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His first comment was "Well, the letter of certification worked, didn't it." Then I had him back up a little and tell me how his role evolved after I had seen him. I was helping Howard Baker with some of the freshmen.

"You remember that we talked about joint crewing and that I had suggested they fly 3 and we fly 5, that sort of thing. There was even talk at one time of some of us going over there to negotiate with the Saudis. Well that all fell through. The Saudis said they wouldn't accept any joint crewing idea, that there would be no treaty and things looked pretty bad. We started thinking about an alternative in the Armed Services Committee, when Weinberger was testifying in closed session about some of the agreements we had with the Saudis. Several of us said that the administration would have to give some guarantees in public or the sale was dead. That's the way I felt--that I could not vote for the sale unless some changes were made. We began searching for a mechanism. Sam Nunn came up with the idea of some legislation tying the President down--and out of that came the Nunn-Warner resolution. The people I had been talking with thought we needed some kind of letter from the President. I said I thought that was what we needed. Well, what will we call it. So we went back and forth and I forgot who suggested we call it a letter of certification. I went back and, with Dan Ingram, wrote a draft of the kind of letter we would want. I showed it to Slade Gorton and he rewrote it and worked it over very carefully in his own language. And the letter went through several drafts. When the President invited all the Republican Senators to the White House, Gorton and Murkowski and Mattingly and I went early and met with Jim Baker. They had already seen a copy of our draft; but we told him that this is what we needed if we were going to go along--that otherwise, we would

vote against the sale. The idea of the letter had gotten around so much that when we met with the president, Alan Simpson got up and said he was going to vote for the sale on the basis of the letter. But it was not made public. That afternoon, Baker and Max Friedersdorf came to my office. This was the crucial meeting. Present were Kasten, Gorton, Mattingly, Murkowski and myself. That was the meeting when they told us that they accepted 95% of the letter. I think they wanted to create a steam^{roller} right there. We were going out for a few days and they wanted us to come out for the sale before we left. We said, no, that we wanted more time to reflect and that the recess would be a good time to do it. We wanted to make sure the President was willing to sign it. We did not Baker's signature. But I knew then that Murkowski and Mattingly and Gorton and myself would go. Andrews was holding out but we thought he would go. Kasten we weren't sure of, and he's the one we never did get, though I think he would have gone if the President had really needed him. After the recess, and after the President had said he would sign, Mattingly and I announced that we would support the sale. Baker told Les Rosen that once we announced, he knew they could win. And I notice Max Fredersdorf came out to listen to my press conference outside the White House to see exactly what words I used."

"The letter became the mechanism for winning over doubting Senators. Each one would read it, change it a little bit and put his Hancock on it somewhere. We have a copy in the office that shows our original draft, and we got 75% to 80% of what was in it. Gorton made a lot of changes; Mathais got interested in it, and made changes. A lot of people had their language in it. The only language they wouldn't accept was Kasten's. They said no, that his language went too far. And he voted against them. Lots of other Senators cited it, Bill Cohen cited it. Chuck Grassley got interested in it and cited it. Jepsen didn't. He just said he owed a loyalty to the President who helped him out in 1978."

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"Slade Gorton was interested in the fine print. I was not interested in the fine print. I was only interested in the concepts. The main idea came down to an institutional one--can the president conduct our foreign policy. That's what my mail said--the people in favor said, 'can't you support the president?' The more reasoned arguments in the merits of the sale came from those who were opposed. But it boiled down to supporting the President. That was the issue back home and it was the issue here."

Got 700 letters, big but only 15% of mail. Not one of the biggest issues.

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"Every Senator took this very seriously and thought it through for himself. There might have been ten who would have voted against no matter what and ten who would have voted for no matter what. But the rest spent a lot of time on it, held a lot of meetings on it. I think every Senator put himself in the position of the President. I know I was on the House Foreign Affairs Committee for 4 years and I never took anything as seriously as I took this. You feel it's more important and you spend more time on it... I think Senators do put themselves in the President's shoes. House members do not. "What would you do if you were in my position? Put yourself in my position." That's what the President said to me. And so many President's come from the Senate that you can do that. You look around and you say, it might be him--or him. He talked that way to Senators. He didn't pay any attention to the House. Of course, he knew he was going to lose over there but, still, he ignored the House."

Media
"Martin Schram wrote an article in which he wrote "What's the President doing negotiating with freshmen Senators. What's happening. I'll tell you what's happening. There are 16 of us, that's what. We are on-third of the Senate Republican. I was talking to an AP reporter and he said, we don't know who you are, we've never heard of any of you. We don't recognize any of your names."

Re freshmen
Re freshmen. "We've had one meeting a long time ago--in Don Nickles' office. Some of us are getting together this afternoon to discuss the budget to see what we want to do and if we can get together. Tomorrow morning we've invited all the freshmen Senators to breakfast and we'll see what happens there."

"Slade Gorton and I went over to talk to Katsen. the afternoon of the vote. We didn't ask him directly, but we got the strong feeling that if he had been the 50th vote for the sale, he would have done it. He didn't want to be the 50th vote against it, but he wasn't going to be the 53rd vote for it. He was against the sale. And they refused to put his language in the letter of certification."

"It was an example of how this Senate works. Everything went through Howard Baker. He ran the show. He dealt with people like me with the freshmen. He dealt with Sam Nunn on the other side."

Re senator to senator contacts. "There was no lobbying of other Senators. It was a matter of talking it through--why do you think this why do you think that. Nobody said 'Go this way or that way.' When someone told you how they were going, that was that, nothing more said."

I asked him who best reporter on AWACS was and he said no one in particular mentioned a Martin Schram story around AP, UP interviews. He was not a main player.

Re Budget Committee
He was upset that a CBS reporter had found out about the meeting of Budget Committee freshmen. (I saw Peter Davis later today and he said all the committee Republicans. "We'll see how solid we are. If we're solid we may just ram it through as fast as we can. If we're not, we'll string it out while the chairman works on our guys. You are paying the price for using Budget as the dumping

ground of the Senate. Domenici can lead some of them, with the help of Howard Baker, and keep these guys in line. But it won't work forever.")

"George Will said AWACS was like a baseball game, where a tie goes to the runner. The arguments were very close to a tie and Reagan was the runner."