

DAVID PRYOR

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I stopped in to check on yesterday's action on the defense bill. I left early last evening and I thought David would have had a nerve gas amendment up later. I asked Knox about "David's amendment." He said "You mean the IG amendment." I said "Yes." (Having not even thought of that!) And Knox went through the parliamentary tangle with me. The problem is how do you get a vote and on your terms.

David came in and told me to come in--that Nick Kotz had paid me a compliment and asked me to "sit down and tell me how you're doin."

I asked him how the Nerve Gas hearings before Appropriations went. "The first day we had witnesses for our side. The second day they were for the other side. We went into closed session for about an hour the second day and all these defense department people threw a barrage of facts, figures, statistics, studies at us. You're in there without anything to refute them. It all boils down to who you believe. I don't think many minds were changed."

"We may pick up some unexpected votes this time. We may lose some, too. But we might pick up DeConcini; we might pick up Bennet Johnston. We might even have a chance to get Russell Long, since he and Bennet tend to vote together on things like that. I think the nuclear war worry, Ground Zero and all that, has had an effect. Chemical warfare is not the important part of that movement. People don't parade with signs saying 'stop chemical warfare.' But it is a part of the same movement; it's part of the war, war, war problem. Bennet has talked to me several times about it. I told him if he wanted something to hang his hat on politically he could say that the plant is 70 miles or so from Louisiana. For safety reasons, if for no other, he could be against it... I don't go around knocking people over the head on the subject. For one thing, I'm sick of the issue. For another thing I

don't want people to think that every time they see me coming, I'm going to talk to them about Nerve Gas. (Here he flinches, ducks his head). 'Here comes Mr. Nerve.' (He opens his eyes wide and laughs.) When John Warner and I meet, all we ever talk about is nerve gas." I laughed and asked him when he thought it would come up today. He thought "about 6:00 I don't know why..." The Jackson Nunn battle over the 747 and the C5 will take a least 3 hours."

David gave a good example of ^{action forcing deadline!} ~~"deadline forcing action."~~ "The defense bill has a history. It will repeat itself this year. You just watch. John Tower has been managing the bill without asking for any time agreements. He's been sitting over there, relaxed, letting everybody talk themselves out. We were in late last night. We'll be in late tonight. Baker says, we'll meet Friday if necessary. But everybody is heavily scheduled for Friday. I am. So there will be a lot of pressure to finish tonight. So about dinnertime you'll start seeing time agreements. They will be 15 minutes--7 1/2 minutes to a side. And we'll start voting on battleships, rockets, missiles, billions, each with 15 minutes of discussion. They will just roll those things through."

As pressure to adjourn, recess, go home etc. increases, time of consideration decreases. Results may not change, but thoroughness of discussion will. But would long discussion matter? The minority wants more discussion. It is all they can do, after all.

I told him I called the Senate the 'Candystore'--so many good things to choose from. "You mean it's hard to chose between the milky ways and the snickers. It's a fascinating place."

When I left he was headed for a vote. He comes in with his necktie draped behind his collar but untied. That's the way he would come out of the Governor's mansion, too. He greeted a bouple of ladies that way (Annie said you're busy. You don't need to see these people.' But he did.) then me.

When I left he said "I hate to put on my tie, but I'll guess I'll have to put it on and go vote."

He walked into Knox's area "When I was a page, between my junior and senior year in high school, I went back to Camden High and delivered a 30 minute speech on parliamentary procedure. My teacher had to correct me-- that it was parliamentary procedure." A typical joke on himself.

Knox went into detail about how they tried to box Roth out to keep him from getting the first vote on his amendment so they could get a vote on their amendment. He tries to amend bill so that passage would wipe out all other amendments. Tries to amend own bill and can't. Since that's out of order. Some confusion after that. When you ask for yeas and nays you lose the floor. Chair recognizes Bentsen, then reverses and recognizes Roth. Bentsen wanted to offer amendment. Tower conciliates and Bentsen offers it.

Knox said House passed IG bill last year. (Brooks) and it's been sitting in Governmental Affairs. Roth sitting on it--although he had a bill. Maybe he's afraid Armed Services might ask for referral - David wanted to put amendment on last years appropriations bill, but didn't on Roth's assurances. But no movement since, so he moves this time. Roth moves too. The amendment that gets passed--Roth's amendment--(technically, Pryor amended by Roth) is stronger than Roth's original bill, says Knox, and stronger than AS wants. So they gained substantively, says Knox.

The IG issue is one DP has been interested in for some time.

As it turned out (and I write this on the 19th) chemical warfare came up at about 3:00 am and ended at 5:00am. There was some kind of compromise. Ann Pride said. "What a terrible way to legislate. You work on issue for years and years, and it gets decided between 3 and 5 in the morning at the far end of an all night session."