

CATES: How do you think Senator Russell--why and how did it come about that he was chosen to head up this inquiry? Was it because of the position he held in the Senate or did Truman have--did he select him because he knew him personally?

RUSK: Well, I suppose the actual selection rested with the Senate, the Senate leadership, because it was a Senate investigation. I'm not sure whether Senator Russell had become Chairman of the Armed Services Committee at that time--

CATES: Yes, he was.

RUSK: Well, that would make it a natural thing for him to do--

CATES: I see.

RUSK: As Chairman. But, apart from that, Richard Russell had an enormous respect for what I would call political integrity in the Senate. You always knew where he stood and you knew that if he told you one thing today he would tell you the same thing the next day--tomorrow. But if he was with you, he would stay with you until the house burned down. If he opposed you, he, would oppose you with all the parliamentary skills at his command which were very considerable. So I don't believe I've ever heard anyone challenge the integrity of Richard Russell. I've heard a lot of people disagree with him, but I never heard a man challenge his integrity.

CATES: Would you like to comment just a little further in connection with the hearings? Other persons have commented about the fairness with which the conducted the hearings. You were kind of on the scene so to speak. Would you like to comment about that?

RUSK: Oh, I think he showed impeccable care in handling the hearings. See, there was a great deal of emotion at the time. As a matter of fact, when President Truman relieved General MacArthur he told the rest of us in his administration that he was very much aware of the fact that General MacArthur had not been home since World War II. He had not received the hero's welcome to which he was entitled. And Truman told us that he did not want anyone in his administration to do anything to detract from the kind of welcome that MacArthur would get and to which he was entitled. He said there'd be hell to pay for about three weeks and then it would blow over. That was his summary of the situation. But that rather big view of Harry Truman even in that difficult situation has sort of been lost and doesn't come out in later accounts of that episode.

CATES: You mentioned the fact that you really got to know Senator Russell while you were Secretary of State beginning with John F. Kennedy. What were some of the significant dealings you had with Senator Russell while you were serving as Secretary of State?

RUSK: Typically I would testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but on rare occasions I would meet with the Senate Armed Services Committee. There were times when these two committees would hold joint hearings as they did for example at the time of the--I think the Tonkin Gulf Resolution discussion in 1964. But I would also drop in on Senator Russell, not too often, but occasionally because I looked upon him as my Senator although I was

technically from New York at the time, I looked upon Senator Russell as my Georgia Senator. Occasionally I would have something to talk to him about involving foreign policy. For example, he kept a very close personal watch on the naval vessels which we made available to other governments and, of course, we were under great pressures from all over the world to provide this or that or the other government with destroyers or whatever. And he handled that rather personally and so I would go down and talk to him about that kind of problem. Of course, when a president, whether it was Kennedy or Johnson, had the leadership of the Congress in in moments of crisis, Russell was always there. For example, at the time of the Cuban missile crisis and later when President Johnson called in the leadership connected with Vietnam and so forth, Russell was always present and made his presence felt. So we weren't intimate but we had a good many official problems to consider.

CATES: I see. You mentioned the Cuban crisis there. Some others that I have interviewed in the past have kind of indicated that Senator Russell had some definite views as to what we should have done and that he passed those on to President Kennedy. Would you like to comment about that?

RUSK: Yes. You will remember that President Kennedy made his famous television speech to the nation on a Monday in October of 1962. But we in the executive branch had known about the missiles for a week preceding that statement. And we organized our task forces and our study groups for intensive study as to what this meant and what should be done about it and how we should move on it. Well, we did not consult anyone in the Congress during this period unless President Kennedy or President Johnson talked behind their hands to Senator Russell in a way that I did not know about. But late in the afternoon of that Monday of the television speech, President Kennedy called down the leadership of the Congress to meet with him in the Cabinet Room. And there unfolded the whole situation for the first time to the members of Congress. There were about eighteen or twenty of them there. And at the same time told them what he was going to do about it in regard to the quarantine and the contents of his speech to the nation in about two or three hours time. Well, these members of Congress were looking at it for the first time. They had had no chance to think about it, to look at all the alternatives deeply. And so in a sense it was not real consultation so much as informing the leadership what had happened and what the President intended to do about it. Well, on that occasion Senator Russell and Senator Fulbright wanted more immediate military action against Cuba. They wanted bombing of the missile sites and invasion of Cuba, whatever it was, as had Dean Acheson that previous week in our private consultations. And they made those points forcefully. But nonetheless, the President continued on his course with respect to the quarantine and Senators Russell and Fulbright did not make speeches during that delicate period that would have made things more difficult for President Kennedy. This represents to me a deficiency in the process of consultation because when you get the congressional leaders in their two or three hours before a major speech to the world was going to be made which would precipitate a major crisis, about the only question before these congressmen is "Are you ready to support your country in a moment of crisis?" because it was too late to have any effect on the decision, you see. So as a result of that meeting particularly I have come to the view that that group that is called in at moments of crisis ought to be called in periodically in between crises to share information, to develop some consensus and to give the leaders of Congress more--more opportunity to reflect upon some of these situations. But Russell wanted very forceful military action. We rejected that as the first step. We did not

exclude it down the line if something didn't happen to those missiles. But we rejected in the first instance for a very special reason. We're not going to have nuclear war because some government sits down and makes a calm, deliberate, well-reasoned decision to open up nuclear war. That's suicide for everybody. We could have nuclear war; however, if a man or group of men found them driven into a corner from which they see no escape, where they would be tempted to play the role of Samson, and pull the temple down around themselves and everyone else at the same time. And we did not want to drive Khrushchev into that kind of a corner at the opening of a crisis. Now, time was running out during that crisis because there was one factual point that I haven't, seen discussed publicly. We never saw a warhead on a missile on a launcher ready to go. So we had a little time, not much. Because if we had seen a warhead on a missile on a launcher, then it could have been a different ball game. So we were playing for hours. We might well have wound up doing what Senator Russell recommended if the Cuban missiles weren't taken out on just about the day they were taken out. It was getting awfully close to the deadline.

CATES: While we're talking about that and the fact that Russell did offer I feel reasonably certain from persons that I've talked to before-- some advice to President Kennedy, we might just touch now on how President Kennedy felt about Senator Russell and his--well, eventually he had thirty-eight years in the Congress before he died in January of '71. But how did Senator Kennedy--President Kennedy view the advice from Senator Russell on any matter?

RUSK: Well, this requires us to take a look at how it was that Richard Russell became for a period of about twenty years the second most powerful and influential man in Washington, second only to presidents. He began with that strong sense of political integrity which earned him the respect -of his colleagues. Secondly, he was a very skilled parliamentarian. He knew how the Senate worked and he could influence its working by his parliamentary capabilities. Third, he was Chairman of the Armed Services Committee which is a very important committee and through much of that time he was the de facto Chairman of the Appropriations Committee because he was second in rank to Senator Carl Hayden of Arizona--

CATES: I think it's Arizona.

RUSK: Of Arizona. Carl Hayden had come to the Congress when Arizona entered the Union. And so as he got older, his own powers diminished and Senator Russell had to carry, in effect, the Chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee. So--and then Senator Russell could deliver anywhere from twenty to twenty-five votes on any subject whatever. Well, that meant that he was the man that presidents had to talk with. And that was true of Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, no question about it. I expect that the record will show that President Johnson was in touch with Senator Russell one way or another four or five times a week throughout the Johnson presidency. I don't know what the logs would show but it wouldn't surprise me at all if that should be the case. So Kennedy having been a Senator for a relatively brief period was really aware of this towering position of Senator Russell in the Senate, so he talked to him not as frequently as Johnson, but he talked to him fairly regularly, tried to keep in touch with him to keep them together as much as possible. Of course, on certain subjects they just didn't agree. But no one during those years could be President without maintaining pretty close touch with Senator Richard Russell.

CATES: Would you say generally he would heed his advice, not that he would necessarily agree and maybe follow his advice, but he would certainly respect it and I guess heed it. Would you say that that would be a good statement?

RUSK: Always. You always had to take his view into account but that didn't mean you always had to accept his view as policy. Now there are some things in which his view was final. For example, when the question came up as to whether this or that or the other country would be given an American destroyer, Richard Russell's view of that was absolutely final. There were no ifs, or ands, or buts about it. He decided that question. But also you relied upon him in other respects. In retrospect I think this is not the right procedure but--I never saw a budget of the CIA, for example, although I was a statutory member of the National Security Council. The CIA's budget apparently went to two or three specially cleared people in the Bureau of the Budget, then run briefly by the President, turned over to Senator Russell, and that was the end of it. He would lose the CIA budget lip the Defense Budget and he wouldn't let anybody question it. There were no public hearings on it. So again his judgement, his word on that was the last word. The--on questions of military policy and, of course, any administration has to deal with those, you pretty much had to work things out with Senator Russell in those years.

CATES: It's interesting that you mentioned the CIA budget in view of what just happened this past week. Do you think Senator Russell would have had knowledge of pay-offs say to King Hussein by the CIA, or would he not have had knowledge of that?

RUSK: Well, I don't know whether those reports are true to start with, nor if they are true what the money was for. I could well imagine some funds were made available to King Hussein for his own security arrangements in Jordan and his own security services. We were giving him large foreign aid at the time overtly so--I never sat in on any of the briefings of Senator Russell by directors of CIA so I don't know in what detail he was briefed on some of these things.

CATES: I see. You had indicated that as Secretary of State you would drop by his office occasionally. While you were in this office, and I believe you were in this office about seven years--

RUSK: Eight years.

CATES: Eight years. How did Senator Russell help you the most if he indeed helped you while you were Secretary of State and he was in the position he was in?

RUSK: Well, he was always very kindly and courteous to me personally. And he was willing to offer a word of encouragement or advice about this or the other problem. I don't think I ever called upon him directly for major assistance on the Senate Floor about any particular subject. But I wanted him to know that I was always available if he wanted me to come down and brief him about any particular matter that came up and--but he was considerate of the time problems faced by a Secretary of State and perhaps only once did he ever take the initiative to ask me to come by to see him about something. Of course when we met with groups of senators, whether at

the White House, or down in the Senate, he would be there and his views on particular points would be extremely important because the other senators listened to him and respected his views.

CATES: You indicated that he took the initiative one time to ask you to come down to see him. Would you elaborate on that?

RUSK: I just don't remember the subject.

CATES: Oh, I see. OK.

RUSK: See I met with about--I met with individuals and groups something like fifty thousand times in eight years so I just can't remember individual conversations too well.

CATES: That's understandable. Much has been said about the differing political philosophy between the two friends, Senator Russell and President Johnson. Would you comment about this, please?

RUSK: Lyndon Johnson grew up in circumstances which caused him to have some strong inner views about civil rights problems. Around in that part of Texas were a lot of German refugees from the Revolution of 1848 who had that mid-nineteenth century German brand of liberalism in their make-up. He had seen the Chicanos, the Mexican-Americans in Texas. He had taught them in school after he graduated. He had seen at first hand the problems of the blacks including blacks on his own staff. So when he was liberated ~ from the necessity of being elected a Senator from Texas, all these dammed- - up feelings just came out like a volcano. I think the most dramatic moment of my tour in office--to me as a Southerner--was President Johnson's address to the joint session of Congress on voting rights where he in effect said, "Now here's what I've lived through, but now I can do something about it." And then he looked at the Congress and said, "And you're going to help me." But it was--Senator Russell had not had the same kind of experience. His views on race questions were more traditional. My guess is that part of that was in a sense superficial. Senator Russell was kind and compassionate and understanding of people including blacks. But it was still true in those days that you were supposed to say certain things and take certain attitudes. I used to refer to it as the "tea-table version" of these issues, you see. And also Senator Russell was a--probably a member of the last generation who remembered the bitterness of the Reconstruction period. When I was a child that bitterness was very strong, very pronounced. Well, I think during World War II we put--we put the Reconstruction period behind us here in the South. But he--this meant more to him than it means to the next generation. Now their friendship was I think not strictly personal in character-. I have the impression that Senator Russell's personal friendships were rather carefully selected and rather austere in character. He did not give his--the warmth of a personal friendship easily. But undoubtedly Senators Russell and Johnson had great respect for each other. They'd been in the same parliamentary foxholes together many, many times, They were close working colleagues in the Senate and that brought a real mutual respect between them. There were, of course, major differences, sometimes large matters, sometimes smaller matters. There was the continuing difference on civil rights issues. I was amused to--President Johnson once told me about Senator Russell on the Warren Commission. He said he had called Senator Russell and told him that he wanted him to be on the Warren Commission, that it was important that the best people in the country be on it. He said,

'Senator Russell replied, 'No, Mr. President, I will not serve on that Commission. I won't do it. It's the last thing in the world I would think of doing. Just leave me off.'" Well, then Johnson said that a few days later he called Senator Russell and said, 'Senator, I just thought that I better let you know that I'm announcing the membership of the Warren Commission today and you're on it.'" So the Senator said, "Mr. President, I told you I would not serve on it." And Johnson said, 'Nevertheless, Senator, you're on it.'" And the announcement was made and Senator Russell served.

CATES: One thing that we might want to just clarify here in your chatting just a few minutes ago on Side I of this tape, you indicated that there perhaps was not this warm personal friendship between Senator Russell and President Johnson, and you might want to clarify that because some people might think that it was just a friendship of political expedience, and I believe you indicated it was probably a little more than that.

RUSK: Yes, I wouldn't call it political expediency. I--you know, there is a difference between official relationships and personal relationships. These official relationships can be very close indeed without getting over into intimacy between families and things of that sort. Now, I don't want to draw too sharp a distinction here as far as Russell and Johnson are concerned because I don't really know at the heart exactly what their personal relationships were on a purely personal basis. But, for example, the official relationship with President Kennedy was very close indeed. I met him several times a week and hundreds and hundreds of times during our joint service. But I was not a member of his private life. I didn't play touch football at Hyannis Port. I didn't go yachting at West Palm Beach. I wasn't pushed into the swimming pool at Ethel's place over in Virginia, things like that. So at least I had the impression that Russell and Johnson were two colleagues who worked extraordinarily close together on matters of public business. But I don't even know whether they shared any of the same personal interests or tastes or anything of that sort.

CATES: You had indicated that you were not aware that President Johnson did not attend the funeral of Senator Russell. Would you--

RUSK: No, I'm sorry, that was a mistake because I was at the Senator's funeral here in Winder. It was a terrible day. The parties from Washington had to land in Charleston or someplace like that. And I'm quite sure that it was President Johnson's health that prevented his coming. I just utterly reject the idea that somehow there was tension between them or that somehow for policy or other reasons, personal reasons Lyndon Johnson would not have come to the Senator's funeral had he felt up to it.

CATES: I might mention this to you and you probably do not have this knowledge that we tried to get President Johnson to participate in the oral history, and the word we got back--I guess it was through Tom Johnson who is now on the Board of the Russell Foundation--was that President Johnson would not participate because he felt like that Senator Russell did not approve of such oral histories because he, Senator Russell, did not participate in the oral history for President Johnson which was being conducted while President Johnson was still alive. Were you aware of that?

RUSK: No.

CATES: So this is the reason I try to kind of probe in this situations to find out from persons like yourself if there was indeed bitterness there at the end between the two men.

RUSK: Well, I saw President Johnson after he left office a few times and I never got that impression. As a matter of fact, after I left office in 1969 while I was still living in the city of Washington, I had a health problem that took me out to Walter Reed and Senator Russell was in Walter Reed at the same time. We had adjoining bedrooms there in the VIP suite at Walter Reed. And I visited with him three or four times at the hospital where we were both patients. I found him mellow, reflective, no feelings of bitterness or anything in his make-up. Now, given the nature of their relationship had there been any problem of that sort, I'm sure that neither Richard Russell nor Lyndon Johnson would have spoken to me about it, see because I was, from that point of view, I was a stranger.

CATES: I see.

RUSK: And I don't believe they would have gossiped with a stranger about each other.

CATES: How do you view your political philosophy with that of Senator Russell? Did you ever discuss this with the Senator?

RUSK: No, I knew that there was no particular point in my discussing civil rights with the Senator. He had taken his position. I knew he would remain on that position. I did lead off Cabinet testimony on some of the civil rights bills during the Sixties. But I didn't ever discuss that with Senator Russell.

CATES: What specifically did Russell do to your knowledge to aid Lockheed thereby aiding the economy of Georgia and also other military installations in Georgia?

RUSK: I don't really know specifically because that was pretty much outside the range of my responsibilities. But at the time when Richard Russell was Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Carl Vinson was Chair- man of his Committee over in the House, Georgia certainly didn't suffer as far as military installations were concerned. As a matter of fact, we have this fine Naval Supply Corps School here in Athens, Georgia, right now and I'm sure that Senator Russell played a major role in seeing to it that that was here and it was properly developed.

CATES: Russell was noted for his frugality, both personal and in government. Would you please comment about this? Do you have any personal knowledge or observations there?

RUSK: No. I had the impression that Senator Russell led a fairly austere private life. He never let himself be caught up in the social life of Washington. He was--it was very difficult indeed to get him to come to a function or a ceremony or a party of anything of that sort. He'd always turn up for the Georgia Society in Washington. But if we had a visiting dignitary and gave a state dinner, we could never get Senator Russell to come. I had the impression that he led a very

simple life. And I don't know if that had anything to do with frugality, but--but he didn't--he didn't lay on a lot of frills and extras and things like that.

CATES: Over the years many crises have faced the nation and Senator Russell was on stage center so to speak. What did he say to you concerning some of these eventful times? You indicated that you really were not close or did not know him in World War II so I guess we'll have to jump to the time that you were familiar with him. For example, there were a lot of riots in the cities, for example, during the Sixties. Did you ever have an occasion to talk with him about riots?

RUSK: No, those were handled by the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General and the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense so that I--I just was not involved with that nor with--I don't recall anything about the Korean War relating personally to Senator Russell except that he was very staunch during the Korean War. Now I think his good judgment and his balance and his sense of procedure were invaluable during the MacArthur-Truman Hearings. It is my impression that he, too, shared the view that we must not let an American general defy the constituted civilian authority of the country. In the Cuban crisis I've already talked about his views on that. My only exposure to him in connection with assassinations had to do with his role on the Warren Commission. Incidentally, I myself have only learned in the last few years or so about those CIA assassination plots aimed at Castro. Had I known about them it would have affected one small portion of my own testimony before the Warren Commission. Basically I testified on two points before the Warren Commission. One is that we did not have any evidence of the involvement of a foreign government in Kennedy's assassination. But then I added some brief comments along the lines that I did not believe that foreign governments had a motivation to participate in the assassination attempt on Kennedy. Well, no one pulled my coattail at that point and said, "Now wait a minute. There's something you ought to know before you testify on this point." Mr. Allen Dulles, former Director of CIA, was sitting on the Warren Commission and he didn't say anything to me about it. Now whether he knew about these plots, I don't know. If he did, then I have some very grave questions about Allen Dulles. But given Senator Russell's sense of integrity and so forth, I would be extremely surprised ever to learn that he was informed about these assassination plots. I just don't believe he was.

CATES: What kind of part or role did he play on the Commission from your own personal observations or what you might know about the proceedings there? Did--was he very active in questioning you when you were before the group?

RUSK: I just don't recall.

CATES: You don't recall.

RUSK: One could tell that from looking at the Warren Commission Report itself. Quite frankly I'm not quite even sure that he was present that day.

CATES: How do you think he was personally affected by these assassinations like President Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King. I meant it just was a shock to me as a

private American citizen that something like this could happen and I was just wondering if you had ever talked to him about that.

RUSK: I never did discuss it with him. I'm sure that he was deeply shocked as well.

CATES: When was the last time you talked with him and what did he say? Do you recall?

RUSK: It was during those few days when we were both at Walter Reed Hospital in 1969. And we had no particular subject to talk about. I was out of office. There were--we were just chatting informally about events and people and his family. I've known two or three of his brothers along the way. But there was nothing of great consequence there.

CATES: What is the most vivid impression you have of Senator Russell?

RUSK: Well, it's hard to select one but I was very much interested in his attitude on Vietnam. I had the impression that had he been President in the Kennedy years that he would not have committed American forces to the mainland of Asia. But when the forces were committed his view was that we ought to back them, we ought to help them accomplish their mission. So there is a case where he would not have gotten us into that situation, but when his country was in that situation he wanted them to succeed. Now this is not that superficial kind of my country right or wrong. I think Senator Russell had a constitutional respect for the way in which decisions were made in this country. I think he was among those--Barry Goldwater was another--who realized that at all stages the Congress had played a role in the Vietnam affair. So he was not one of those that went whining around about it later saying "Oh, my God!" I think he believed that the original decisions were a mistake but they were made and so let's get on with it and support our country.

CATES: What type President do you think Russell would have made? You know in 1952 I think he received three hundred votes there at the Democratic Convention. But do you think he really thought that he would have a chance to become President and especially in view of the fact that we do have a Georgian now that is President?

RUSK: Well, Senator Russell could have been a great President had he been of the next generation with respect to civil rights matters. I don't believe with his civil rights views that he could have been elected or could have been a good President if he had maintained those civil rights views during that particular period of our history. But had those matters been clarified in his own mind, I think he would have--he would have been a very fine President.

CATES: Do you think that this is an ambition that was unfulfilled as far as he was concerned or do you think that he really preferred to be in the Senate?

RUSK: I never talked about that with him, of course. I would doubt that he ever thought that he really could be President. But I think that he also felt a strong commitment to represent a point of view to the American people. And when he ran for President my guess is he was as much interested--even more interested in that point of view as in the question as to whether or not he might somehow become President.

CATES: I see.

RUSK: One never knows because people like that do have around them aides and staff and friends and so forth who give them a lot of heady wine to drink. But I'd be surprised if Richard Russell ever thought that he was going to be President.

CATES: In view of the fact that Jimmy Carter is our President, do you know anything about the relationship between Jimmy Carter and Senator Russell?

RUSK: No, I don't, I don't.

CATES: In other words, you don't know if Senator Russell furthered his political career. You know the only time that Senator Russell ever endorsed was when Jimmy Carter was running for Governor against Hal Suit and I don't think it was a strong endorsement but it was an endorsement and I just didn't know if you had any knowledge there?

RUSK: No, I would think that when the issue became Democrat versus Republican as distinct from the primaries that Russell would normally support the Democratic candidate.

CATES: What did you consider to be his most outstanding personality trait?

RUSK: Well, in my own mind, and of course, this would vary with different observers, but to me I think what I have called political integrity would be the most dominant trait. He was honest and honorable in giving you his view. It was a considered view--he didn't just come to flash reactions--based on his concept of what is good for this country. And he didn't waffle all over the place, if he told you he would support something, you knew he would support it. And if you knew that he--if he told you he was going to oppose something--you knew exactly where you were. Now it's extraordinarily valuable to have people like that in our government because the element of predictability becomes very important in making an assessment as to what is possible and what is not possible and so I never had much respect for people in public like who weren't prepared to stand up and be counted and who would tell you one thing today and another thing tomorrow and give you a commitment today and then vote the other way tomorrow, that kind of thing. Russell was not like that. And I think that particular trait was at the heart of the enormous respect that people had for him in the Senate. I almost was called upon to express my views of Senator Russell on a rather solemn occasion. The weather for Senator Russell's funeral in Winder was just terrible. Airports were closed down and it was raining like cats and dogs and so forth and those on the program had not arrived. One plane had landed in Charleston and somehow they were having some problems. So about thirty minutes before the time of the funeral I was alerted that I might have to pinch hit, to make a speech. So I spent thirty agonizing minutes recollecting all that I could about Senator Russell, deciding how I should frame some words, but finally part of the Washington party arrived by car and there were enough of them on the program there to relieve me of that responsibility. But I was almost the pinch hitter at his funeral.

CATES: Can you recall any other interesting little stories like you've just related? I don't mean to press you, but by the same token what you've said up to this point has been very good and I just don't want to overlook anything that you might recall.

RUSK: Well, I'm sure you've heard from other senators that it was almost a necessity for any new senator to go and visit with Senator Russell, to get his advice, get acquainted with him, get any wisdom that he wanted to impart, because I've talked to many a senator who told me that one of the first things they did when they reached the Senate was to make their call on Senator Russell. There were a lot of foreign embassies who wanted to see Senator Russell from time to time. But we knew that Senator Russell didn't care much for this. So we tried to protect him from the importuning of foreign embassies because the more sophisticated foreign embassies themselves knew that Senator Russell was Mr. Senate so they were often quite anxious to get hold of him on one matter or another, you see.

CATES: Why do you think the Senator would not see them? Because he knew that they probably had an ax to grind and that he--

RUSK: Yes and he was busy and he didn't care too much for that sort of thing. He thought that ought to be a responsibility of the President and State Department and if somebody had to be involved, Members of the Foreign Relations Committee. It would be interesting to see from his diary or his log or his appointment book how often he met with representatives of foreign governments. My guess is very, very seldom, very seldom indeed.

CATES: What comments or correspondence did you receive from the Senator in 1970 when you accepted the position of Samuel H. Sibley Professor of International Law at the University of Georgia School of Law? Did he comment?

RUSK: No, I don't think so and I don't think we had any correspondence during that period. He was, of course, pretty ill from 1970 on and so I wouldn't have expected him to correspond freely and since I also knew that, I didn't bother him so that I don't think I have anything here.

CATES: You were just elected to the Board of Trustees of the Richard B. Russell Foundation. Would you like to make any comments as to how you see the Foundation, how it can help future historians or further the dissemination of information about Senator Russell? Maybe I'm not phrasing this exactly right, but *anyway*, as you are probably well aware on January 10th I believe it was, the papers were opened up to historians and researchers, all of those that were not on time seal and would you like to make any comment in this area?

RUSK: I happen to believe that events are determined by live human beings and not by blind historical forces. Now professors very often try to summarize a lot of activities and decisions by human beings with large generalizations such as an economic interpretation of history and things like that. But I don't believe much in these blind historical forces. Khrushchev did not have to put the missiles in Cuba. Kennedy did not have to decide that he was going to insist that they be taken out. And therefore, in my mind, this puts a special premium on the study of certain personalities, not from an amateurish psychological--

CATES: This is Tape 2 of an interview with former U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Okay, Mr. Rusk, if you will continue.

RUSK: Not from an amateurish psychological point of view but in terms of their background, their education, but more particularly their approach to the public service. For example, in the executive branch of the government George C. Marshall was a great teacher with respect to the very nature of the public service and how those who are in it ought to conduct it. On the legislative side I would name very few people of whom Senator Russell would be top of the list--another one would be Margaret Chase Smith of Maine--to see how they view the responsibilities and the role of a senator and of the Congress in our constitutional system. You see, I think most Americans don't really understand that we have the most complicated constitutional and political system in the world. It was deliberately designed to be complicated in the interest of individual liberties. But it takes an enormous amount of effort on the part of those who were in the government to make it work at all. The late Chief Justice Earl Warren was here at our law school just before his death and on that occasion he said that if each branch of the Federal government were to pursue its constitutional powers to the end of the trail, our government would simply now work. It would freeze up like an engine without oil. Well, it takes a very deep understanding of the nature of our constitutional system to get it to work at all and Senator Russell, George Marshall, Margaret Chase Smith, and I could name some others, had that kind of understanding. And Senator Russell was able, for example, to respect the problems of the President without being a yes man and that is--that is--and Presidents respected Senator Russell and the Senate without being yes men either. I think Senator Russell understood the difference between official difference and personal relations. He could understand that two senators could hammer each other unmercifully on the Senate Floor and then walk off arm in arm and have a drink together. It requires political sophistication of that sort for this, as one professor put it, for this "contraption"¹¹ of ours, the "contraption of 1787", to work at all. Senator Russell understood that.

CATES: So what you're saying in effect is that there is given and take in all branches of government and this will serve future historians well to see and see the human side of Senator Russell and understand maybe how he reacted to things. Is that basically what you were saying?

RUSK: That's correct. For example, on this civil rights matter, he knew that he was going to lose at the end of the day--the end of the day particularly when say Everett Dirksen of Illinois moved in to work out the kind of compromise that eventually came in. I didn't get the impression that Senator Russell was personally bitter about it. I may be wrong but I didn't get any sense of bitterness so much as "I fought the good fight and I lost". He was a rather courtly gentleman. I--there may be instances in his life when he was petty, but I never say any of those. I'm sure all of us are petty at one time or another but I never saw that aspect of Senator Russell.

CATES: Before we close this interview is there anything else that you would like to say covering a broad spectrum, anything about Senator Russell at all or his career of thirty-eight years in the Senate--actually I think he had about fifty years of public service going back to the time that he went into the State Legislature here in Georgia until his death in January 1971.

RUSK: Well, I don't want to make any campaign speeches for an individual-- any individual, but I think Senator Russell's career reflects one point with respect to a state like Georgia, a state

of only five million people, in many matters on the by-passes and not on the main highway. Here was a Senator from Georgia who was sent to the Senate and kept there to develop the position, the influence, the prestige, the power that normally would not come out of a state like Georgia. Now one can make a political scientist kind of argument against that kind of continuity, but from the point of view of the interests of the state and the people of Georgia, unless you do build up that kind of continuity, then you get overwhelmed by the larger states and the surging interests outside. So Senator Russell's career is a kind of object lesson for Georgia about how to deal with their representation in Congress. I'm not particularly in favor of rapid turn-over because rapid turn-over surrenders influence and power.

CATES: You're probably aware of the fact that Senator Russell often times said that he represented Georgia to Washington and not Washington to Georgia. Were you aware of that? And in effect, that's what you're saying--that it was a strong suit of his.

RUSK: Yes, but that was a good part of his time, but also Senator Russell was one of those Senators who could look at the nation as a whole, particularly in foreign policy and security matters and so he--his mind and commitments reached beyond the state of Georgia because he was a man of that stature.

CATES: Mr. Rusk, I don't want to belabor this but I would like to say this--that since you are going to be--since you are on the Board of Trustees of the Richard B. Russell Foundation and since we meet at least once a year, if any time in the future you can think of anything that you would like to put on tape, I'm usually at those meetings--

RUSK: All right.

CATES: And either before or afterwards we can just take a few minutes and put any other additional stories that--

RUSK: All right. One of the things that the Foundation might want to do is to have a study made of Senator Russell's conception of the role of a senator and of the Senate in our constitutional system and his--his own practice of the arts of politics on the national level.

CATES: Okay.

RUSK: Because I think that, just as I mentioned George Marshall as a great teacher, Richard Russell was also a great teacher and there is much to be learned through him about the--the operations of our constitutional system at the center of power.

CATES: Okay. We might bring that up at the next meeting then we would certainly want to discuss it with Congressman Landrum since he's the Chairman. Well, again Dean Rusk I want to thank you for this excellent interview and I want to assure you that you have given me a lot of good information that I have not gotten before.

RUSK: Well, thank you for an opportunity to reflect upon a very great man.

CATES: Very good. Thank you.

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