

*Steve Silver:* This is an interview with Mr. Emmett Hines for the Bryce Harlow Oral History Project. Emmett, thank you so much for joining us and talking about Bryce Harlow with us. Let's start by having you tell us a little bit about your professional background in Washington.

*Emmett Hines:* Well, after years with one company being salesman, a sales manager, a general manager and that sort of thing, they sent me to Washington as their corporate ambassador, with the title of Director of Government Relations. My job is to talk to government when my company wanted to talk government and listen when government wanted to talk to my company.

*Steve Silver:* How did you first meet Bryce Harlow?

*Emmett Hines:* I don't know except that as soon as I got to Washington it was clear to me that Bryce Harlow was, was a guy to know and very quickly I got to know him.

*Steve Silver:* Did anyone introduce you, do you remember making a call to him or –

*Emmett Hines:* No, I really don't.

*Steve Silver:* Why at that time, in the 1970's, why did a lot of corporations like your's and like Procter & Gamble feel that they needed people in Washington?

*Emmett Hines:* I really don't know more than what they said – we want an interface there and what was wanted. You know, like some countries send ambassadors.

*Steve Silver:* And I guess a lot of them were starting at the same time.

*Emmett Hines:* Not that I'm aware of. I just don't know the answer to that.

*Steve Silver:* That's okay. What was the Business Government Relations Council? I remember reading about how that was something you and Bryce were involved with.

*Emmett Hines:* Yes, we were involved with starting it and beyond the fact that it seemed a logical thing to do when people in all sorts of professions tend to sort of group together to communicate with each other and learn from each other, set principles and so on.

*Steve Silver:* So was that just an area or way for a lot of government relations professionals to get to know each other and interact and share –

*Emmett Hines:* I think so, I think so.

*Steve Silver:* Was Bryce very involved with that? Did he –

*Emmett Hines:* Well, I'm pretty sure he was a member of it at some point and I was just going through a lot of my old notes here, about the establishment of BRGC and how the group that originally sort of wrote up its purposes and the way it would operate tried those out on Bryce and Bryce made certain suggestions. He was much involved in its establishment.

*Steve Silver:* What was it like when Bryce would make suggestions? Was he sort of the voice everybody listened to?

*Emmett Hines:* Very much so.

*Steve Silver:* Yeah.

*Emmett Hines:* Very much so.

*Steve Silver:* Pretty respected guy in the –

*Emmett Hines:* Absolutely, no matter who he was talking to, you didn't always like the answers you got but you respected him and you probably learned that they were right.

*Steve Silver:* I understand that there were a series of regular meetings that you had with Bryce and a lot of other government relations people while Congress was in session.

*Emmett Hines:* Well, in general there was a tendency to form coalitions. In other words if you were trying to accomplish something on Capitol Hill, you'd look for other people – association executives or corporate executives – who were trying to do the same thing and you would work together to do things and one of the, as far as I know, the most outstanding of such was something called a Consumer Issues Working Group, which I actually started and Bryce joined on immediately and our whole purpose was to defeat a certain very bad piece of legislation and we were in existence for about eight years. It took that long to eventually kill it in one Congress and it'd come back in another, but at the end of about eight years we finally killed it for good. But, Bryce was very much involved in

that; in encouraging us, in advising us, in addition to his simply being a member of us.

*Steve Silver:* Was that common to sort of form these coalitions around specific issues back then? Like with you it was, you know, consumer, consumer legislation –

*Emmett Hines:* Particularly one. No, no it was common to get together to form a coalition with others who have this same purpose in mind on almost any issue. It might be some little issue where there's only, you know, maybe there's one other company or two associations both interested in – they worked together; could be big ones like Chamber of Commerce and the NAM.

*Steve Silver:* Was it common for organizations that didn't have a lot in common sometimes to get together on a particular issue?

*Emmett Hines:* Oh yes. If they had, if that issue was something they had in common.

*Steve Silver:* What other legislative battles were you and Bryce involved with or was it mostly the consumer legislation that you just talked about?

*Emmett Hines:* Well that again, that was just one piece of legislation. I really don't know the answer to that question. There would have been several other pieces of legislation where I got involved with small or a larger coalition but I can't remember specific ones.

*Steve Silver:* That's okay. Did you ever find yourself on a different side of a piece of legislation with Bryce, in other words were you ever adversaries on anything?

*Emmett Hines:* Not that I can recall. I can assure you if I ever found Bryce as an adversary, I'd go sit down with him to find out why and the odds were I'd change sides. In fact I can remember going – our chief executive officer instructed me. Normally I didn't get instructions from my management. They trusted me, but one time my chief executive officer came to me and said we're going to be on this position on this issue. And I said, "Yes, sir." I can remember going back to him later on and saying, "Nope, we're not going to be on that side of that issue, for the following reasons, these are reasons Bryce Harlow gave me."

*Steve Silver:* So you would change your position?

- Emmett Hines:* Yeah, and my top management, they had enough respect for Harlow too, that you know, that was all it took to get them to back off.
- Steve Silver:* So they didn't even fight you on that?
- Emmett Hines:* No.
- Steve Silver:* How did Bryce Harlow treat the people that he disagreed with – his adversaries?
- Emmett Hines:* Well, for one with respect and two, whether it was a president that he worked for or an important member of Congress like the Chairman of the House Armed Services, Carl Vinson, Bryce simply said, "I'm sorry, sir. You are wrong and here's why." That's the way he treated them.
- Steve Silver:* Well I know, when Bryce was working for Procter & Gamble, the White House kept calling him back, a number of times.
- Emmett Hines:* Yeah he referred to himself often as Procter's biggest gamble.
- Steve Silver:* Do you remember if there was a lot of other competition for Bryce's services? Were there other, was he a sought after lobbyist or was he –
- Emmett Hines:* I doubt if there were many companies or associations who tried to recruit him. He was just too – I think their feeling would be, you know, he's too important to recruit. He's just where he wants to be. But –
- Steve Silver:* What did he teach you as a corporate representative in your career?
- Emmett Hines:* Well, I would say that the biggest thing he taught me is the importance of integrity and that whatever I was trying to accomplish in the final analysis I would accomplish more of it if I demonstrated integrity than if I demonstrated anything other than that.
- Steve Silver:* Did Bryce –
- Emmett Hines:* Incidentally, I remember a couple of times Bryce left Procter & Gamble and went back to the White House because the president asked him. I think that was Nixon. The president asked him to come back and he resisted that at each time. I think it was Mel Laird who called him and said, "Bryce, they want you and me both

to come back to the White House. I'll go if you'll go. I won't go if you won't go." So Bryce agreed to go back to the White House and then I remember calling him shortly thereafter at the White House and I said, "Bryce, I've got a real dilemma on the consumer issue working group problem we're working on and I need your advice" And he said, "Emmett," he said "While I'm in the White House, you and I cannot talk about any business we ever talked about when I was outside the White House." And that sort of seemed to cover the field and I said, "Well, Bryce, what can we talk about?" Long silence and his answer was, "Girls."

*Steve Silver:* Talk about girls while he's in the White House. So, did Bryce Harlow feel that he, that your profession, corporate representation, the one that you both were involved with, needed any kind of organized code of ethics or was it just learn by example, here's how I act?

*Emmett Hines:* He never gave any indication he thought we needed an organized body of ethics.

*Steve Silver:* Or any kind of governing body?

*Emmett Hines:* No.

*Steve Silver:* When Bryce Harlow finally did retire, was it Harper's Fairy, I believe?

*Emmett Hines:* Yes.

*Steve Silver:* Did he make much of an effort to stay involved? Did he want to stay involved with the day-to-day affairs of Washington or did he want the sort of retirement where he was away?

*Emmett Hines:* I think he just wanted a full retirement I was thinking, though, he welcomed the visits from his friends and running into a note something the other day about his inviting – well, he always enjoyed it when people came to visit him and I remember one time there were about four of us that had worked particularly closely with him and we went up to visit and spent about half a day up there at his place and had lunch and then I remember – just as an indication of how clearly he enjoyed visitors – I remember calling him and asking if I could bring my son up to meet him. And my son, then being a teenager, and he spent the better part of the day talking mostly to my son about life's lessons.

*Steve Silver:* Do you think he tried to leave any kind of an impression on the field of corporate representation, in other words did he try to leave a legacy?

*Emmett Hines:* I don't believe that was at any point his intent. I'm, I think I – this is a good opportunity to mention this. It's in the Bryce Harlow Foundation files, something prompted me to write an email to Linda Dooley and I guess I was commenting on some language about the Foundation's establishment. I say here, "while I have no objection to this language and it may be factual, I do think the Foundation's archives should contain the information that Bryce allowed his name to be used as a part of the Foundation's name only after I assured him that our purpose was not to honor him but to use him. I'm the only one who knows this first hand and our conversation was private. When I sought his okay, at first he said, "No, you Washington reps have done enough to honor this old man." I countered with, "Bryce, we do not want to honor you. We want to use you for something you believe in." He smiled and said, "Okay."

*Steve Silver:* So it was the thought of using him to further –

*Emmett Hines:* Yes.

*Steve Silver:* An idea, his ideas that made him agree. Can you talk about the Bryce Harlow dinner, the famous dinner?

*Emmett Hines:* You mean the sort of annual dinner or the –

*Steve Silver:* Well, the one that you started.

*Emmett Hines:* Oh, you mean the one where we honored him?

*Steve Silver:* Right, right.

*Emmett Hines:* I mention – I think the Foundation already has a copy of these tapes, but I'd be happy to loan them to you. Well, just a whole bunch of us decided we wanted to honor him and we planned this dinner, invited him. He spoke and a number of corporate Washington representatives spoke and what was the rest of your question?

*Steve Silver:* When we sat down you started talking about this dinner that you had to start, it was, I believe, 1981.

- Emmett Hines:* Yeah, and its purpose again, was we wanted to do something to honor him, so we did that. We had some money left over. It was not our intention, but we had it and so what do you do with it? And one of the group was a lawyer, somehow – was that Ed McCabe? Sounds like it; anyway, said, “Why not form a foundation to honor his principles?” So that’s –
- Steve Silver:* And how did he feel about that – was he, Bryce Harlow?
- Emmett Hines:* Well, I just read you – that’s what I was reading. He said, “You’ve done enough to honor me, this old man.” He was going, in effect, he was saying no and I said our purpose is not to honor you but to use you for things you believe in, so he was willing to be used.
- Steve Silver:* What are your own thoughts about the state of corporate representation after Harlow left, after he retired?
- Emmett Hines:* Well, I don’t think that his retirement made any difference in them and I guess I was still active and involved in government. Well, I mean you know, I had not retired at that point and so I was around for quite a few years in that position. in which I often saw Bryce and you know we saw him through the death of his first wife. That was Betty, wasn’t it? And then he later married his ex-secretary, Sally. I don’t recall you know his retiring had any impact on the on the process.
- Steve Silver:* Why do you think Bryce Harlow is seen as such a unique figure in Washington today?
- Emmett Hines:* Today probably only because of the Bryce Harlow Foundation and their activities and their explanation of who he was and what he stood for, when asked and I doubt if there’s – I doubt if there’s anything else that would cause someone new coming to Washington in this business to know about him.
- Steve Silver:* What do you think are his biggest contributions or lessons that, in other words, why should people study his example do you think today?
- Emmett Hines:* Well, I mean to me it’s just, you know, the obvious things that made him stand out – his integrity, his ability to express himself. I don’t know of anything further to answer that.
- Steve Silver:* Okay. Could you talk about the letter from Governor Alexander?

*Emmett Hines:*

Yeah, this is back in April of '85; a letter to Bryce Harlow from Lamar Alexander which reads in part, "Do you recall a little story you told me one time about President Eisenhower that went something like this. The president was surrounded by his Cabinet members discussing a very tough issue. They all had differing views and finally the president said, 'Well, what would be the right thing to do?' One of them said of course the right thing to do would be 'x'. The president said, 'Well then why don't we do that?' They all agreed that would be the thing to do. I use this story a lot because you comment on whether I recalled it right and so Harlow back in April 16, '85, responded in a letter which among the things included are the following. "The little story that you inquire about, unless something else comes to mind, was this. We're talking of thirty-one years ago, 1954, the Dixon-Yates matter was in full flower. The festering scandal involving among others the Director of the Budget. Allegations of conflict of interest intensified and the fangs of the media vampires were full out and a drip with venom as the search escalated for victims. In time it became necessary for the president to put out a public statement because the integrity of his whole administration was coming into question. We staff functionaries, Hagarty, Adams, Pearsons, Morgan, Harlow, et al, laboriously contrive and apologia, a mealy-mouthed, evasive, convoluted, turgid, bureaucratic intended to blot out all possibilities of further suspicions. Then we gathered in the president's office with a flourish. Jim Hagarty handed Ike our handiwork. We all sat silently as he intently read every word. Suddenly he threw the statement over Hagarty's head and out into the middle of the Oval Office. Plainly, he was mad and he showed his famed temper. His blue eyes flashed, his five-star look on. His face was brick red. He had at us with his best guttural ultimatum, 'You listen here boys,' he said. 'I'll never put out any dribble like this as long as I'm around this place. You got to understand that the right things to do in cases like this is always tell the truth. Put out the facts very fast, don't get cute about it, just say exactly what the facts are and make it as simple as you can and as short as you can. That way the whole damn mass will blow over and be gone in a week or ten days and the public will back you for being honest about it. Do it this way, like you guys have it here and we'll all be up to our necks in trouble and we'll deserve it.' We filed out of the office chastened and embarrassed but with a lesson in responsibility and leadership that I for one will never forget. He was right, by the way. As soon as we got the facts out, the whole thing died away. That, incidentally, was what I urged that Nixon and Stans do with Watergate in '72. It would have hurt a few people but saved the Presidency."

That's it.

*Steve Silver:* So the whole thing died away soon as you got the facts out.

*Emmett Hines:* Yep.

*Steve Silver:* Emmett Hines, it's been a great pleasure talking to you about Bryce Harlow and we thank you for your time.

*Emmett Hines:* You're most welcome.

*[End of Audio]*