

*Steve Silver:* We're talking with Mr. Joel Jankowsky as part of the Bryce Harlow Oral History Project. Thank you again for talking to us.

*Joel Jankowsky:* Happy to be here.

*Steve Silver:* Let's start by having you tell us when you met Bryce and what your impressions were of him.

*Joel Jankowsky:* Well, I had the honor of working for House Speaker Carl Albert from Oklahoma who retired in 1977. When he retired, I retired. At that time, I was looking for jobs in the private sector, and I really had three separate things I was looking at. One, Jimmy Carter had just been elected president and I had conversations with the White House about working there. Two, I had conversations with several law firms, including this one; and three, I had conversations with regard to joining a corporate office, and that led Bryce Harlow to me. I had a couple of conversations with Bryce about possibly joining Procter & Gamble. That's how and when I met him.

*Steve Silver:* Did he live up to the reputation?

*Joel Jankowsky:* Absolutely. We had a meeting and then lunch. He took me to the Metropolitan Club, which, for a young kid off the Hill, was a delight, and very impressive. We had a nice chat about Procter & Gamble and what the office did, and all of that. And all through that conversation it was obvious to me the quality of the person with whom I was talking. You could get a real sense of history from just talking with Bryce Harlow because of all those qualities he had which we now celebrate through the foundation. He exhibited all of those qualities in our conversation. So it was very impressive.

*Steve Silver:* What does the name Bryce Harlow mean to people working in D.C., either from Oklahoma or with any kind of an Oklahoma connection?

*Joel Jankowsky:* For those of us from Oklahoma it has a special meaning. He was a fellow who makes all of us from Oklahoma very proud. He had many "firsts" in his career – first on the Hill, first in the White House, and then he quickly rose to very prominent heights in the corporate sector. Under any measurement, his career was a remarkable success. And so those of us from Oklahoma are especially proud that as an Oklahoman, Bryce Harlow, one of our own, accomplished the many things that he did. And so it has a very special meaning.

*Steve Silver:* Why do you think people of such stature – presidents, senators – were drawn to Bryce Harlow?

*Joel Jankowsky:* I think Bryce had an uncanny ability to judge a situation, understand the many facets of a situation, and give good advice, both pro and con on any matter. Any decision-maker, whether they are a corporate executive, a senator, or a president values the kind of sound advice and good judgment that Bryce always brought to the table.

*Steve Silver:* Why do you think he was so effective at bringing business and government together as a corporate representative?

*Joel Jankowsky:* Well, I think, as I said, he had the ability to look at both sides of the issue. Once you have served in government, as he did so successfully, and once you have served in the corporate sector, as he did so successfully, you can see what people are trying to accomplish in any situation. Understanding the outer limits of the other person's position also defines the compromise. And therefore, I think he had a very good ability to understand what it took to develop a compromise. And in those days, more so than now, it was about the art of the compromise. I think Bryce Harlow had a special skill of bringing people together and it was held in such high regard.

*Steve Silver:* Do you think it could ever be like that again? I mean about the art of the compromise?

*Joel Jankowsky:* I would like to think so, but in today's very polarized environment, I don't know that we can get back to that. Although there are examples, depending on how you define "compromise." The Congress just passed an energy bill that was a long time in the making and required a lot of compromise. I mean, in most cases we still have to find "middle ground." I think all the attributes that Bryce Harlow exhibited still have value today.

*Steve Silver:* What do you think is his most important legacy that young people should know?

*Joel Jankowsky:* I think the one principle that stands out is integrity. I think that's his hallmark. Most Americans hold their government in low esteem, particularly the congressional branch, and people associated with it, including lobbyists, whether they be corporate representatives or independent lawyer/lobbyists like me. I think that the American public holds all of us in rather low esteem. But

by practicing our trade with integrity, we might gain back the confidence of the American public.

*Steve Silver:* Was Harlow very concerned about the public image of lobbying and government service?

*Joel Jankowsky:* I don't know the answer to that question. I believe, however, that he was a man of such natural virtue – that he wanted the system to reflect that virtue – and I think he assumed the people with whom he dealt would act as honorably and with as much integrity as he did.

*Steve Silver:* What were some of the things he taught you about being an effective corporate representative?

*Joel Jankowsky:* Well again, I think the principles that he practiced – integrity, honesty, hard work, understanding the political system in which you operate, understanding the changes in the political system – are the lessons to be learned from Bryce Harlow.

*Steve Silver:* As a final thought, do you think there could ever be any more Bryce Harlows?

*Joel Jankowsky:* Sure.

*Steve Silver:* Or was he unique?

*Joel Jankowsky:* First of all, there's a Larry Harlow – that's his son. The apple does not fall far from the tree, and Larry's a first class fellow. He applies his trade very well, and with all the attributes of his father. And so, yes, I think all of us aspire to be Bryce Harlows in our own way and I hope that future generations will try to do the same.

*Steve Silver:* Joel Jankowsky, thanks for your time.

*Joel Jankowsky:* Thanks for talking to me.

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