

















now in the first place, I might have had a lot of sympathy with them, but that's, see, they had a responsibility and they couldn't say what they were going to do and what, so therefore, I had the rather disappointing job of having to relieve those people and by the same token, I probably, had I been--I don't know anything about this case, it was the--where the university is, isn't it the University of Georgia, wasn't it the town where the boys resigned, the--

CATES: In Athens, Georgia.

HERSHEY: In Athens. Now you see, I don't know who they were. I may have met them because I've known a great many of local board members, but I would have to maybe use my good offices if I could to get them to stay on, but if they wanted to resign because they didn't like the way the country was running, I couldn't change the country and I'd have had to accept their resignation, no matter how much it hurt me. And it did, in Montana, because I'm sure that guy was a fine guy up there, but of course in his case he made some statements and he got a lot of publicity and he couldn't get away from the publicity after he got it.

CATES: Uh hum.

HERSHEY: I happen to be rather liberal-minded toward soldiers, but not when they disobey, or not when they desert. Now, the local board member had a right to resign because he's working for nothing and anytime he got so he didn't want to work, he had a right to leave. But in the first place, you can either accept it or not accept it and not accepting it would merely be holding a fellow that, I don't happen to know the practical way of making a local board operate after he says he's quitting because he's working for nothing and he's done very, very well to work all the time he has. So, this is something I don't know much about, but I can't see anything I could have done except accept their resignations.

CATES: Hmmm.

HERSHEY: No matter how much I regretted it and even if I sympathized with them. I had the experience of even administering a lot of laws that I wouldn't have passed, but on the other hand, I don't know how you're going to live in a community, either a little one or a big one, and expect to have everybody do exactly what you want done. After all, some days you have to do something that somebody else wants done.

CATES: General, you mentioned the Truman-MacArthur situation, and of course, this was in 1952, and Senator Russell was the person in charge of the Joint Committee on Armed Services and Foreign relations and did you ever have any conversations with the Senator about this?

HERSHEY: No, I never did and in fact, with very few other people. I don't know why I didn't. I'd known General MacArthur a little, but not nearly as much as I'd known some, but I have probably had the experience of being involved in a certain line of work and while I worry about the world going into specialties because then nobody could do ordinary things, but I have stuck fairly close to my last, merely because I was a soldier, and it doesn't sound believable, but it's the truth. I worked for six presidents, and I never have to myself sat down, attempted to line them up, that is, one, two, three, four, well for a lot of reasons because each one of them was

confronted with something so different than the others were and when you're comparing how a fellow played football with a fellow who plowed in the field, it's hard to say which one of them you think did the best. And the variety of things that the six presidents have done has been so dissimilar that I have never thought probably lots about it. You could very easily say, well I didn't do the same on setting up number one of chairman of the armed forces in the Senate. But that was quite another matter, because so far as I was concerned, the people I observed in that job had very much the same tasks all the time. And not only that, I think the difference between the one different ones was enough greater, there was never any question. That was one of the self-evident truths and not only that, what I saw them do was similar to what I saw another chairman do another time now. I've seen some awfully good chairmen in some ways, but some of them, I didn't think had the capacity or the breadth of the understanding that Senator Russell had. I know one or two--I know one chairman particularly that was a very fine old gentleman and I think he wanted to do exactly what was right, but he was lost as far as what we were doing and a good many times when he tried to help, if he'd delegated it to--I knew one chairman we had that, he was completely against most everything we were doing.

CATES: Hmmm.

HERSHEY: It didn't make much difference because he always said to one of the members, Bill, now you pay attention because you're going to have to defend this on the floor, you know. I'm going to be on the other side. And in a lot of ways he was a much easier man to live with than the fellow who followed him, who wanted to do everything right and messed up everything he got in. Well now, when you're dealing--when you recommend--now another fellow that I know that I think of very highly of, but he was on in years and the things on the floor got to moving awful fast for him at times.

CATES: Hmmm.

HERSHEY: Although on the other hand, I do think that his side gained vote sometimes because some people tried to get smart with the old man.

CATES: Hmmm.

HERSHEY: That's the kind of competition Senator Russell had.

CATES: Could you cite maybe a specific example of where Senator Russell had a clear grasp of what you were trying to deal with him on. I'm thinking now in terms of maybe--

HERSHEY: Well, all my difficulty is trying to remember anytime he didn't.

HERSHEY: Because, of course, he lived around here a long time. I mean he had seen a whole lot of things go by and I, as a family man, don't want to say that he had time to devote some things that some of the rest of us devoted to our family. Maybe there's some advantage of the fact that he was a bachelor.

CATES: Uh hum.

HERSHEY: Because this was about his life and I don't know. I'd hate to start out trying to point out some time that he was well-informed, because I think he generally was. In fact, you know one of the things in any sort of thing, whether it's a lawsuit or whether it's legislation, if you can find a fellow that knows what he's talking about, and had a fair consideration of other people so that he, if he can't get it done, if he's got to let this fellow wear himself down, you got to let him wear him down. And not try to outrage maybe two or three people by snorting this fellow off too quick. And having faith that I know what we're doing and we're going wherever we're going and whether today or tomorrow or another time, because the Senate is a place where you don't crush out your opposition quite like you do up in the House where you got rules. You're five minutes and you sit down; Senate, all day maybe but knowing that's what you're dealing with is quite an advantage. A fellow who knows he is in the House; he's in the Senate.

CATES: Uh hum.

HERSHEY: And the thing he's got to do, he's got to do them under certain procedures and you just can't make--a fellow this one fellow that I spoke about who was on in years some, I think was a little confused at times when he was on the floor. Yet I think he, the opposition, lost votes at times by trying to show the old man up as not knowing what he was talking about because the Senate thought very well of him. He was an elderly statesman and I think it cost them with certain people quite a lot every time to try show the old man up as being a little senile.

CATES: Hmmm.

HERSHEY: But I do think--I still go back to the--I never knew anybody who was the chairman of that committee that compares to Russell and sometimes when you're a person that's not too intellectual and I don't pretend to be, you feel things and somebody says, well, do you get that? Well, you think you know it very strongly and yet when somebody says, well, A, B, C, D--

CATES: Hmmm. General, can you, I don't want to leave the Korean War era without maybe exploring this a little bit with you to see if you can recall any interesting or amusing stories that you might remember about Senator Russell and your dealings with him. I know your specific area was getting the necessary manpower, but I'm sure that you must have had other dealings with Senator Russell and--

HERSHEY: Well--

CATES: It might give a little insight--

HERSHEY: Not very much, because one thing about it, Senator Russell, because he did believe in the way our government is run and the way our agency was delegated, Senator Russell never bothered you about individual cases.

CATES: Hmmm,

HERSHEY: And that's one of the things you have a lot to do with the fools sometimes in the congress. And I'm not quarreling about it, and as somebody has said to me, members of congress said, "Now I'm not trying to crowd you." And I always said, "Don't worry about that. You aren't."

CATES: Uh hmmm.

HERSHEY: Well, I don't ever remember Senator Russell talking to me about an individual case. He had, of course, it is true that some of the ideas that I have and so forth and so on, I don't know whether you, how long you going to pursue, but I have one fellow that worked for me over on the Hill during all this period and knew, not only a great deal that went on in more detail, that was his business, but in the next case he knew different things that I was dealing--where he dealt with the staff-- and neither one of us got into it. Well, it was something that--this is Colonel Franck that I'm talking about--

CATES: Colonel Franck--

HERSHEY: Franck, Bernard Franck.

CATES: Uh huh.

HERSHEY: But, we can--I can tell you when we get through where you can find him because he has an office here in town.

HERSHEY: He's not with selective service anymore.

CATES: I see. General, would you have any observations about 1952 and Russell's candidacy for the president?

HERSHEY: This may be in a pretty light vein because I don't know, the way we're organized in this nation, I think I know something about it, there's some things that you, we never used to think could happen and so that reason, that has something to do with the background. Now, I don't happen to be political much. I grew up in a certain party, and just like some people grew up in a church and when you ask them ten or fifteen years later what church they're in, they say a certain church, and "How'd you get in that?" They say, "Well, my father took me to that church, and I've gone to it ever since." I happen to belong to a different party than what is on the surface. Of course, when you get into this party business, in the first place--selective service--I never would be dealing, if I were dealing with Senator Russell I certainly--whoever, whether it was Mrs. Smith or whoever--I always kept so that they knew pretty much what I was dealing with anybody, this, if you're going to have survivors, you got to be bi-partisan about it, and that's one of the things that I don't believe worried Senator Russell. Of course, we people who come from the north are probably--when you say a Democrat from the south, don't know exactly what you're talking about anyway.

CATES: Uh hum.

HERSHEY: Of course, there were a lot of reasons probably. But, now when he ran for president, I don't remember for sure, but I am going to be honest, I would think, well, people in Georgia, Georgia will vote the Democratic ticket, no use of giving them anything.

CATES: Uh hum.

HERSHEY: Now I probably thought so, not because I'd been in the political world much. No, but I did grow up in a political atmosphere and I learned some things pretty early. They were on a very small basis, township, county, and small city, maybe, but that sort of policy is not so much different than the people up here behave about like they did down there. So therefore, I probably didn't think he had any chance. Now! I did have a conversation with his nephew about it.

CATES: Is this Ernest Vandiver?

HERSHEY: Yeah, General Vandiver, because he at that time was both the Adjutant General of Georgia and also Director of Selective Service and I knew him pretty well. Well, we were a small organization and I tended to try to know my state directors well. And we talked about odds that his uncle was going to run for president and he said he was going to get mixed up in the campaign, and he said, "I guess I'm going to have to get out of being Director of Selective Service, I'll also be under the Hatch Act." It doesn't come in on being Adjutant General. So I said, "Well, good luck to you," and he said, "Well, I won't probably be gone too long."

CATES: Hmmm.

HERSHEY: "Because it's probably only going to be up to the time of the convention and when that's over, I'm afraid this is going to be all over." Now I don't mean to say that either he or I would, I wouldn't yield him a great deal in my thoughts of whether Senator Russell ought to be president, because I might be very much like the fellow who I was sitting with one time when Jim Wadsworth came into the dining room and one of the fellows from Texas, a congressman, said to me, "There's the fellow that I'd rather see president than anybody else in the United States--probably wouldn't vote for him, but."

CATES: Hmm.

HERSHEY: Well, I knew what he was talking about. If he hadn't been a Democratic Congressman, probably wouldn't vote for him. I, and I don't know whether I'd vote for Russell or whether I wouldn't, but I don't know of anybody offhand that I would think had more capacity to be president.

CATES: General, did you have an opportunity to observe the relationship between Lyndon Baine Johnson and Senator Russell? You spoke of the time that you were at that meeting--

HERSHEY: Well, yes, in all my observation--I realized that times--after a fellow gets to be president, gets into a place where he's under continual strain with the people he's known. I don't happen to know anything about what those strains were and I have no business to try to answer for President Johnson, but because I haven't any right, I probably will. I would say that no matter

what the vicissitudes might have been of being president and clashes that might hover or whether they occurred or not I don't know, but I would bet my money on what President Johnson thought of him--of Senator Russell. I wouldn't be surprised if it was even better than I think, and I don't, I don't worry too much about a lot of things, but I've heard President Johnson got--at times he was over running around with folks that probably some of us who had known him quite a long time were surprised, but after all, this presidency business, I don't pretend to understand it, but if you are going to be president of all the United States, that gives you--you got a lot of folks that you got to try to get along with that maybe you don't have to do when you're not president.

CATES: Do you think Senator Russell was aware of this?

HERSHEY: Oh I, knowing as little as I do about the legislative business and having these ideas, I certainly wouldn't think of the man who knew legislative business as well as Russell did wasn't way ahead of me, on understanding all of these--

CATES: Well, what I meant by that was that he was aware 'of this and that he might have overlooked certain things as far as actions on the part of President Johnson, which did not affect their friendship because he--

HERSHEY: Well, of course there's one thing about it I would think--if we're thing? going to--again I don't know too much about politicians, but again I think you can disagree without being disagreeable. In fact, I've had to live a long time with a lot of people that I don't agree with at all, because they're in existence. But on the other hand, these two gentlemen, I'll give both the credit for being too big to let things that rubbed your neck and one thing or another ever destroy the great regard I think they probably had for each other. But I may be wrong,

CATES: General, did you ever see Senator Russell upset or peeved about anything?

HERSHEY: No, I don't think so. Now when he talked very determined, as he did to stay on the floor, when this committee was a subcommittee and then a committee was sort of rating the Armed Forces Committee, I think he had enough determination, so that there wasn't any doubt about the fact that these people were friendly, but I thought that he handled himself very well indeed. I never had an opportunity to be around when I thought that he had lost his temper.

CATES: General, I'll mention several things that may have affected you and may have caused you to have had some conversations with the Senator. One is the Lebanese War, if you want to call that in 1967; the other was the Cuban missile crisis in 1961. Were you involved in any way with the Armed Services Committee?

HERSHEY: No, I, in the first one I was around here but I don't remember anything about after we got into it. I was on a rather extended trip at the time this Cuban crisis broke, and therefore, I don't know as I'd have known anything if I was here, but I wasn't here. In fact, I was down I think in between Arizona, because I was one of these trips by automobile where I was stopping at reserve units, stopping at state headquarters and that sort of thing; and I didn't cut it short because, either I don't know what they were asking of us here, but the boys in my shop were

doing enough so that they didn't get any gray hair--I probably had less anxiety about the Cuban crisis at the time it happened than I have had sometimes when I've been reading about it since.

HERSHEY: But I don't know, the thing that worries me about the Cuban crisis is that if we have any of these things happen again, I worry about our superabundance of trans--of communications.

CATES: Communications?

HERSHEY: I think it's the hardest thing in the world to keep Washington from interfering with everybody. I don't think that there's any question that they ought to make the policy, but policy isn't detail. If you say, hold that place. All right, I think that's pretty well understandable. And then they said, "Be sure on that right flank you do this, you do that and now you better be reconnoitering some way if you're going to withdraw. Well, we want you to die on that line, you better reconnoiter how you're gonna get out." I think half the time of the Cuban crisis, haven't read much but I read some sense. It seems to me there's somebody up here with a headset on and trying to tell these guys how to skip those ships. And I don't want to ride oh the ship anymore; I don't want to ride with a driver when I'm telling him how to drive because I don't--and I don't want to be on a ship where somebody that isn't on the ship is telling how to sail it. And this is the just the thing we're up against down in Vietnam and I've happened to have some of my relatives down there and there was far too much. It was too easy to get from Washington to Saigon and from Saigon to Da Nang and from Da Nang to the regimental headquarters post because I still always believe in telling a fellow what you want to do, what you can do to support him, whose on his right and left. Seems like-

HERSHEY: Well, I certainly hope so because, well, I probably think, yeah, I can't prove it though, but I think so and I believe so.

CATES: General, you said that you worked under six presidents--

HERSHEY: Yes.

CATES: --and Senator Russell was advisor to six or seven presidents. Did you have an opportunity, I know we've talked about Johnson; did you have an opportunity to observe his relationship with these various presidents?

HERSHEY: Well, probably not Roosevelt. I don't remember as much as I ought to, although I wouldn't say that I didn't know quite a bit about Senator Russell under Roosevelt. But I, in the first place, it's longer ago, I haven't got the notes probably I ought to have. Anyway I don't remember as well. I wouldn't have any doubt in my mind about the influence of Senator Russell with Senator Truman or with President Truman. And I wouldn't have any doubt of the Eisenhower administration--probably in some ways a little differently organized maybe than some of the others, but I wouldn't have the slightest doubt in my mind about the high regard in which Senator Russell was held. I would say pretty generally, you know, that may be going quite a ways. I never knew, see I didn't know General Eisenhower, President Eisenhower in the Army and I didn't know him much here, never served much anywhere near him. He had a staff

operation and I did know most of the staff people that I had to deal with, some of them that some people don't like. One of them got into quite a little bit of trouble. I had known him as a congressman and I had known him as governor of one of our states and I knew him as more or less chief of staff down here. For my money, he's all right, but he got into this coat business that I think it was most unfortunate. But! I have no reason to believe that the Eisenhower administration, I think he trusted, I'm sure he trusted Senator Russell. I think probably the Kennedy administration did. The Kennedy administration was a little shorter and it, maybe I orient a little slower than some people. I do not want to put ideas in anybody's mind, and I don't think there's any doubt but what probably that President Kennedy thought very highly and trusted very much Senator Russell. Well, I'm giving him credit for having good sense, but it's because I think anybody with good sense with a position that--Of course these are my personal opinions--

CATES: Sure.

HERSHEY: That Senator Russell occupied I don't think, you just don't do any thing else but use him. I mean use him in the sense that here he is, he is a force in the Senate for survival, and of course, I'm more interested in survival, than common. I never was quite as sure probably of [Robert S.] McNamara as I was of some people, but that wouldn't be to derogate Senator Russell because if there was anything there the derogation would be in the other way. And again, we're back to Senator Johnson and whatever might have come up I don't believe that those two people would ever disagree on national survival. And of course, the present president hasn't been here very long. I am thinking he went out to see him pretty late. I was out of town at the time Senator Russell died. I think the present president was out to see him within hours, I mean not hours, but a day or two of his death.

HERSHEY: Well, I don't know. I've heard the Senator say--I guess it was on television' cause I think it was when they opened the joint session this year, I think one thing he talked about then was having been out to see Russell and while he was there Russell's--about his last words to him was, "Survive, save the nation." I mean--

CATES: Hmmm.

HERSHEY: At least he was--Eisenhower I understand, the last thing he said was that he loved his father; he loved his wife and his children and his grandchildren and his country.

CATES: Uh hum.

HERSHEY: I think that Senator Russell thought it was important, I think he put his country ahead of anything.

CATES: General, did you ever have an opportunity to go to him with a special problem in which he might have assisted you?

HERSHEY: Oh, I don't think so. Now on this legislation business, that's one reason why I think perhaps Colonel Franck is more familiar with the things that maybe we got through some of

Senator Russell's staff. I never made it a business to bother people too much, especially when things were running pretty good and I think we did probably work through staff more than some people do. I had a pretty high opinion of all his staff. If you can convince the staff, you've got a pretty good start.

CATES: Right.

HERSHEY: It was a matter of technique.

CATES: General, what would you say was his most outstanding personality trait, Senator Russell's most outstanding personality trait?

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HERSHEY: [That would be] pretty hard. Of course, I suspect that, if I'd say attitude that wouldn't mean much, and I would be selfish if I said that I think he believed in the people of the United States, had confidence in them and felt they'd act right because they got their information accurately.

CATES: The majority of them--

HERSHEY: Huh?

CATES: Say the majority of the people.

HERSHEY: Well, yes, the great majority and not only--that's entirely with out any idea of trying to talk about the majorities or the minorities. I'm talking about people; I don't care what color they are. And I'll bet, you're from down--know a lot more about it than I do, but I'll bet there are hundreds of people, yeah that they sometimes call a minority, had a lot of confidence in him.

CATES: Well, actually I probably shouldn't have injected the word, but I was thinking in terms not so much in color as of some people I've seen here in Washington here in the last couple of weeks which someone pointed out, and I don't know now who it was, and it was probably Attorney General John Mitchell pointed out that if we had 200,000 people here in Washington the last two weeks, that's just two percent of the population of the United States.

HERSHEY: Well, maybe it was just a little less than that. Well, I happen to believe and happen to be sure that Senator Russell believed and I can't prove it, that he could equate, for what they--he would know that when you saw a good many people present somewhere, been collecting from all over the country, think he could remember there are 200 million people here in the United States and, unfortunately, one of the unfortunate things of the television is it gets you in a room and then they have this thing comes up in front of you and here's something happening, says, "there's America." Nonsense! The reason it's there, it's so unusual that they put it there and then you've turned around and equate that as being, this is America.

CATES: Uh huh.

HERSHEY: Well, then, I've been out, I went out with the National Guard of Missouri this weekend and I was in Indiana with a couple of groups, one old, the chairman of the contemporary club, and one young, of the junior chamber and they didn't look like how these people have been described to me, and not only that, I have a great deal of faith a lot of these people aren't near as bad as they think they are. I don't think, first of all, they're near as tough as they think they are. And I think that when the hardhats leaned on the college boys, you found about how long they stayed. I mean, kids are kids and people ought not to expect too much of them. I do have a little bit of worry and I'm sure Senator Russell had at some of his own colleagues that acted like children in the decisions they made about some things that are happening now. It worries me and I'm sure it would worry him. I think we'd rather have a youngster trying to act like a grownup, than to have some grownup exhibiting about the judgment of an irresponsible child.

CATES: That's true. General, do you have any other thing that you would like to say about Senator Russell before we end this interview? Or any--

HERSHEY: Well, I don't think I can get into the superlatives. I don't know, I haven't started out to name him, but I think I've got plenty of hands to name him on, but I would put him on two hands or I would put him on one, of the people I know.

CATES: Uh huh.

HERSHEY: I don't know what more I can say.

CATES: One of the most outstanding--

HERSHEY: Well, if I take two hands then I'm talking about ten people I've known, but if I only take one hand, I'm only talking about five.

CATES: Right.

HERSHEY: And either way, he'd still--I don't want to go much further than that, I guess.

CATES: Right.

HERSHEY: In the first place, these things are--but he had--I know when I was in Florida at the time that Senator Russell died, and I thought, here's just the most wonderful man that I've known. I was--I had to see him leave the Armed Forces Committee with a great deal of regret and I have a very high regard and I'm very friendly with the fellow that took his place, even Senator Russell and I don't say that to discount Senator [John C.] Stennis either. In fact, I'll place Stennis pretty high but his [Russell's] shoulders were too big and I don't know of anybody in the Senate, now they may be there, and somebody might call attention to something and prove to me that they were, but I just don't happen to know of anybody that could step in the shoes in the Senate that I thought that was anywhere near capable of the things he was doing in my business, that is the

armed forces, especially for drumming them in. So, I know I've gone overboard pretty far, but this isn't, I didn't do this today.

CATES: Right, right. Do you think that his influence will be felt in the Senate even after his passing?

HERSHEY: Well, I don't think there's any doubt about it because there's a lot of things that he has done, as long as they remain on the books, to be a tribute to him, and if I, with as little chance I had to see him was affected as much as I was, some of these people who had more chance, unless they were doing something else, ought to have had a great deal longer shadow cast on them.

CATES: General Hershey, I certainly want to thank you again for this very excellent interview on your part and you have recalled some things and given some insights into his personality and character that some of the other persons I've interviewed have not touched upon and I want to thank you again.

HERSHEY: Well, my pleasure to do it.

*Richard B. Powell*  
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