

MARK ANDREWS

October 16, 1981

I dropped in to see Mark for first time. We talked briefly, rode trolley to Senate where he was to preside, Senate adjourned, drove back to SOB in his car and parted at the elevator.

He got up and greeted me with "I know you. You're a political scientist, a teacher, etc." I asked him how it was going.

"This is a fun place to be. You remember back in the campaign the other side criticized me for giving up my power spot for North Dakota on Appropriations to satisfy my ego. When it came down to it only one person lobbied me to go on a committee--Daniel Mont(?) a member of the Sioux indian tribe. He begged me to get on the Select Committee on Indian Affairs. I did (he laughs) then I picked up Agriculture, Appropriations and Budget on the side. Nobody cared what committee I went on. Byron Dougan, whose side was making all that noise didn't even try to get on the House Appropriations Committee. And there were five vacancies. But I'm keeping busy."

Answering questions about AWACS? I asked. And I said I'd heard him mentioned on CBS. "Yes, CBS evening news ran a story saying I was leaning towards the President. But I had told CBS in an interview that morning that I was going to vote against it, that my position had not changed."

He was shaking his head when the phone rang and the White House called. (Pam Schreiber ?) He told her the same story he had just told me and then he said. "I'm spending all my time answering questions on AWACS. The best thing everybody could do is to just lay off. The more pressure I get to vote for it, the more I will be forced to vote against it. The best thing you would do is say nothing... . No, I've had all the input I want to have on AWACS. I've had more input on that in the last two weeks than on anything else since I've been here... Well, if you want to talk about other considerations, the administration is telling us we have to sell AWACS to Saudi Arabia

to protect our oil supply in the Middle East to keep us energy independent. Then Stockman comes up and recommends that we cut subsidies to energy producing cooperatives in my state. (He went into interest rates and FFB or something at this point.) If you are interested in Middle East oil because of energy independence--and you should be--why not help people in this country who are also working toward energy independence. How inconsistent can you be?

There's no avid pro quo here. We ran over you on the rural cooperatives twice before and we'll do it again. But that's something you might want to consider... No, I told you I've had all the input I want. And I'm helping you. I took Davey Jones to North Dakota with me two weeks ago. I took him into Fargo, N.D., my home town, and made him the number one news item there and brought him before all the media and let him talk about AWACS. That program went into Durenberg's state, Boschwitz' state and my state. So I'm helping." That was substance of conversation--from his end of it."

"I think it's probably in our interest that the sale go through. I think it's even more in Israel's interest that it go through. I said to the President that it was all right for Begin to scream against it--and the President said he sure was--but I said, he ought to get hold of Begin and tell him to get hold of his chief hanzo over here--the ones who control and--you can't say that in public because that demeans your colleagues even though it's true--about 35 votes and tell them it's OK to change. Without the Israeli lobby, the AWACS would pass the Senate two to one, although Democrats have made a partisan issue out of it so they can sew up all the Jewish money in the next election."

"A group of Senators was talking at lunch about AWACS. We agreed that historically, it's just a little bump that will be soon forgotten."

It's an emotional issue." (Maybe the Israeli lobby quote ran on after this one?)

Would you have felt any different if you were in the House? "I'd have just voted against it. My constituents don't like us selling arms to other nations period. It has nothing to do with the Jewish vote. There probably isn't one rabbi in my state. That has nothing to do with it. My people believe in being militarily strong ourselves, but they don't believe in us meddling in other people's affairs. Never have--it goes back to a long ways to LaFollette and populism.

The letters I get are running 10-1 for against the sale. But if my judgment is correct, that does not represent true sentiment back home. They are against the sale; and I probably will be too. I have always campaigned against us getting ourselves involved in other parts of the world; and a fella has to be consistent sometimes. But it's going to be an awful mess in the middle east no matter what we do. I confess to you as an old friend and off the record that if the sale looks like it's going down, I may vote for it. Politically the best place to be is on the losing side of that vote, because whoever wins is going to be held responsible for the mess that will surely follows. It was ever thus."

"AWACS is taking about two hours a day--all that time for an isse that doesn't mean a rat's ass in North Dakota. There are only three things my constituents are interested in right now. The first is interest rates, the second is interest rates, the third is interest rates. They aren't even interested in the farm bill."

I asked about MX and he said that they should be worried (and are I guess) because the President's plan is to replace 3-war head missiles with 12-warhead missiles, which will cause the Russians to zero in on them that much more carefully.

*Helen Drew  
puts him out.*

I asked if I could follow his Transportation Subcommittee markup. "Since we do it in a pretty ~~test~~ tonic way, I don't bother with the fancy, fine points. I talk with Chip about it on the run. We had a preliminary markup all done, but then put it on hold when the President's second round of budget cuts come down. I don't know what we're going to do now, or when we will do it. Maybe we won't do anything. Maybe we will and if so it may come up suddenly."

Budget is "on hold" and in the car he showed me the horrible news" i.e., even with Reagan's 2nd round of cuts, a 59 billion deficit in 1984. And that assumes 8.4% interest on 90 day Treasury bills.

*Confrankult  
D.P.*

He looked over sheet which detailed no. of hours each Republican had spent presiding over the Senate in September and in 97th Congress. He had done 17 hours, which put him in the middle. "I'm all right. They can't complain that I'm shirking my duty. What an awful job, to sit there and listen to that. It's not so bad if there's a debate, but most of the time you sit there listening to quorum calls. Why anyone would want to set a record presiding over the Senate is beyond my comprehension." (He had said "It looks like John Warner is trying to set a record--40 hours.) He stood on the Capitol steps comparing himself with other freshmen, mostly.

He complained about how Stockman wants to put coast guard ships in moth balls at very time drug traffice increases.