INTERVIEW WITH DICK CLARK 7/13/73

QUESTION: The first question that we're going to ask you is why you think the office of administrative assistant is such a wonderful(?) job.

By Warm, Jon Bib

ANSWER: Well, it's the same job really. I don't see much difference.

Q: We thought it was interesting what your secretary told us. (laughter -- unintelligible)

A: Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you meant, why did I leave it? Oh, I see. Well, that's a good question. I've got, you know, I really have, if you're serious, it's an experiment. I think a lot of the problem with the organization of Senate offices, Congressional offices is that we create too many different structures, and it would be possible of course for me to structure an office as everybody else does in that way in the sense that you could go out and hire somebody and say now you're going to be in charge of all the legislation or you're going to be in charge of administering the office. But, I have a feeling, and I'm not very often ready to conclude it definitely yet, I have a feeling that/you only pick someone to hold that position and then make decisions position (2) that are not as, the prenominate (?) decision (?) to make, as well as below Them someone. I'm not articulating that very well, but what we've got is 5 or 6 legislative assistants, all of whom are solely responsible for their own **XXXXXX** areas, whether it's the energy crisis or

foreign relations or rural development or whatever it is. And I picked those people very carefully because I thought that they had had the background or the experience, intelligence, or some combination of those three that would make them better at rural development, let's say, than anybody else that I had on the staff. And, if I ever go out and get somebody else, then, and put them up above and say anytime you really have a problem with rural you just development/go to him or her and they'll tell you what to do. It seems to me that that really is just creating problems for yourself because that person will make the decision. I have, for example, a professional planner on my staff -- I don't have a legislative assistant or an administrative assistant, but I have a person who just plans, plans the operation of the tries-(this phrase hard to understand) mail and when he/gets that through he'll solve the planning of telephone numbers and he'll plan the legislative attack, etc. Well, he is a kind of natural administrator, and I find, for example, they'll often go to him, you see. There's a tendency often on both ends to want to do it in the old way. They'll/go to him and say now what do you think I ought to do about holding these hearings, etc. And so what the hell do you know about it; you don't know anything about rural development at all. You know? Why do you think we out to have hearings, etc? Let her decide that because that's what she does 10 and 12 hours a day. So it's

a kind of an attempt to decentralize with really only one boss, namely, me. Because ultimately I do want them to come to me if it's a policy decision or if they want some advice on it, etc., body in rather than putting some make between us. It will make the decison all right because he's in the habit, and I say he literally because it's usually a he, is in the habit of making decisions whether he knows anything about it or not -- just take the information as best he can, make the decision, and keeps moving. I'm just convinced that if you can get good enough people at this lowest level which is also the highest level to operate that thing effectively and /efficiently that you could have a better office. We even try to get that same person to do their own typing -- there are no typists -- on a couple of occasions we can't do it -- it hasn't worked out. But, they get the mail and they answer the mail, and they research the mail and they write the speeches in that area and they write the statements and they do everything in that area. See, the other alternative in a way is you get a hell of a bureaucracy built up handling one letter! You know, it ormes to them, and they study it, they send it here, and they and then they send it back write it, /and then they approve it, somebody else signs it, somebody else types it.

Q: The big state offices particularly where in a sense they can't do much of anything else when they get a thousand letters a day...

A: yeah, yeah

Q: Which is funny, this is very similar to what they're doing in some House offices.

A: Oh, is that right?

Q: I used to work for Don Fraser, and he's moving in that kind of a direction -- people do their own mail, and it is the kind of thing where people have their own areas.

A: Yes...

Q: Well, part of it, I think, is just, it's related to the kind of access you can have to the man at the top.

A: Yes, that's the biggest problem.

Q: And you can't do it in most Senate offices. (untelligible) A: That's the biggest problem. But as that process gets better, you see, as the person who's doing that or has the responsibility for it get's **better** more adept at it they need to bother you less and less.

Q: Yeah, that's true.

A: And, because then you're really only getting into policy decisions. That is the biggest weakness to it, even for our side office. I think we have 29 people. We're heavily loaded in the state, almost half our people are in the state. But it is the biggest problem with it, and sometimes it holds things up,

you know, now we've tried to shortcut that by having red tags on memos that have to be seen right away and giving it priority that and Jody (h) does a good job of trying to shuffle $\dot{x}x$ around so that nobody really gets stuck for too long, but, still, it is a problem. The other reason I did it, at the outset, was that most of the people that I hired were inexperienced. And I kind of did that on purpose, too, or obviously on purpose, doing it and and I wanted to break them in to my way of/thinking, etc. And again, if you put somebody in between it gets increasingly hard to train people in your own way, and I knew I would not be so in terms busy in this first year or so/of duties that I would not have time to do that. I could conceive that if we were subcommittee chairman of two important committees that were very active plus doing a hundred other things that we just might have to farm it out to somebody else.

Q: It's undesirable.

A: Yeah, I think you want to put it off as long as you can and you want to at least keep a finger in their activities as <u>long</u> as you can so that when you leave it they know what it is anyway and what you want them to do generally speaking. The other thing is they educate <u>you</u>, probably more than you educate them pretty fast, you know, if they develop expertise. The more you come in contact with them the more they're going to tell <u>you</u>, too, about

what they're doing. Anyway, we'll see how it works. It's really, I guess you'd say, just a horizontal structure, and I don't know -different people get good results in different ways.

Q: But you're also -- you think about these kinds of things which I'm sure relates back to your past experience as a...

A: Oh, yes, yes.

Q: Most Senators, I think, from our experience at least and from my own and from both our experience in working places, too, in both the Senate and the House is that most of these guys just don't think about it at all...

the

A: Yes, that's true.

Q: about what they're going to do. It's just come in, get somebody, you handle it...

A: I know, I know. I can't imagine that/-- I've never had any experience in business to speak of so I'm not a particularly good judge, but I would guess that the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives -- the offices -- are as poorly organized and administered as any institution in America. They just about <u>have because</u> to be. Now, I see --/as you say, I am somewhat interested -today I went down to the robo of room and went through it. And potential I can't <u>imagine</u> that Senators realize, you know, the/of those machines. Sometimes they've got 3 or 4 machines and 2 or 3 people and they're putting out 50 letters a day. When they could

be putting out (beginning of sentence unclear) five thousand or ten thousand, but I don't even think they know the room is there, sold them you know. And someone at some point/on getting robos, etc, or (some kind of unclear) getting a (f) computer or some damn thing, but in terms of effectively using that -- of course, I must confess that I think half of our motions are wasted, too!

Q: I was about to say that the offices may be mismanaged but the institution is not very well managed either.

A: That's right.

Q: And I think that's the whole relationship, too. It gets to be come a sort of vicious circle.

A: Sure has.

Q: If you guys could take some time to sit down and say now how should we be managing ourselves and the way legislation works and everything that you could do better, but you don't have the time because it's so poorly managed to sit down in the first place.

then

A: That's about it. And,/of course, there are so many other factors that you're probably more aware than I am about that sort of auger against change, you know. Where Andy Lowe (?) I see are going to meet here next trying to do something here in the Senate that would be similar to what the Bolling

Commission has done in the House. There've been a couple, intuduced a bill and Stevenson (next untelligible), Mathias, and Brock (next phrase unclean) and we're talking about trying to do something even better (phrase unclear). But I said, you know, let me talk to Byrd first. It's Byrd's subcommittee and he runs the subcommittee, doesn't have any staff for it. And if Byrd is opposed to it, unalterably opposed to it then we have to console ourselves to simply dropping it in. If he isn't then we can talk to him about the possibility of doing it, then we might, you know, put the time, effort and energy into going ahead and really trying to do something with it. Obviously, it's hard for a freshman Senator to do anything with it anyway probably, not as bad in the Senate as in the House, by any means. But, you do, when you're constantly thinking what would Byrd do, I mean what would he do with it if he introduced it anyway. And how much time should you put on it anyway, in terms of productive work rather than just showmanship. We're trying to put together a bill now, working with Common Cause, etc., because there's never been a comprehensive bill on public finance of election campaigns. Hart has a bill affecting only Presidents ...

Q: only Congressmen...

A: only Congressmen, not Presidents. And there's another one

I think ...

Q: Stevenson... Mathias that's right A: Stevenson and (unclear)/-- talking to one of the great experts on...

Q: I'm a Congressional Fellow and I'm working for Mathias...
A: Oh, you work for Mathias.

Q: on campaign financing.

A: You're doing the same thing. Well, you know, again, there's a lot of room in different areas to do things, but the question is not whether you can drop one in but where it's going to go and how you do it. So the institution is stifling; I suppose all institutions are, probably -- got to get through the president of the company someday even if he's prejudiced against you. O: Yeah.

A: I just think the damned Seniority System has got to be the major stumbling block in a...

Q: Even around here? Because I mean ...

A: I think (unclear) important Senator, but when you speak out, you get some play...

Q: You get plenty of mean. medice

A: Yeah, but...

Q: You have subcommittee chairmanship...

A: Oh, yes. To that extent, I mean, it's not like the House. Q: And it took John Culver several years before he got a subcommittee chairmanship.

A: Yes, no that's true. You get more power, immediately, but in terms of, in certain select areas, at any rate. But in terms of doing the kind of reform that we're talking about here, public financing, etc., it still operates so much on the basis of committee chairman. It isn't so much just the seniority; it's committee the fact that the/chairman stays there forever. And, has such a hold, combined with the seniority it's the degree of authority he has, or has taken, or has been allowed to take. unlimited Q: (comment unclear -- re: /tenure, then laughter) in a way And in some cases, almost unlimited power, which (whether) A : worse than the tenure, you know. If it were a democratically operated group, it wouldn't necessarily mean, you know, that even the oldest member would be so bad because he would be kind of referee, he could act as presiding officer, and ...

Q: Yeah.

A: The committee structure -- that could be improved tremendously, obviously, too.

Q: Let me move to something here. XXXXX You're on the Steering Committee.

A: Yes.

Q: First, how did you get on the Steering Committee, why you as opposed to someone...

A: Well, I really don't know. I came in immediately after the election and talked to all the members of the Steering Committee about my committee assignments. And I came to know some of them rather well, I suppose, for a freshman member. I got along well, I thought, with Senator Mansfield. I don't know who made the recommendation. I'm quite sure the leadership did, now that I think about it -- I'd just never thought about it before. And so I just assume it was just accepted by the others.

Q: Are you elected by the full caucus...?

A: Well, technically, I think you are, but in fact the nomination if probably tantamount to election. I did talk to Senator Byrd about it, who told me that he was opposed to broadening the Committee, but if that decision were made that he would support me. And he felt the leadership; I shouldn't say that -- I can't remember it that well (?). So I'm not sure really, I there was a desire to don't know. My guess is that they wanted some, intervalue to as I recall, do two things/ intervalue is broaden the geographic representation and maybe broaden the, I mean, not be quite as dependent upon real (?) members, because of the criticism. But that's pure speculation, the latter part. Maybe they want more freshmen, I don't know (next phrase unclear).

Q: I want to talk a little bit about how the Steering Committee makes its decisions, or how you as a member of the Steering Committee make decisions. People submit orally or in writing their preferences for committees.

A: That's right. I think mostly in writing and they will contact you. It was an odd experience for me because I was sworn in and as I was being sworn in I had all these people lobbying me that I'd never heard about in my life, you know, that I'd never seen before, sort of. And so it was a fastmoving experience and in another year I think I could tell you better in terms of what really happened and how it worked well enough. than I could now. But, you know, I think I could recal ½. You say how does it operate, what happens, how do we get selected. Q: Yeah, right, exactly.

A: First of all the essential thing is that you're always advised by the Secretary of the Senate or by Mansfield's assistant that you should write to each of the members of the Committee and advise them of your interest be on record for it. I think through they even keep these fox several years. I remember the time ed I submitted I was more interest/in getting on Foreign Relations --I knew I wouldn't be able to do that right away, but I listed that as my fifth choice or something, with the advice to continue

to do that in future years so that if you were ever in a position to do it you would be on record as having done it. So I think the historical record has some effect. Now, what really happened was/as we went through each committee, someone would bring up, again, I think Mansfield, in effect, or his assistant the number of vacancies -- we went through them alphabetically -the committees. We came to agriculture, I guess probably first, we talked about how many vacancies there were, 1 or 2 vacancies, how many people applied for it. And wherever possible, and it was often possible, people were given the committees that they had applied for and there was no contradiction. There were two vacancies and there were two people that wanted it and so it was given without any further consideration. Wherever there was a conflict various things were discussed. I suppose the most important of which would be how long he'd asked for it -- how long he'd been on record -- not technically, necessarily the most important but weigh very heavily. Which really in effect meant how long have you been here. So the seniority pull (?) was a leading factor. In fact, in terms of what you even applied for it would be. You notice I said I want Foreign Relations and I listed it fifth, not first, you see. Because I knew I could not just move -- just intuition if nothing else -- that that wouldn't do...So wherever possible we fill those where there

was no controversy, wherever we could. Sometimes on the other hand people would have applied for things that they really didn't want because they had made a commitment to their constituency to apply for it in campaigning or something. And they did apply this for it, but they let it be known privately -- I can remember/in some one case that they really didn't want it. And so waw member of the Committee would say well yeah, I know he did that but he told me he really didn't want it, you know, so there'd be some of that. Now you'd only get down to the crunch on/major committees, generally. On the minor committees, incidentally, well, on both committees if you could not give somebody what they wanted you sometimes tried to find something else that they would want, that we thought they would want -- and even occasionally called them on the telephone and said, you know, Commerce is full, but would you be willing to take something else and how would that work? And obviously political considerations have a good deal to do with it, not heavily, but it was considered if a man was up for re-election next year and there was reason to believe that it would be particularly beneficial to him and it could be done easily there might be a common agreement that it would be good to do that. Or, as I recall, in a somewhat more negative way, a couple of people who felt they

needed appointments very badly couldn't be given them, according to the majority of the Committee so they would try to find something for that person that would look fairly good. I think the political considerations were not very great, but I think it would be a mistake to think they don't exist. Actually, as I recall, there were only 3 or 4, maybe 5 cases this year where there were committee positions open where there was a real constroversy and a real battle for them and sharp division. Foreign Relations, as I recall, that happening, when we had to go back and open up another position for Humphrey and McGovern both, etc., which I guess settled that problem. But I remember on Finance, in particular, there was a, the hottest there, I think, battle. People wound up there pretty much/on the basis of their own political philosophy. Bensten was elected rather easily and so was Mondale, two very opposite ones, that they were well enough organized on it that those two came out ahead right away. As I recall, Gravel was added at that time as well. Well, the feeling was, this was never discussed in the committee, that there had been some pretty heavy lobbying from oil interests, etc., for this. I have no evidence of that -- nobody spoke to me about it, and I voted on a philosophical basis, as far as that's the concerned. But I think those are the kind of/considerations that you run into the operation -- the name is presented, the alternatives are presented, it's broadly discussed, it's usually almost unanimously agreed to then by the Committee, but not necessarily in the difficult ones. Try to get people what they want if you can.

Q: Let me move to something else. Just one other question before we get into this. Did you find as a member of the Steering Committee that you got any special little preferences when you listed your committees.

A: Well, I think that, I don't think that it was, depends on how you look at it. I think that if you are sitting there with 20 other people and you say I'm really interested in Agriculture and it's a good committee for me, etc., that the other people there are reluctant to turn you down. Now, on the other hand, I think that -- it gives you an advantage. On the other hand, if there was strong enough feeling against you for someone else I think they would do it. They have secret ballots, by the way, on the tough votes, but it gives you an advantage. It happened on my committees, as I recall, that there really wasn't much of a problem because nobody else wanted Agri...- I think three of us wanted Agriculture, there were 2 positions and one of them in this case was one that really didn't want Agriculture. I had a second choice, which escapes me now that I did <u>not</u> get. My third choice was Public Works and I got that and as I recall it was no big problem to get. I don't think there was any controversy over anybody else wanting it as a first choice. You know you list all these choices and then kind of just juggle them around. It's not as much controversy as one might think -- probably 5 or 6 men in the Senate who wanted to move around that didn't. pretty much the way they wanted to. They were even violating the as I recall, what was it, the Reorganization Plan, in order to add more people and (unclear) to get the Republicans to agree another one to match it, etc.

Q: Something that at least people used to write about the Senate has (unclear) is that the Senate/over time developed certain...People find that the Senate has developed certain expectations about the way a Senator ought to (unclear), certain norms that are communicated to new members. Do you think there's anything to that? (last two words unclear)

A: Explain a little more what you mean.

Q: Well, ok, -- go through some specifics. People claim for example that new Senators are expected to serve a period of apprenticeship where they're sort of silent and learn the ropes before they really speak out and get involved.

A: No, I've never xxxxx been told that. I think that undoubtably to had been a practice prior/ this time. I don't sense that at all.

In fact, the one thing that Mansfield said to me was, the first time I saw him, was, how did he say it, don't believe that freshman Senators are to be seen and not heard. You're an equal member of this body just like anybody else in the United States Senate. You represent a state just exactly as the oldest member of this body does and any time you've got anything to say, feel free to say it. So I think there was more, in effect, he... I did not speak in the Caucus the first 2 or 3 times -- a maybe couple or three freshman/had not -- and I remember at some party where the or something where he was at and/freshman were invited he stood up and said -- he hasn't spoken yet and he hasn't spoken yet, but by god, they're going to talk, you know. And so he was really pushing us to talk, you see? Now I think it's quite true that it's very natural for a young person coming in, it's natural for me and it's natural for everybody, not to immediately get up and start talking about something about which you know relatively little. And it's just wise to do. I mean it's wise for an old member, as far as that's concerned. Older members do tend, on the whole, to know more about the particular bill or the subject matter, etc., because they've been through it in past years. And so it's rather natural, I think, that younger members don't speak as much. But I think if you look in the Senate floor even now you'd find that a number of members speak a good deal and

that have

freshman members, particularly those whether been in the House, I think, who've had some familiarity -- a good example is Bill Hathaway (?), and I think he's respected. I don't think there's any disrespect because when he talks about something, introduces amendments, etc., he seems to know what he's talking about. So I think that that's the test, really, rather than how long you've there are old... been here. Now I'm sure there are old... been here. Now I'm sure there are old... been here and saw a young member stand up the second day and give a speech about something would probably resent it. But I don't think it's a significant factor at all.

(?) about

Q: How well within your committees?

A: Same there. I don't sense that -- again I think an older member, you know, if some guy started talking to Muskie about environmental problems and telling him what's wrong about this thing or about that...well, let's not get that in, you might feel that way about an older member. But, if he started talking a lot and had relatively little information he might resent it more from him than from an older member, I don't know. But there's very active participation in the committee by the in freshman members. I've done it a great deal and all the committees. I know even on the floor, in the Ag Committee, I got up and paged 4(2) the Chairman on 2 or 3 occasions and asked for roll call votes that he didn't want, etc., and I've never felt that he's discriminated against me because (next phrase unclear). He's never refused to grant me hearings that I wanted to hold in Iowa or whatever I wanted to do. I've never felt any reluctance to oppose him and to say so on the floor or any place else as long as I did it directly and in a straightforward manner as any older member phrase (seemed to repeat not feeling any reluctance) would (next/unclear) -- I didn't (word unintelligible-like serve d "sensed") from other members.

Talking about your committees, could you say a little bit Q: about a comparison of the two, sort of the way they operate. Are they very similar in the way they do business? Or different? They are rather similar. I gather, in the case of Agriculture, A: that most of the staff members there are hired by the Chairman, are responsible to the Chairman, unlike I gather, some committees, where if you're subcommittee chairman you hire the staff for it or the people for it. Same is true of Public Works. I have two -- a subcommittee in each one -- and no staff people. They're assigned to me out of the pool, so to speak. I guess other committees operate in different ways, in terms of the subcommittee chairman, the staff members, etc. Both committees are relatively democratic, as relatively as any committees, in the sense that I've just described them and I think I've never sensed that I even didn't get an equal opportunity to speak and/sometimes/Talmadge

will start at the lower end of the seniority and let them ask questions of the secretary first or something first, you see. So I think you have an equal opportunity to do anything, to introduce legislation, to talk. I don't know that I've -can you think of other...? (end of first side) Q: What about the subcommittees? Are they pretty autonomous and

or does the Chairman sort of try xm govern what they do rather closely?

A: Well, again, I think it would vary as much as it would with each individual. Most subcommittee hearings and activities, in terms of it seems to me, revolve so much around the chairman metho chalantary god presence". There's rarely anybody else there! That's the first problem. I walk into a subcommitte meeting and I notice that the chairman's surprised to see that I've come to the hearing because not very many people stay there, other than the chairman or somebody that he gets to chair the meeting for him on that day. I think you could probably assume about as much autonomy as you wanted because most other members would not care very much I think, unless you became reckless with But I think it's fairly autonomous. I decided, for example, it. to have all my meetings open in the committee that I've got -whatever it is -- mark-up session, or anything. And that's

opposed to the policy of the chairman, but I've never had anybody it was in someway suggest to me that I shouldn't do it or that 'ixxxxxxxxxx undermining the chairman. I've never had any comment on it -- I've always done it. And other members -- I try to consciously not go ahead with procedures without bringing them up to them and asking them what they...for example in Buildings and Grounds we're starting a whole new approach in building Federal buildings, etc., we getting a much more systematic kind of approach and it's a whole new procedure, forcing the GSA to come to us earlier with more information and going through a system that the Library of Congress and GAO is setting up. It would be systematic, scientific way of deciding whether we ought to build a Federal building. And again I've had nothing but encouragement from the chairman for doing that and (following unclear) nor has the committee. Q: You mentioned mark-ups. Do subcommittees on both committees mark up bills?

A: Well, only to the extent that we -- when I say mark-up I guess I really mean in terms of deciding what we're going to put in the bill that we report to the full committee. Obviously they can change it then any way they want to. But, whatever we're doing we've always had everything open to the press. Not that I suspect there's that much interest in it, but just by way of a policy and it's a contrary policy to change. I've never had any trouble with that. Now on another committee you might have all kinds of trouble, I don't know.

Q: (first comment unclear) In the House you have all kinds of voluntary groups like DSG and (rest unclear). Are there any of these that you belong to in the Senate? A: We just started the Midwest Democratic Caucus which is the only one that I'm aware of of any kind. It's Hughes' idea and he's chairman and we've got a great number of liberal democrats in the Midwest...

Q: Which is incredible!

A. Yeah. So we try to get together, we get together -- it was just created in February, I suspect, and we get less frequent in our meetings involve all the time. We try to get some stands together, etc. But it's very informal and g/10 (?) of the members don't come. So no, I don't know of any kind of...
Q: That's probably the reason most people can't come...
A: Yeah, it's so busy, you know...we've only got two (or a few)

more minutes?

Q: Let me just ask you once more and then we'll finish.
A: Having served as a staff member of the House, you're pretty
familiar with the House. What were the most striking differences between -to you/in the way you saw things in the House?

immediately

A: A Senator is given a good deal more responsibility/than **#MRERERX** the House member. That would be the most striking...subcommittee chairmanships,...

Other difference in the leadership, the way it operates. Q: I don't know whether I could judge so much in the House. A: Leadership is pretty dependent upon, you know, the personality who's the leader. And Mansfield is obviously a very soft-spoken, kindly, gentle, democratic person. I don't know enough about the leadership in the House of Representatives now or even at that time to know -- certainly a very different period under Johnson. I think it's very arguable which one's best. And I remember he got speaking to a Senator who said drawn on the Foreign Relations Committee, the first time he was here. And I said, how the hell could you do that? And he said, well, I just went to Lyndon Johnson, and he said, he put me on it! And, he said, but about a year and a half later I voted against him once -- he never spoke to me for a year, never spoke to me. I could no more ask him for anything, because I voted against him once. Well, now that's discipline, and you would have gotten the Vocational Rehabilitation bill through undoubtedly here that we lost (following unclear) -not enough people to over-ride the veto, if we had Lyndon Johnson But boy, don't think you don't pay a price for that in terms of your own conscience and your own ability to move, etc. It's

frustrating on the other hand to lose, too.

Q: Is your time spent, your day, different than the House member spends his?

A: I don't think so. No, I think it's the same thing; I don't see any difference, about the same. We have more committees, you know, more committee responsibilities certainly, but (followingunclear) become more selective... Sorry(?) (tape ends here)