

17 P      Committee  
Re

David Pryor

May 15, 1979

Went to hearing chaired by Proxmire in Banking Committee.

On way over:

DP: "What's this all about?"

Bruce L.: "It's a banking bill sponsored by Ribicoff, Javits and Proxmire. As far as I can tell, they are the only ones supporting it."

DP: "I'll just say 'I'm here to learn--from the masters.'" Later when Proxmire asked him if he had anything to say, DP said "I have no questions. I'm here to learn."

DP stuck head in Bumpers office and whispered at the woman at the desk. An aide walked out and Bruce said "That's Bill Walsh, their energy man." Dave said "Who's our energy man?" Bruce, "Ramona." "We have an energy woman." Bruce said "She's not here when we need her--she's taking exams." Dave: "Last week was energy week. And she was away taking exams in law school."

Pryor sat in the hearing and said nothing. Afterward he said, "Dick, I'm the worst person in the world on business, finance and money."

He had handed Bruce one note during the hearing. It was "Isn't Malarkey (WVa Banking Comm) a great name for a public office?"

He signed his ethics disclosure statement during the hearing.

When we got back to the office- Ann and Bruce were talking about their first newsletter. They can't frank to postal patron, so they have to get up their own lists--to whom they can, of course, frank. They have a list of 10,000. Every person to whom they wrote automatically goes on their mailing list because their computer is linked to Senate computer. Ann said they didn't have enough staff to take other lists they have and convert them to computer tape. She noted that some people purchased voter registration

lists and converted them to tape. I asked if they could get Bumpers list. Bruce said that wasn't done. Ann said maybe after next year's election, they might. But her first comment was "I'd rather have McClellan's." They did not, however, indicate any particular attitude toward Bumpers. I tried to give them a chance!

On the way to the hearing, DP said to Bruce "I wonder if Dale went to that thing last night." There is a hearing before W & M today that affects several Arkansas communities adversely in that they won't be able to float housing bond issues. The governor is up here--and David is going to testify this afternoon. As I sit here, Bruce and Ann are drafting his testimony. On way to hearing, he noted that Bumpers said his testimony would be only 3 minutes long.

I happened to be <sup>with</sup> sitting Ray Scott and Pryor saw me and asked if I was going with him. I went to hearing. Then he left me sitting in the office. I guess I'll sit.

On the letter Bob Byrd has written to Senators telling them what the schedule will look like he wrote in hand, on the bottom, "Thanks, David, for your support of the efforts of the leadership." The notice says that in July they will have long sessions--and weekends.

As we came up in the elevator from the hearing, Dave asked me who I was travelling with. I told him. Then, after I had sat for a long time in his outer office, he came out and said "Tell me, off the record, is Bill Cohen, well, a little aloof. He's not the kind of person I'd want to <sup>slap</sup> ~~step~~ on the back. He makes you feel like maybe you did something to make him mad. Maybe he doesn't want people to come up and talk with him. He's very capable, but..." I told him Bill was described as a loner, so that he, David, would not take it personally.

At lunch - Carmie Henry from Arkansas, worked for McClellan, Hodges and Pryor. Melinda worked for Symington, Anderson and Pryor.

Ray said Clinton ""will probably take us on" in 1982. So--they do see him as the opposition.

Walking over to the House where Dave is going to testify against Barber Conable's bill. The first thing he said was "A person who has been getting a good deal of <sup>favorable</sup> ~~forwardable~~ publicity in recent months is Sam Nunn. I had lunch with Sam and a few others today in the small Senate dining room. Senator Stennis called them favorable press notices--like the early 19th century. Sam said he could feel the balloon pulled so tight it was about to pop."

"I spend a great deal of time on the floor--more than most freshman members. I preside as often as anyone. I think Max Baucus has presided for the greatest number of hours and I'm a close second. They keep a record. The first one to pass 100 hours gets a golden gavel award and all that jazz. I log a lot of hours on the floor for two reasons. The first is that I want to learn the rules and the only way you can learn the rules is to be there most of the time. The second reason is that I know that the longer you're here the less time you have to learn the rules. So if you don't learn them at the beginning, you never will."

Are the rules different. "Yes they are very different. You can get anything done in the Senate, almost anything, by unanimous consent. And people are very protective of each other's rights. Last night we waited on one Senator for 20 minutes--Senator Proxmire, so that he could come over at the last minute and get his ritualistic speech on the genocide treaty. He's been doing that for 10 or 12 years, every day. In that way, it's the last vestige of a civilized organization."

After he gave his testimony he had to race over to the Senate to vote on amendment asking the President to lift sanctions on Rhodesia. He caught a car that a Ways and Means employee had waiting at Longworth door and we sped over to Senate. Bruce Lindsay was telling him about the Schweiker amendment (to Helms amendment ordering President to lift sanctions); and he told DP that Javits had said he would accept amendment. We raced to building, up the elevator and DP ran to the floor. The last thing he said to Bruce was "Javits voted aye" and Bruce said, yes. And DP bolted through the door. He made it; but it was interesting that he cued off Javits.

During Dave's testimony--or while Dave was waiting to testify, Barber came down and talked to me. Ann had said when we went in and I told him BC was my congressman, "He's the bad guy." I told BC that and he laughed.

In the office all day, the talk was about the night's softball game. Their team is the Pryorities. They were circulating a get well card to the man who lets them use his field for their weekly game. They were playing Bellman's team. Pryor had played in the 1st 2 games, but he kept saying he'd probably miss tonight's game." "I probably won't make it tonight." Bill Alexander has asked in to dinner and then there's this thing at the Greek Embassy. I'd a lot rather be playing softball." His wife wanted to go to the embassy said Ray. And Ray and Ann and Melinda and Carmie (all of whom I ate lunch with) said he loved to play softball. (So do Tsongas & Cohen)

Their staff eats lunch together at this point and seems very harmonious. Of young Susie James Ray said "She's our little pet." Susie made like she was going to punch Ray, in a laughing way. I said "Go ahead, punch him." Everyone was laughing. But the AA in P.Tsongas' office would never refer to a woman in that office in that way." Differ cultures.

In the elevator, Ray said "Paul Tsongas seems awfully austered. But

then, next to Pryor, everyone looks austere~~d~~."

After I had asked him if he'd let me go to Arkansas, he said "When I was governor, I had a state policeman who went everywhere with me. Now I'm used to going by myself, so I'll enjoy the company."

One reason I asked about Arkansas was that I think he might open up more under those circumstances or, at least, say more. He is not a good generalizer and he does not talk spontaneously about institutional matters. Both times when we were alone, once when he came out of his office to talk to me and once walking over to the Senate, he started by talking personalities--Bill Cohen and Sam Nunn. I think he thinks in terms of people. He's good with people, I'm sure. He's not an abstract thinker at all. On the other hand, comparing his testimony with that of Bumpers before Ways and Means--and all the agony that went into the statement (which may be because it is so early in the game for him)--he doesn't seem as forceful or as thorough in terms of detail work. Dave's testimony was more general than Bumpers'--who had lots of facts and figures.

Jim Corman "sitting here looking at the last three governors of Arkansas, I wonder if you have to be old enough to vote to be governor of the state."