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Barbara painted a picture of the committee from a junior member's viewpoint. The process doesn't work very well. Dan feels it doesn't "do" anything that it's supposed to do. It doesn't read. It follows. Its figures are always last year's figures. It's and has no teeth. It is a parliamentary operation without a parliamentary system because it can only work with strong parties. I would say you can have bipartisan consensus or strong party leadership, but not the current situation of partisanship plus divided party leadership.

She thinks Pete is a very ineffective leader, because he does not put together coalitions the way he should. He takes too much of it onto himself. The problem is that the members do not feel they have a stake in it anyway. That's for starters. It's not anybody's first choice. And the chairman has no goodies. But he has to give them a stake in it somehow. The way to give them a stake is to let them participate in shaping the draft budget. As it is now, PD brings in his mark. And all the other guys have to go separately to CBO and get the numbers for their own plan. Everyone has a plan. They don't immediately accept PD's plan because they had no part in drawing it up. I said I think of PD as the Lone Ranger out there with no one helping. But her view is why should they help, except on philosophical grounds. PD doesn't have to be the Lone Ranger and he is as much the cause as the effect. She thinks he should farm out the revenue side to the younger guys, the COLAs to somebody else. Then they would get together and hammer out a budget that they all had a stake in. They'd have a committee bill. It wouldn't have the symmetry of PD's bill, but it would have support. In addition, Pete should lobby the members and talk to them more than he does.

"There's more to being a chairman than proposing a plan. You have to talk

to members and see what they want. You have to sit around after hours and have a couple of beers with them. You have to work on people all the time. Armstrong would make a good chairman. He likes to get people together."

Re Dan Quayle. "Some Senators like to do the intellectual work of drafting legislation. Others like to get to know the other members and build support for the legislation. Dan is one of the latter. Not many of them are good at that. Dan is." "I think Dan is not a loner. In that sense he's not like Tsongas or Cohen.

Barbara talked about how the press plays up the Committee as Pete Domenici. No sharing. The staff is tightly knit and doesn't ask for input from members' staffs. They meet, but only to be told what's up and be kept informed. They aren't asked for their opinion. She thinks because Bell is a press person that they play an inside game, leads, etc. with the press and the net is to play up PD and staff and downplay other staff.

Dan wants to reform the system. Would like a tax subcommittee, she thinks. He doesn't like Budget assignment. She thinks he shouldn't stay on Labor--bad for his career.

She said that at the last meeting of the Republicans, PD had asked Quayle, Armstrong and Kastenbaum to come up with a compromise plan. (Pete D. had told me it was Quayle and Armstrong--"the two loose cannons.") Barb. said that they would offer some amendments, but that they hadn't come up with a compromise plan.

Barbara's attitude is always one of depression about the process. It's falling apart. It's not working etc. We spent a lot of time speculating on what it would look like if there were no budget committee and approp. comms. took over budget process.

It's interesting that the three people PD asked to produce a plan are about the only ones that don't already have a plan already--except for Tower and Hatch, who are Chairman of own comms. and preoccupied. (Tower's defense bill is on the floor now.)

(I go into Pete's office and talk to Skip. Who says that the big difference between business and Congress is that in business you are inculcated in team spirit and here it's very competitive and individualistic. On average, people are better in Congress. Competitiveness is greater among staff than among Senators, he says.)