learned how the House worked; learned everything about it. There weren't very many people who knew that much about the House or, to this day, there aren't that many people who know the rules of the House intimately. There aren't that many people who know the rules of

the Senate intimately. And to have that knowledge gave you power back then and also made you a valuable commodity. I think that probably helped him immensely in the early part of his career.

*Steve Silver:* Did he mention any specific people that he looked up to back then in his early career?

*Larry Harlow:* Well, I believe Congressman Disney was – that he did think very highly of Disney. He was the only staff person in that office. It was back when congressional offices were much different – it was the congressman and it was him. And I'm sure that he got that because of his father's clout in Oklahoma. But that was one person he mentioned to me. Then later in his life – well, obviously in that period of time, also, would've been Sam Rayburn who he came to know and, obviously in that period of time, Carl Vinson.

But, it depends upon what time you're talking about. Very early in his career, my guess is that his main experience was with Congressman Disney. I don't know who he worked with through the Library of Congress years but then as his career advanced and he went into the Department of War for the war. Obviously, he worked around General Persons who set up, along with Dad, the legislative operation, congressional relations operation, DOD – what's now called DOD. And then during that period was when he got his exposure to George C. Marshall and his exposure to Carl Vincent. During that period and later, of course, he became the chief clerk, in essence working for Vinson.

*Steve Silver:* It sounds like he had a really strong respect for the institution of government – that's the Congress, as you said, when he sat there awestruck. Do you think there is a difference between people back in your father's generation versus your generation versus even my generation as far as how people – do you think that respect is waning at all or do you think that was just something that was unique to your dad?

*Larry Harlow:* I think times have changed. It's much more that information bombards people, young people these days. There's much more callousness and cynicism towards the institutions of government and how politicians make up their minds. And the role that money plays in politics today is much different than it was, then.

So, definitely, I believed it's changed. I think part of it was also his upbringing. His father was very much involved in the formation of the State of Oklahoma and had a role in writing the Constitution of the State of Oklahoma. And actually had a

political weekly for which Dad wrote, contributed while he was back here in Washington. He'd write reports for Harlow's Weekly which was a political, what we call these days, "rag," talking about political developments in the state capitol and then also would have these reports from young Bryce Harlow back in Washington. But yes, things have changed. I think the attitudes have changed enormously on everything since the time he was a young man growing up in this town.

*Steve Silver:* It's funny. When I picture your father as a young staffer in Congress in the 1940's, I can't help but also realize that Lyndon Johnson was there at the time and I'm struck by the contrast of personalities. Johnson, of course, was known as loud and kind of in your face and your father, based on what everybody's been telling me, has just been a lot more reserved and sort of cerebral. And the question I want to add, both men, of course, went on to great success in D.C. Do you think this is a town that rewards the more loud, in your face personality or do you think this is a town that can reward your father's type of quiet reservation when it comes to meetings and that sort of thing?

*Larry Harlow:* I think the answer's yes to both; it depends.

*Steve Silver:* To both, yeah.

*Larry Harlow:* It comes down to the individual. I think it's hard to make generalizations. It comes down to the individuals, it comes down a lot to who you know; it comes down a lot to your individual strengths and characteristics. By and large, given the area that my father got into, it also comes down to a great degree, to integrity. And the qualities that he had, I think, were essential for his success in the field he went into.

His father, besides being a political figure in the State of Oklahoma, was the owner of Harlow's Publishing Company, but he was also a scholar on Christ. And so he had an enormous knowledge about the life of Christ and wrote, I think, four or five books about the life of Christ. His mother was a schoolteacher and his father was the youngest university president at the age of 19 – I forget the name of the university – in Missouri. But you grow up around an individual like his father and an individual like his mother – Reston. James Reston was taught, also, by my grandmother. And so in essence, he was taught at a very early age and taught about the importance of proper behavior and so forth. And that's how he turned out as he did.

Lyndon Johnson had a much different upbringing in Texas and the whole countryside of Texas was a much different lifestyle. And he learned a lot of different lessons.

*Steve Silver:* Your dad, I guess, was obviously not very easily intimidated by a loud personality like that, was he?

*Larry Harlow:* I never saw it but I can't – Everybody knows the legend of the confrontation with LBJ but, beyond that, I don't know.

*Steve Silver:* How did your father portray government as a profession when you were growing up? Is it something that he inspired you to go into yourself?

*Larry Harlow:* Oh, absolutely. He told me many times, and I'm sure you've heard this, that the greatest pleasure in life comes from being of service to others. And he felt, of course, that the presidency, being in service to the president, was the highest expression of that. And I heard that all the time. We spent a lot of time – we'd spend, on Sundays, all day in the car together and then all day traveling around these battlefields. So I heard it all – everything he wanted to leave with his son, I heard. He had plenty of opportunity to do it and try to make up for the week when he wouldn't be around because of the horrific hours in the White House.

So, yeah, I think that he always felt that it was important to serve your country in some fashion at some point. Now, he also felt strongly about the importance of the private sector, the private industry, and a strong economy. And so, I think that he felt, also, it was important to pursue a career in the private sector.

*Steve Silver:* Do you think it was easier to establish a career in politics back when your father did it versus now? Do you think there was just more access to the younger people or for the younger people?

*Larry Harlow:* No, I think that the field's much more crowded now and everything that goes on in this town, there's five thousand people trying to do the same thing. The city was a sleepy southern city, in essence, I would guess, until the mid 50's, or certainly, until after the World War II. And some would say, particularly those from perhaps New York, would say it still is. But compared now to what it was then it's just exploding, that there were very few restaurants in the city and there was very much all the attributes of a sleepy southern city that also happen to have the Capitol of the United States located in it. Back then, life was defined by things such as weather, too. Can you imagine us sitting in this room right

now trying to carry on this conversation if we didn't have air conditioning?

*Steve Silver:* No, not at all.

*Larry Harlow:* I mean nobody stayed in this town in the summer.

*Steve Silver:* Yeah, I guess they couldn't.

*Larry Harlow:* Yeah, you just left. Congress shut down; it would not be in session in the summer. And so again all of these things defined what it was then and progress has defined what it is now. And the field has really expanded. It's much harder to get involved, I think. You look at the staffs then. You look at the number of office buildings when my father first came to town. There was one House office building and there was Senate office building. And –

*Steve Silver:* It's a complex now.

*Larry Harlow:* It's a complex now and my father was the sole staff; he was everything for Congressman Disney. He answered the phones, he made the decisions, he was the Chief of Staff and plus everything else. And now you have staff that can pick up the phone and move divisions by saying this or that; have enormous influence, enormous impact. There's so many of them, they all need to find something to do to justify their existence and they all do. So, yes, things have definitely changed.

*Steve Silver:* Do you think the idea of integrity that is really so synonymous with your father, do you think that could be taught or even learned or is that something that you just think kinda needs to be inborn to a person?

*Larry Harlow:* No, I definitely think it could be learned and I definitely think it could be taught and I think that's part of the reason for the Harlow Foundation. And similar organizations have a slightly different focus such as the Bryce Harlow Institute or the Fund for American Studies. A central, I think, bedrock for both organizations is integrity and to demonstrate the standards from that are important in doing business, not only here in town, but whatever your business is. This is all about human relations and that, certainly, the art of lobbying is about human relations. But that's not much different than the people who are out making commerce succeed in Boise, Idaho or Warrenton, Virginia and are doing dealings between themselves on a straightforward basis and on an honest basis. Well, if somebody comes to Washington and has the

business of government and you're talking about representing the private sector to the government, you also have to have that same type of honest dealing. It's just, I think, a reflection of what goes on in day-to-day life around the country.

*Steve Silver:* Do you think, in a city like Washington that's known for a lot of people without integrity, do you think people ever got frustrated by your father because he wouldn't play out of bounds and he wouldn't do some of the things that a lot of other people do in this town?

*Larry Harlow:* Well, when you say it's just now for people that don't have integrity, I think that this town's fairly representative. We have a representative democracy and I think that the institutions of government, the House and the Senate, are fairly representative.

*Steve Silver:* The idea of winning is – I guess politics has always really been about winning but, do you think that it was less about winning back in your father's day than it is now? Do you think it was –

*Larry Harlow:* No.

*Steve Silver:* No?

*Larry Harlow:* No, I do not. We may have more attention brought to it now, but it's always been the same. It's always been the spoils system, it's always been a power system, and it's always been, "I want power because I believe I'm right and you're wrong and what I believe is better for the country than what you believe." And I think that the tactics that are employed are probably a little bit cleaner now than they were back in the old days because you have the media who's out there serving as a watchdog and you have public groups serving as a watchdog as well. So, my guess is it's actually probably a little bit cleaner, certainly, at the local levels than it used to be and almost certainly at the national levels than it used to be.

*Steve Silver:* Having worked in the White House for as long as your father did in various administrations, I'm sure he must of navigated his share of crises and things that came up. Did he ever talk about the art of political crisis management? Or, if not, what do you think is –

*Larry Harlow:* Well, you may want to check the Miller Center for the Study of the Presidency – I think it's called the Miller Center at the Charlottesville University of Virginia. And he gave some interviews. As a matter of fact, there's some of them online; you

can download jpg's. It's pretty interesting where he gave some of his oral interviews. It might be worth your while to look in – I don't know if you've done that or looked at that –

*Steve Silver:* Yeah, we looked a little bit.

*Larry Harlow:* But yes, he's given interviews where he talked about that and he and I have talked about it at times. He also, I have to be quite frank with you, we spent a long time talking about vignettes of LBJ and LBJ when he's in the White House and LBJ when he was Majority Leader and my father would be in the White House. And things that LBJ would call up and suggest which were just totally the wrong thing, ethically, to do and lots of stories like that. But I never heard many, at all, about things that were conducted, things that were done behind closed doors in the Oval Office in terms of crisis management. That's because a lot of what he did and was involved in, by its nature, he felt was supposed to be kept behind closed doors.

The reason I reference the Miller Center is that he did give some oral interviews there where he talked about, anecdotally, about some things that happened that he participated in that reflected the strong integrity of Dwight D. Eisenhower. One story he talked about I recall, and I don't know the names involved, and I think it was in one of the printed books or in one the oral interviews, was a concern about the budget director and some alleged improprieties by the budget director. And Dad said they all gathered in the Oval Office and started damage control exercise, "How are we going to deal with this," and came up with this plan. And the president was sitting there. With Eisenhower – you can tell when you're on the wrong track because he had a very visible and explosive temper. And they saw that the steam coming out of Eisenhower's ears so he said, "Boys, you're on exactly the wrong track. If you do that, we're all gonna go to jail. Just get it all out. Get all the information out. Just put it all out. The people will understand we're putting it all out and we'll take the right action based upon getting all the information out. It'll be over." And that was the type of lesson he took with him, for instance, into the Nixon White House.

*Steve Silver:* Well, I wanted to ask you about that. Your father was really seen as one of the really good guys throughout the Watergate – he, of course, wasn't a central figure in Watergate but, he's really seen as one of the good guys in a very sad chapter. And I wanted to ask you if you think he ever had any resentment towards either the

press or to anybody for the way that went down or if he ever talked to you about that.

*Larry Harlow:* Oh yes, he did. He felt that Nixon, in essence, had the sins of all of his predecessors visited upon him. He felt that the presidency had to come to be imperial, but that that had happened mainly through the administrations of Kennedy and Johnson. And that Nixon was being penalized for exactly the same type of activities and the behavior that LBJ had been able to pursue pretty boldly without any penalty when he was in the White House. He did feel that it was almost, from an historical perspective, a natural unfolding of events with the Legislative branch reasserting a degree of control that it had ceded to the Executive branch.

*Steve Silver:* So it was almost correcting itself –

*Larry Harlow:* Right, it was correcting the balance. But he felt what was greatly unnatural was the role of the media in it. And he was very upset by what he saw as the weekly planning sessions, which he insisted went on during that period, of the major liberal media outlets such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Time Magazine*, and *Newsweek* to coordinate their activities on Watergate for the next week which he felt was entirely improper and was probably entirely unprecedented. Go ahead.

*Steve Silver:* Well, I was just going to – that was a perfect segue because I wanted to ask you, for most people who survive and thrive in Washington as long as your dad did, a lot of people, not everybody, but a lot of people tend to have this ill will towards the press and just the way things are covered. Did your father, do you feel he had any ill will towards the press?

*Larry Harlow:* No, not at all. As a matter of fact, remember, he regarded himself as something of a journalist because of his role as a youth – a very young man here in Washington writing for Harlow's Weekly. I think he even had press credentials and attended White House press conferences when Roosevelt was president and Truman was president. Of course, in those days, those press conferences were much different. It was not the televised press conference; they were more like gaggles, small things. And he maintained his Press Club membership up until he retired. So he had a strong connection with the media or with the press, I should say.

So no, I don't think he felt any resentment towards them at all. He did feel that some media allowed, some of those in the press, allowed themselves to be colored in how they reported the news by

their own biases. And he felt that everybody needed to go into these things with their eyes wide open.

He used to encourage me to read as many editorials as I could; read all the editorial pages and the editorials and to try to get a sampling because, you know, what you get out of the *Washington Post*, you knew what you get out of the *New York Times*, but you needed to read some others to get a balance and see what they were thinking around the country. So I tried to do that to some degree.

*Steve Silver:* Yeah. I just want to talk briefly about government relations, business-government relations as a profession, since that was obviously such a big part of your father's life, and yours. I want to, actually, start with you. Out of everything you were probably exposed to, what about business government relations inspired you to choose that track?

*Larry Harlow:* Just because I had a job offer. I was out trolling in the vineyards in Colorado with the Environmental Protection Agency as a career employee. I was not a political employee, I was a career employee.

*Steve Silver:* For the EPA.

*Larry Harlow:* For the EPA, right after it was formed. My father had nothing to do with me getting the job but my sisters did, particularly my sister Peggy who was working at the Federal Water Quality Administration, knew the regional administrator that was coming into Denver as the Denver region was beginning to get organized. And so, I got in on the ground floor. It was a great experience. I lived out there with my wife and my daughter – very, very young – and moved from D.C., which was, back then, a pretty sordid place. You had a lot of air pollution here, a lot of water pollution; the air stank. There were plants down along the Georgetown waterfront that put out a lot of extremely obnoxious odors that permeated this part of town.

Then we moved from there and went out to, in essence, the Switzerland of America and, the Rocky Mountains, we just fell in love with it. But after four and a half years and watching the election coming up in 1976, I felt that they were going to, in essence, if there was a change in administration, despite my being a career employee, that I would be sent off to a civil service Siberia, somewhere, given my name, which they would've done. They would've found me, they would've said, "What's this Harlow guy doing here?" I would have been relegated to a tune of

an extraordinarily junior status, somewhere. And so I figured it was time to make a move and this fellow back here who was very close to my dad named George Koch; marvelous individual who I went to work for. I turned down his first two job offers and, over a year, he continued to pursue me. I finally said yes.

My heels dug ruts across the country, Steve. I did not want to leave Denver. The lifestyle was so much different than here, and I didn't know if I wanted to get back into the hours and everything else. I didn't even know if I wanted to get into representing business. I was afraid – I was an environmentalist. I was afraid that I was going to have to come back here and represent views that I wouldn't agree with and, fortunately, that was never the case. In fact, the only time that I've had that happen was when I worked for the president; when it manifested itself was in the White House. There were a couple of things that I had to work on that, personally, I disagreed with. But when you work for the president, that doesn't matter.

*Steve Silver:* Right. You're serving the president.

*Larry Harlow:* Right.

*Steve Silver:* What are some of the things that either your dad told you or just you have picked up that are important for business government relations? You mentioned it being a town of human relations. Do you think it's always been relationship based? Is that still what's important?

*Larry Harlow:* Yes, but I think it's something that began back when Washington representation started to explode; has grown in importance. And I think that is that you need to know what you're talking about. Issues have become so – and I'm not suggesting they weren't tough to deal with back 25 to 30 years ago – they've become enormously complex, in part because of the growth, again, in staff. Up on the Hill they can look at aspects of legislative proposals that, before, would never be considered and the desire to answer every potential, possible question and you add to that the growth of law firms that specialize in legislative issues in this town. And the law-making process has become incredibly complex and the need to be knowledgeable about those issues that you're proposing or those issues that you're fighting has grown in importance.

And so it's – not only can you rely solely upon relationships because you go up there and the young people who are in Congress now – and I'm not just talking about staff, I'm talking the members

– you go up and say, “You gotta do XYZ.” They say, “Why?” And you can’t say, “Because I just told you to!” You have to say, “Well, here’s why,” and it can’t just be because, “Hey, you’ve got 1,500 constituents in your district that think that’s what you should do. That’s why you should do it.” That answer works some of the time but for the new breed of people up on the Hill it works less and less because they want to be sure they’re also doing the right thing. And so you need to be able to explain issues; you need to be able to understand issues, and that means that the hours for this job have grown longer.

When Dad opened the Procter & Gamble office, he and Sally, who later became his wife after my mother passed away, went into that office and kept the White House hours. They just segued right over, took two weeks off, set up an office for Procter & Gamble and worked around the clock; didn’t know any other way. And then, after a year or so, I think, they had to do some type of audit and somebody comes down from Cincinnati and was horrified by the hours they were keeping. He was ordered to stop working those hours.

*Steve Silver:* To cut back his hours? Yeah.

*Larry Harlow:* “You stop working. You do not get in at seven o’clock and work until nine o’clock. The hours at Procter & Gamble were nine o’clock to five o’clock.” And he started taking the bus in and now he’d be home at six o’clock and it was a normal life. You can’t do that any more. You cannot have that type of life in Washington representation. I get in to this office, seven o’clock. I’m in my office by seven o’clock every morning and I’m lucky if I’m home at ten o’clock at night. And it’s not because of fundraisers, which is a new aspect which Dad would not have appreciated and I don’t think anybody who has to get involved with it appreciates it at all. But most of the time it’s because the Senate’s in session; the House is in session and there’s an issue that could be of interest to you. It’s also because client demands are enormously greater than they were even ten years ago. So, the nature of the business has changed a lot.

*Steve Silver:* It must’ve been very challenging even back then, though, for your dad to cut back on those hours, I would imagine, when they ordered him to do that.

*Larry Harlow:* Yes. I think that they didn’t know – when so much of you’re existence has been tied up in what’s going on, it is hard. And I also think around this time was when he became the go-to guy for

Eisenhower in town, as well. Eisenhower left, went back up to Gettysburg and this period of time is when Dad evolved into his eyes and ears in Washington and became known for that. This was enormously important to his career, that it became known that if you needed to see or hear from the former president and the greatest General in modern times, you needed to go see Bryce Harlow.

And that became, I think, incredibly important to his career and that's a reflection, again, of the importance of integrity. When he grew up and in the formative part of his career, first of all, he was raised by a father whose academic forte was Christ. He then goes to work in town, one of the first people he serves under is a completely drunkard, a librarian of Congress, but goes from there into the military where he, in essence, gets sucked into the parallel to the today's Joint Chiefs of Staff with George C. Marshall who's been described as Christ like, himself, in terms of his integrity. He wasn't brought into those because of his stature. He was brought because he could take shorthand. And nobody with a top secret clearance could take shorthand. They needed somebody to record what was going on in these top secret meetings and he was the fellow that was brought over. And so he became very close to Marshall. He would then be entrusted with running over to the White House with top secret matters – he would bring them maps of the invasion of Africa and bring them over to the map room of the White House for Roosevelt and Churchill to see what the progress of the invasion was. Those maps are still there in the map room of the White House.

But that was because of integrity. And then he goes from the George C. Marshall experience – goes from there back to take over the Harlow Publishing Company in Okalahoma City and then goes to somebody who's integrity was also always above question, Dwight D. Eisenhower. And so he had a string in his early and mid career of serving with people who had unimpeachable integrity and the standard of conduct that, I think, in essence, formed his own standard of conduct – very high.

*Steve Silver:*

Do you think he enjoyed that? I wanted to ask you about what do you think he enjoyed the most of all of his jobs or anything he did in Washington. But I wonder if it was being Eisenhower's eyes and ears, it sounds like.

*Larry Harlow:*

Eisenhower's eyes and ears and the experience in the Eisenhower White House. If you remember, if you're telling your son that the greatest pleasure in life is being of service to others and that the

greatest manifestation of that is to the president, what's better for a young man? He was the youngest member of the Eisenhower staff and the oldest member or the senior member of the Nixon staff. And there's no question about it. Having served in the White House as a young guy, you go in there and that's heavy stuff. That's big stuff and it's very fulfilling if you believe in public service and he obviously did through his father.

*Steve Silver:* Do you think your father was a very unique figure in politics and in Washington with all the integrity and everything or do you think that there really are other Bryce Harlows either at his time or today that we just don't know about?

*Larry Harlow:* I think the war was a very defining moment, obviously for the nation but also for Washington.

*Steve Silver:* The war?

*Larry Harlow:* World War II

*Steve Silver:* World War II; okay.

*Larry Harlow:* World War II. Again, the transformation from a very sleepy southern town with this institution up there and this institution down here, both of which were, themselves, somewhat sleepy, into part of this machine, this huge construction boom that went on in town. It used to be down here where Constitution Gardens are now, lakes and they just used to be a flat structure with World War II buildings on it. That's where they constructed all kinds of "temporary" World War II buildings. It's lasted, of course, as everything does in this town, until the 70's.

But I think his intellect was remarkable and his ability to express himself, which he got from his mother, was remarkable, his ability to coin a phrase, to use words, was unique. And I think that that would be the case in any time. These unique abilities he had, along with the standard of integrity that he had, combined with the people who were in power, in terms of the military flavor to everything, and the explosion of the town, in essence, being in the right place at the right time, are what brought him into the position of prominence that he enjoyed.

And again, there weren't very many people back there – the White House staff was much smaller back then. Eisenhower reorganized the White House into the command structure that it has to this day, and he was a key part of that. As part of that, the office of

Legislative Affairs was formed and he became the heart and soul of that legislative operation. Again, your roles were much bigger and the visibility you got was much greater than you can get now where you have everybody elbowing you in the side trying to get through that same door that you're trying to get through.

So, I think it was a lot of factors, but, certainly, in any period of time, his remarkable intellect and his remarkable ability to express himself and to be able to use the written word in the correct fashion was what made him totally unique.

*Steve Silver:*

I'm struck by something that your sister Trudy said the other day when I interviewed her. She said that she always believed your Dad had this inherent belief that people were good; that most people that he would meet on the street, whether it be cab drivers or street vendors, everybody was good. And it really struck me because that seems a little contradictory to Washington, you know, with the old saying, "If you want a friend in Washington, get dog," but, obviously, she was right – your Dad thrived. So I wanted to just get your thoughts on that as, do you think maybe that's missing today?

*Larry Harlow:*

No. What he always used to say to me was, "Always understand the other person's point of view. You may not agree with it, but they have a right to have it." And I think he just enjoyed people. He liked people and I think he had a strong belief in the value of the individual. He had a really strong belief in the foundation of the American Republic that recognized the worth of the individual and that's, in essence, what he believed the country was all about.

I never heard him say a bad word about anybody, even when he was old and at the point where he was in poor health. You know he had every opportunity to say terrible things about people and a lot of other people do when they're at that point. And he didn't.

So, to put it in a trite sense, I think he probably would have said, "What goes around comes around," if he was given to trite phrases, which he wasn't. So I believe that he believed that, in terms of following the correct way of behaving and the correct way of living up to your expectations, that you should only expect others to treat you as you treat them.

*Steve Silver:*

As sort of a final thought, what would you say is your father's most important legacy in this city in terms of contributing to either Washington politics or just the country in general?

*Larry Harlow:* That's a hard one to answer off the top of the head. I would guess it would be the importance of integrity and the emphasis on that. That sounds like a very cheap answer to your question but I just think that that, above all else, is what he was about.

*Steve Silver:* Integrity.

*Larry Harlow:* Yes.

*Steve Silver:* Larry, you've been very generous with your time. We really do appreciate it.

*Larry Harlow:* Well, thank you for coming in and talking to me.

*Steve Silver:* Thank you.

*[End of Audio]*