

Leonard Ballard

Inspector, United States Capitol Police (1947-1984)

Interview #8

(Thursday, October 27, 1983)
Interviewed by Richard A. Baker

BALLARD: There was an incident with [Fidel] Castro when he came up here [in July 1959] to meet with Nixon that I think is an interesting item in history. Castro took over Cuba in January and he came to the United States in July. He was in New York and then he came down to Washington. He had an appointment with Nixon on Sunday at 1:00 o'clock in the vice president's formal [Capitol] office. I had to come in because it was a special occasion. It was only supposed to be an hour. I told my wife to come with me because it was only going to be an hour. I parked at the Senate steps so she could see him come in. So, he came in with his chicken pluckers. Well, at 4:00 o'clock, they sent word down to the Senate restaurant to find someone to make them some coffee. At 4:00 o'clock!

Somebody rustled it up. They broke up at 6:00 that evening! They came out and had a press conference in the Senate Reception Room. The chicken pluckers were in there and they had on the same coveralls, I think, that they had worn during the January invasion. They had their long hair in rubber band pony tails. New American wrist watches. American cigarettes. And they were living it up! Well, they had the press conference and Castro invited Nixon to come to Cuba. Nixon changed the subject. But, I paid attention to

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it. The next morning, I was up in the Senate Lobby and Major Hughes, Nixon's aide, was in there and I said, "That was funny that Castro invited Nixon to come to Cuba, but he changed the subject." And he said, "After you cleared all these people out yesterday, the vice president called Betty, that was his secretary, in and dictated a memo to President Eisenhower, 'Beware of this man. He definitely has communistic leanings.'" But apparently somebody didn't pay any attention to the memo. If they had, maybe things would have been a little different.

BAKER: Maybe they would have. You've known Nixon for a long period of time.

BALLARD: I knew him right from when he first came here. He didn't have many close friends, but if he liked you, he was your friend. He'd stop and talk to me. We had the Senate Staff Club and I was its sergeant at arms. I would invite him and he came to nearly every event.

BAKER: Just as a participant. Not necessarily as a speaker?

BALLARD: That's right. I have a picture of us presenting him with a membership card. He appreciated it and he attended just about every meeting of the club.

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BAKER: People have said about Nixon that he was not very good at small talk. That he couldn't relax in an informal kind of setting. But, that doesn't sound like what you are saying.

BALLARD: He relaxed with us. Or seemed to. Of course, what he did [regarding Watergate], that's something else, but I always liked the man personally, because he always seemed to return . . . If you needed a favor . . . and he had a good side to him.

He had a fella when he was vice president . . . a doorman. He put him in the vice president's formal office to show visitors around. Members send people in to see the formal office. He could explain it.

BAKER: He was there on a full time basis?

BALLARD: Yes. All he did was handle the vice president's formal office. Of course, now, he had a sightseeing business personally. On the side.

BAKER: The doorman did?

BALLARD: Yes, naturally, you know what I mean. And he would set down on the Senate steps outside and solicit sightseeing with the snapper, "You take a tour with me and I'll give you a personally conducted tour of the vice president's formal office." Pete would take them downtown on the tours. You could tell who held taken, because

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the next morning about 9:00 o'clock some people would show up hunting Pete and the vice president's formal office. Well, you didn't do anything about it except to show them where Pete was. Pete did a good business, but he took sick. He was up in Sibley Hospital. Nixon went up to see him. John, the chauffeur, drove him up. He asked Pete if he could do anything for him. Pete said, "I'd like to have a cold bottle of beer." So he came out and told John, "If you see any store that sells beer, stop." They found a "Mom and Pop" store up there and he sent John in to get a case. They took it back to the hospital and left it for Pete. Pete died the next day. He never even got the beer. Nixon saw to it that his body was taken care of. That's a side that people don't know about him.

Of course, up here you don't judge people on their political views. You judge them on the person that you know. They have their own reasons for their political views and that doesn't make any difference to you. You do what they want to do. I have never seen a senator yet that wouldn't help an employee. You just have to find the right senator and he'll help you.

BAKER: And it doesn't really make any difference whether it's a junior senator or a senior senator.

BALLARD: Oh, no, no.

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BAKER: You mentioned the little tour business on the side. Does a lot of that go on with staff. Do you find that there are staff people who run their own little tour business to pick up money on the side?

BALLARD: No. Many years ago, however, the policemen had arrangements with certain tour guides and taxi drivers. They got a dollar a head for every person that they sent to this tour guide. In a day's time they could do pretty good.

BAKER: So they would just give out a card?

BALLARD: That's right, with their initial on the back. I never worked the [East] Front, but at one time we had a (deleted) here who charged men so much a day for [being stationed on] the East Front.

BAKER: Just for the "privilege" of being stationed there?

BALLARD: That's right. Twenty dollars on Saturday. Thirty dollars on Sunday! But they could make it back [quickly]. Now, you never had to worry about them taking a break. (Laughter)

BAKER: I bet you didn't.

BALLARD: And they ate their lunch standing by their car. Up East Capitol Street there were quite a few tourist homes in those days. They got so much per head for those that they sent to the tourist home. They had their card with the initial on the back and

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they'd go by the tourist home and pick up there money. It got to be pretty well known. The Sergeant at Arms of the House at that time, he didn't like it.

BAKER: Zeake Johnson?

BALLARD: No. It was before him. He got dropped as Sergeant at Arms. Now, (deleted) on the Senate side took the idea that the men are not making much money, and we weren't in those days. And if it doesn't interfere with there duties . . . they were on their posts . . . just don't make an issue of it. But the Sergeant at Arms of the House got a hold of the hack inspector's office, and they sent a man and a woman up here one morning. They solicited three boys [police] and they got caught. One of the boys was under [Senator James] Eastland. The other two were House men. They didn't get fired. The Sergeant at Arms suspended them

until he found out that nothing was going to happen to the Senate boy, so he restored them back to their jobs. And that's the last we heard of that. Of course it went on.

We had one boy . . . I suppose he bought a couple of apartment houses with Kodak film. See, there wasn't a place on this Hill to buy Kodak film and he had the trunk of his car loaded with any kind you wanted.

BAKER: How would people know he had it available?

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BALLARD: The other men would tell them. They would ask. "I've run out of film. You don't know where we can buy some film?" "Sure, see that officer standing over there . . ."

BAKER: So then he would have to give them some kickbacks.

BALLARD: Oh, yes. He'd give them a dime or fifteen cents on the box. This boy was born in Czechoslovakia. I don't know what his original name was but he changed it to Andrew Billy. He bought two apartment houses and retired from the force to take care of the apartment houses. He died just a few years ago.

BAKER: Does that still go on?

BALLARD: Oh, no. It came to an end [in the 1950s] when we got Charlie Sullivan, the first Metropolitan chief. Not the first one, the second one. The first was Bob Pearce. Now Bob wasn't very dangerous. But Charlie Sullivan threw the fear of God in 'em. I want to tell you. He was a tough character.

BAKER: Did he come in immediately after Pearce?

BALLARD: That's right. He was rough. One of the finest fellas I've ever known. One of the fairest. He wanted you to do the job, and he wanted you to do it right. He didn't break your back, but, "No monkey business of any kind!" None. And the word got out and the boys closed their tents. They knew held fire them. It didn't

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make any difference who your sponsor was. He had a way . . . I've heard him talk to AA's like he was talking to a new private. I wouldn't dare do it. I knew a case involving [Representative John] McMillan of South Carolina. He was a powerful member. He had a man on the police force. The fella was riding out McMillan's strength. He worked for me and finally, I'd had it up to here. I talked to Chief Sullivan about him and he said, "Well, bring him down. Let me talk to him." We went in the chief's office and the chief said something about some infractions and the boy said, "Why, you want to talk to Congressman McMillan." (Laughter) Sullivan reached across the desk and got his badge and took the badge off and most of the side of his shirt at the same time. He turned to me and said, "Take

him into the supply room and take the rest of his clothes off and send him home." Now, that fella stayed at the House door for three weeks trying to catch McMillan. Sullivan had probably talked to McMillan, I don't know, but McMillan never had any more to do with him. He never came back and finally went back to South Carolina. That was the type of fella Sullivan was. It didn't take too much of that before the word got out. "Don't fool with him."

BAKER: Was Sullivan around for a while?

BALLARD: Yes. He left about 1964. He got something wrong with his back. He went on sick leave and he retired in April 1964.

BAKER: Is that when you became Acting Chief?

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BALLARD: I was Acting Chief during that period. Sullivan always said that an outsider had no business up here. That he had no business up here. "Should have their own man up here. He knows them and what to do. We don't. We come in here [from the Metropolitan department] strangers. It takes us years to learn it." We had quite a few Metropolitan police who had retired who came up here. They knew the rounds. They had run across members and had gotten acquainted with them. He got rid of every one of them.

BAKER: Did he really?

BALLARD: Yes, he did! We had a retired fireman. And that was the last one. The chief asked me one day where he [the fireman] was. I said that he had called in sick. He said, "Do you have his telephone number?" And I said, "Of course." I was there. He called him. "When you get well, bring in your clothes, because you are off of the [pay] rolls effective today." And sure enough, the fella came back. I know he went to his member. That was it. He was gone. Sullivan had a way about him. He could operate. Maybe it would have been a stronger police force if he'd have stayed here.

BAKER: He came in shortly after the Puerto Rican shooting, so maybe he picked up on some of the sentiment for reform and professionalism?

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BALLARD: That's right. You see, he worked both sides of the street, too. He worked the Senate side. He worked the House side. He was originally from Boston. He and Tip were buddies. Maybe he used that. I don't know. He never used it with me. He was Joe Duke's type of man because Sullivan was tough . . . Duke was tough.

BAKER: Speaking about Nixon as vice president reminds me of your story of Nixon as president when he came up here the morning after the Cambodian

Incursion [1970]. I read an article in which you discussed that. Maybe you could tell me what that was all about.

BALLARD: I carpooled, and I still do. I came into work that morning with my carpool. They dropped me off at the Senate steps. Well, there was the president's limousine and a secret service car.

BAKER: What time in the morning?

BALLARD: About 5:30, quarter of six. I knew about the Cambodian thing, so I thought, "Somebody's punched the Button." But I didn't see Mansfield's car and I didn't see Dirksen's car. I said something about it to the boys and got out of the carpool. I went in the Senate Door and there was the head of the secret service detail. I knew his grandfather. He was originally from my neck of the woods. In fact, my nephew and this fella had graduated from Marshall University together. I knew his father well. And I'd run into "Hammy." His name was Percy Brown. He had a nickname of Hammy, I suppose

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anything to avoid being called "Percy." (Laughter) Maybe he gave him the name himself! But Hammy was standing there. Hammy's grandfather was in the coal business and my father was with the coal companies. They were good friends. That's how I knew the family. When Hammy came up here, he looked me up first thing, being from home and all. All right. There stands Hammy and an agent over on the red phones--the phones that go direct to the [police] office. He had said that he would like to have someone come up and let him in the Senate chamber because the president was up there. Well, the clown down on the desk downstairs said, "Well, I've never met him. Ask him to come down and we'll have some coffee." He thought somebody was pulling his leg.

BAKER: Sure. Five-thirty in the morning!

BALLARD: That's right. Hammy told me. I said, "Hammy, tell your buddy to drop the phone. He's never going to get anything out of the basement. I'll be right back just as soon as I take my coat off and I'll go down and I'll have the key. Now, I had a key [to the Senate chamber]. I have a key right in that drawer there [pointing]. I don't suppose I'll ever use it, but I have it. Mr. Duke gave me a key. Nobody was supposed to know. He gave it to me because on Saturdays members would want to take guests on the floor and they would disturb him [at home]. He didn't want to be disturbed. He gave me the key and said, "When they make an inquiry about it, you

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can take them in there. I don't know anything about it. Don't want to know. But I'm giving you this key." So, I went downstairs and put on my blouse and got my key and went back up. Nixon and his valet were standing outside . . .

BAKER: Standing outside the Senate chamber?

BALLARD: Yes. You know, the Reception Room. The little hall out there.

BAKER: They'd been out there all along?

BALLARD: They were up there waiting to get in. When I went up, Nixon said, "Well, I know we'll get some action now. He came here the same time [1947] that I did. Which was true. And he introduced me to his valet and I unlocked the door and we went in. He spent some time. Went in the vice president's office. It was quite a while. Then, he said, "How about going over to the House?" I said, "Well, you won't run into any trouble over there. It's not locked. They come in about 2:00 o'clock [a.m.] over there.

BAKER: To clean it up.

BALLARD: Yes. We had a man stationed over there because they did open up early. So we went through the Rotunda, over to the House and took them around to the side. Went in. He explained the House to him [his valet].

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BAKER: This was just for the benefit of the valet?

BALLARD: That's all. There was nobody else along, but a couple of secret service agents. You know they could care less about what it was. What they were waiting on was eight o'clock so they could get off. I think it was just because he couldn't sleep. Nixon couldn't sleep and he had to do something. He had stopped down at the Tidal Basin to talk to some of those demonstrators down there. After we came back through the Rotunda, we came down on the elevator and he said to me, "Is there any place that we can get breakfast here?" And I said, "Well, I'll tell you, Mr. President, that hasn't changed up here. They don't open up till eight o'clock (partner)." He said, "Well, what do you do?" I said, "Well, I eat before I come in here." "Pretty early!" And I said, "Yeah. Pretty early." So, we came down in the car and we talked awhile and he loaded up. Hammy told me later that they stopped at the Mayflower Hotel and had breakfast. The first time that he'd eaten away from the White House since he'd been down there.

BAKER: How much time did he spend here that morning?

BALLARD: A couple of hours.

BAKER: So, he left about 7:30.

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BALLARD: Must have been. He left a little before eight, because I told him nothing opens 'til eight. Every time I ever ran into him, he was always very friendly.

BAKER: That's a good point. You talked about the two views of a senator. The ideological senator on one side and the personal human being on the other. And that must be true of presidents. You've known a lot of presidents. You knew Truman . . .

BALLARD: Oh, yes, Truman . . . Now, I have a picture of Truman that was made on his eightieth birthday [May 8, 1964]. He was up at the Senate Reception Room. They had had a Masonic convention over at the Marriott Hotel. He came up to the Capitol the next morning, the day of his eightieth birthday, up to S-207. And had his picture made with quite a few candidates . . . that old publicity job. They brought some House members over. Truman said that he would like to have one with me. I reckon that Muto [the Senate Democratic photographer] was taking it. Everybody got back. He and I shook hands. Of course, Muto gave me a copy. Humphrey was there and he told me if I wanted it autographed, to bring it to his office up on the third floor and he'd send it back to Independence to have it autographed. But, I just never did.

Truman told me once that he wished Missouri could have two and a half senators. Held like to be that half. 'Cause he didn't want anything to happen to Senators [Thomas] Hennings and [Edward] Long.

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He loved the Senate. He would talk about the Senate . . . he would rather have been senator than president. I took him out of John Kennedy's inaugural luncheon [January 1961] in the Old Supreme Court Room. He came out and he saw me standing right outside the door. He said to me, "You are always around when I need you. How about helping me get down those steps down there?" And I said, "Well, sure I'll help you." He said that he was in a hotel in Kansas City and he went to sleep and his leg went to sleep. He got up suddenly and said he didn't know what he had done to it but he said, "By gosh, I'm having trouble." We went down the steps.

There was a Secret Service agent down there that I had worked with on the Metropolitan and Capitol Police--Floyd Boring. Well, I suppose it was back in 1948, but the president and Congress had gotten into some trouble over appropriations. And Truman wouldn't sign the Appropriation Act and we had to go a month without pay. That was the only payday I ever missed here. Well, what they did, they withheld the president's money and he had no Secret Service. (Laughter) And quite a few of them came up here and got on the Capitol Police Force. I knew three. Now, af ter the money was restored and everything got back to normal, they went back down to the White House. Well, one of them was standing down at the foot of the stairs [in 1961]. He had been at the White House and Truman took a liking to him and he drove Truman's car. Now he was [allegedly] driving the car when they had the wreck in South America. I said to

him one day, "Were you driving or was the president?" He said, "Well, you read the newspaper report, I was driving." I'm quite sure that Truman was driving the car, because Boring wouldn't wreck it.

We were going down the steps and Truman looked down and saw Floyd and he said, "My God! Floyd, you old son of a bitch, what are you doing here?" And Floyd said, "I'm waiting on you." I said, "Well, I'm going to turn you over to Floyd. He's bigger than I am and if your leg gives out, he can carry you. I can't."

Truman used to come up to the Capitol [when he was president] often. We thought once he had run out of groceries down there. He was up there nearly every night to eat.

BAKER: Where did he go to eat?

BALLARD: In the Senators' Dining Room. Eat and drink. He and Russell Long. I was there one night . . . the press would hear about it. The building was closed and they'd come down. You had to watch the press. If you had your back turned to them, they would hit you on this shoulder [pointing]. What they wanted to do was distract your attention and then they'd go by on this [the opposite] side. That was an old trick. I was there one night and somebody hit me on the shoulder. I reached right around and got him . . . right by the leg! (Laughter) It was Russell Long!

BAKER: He was just being friendly, just patting you on the shoulder.

BALLARD: No. Somebody else patted me.

BAKER: I see. So you thought you were getting him and you came up with Russell Long. You had a live senator! (Laughing)

BALLARD: I forget who I thought I had . . . Dan Schorr or somebody. I said (Laughing), "Pardon me!"

BAKER: Well, you knew Truman pretty well. You also knew Lyndon Johnson.

BALLARD: Lyndon was a different package. Nobody got next to Lyndon. Nobody! He had his own little clique, naturally, but outside of that he wasn't too friendly. He knew me. Everytime he'd see me, he'd shake hands, "How ya doing." When I was acting chief /in 1964/ they were having the Civil Rights filibuster and I got word . . . it was Saturday night and the Senate had just adjourned. When I called downstairs to tell them they had adjourned, they said, "Rush to the House Door. President Johnson is on his way to the House Door." This was Saturday night at 8:30! I tore out to the House Door and a Secret Service agent was standing right inside the door. There was nobody else there except the officer on

the desk. Just about the time I got there, the limousine drove up. The agent said to me, "He's going to the Board of Education Room. Can you show me

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where it is?" I said, "No. We don't have time. But you don't have to worry about him. He knows where it is. He's well acquainted with that."

So, Johnson came in. Shook hands with me. Glad to see me. Made his turn. I told the agent, "All we have to do is follow him." A congressman from North Carolina . . . the "Sugar Lobby" was having a hassle. I can't recall the member's name, but he had come up to see if he couldn't get that sugar bill straightened out. Saturday night! He was up there quite a while.

BAKER: He probably got it straightened out, too.

BALLARD: Oh, yes. You know when he put his stamp on it, he would either straighten it up or tear it up. Maybe he lost the war, but he never lost a battle. If he couldn't win it, he quit it. That was one of his ways of doing business.

BAKER: Well, when he was in the Senate, I get the impression he pretty well set his own rules.

BALLARD: Oh, sure he did.

BAKER: After our last session, you mentioned the time he had his picture taken in the Senate chamber with Bill Moyers.

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BALLARD: That just wasn't done. It was a strict rule that's been followed since the Senate chamber first opened. They make an official photograph of members in the Senate chamber.

BAKER: But even that only started in 1962.

BALLARD: That's right, but a camera inside. No way.

BAKER: Why is that?

BALLARD: I suppose it is to protect the senators.

BAKER: Why don't they allow a camera in there when the Senate is not in session?

BALLARD: Beats me. I have never been able to understand it. When school children go in (on the floor when the Senate is not in session), we have to have a man at that door to see that they leave their cameras on the couches in the lobby.

BAKER: So, on that earlier occasion, Bill Moyers and Johnson went into the chamber when the Senate was not in session.

BALLARD: That was the day Moyers was leaving Johnson's staff. He had his degree and he was leaving. Johnson was there and Frank Muto [the official Senate Democratic photographer] and I said to Frank, "Where are you going?" He said, "I'm supposed to meet him in the Senate chamber." And I said, "Not with that camera." He said,

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"Well, I don't know what else he'd want with me." And Johnson got up in the chair and Bill got up beside him. And Frank is out there shooting and I'm holding my breath. I'm there and I'm holding my breath that Joe Duke doesn't open that door up in Gallery 7, right outside his office, which he did often. And look down. He'd have wrecked us.

BAKER: That would have been curtains for you.

BALLARD: As far as I'm concerned it would have been. How in the world would I have stopped Lyndon Johnson from anything.

It reminds me of one time when [Senator John] Pastore was making a campaign picture. He had a photographer. He was in on the floor with someone. And he wanted to take a picture coming out of the floor into the Senate Lobby behind the chamber. And there are no pictures allowed there, either. I didn't know what I was going to do. Pastore was tough. He said something about, "We'll have him take a picture of you and I coming out." (Laughter) And I thought to myself, "And Joe Duke will pick up a Rhode Island paper and see that!" So, I suggested that it might be better if it showed us coming out the swinging doors into the Reception Room. He bought it! I got him out of that lobby.

BAKER: That was a close call.

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BALLARD: You're darn right. He did keep the photographer off the Senate floor because I told him that Mr. Duke had a strict rule. It is hard to turn them down.

BAKER: Also, at the end of our session last time, you told the story about the naming of the Lyndon Johnson and the John F. Kennedy Rooms in the Capitol.

BALLARD: When Kennedy was running for president, he was in the Senate, of course. They built a little plywood room that led into what is now the "Kennedy Room." It was just a temporary room. He had a doorman who stayed in there. If people wanted to visit with him, they'd bring him off the Senate floor and into that room. He never used what is now known as the Kennedy Room. That was Joe Duke's "Key Club."

BAKER: The plywood room was actually built near the Senate entrance on the second floor?

BALLARD: Yes. Right by the back elevator. It didn't interfere with the elevators. It was up just so high, maybe eight feet. It was by the alcove at the entrance to the Kennedy Room.

BAKER: So it blocked the entrance to the Kennedy Room?

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BALLARD: Yes, but they never used that entrance. They always went through Joe Duke's office. Well, Mrs. Kennedy was coming up to S-207 for a luncheon.

BAKER: When he was in the White House?

BALLARD: Yes. It was a quick job. I think it was Mrs. Mansfield's idea, because the day she was coming up here . . . that morning, I was making my rounds as usual and the boys from the carpenter shop were up there painting. And I said, "What the hell is going on?" They said, "We don't know. We got a call this morning to come up here and paint "Kennedy" and "Johnson" on these rooms. That's what we're doing and that's all we're doing." Of course, after the luncheon, they brought Mrs. Kennedy around to show her the Kennedy and the Johnson Rooms. I was there for that. I had to bring them around, because the tourists were all in there. Mrs. Mansfield showed the rooms to Mrs. Kennedy.

BAKER: Was Mrs. Kennedy impressed?

BALLARD: Nothing impressed Mrs. Kennedy! If it did, she had a beautiful way of keeping it away from the public. (Laughter)

BAKER: As far as you know, Lyndon Johnson as president of the Senate had the authority to say, "We're going to name one room after the current president and one after the current vice president."

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BALLARD: Who was going to stop him?

BAKER: Certainly not Mike Mansfield.

BALLARD: No. And the Architect of the Capitol? No. It's the game on the Hill . You don't hit yourself in the head. And that's what you do if you buck a fella like Lyndon Johnson. Or Mike Mansfield. Mike Mansfield was one of the calmest characters you've ever known. But he had power when he wanted to use it. He had a buddy there on the Republican side--George Aiken. Aiken was strong on seniority. They knew how to get along.

BAKER: They had those regular breakfasts.

BALLARD: They had breakfast every morning. In the cafeteria in the Dirksen Building. Lola [Pierotti] and Mansfield and Aiken. Of course, later Lola married Aiken. On one morning a month they had the Marine breakfast in S-207. And Mansfield always attended that. Mansfield was a gung-ho Marine. Outside of that, every morning they had breakfast together.

BAKER: Had the Marine breakfast been going on for many years?

BALLARD: Yes.

BAKER: Do they still have it?

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BALLARD: Yes. They usually have a congressman as one of the officers in the organization, and I think it has been held over on the House side for a couple of years. But Mansfield had it [as sponsor] for three or four years. I had quite a few fellas [on the force] who had been in the Marine Corps and they always liked to go. And I excused them to attend.

BAKER: It was open to anyone who had been a Marine?

BALLARD: That's right.

BAKER: Sort of like the Nebraska breakfast.

BALLARD: Yes, but of course, it hadn't been going on as long as the Nebraska breakfast. That thing's been going on almost as long as there has been a Nebraska, I think (Laughing).

BAKER: Your dealings with Mansfield were pretty much at arms length?

BALLARD: Oh, yes. Mrs. Mansfield and I were very good friends. When he first came here, she worked in his office. She'd come over to the Capitol with papers from his office and she'd be standing out in the Reception Room waiting on him to come out and look at them and we'd visit. We got to be very good friends. Mansfield was a fella who was strictly a gentleman. You learned that if he was going into his [Capitol] office and a tour group was coming through, you

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learned, don't stop the tour for Mansfield. He didn't want that. If I put a man up there, it was the one thing I'd tell him.

BAKER: You have seen some interesting majority leaders.

BALLARD: Yes, indeed. Robert Byrd did his through his pocket full of chits.

BAKER: And a good memory.

BALLARD: He knew my brother in West Virginia very well. That's when he first came here. He'd only been here a couple of months. We had a West Virginia State Society program down at one of the hotels. Well, he had offered his services as MC or something. It was a dinner. He came over to me. I had only met him one time. But, he came over to me and asked me if I would give the invocation. Well, of course, I said yes. Well, my wife said to me, "Now what are you going to do?" (Laughter) I said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to give the invocation!" She said, "I want to stay around for this (Laughing)." So, I did! He complimented me.

I found out later that he had me mixed up with my brother. Now my brother looked a whole lot like me. We always called him the "Black Sheep" of the family because he was active in the Baptist Church. He was active in all the good will and charitable organizations. And Byrd is a very active Baptist and he had run across him in a lot of Baptist meetings and that sort of thing. In fact, he

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asked my brother later on, at a Baptist Church in Hinton, "When did you come down?" And my brother said, "I have never been anywhere." And then one of his staff later told me, "He got screwed up on you!" (Laughter) When he came over to ask me to give the invocation, I knew he thought I was my brother.

BAKER: So, you tried to act as your brother would have acted.

BALLARD: Yes. I gave the invocation!

BAKER: Last time, after we turned off the tape, we talked a little bit about the "Quorum Club." Was that originally located in the old Carroll Arms Hotel?

BALLARD: In the Carroll Arms Hotel, second floor. Of course, the Carroll Arms went out of business. It went bankrupt. They moved over in the building on Schotts Court.

BAKER: Was it a town house?

BALLARD: Yes. You might say it was. We'd call it a town house now. And there were several apartments. [Senator Karl] Mundt had one. And [E.Y.] Berry, the congressman from South Dakota had an apartment in there. They were the only two members of Congress living there.

BAKER: Who ran the Quorum Club?

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BALLARD: Bobby Baker.

BAKER: He actually owned it?

BALLARD: He didn't actually own it, but he ran it. He was membership chairman and president. Then there was that lobbyist Glenn . . . what's his last name . . . ? He and Bobby were buddy buddies. He was the lobbyist and Bobby was the employee here on the Hill. But, he is the fella who put the sting on Bobby Baker! He told somebody about these vending machines that Bobby had that nobody knew anything about. And that's when they started investigating.

BAKER: Had Kerr died at that point?

BALLARD: No, Kerr was still around [i.e. pre-1963].

BAKER: Who was eligible for membership in the Quorum Club?

BALLARD: I don't know. That was up to Bobby. In fact, I think most of them were lobbyists. In fact, I think that's strictly what it was.

BAKER: But any member of Congress was free to go.

BALLARD: Oh, yes. Apparently all were welcome, naturally. There were some who wouldn't get caught in there.

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BAKER: Now, there's the "116 Club." It used to be located at 116 Schott's Court. Now it has moved over to 234 Third Street, N.E.

BALLARD: I don't know much about it.

BAKER: I was just wondering if it was an outgrowth of the Quorum Club?

BALLARD: I think it was. The same type of organization, but not as well known and as powerful as the Quorum Club.

BAKER: But that club got its start in the Carroll Arms?

BALLARD: On the second floor. I think it just moved up from the bar. The fellow who ran the bar was named Anderson. He was quite a politician. He knew how to get business into that bar . . . how to get the members in. They did a terrific business.

BAKER: Quite an institution.

BALLARD: Yes it was. Many a fella was homeless when it closed.

BAKER: To change the subject a bit, I wanted to ask you about women coming to the police force. That's a fairly recent situation.

BALLARD: The first ones came here in the latter part of 1974. We have now, I'd say 120. Now, the turnover is much greater than

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with the men. They get pregnant and leave. They find out it's not the job they thought it was. They get married and their husbands take them.

BAKER: Are their duties any different than the male officers?

BALLARD: Not any different actually. I think we have maybe one or two on patrol. That's the mobile unit. Actually, I don't think women have any business on the street, to tell you the truth. They are just not physically able to handle the street. Fortunately, we don't have much of that here. Downtown is different. We don't have any "street" except checking cars for parking stickers. Of course, there's a place in the clerical end of it. They fit in there. They do a job just as well as a man. In fact, in a lot of cases, better. Outside of that, I don't know what they do with them downtown. I do know they've had trouble with them. But, up here they fit in well because we don't have any street crime.

(Portions Deleted)

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(Portions Deleted)

BAKER: On a different subject, recently there was legislation passed to allow the Capitol Police to protect members off the Hill. Under certain circumstances. What's behind all of that?

BALLARD: Politics. It is the best way to lobby that you could find. As I said, [Chief] Powell is one of the sharpest characters that we have on the Hill. Don't underestimate him. He's sharp. He works on the same principle as J. Edgar Hoover did. "Scare the hell out of them, but be sure that they can reach around in the dark and find a protector." J. Edgar Hoover kept the hell scared out of them, but there was an FBI agent there to jerk you out of the blaze. Powell works the same way. It satisfies the ego of a lot of members if they can point to somebody and say, "This fella's protecting me."

BAKER: It says the person is important enough to need it.

BALLARD: That's right. He goes out of town, and he 's had a threat--we send a couple of officers along. It makes him "important in Washington."

BAKER: Plain clothes officers?

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BALLARD: That's right. Not in uniform. Now when you go [to the Appropriations Committee] for men, there's no problem. Those fellas are sitting

right there on that committee. Now, what good they do I don't know. It has never been tried out. They have never had to muscle anybody.

BAKER: Since that law was passed, have many members used it?

BALLARD: Oh, yes. They use it frequently.

BAKER: Is there a special detachment of men who are available just for that?

BALLARD: No. We draw them from our "Protective Section." They are in plain clothes every day. They are over in the galleries, assigned there and if you need a couple, why you get them. We send a couple of plain clothesmen with the contingent going to funerals. I don't know what for . . . maybe to get coffee for them. Back in the early days, it was the Sergeant at Arms. Now, that was a good trip. The Sergeant at Arms always took a couple of buddies with him because it was a free ride wherever they were going. Back in the old days when I first came here, it was all trains. They went by train and, boy, that was a jolly trip. Now they go by plane and don't get to spend as much time. It's a good trip anyhow.

BAKER: How about the whole question of threats against members? Is that a fairly routine thing?

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BALLARD: Well, that depends on what you think is a threat. What is a threat to some people isn't to another. Some think of them as another kook letter or kook call. And some don't.

(Portions Deleted)

BAKER: That camera system was put in after the 1971 bombing. A pretty expensive system to cover all of the corridors of the Capitol and the office buildings.

BALLARD: For what they're allowed to cover, it's covered pretty well. I don't think we use it much.

BAKER: There's somebody there full time monitoring it?

BALLARD: Oh, yes. Twenty-four hours. We have a pretty good sized staff on communications. At first, they'd get a few [false alarms] because it was sort of new to them. Any movement, you know would alert them. But now it is sort of old hat.

BAKER: Like anything else. I suppose that's the time when you can most expect trouble.

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BALLARD: That's right. When you get lax. That's it every time. That's like they used to say in the coal mines, "You never heard of a new man getting killed by a slate fall." It was always some veteran coal miner. Not a new man. He was always too careful. So, that's the way it is up here. The longer it goes on, the more lax.

BAKER: So it will take another major catastrophe to tighten up on security. I suppose the recent [October 23, 1983] suicide bombing in Beirut must be creating a lot of concern on the part of the people who run this police force. The Capitol sits up there as a great target for all kinds of mischief.

BALLARD: Well, I don't think that put any additional security on us.

BAKER: But it is a reminder of what can happen. If somebody is determined enough to do it . . .

BALLARD: Well, you know, there is no protection against anarchy. There never has been and there never will be. There's no way that you can stop them, because they are determined people and they'll find a way to out think you. It is like the bomb that they put off in the Capitol [in 1971]. That was anarchy. There was no way to stop it. It was going to be done. [Ten days after this

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session, on November 7, 1983 at 11:00 p.m., another bomb exploded in the Capitol, outside the Senate chamber, causing \$250,000 in damage.]

BAKER: Or that guy who was up in the House gallery the other day. He could have blown himself up if he'd wanted to.

BALLARD: That's right. Of course, fortunately, he wasn't too serious. He didn't have any powder. But, there would be no way to stop it. There are not enough people to stop it. Because they know a way to get in. They'll figure out a way.

BAKER: So, more men and more money is not the answer in your judgment.

BALLARD: No. There is no answer, to tell you the truth.

BAKER: That Commission on the Operation of the Senate in the mid-1970s made some pretty strong recommendations about the police force and they were all in the direction of making it smaller and more consolidated.

BALLARD: That's right.

BAKER: They said that you should bring the House and the Senate details together. Is that reasonable to do? Is there any real efficiency to be achieved?

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BALLARD: Well, I don't know where it would help any. Now, they are together to a certain extent. But the pay periods are different. The House gets paid once a month, the Senate gets paid twice a month. You still have a certain amount of patronage on the House side. None on the Senate. But, as far as working conditions, we work House men over on this [the Senate] side. Senate men on that [House] side. Not many, however.

BAKER: But you have that flexibility. You can pull them over.

BALLARD: When we had patronage, we did it more than we do now. In order to protect him, we'd bring him over on the Senate side and hide him. I've done that many a time. Nobody knew whose payroll he was on. It was nobody's business. But, change is slow on Capitol Hill. I don't care where it is. It may come, but it moves like a snail. It takes something drastic to change. Now, we have increased, it is true. As I have said, when I came here, there were 157, about 100 of them working. And it has increased . . . under the Republican 80th Congress, I think by 15, and it has gradually grown.

The changes themselves, in the working of the Capitol Police Force, have been very little from the day I came here. Very little.

BAKER: You have more extensions of the force. You have the dog unit

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BALLARD: The dog unit has just about petered out. When it first started, there were about twelve men on the dog detail. We found out we could get along without them.

BAKER: One of the recommendations back in 1976 was that perhaps duties that did not have anything to do with security could be assigned to non-police personnel. Such as parking. That you could make the force smaller and more specifically oriented toward security.

BALLARD: Well . . . you see, security is something else up here. It is doubtful. You can get to a certain point in security and then you've got to cut it out. Just like I say. The cameras. That's put up there for security, but it didn't suit this member in his office, "I don't want that camera up there near my office." So, security stopped right there. As long as it doesn't tread on some member's toes, you can have security. But, if you start pinching, security is out. It is limited on Capitol Hill and it will be as long as members are here. And that's what they're here for. It is okay to protect the next fella, "But don't get next to me." So, you'll never have much security up here!

BAKER: Some of those proposals for reform say to cut the force back and have a contract with the Park Police or Metropolitan, so that if you need help in a crisis, then you have those people when you need them, and then they go away.

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BALLARD: Again you run in . . . you see Park is very limited in personnel. Metropolitan . . . you could use them, but when you call down there, they usually have a similar situation downtown, because about the only time you need to call them is when you have a demonstration. Well, if you have a demonstration up here, you've got one downtown, too. So they can't send you men. They've got them all tied up.

We think we have to have too many on these demonstrations. I've always said that. We spend a lot of money in overtime and men when it is not necessary. We have never had a demonstration up here yet where we have had to use force. When it comes to actually using force, the demonstrations are not that tight. They are not here to battle you. They'll try to make you think they are, but let them hit you first. And it won't happen.

I have been, when I was over in the Capitol Building, in every type of demonstration that you could think of, but when it came to knock down and drag out, it wasn't there.

(Portions Deleted)

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BAKER: Well, as you look back to the days when they only had one hundred men present for duty, what do you miss most about that time?

BALLARD: You were a little closer. Everybody stuck together. They protected each other. Now you don't have that. The men . . . I don't say they rat on each other, but they will tell on each other if they get in a jam. They will put somebody else in the middle.

BAKER: Do you think that's a function of bigness and bureaucracy?

BALLARD: That's right. We had a captain that used to get loaded, in the 80th Congress [1947-48], and he'd come down here to the guard room. He'd come over to the Carroll Arms and get drunk and he'd come down and display weapons and scare the hell out of you.

BAKER: Was he on duty at the time?

BALLARD: No. Well, he was always on duty. Those riot guns. Of course, we'd watch for him. On the doors, if somebody came in that they didn't know, they'd call the guard room. Well, you knew the description. If it was him, you knew he was coming. I was busy. I called the wife. We lived right here on C Street. I asked her to bring me down something for supper. The guy on the door here called me downstairs and described this woman. And I said, "For God's sake,

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don't stop her! That's my wife with my supper." (Laughter) We were pretty close. Kept each other informed. But you don't have that now. Of course, it's a big organization.

BAKER: What about the Senate itself and Capitol Hill?

BALLARD: The Congress has changed so that even an old senator, if he was resurrected and came back, he wouldn't understand where he was. Especially now on the House side. You have all of these different organizations within the House. The Black Caucus. The Boll Weevils. They're just enough to stop legislation. They can't pass anything. But they have ruined the House. Just enough to stop it. Not do any good. Of course, the Senate's changed so that they don't recognize themselves now. These members going in so many directions. As I've said, when I came here you had about eighteen or twenty members who ran the Senate. And they ran it. They knew what legislation was necessary. What was worthwhile and what wasn't. They conducted their business. They adjourned and they went home. They didn't lollygag here all year long with a recess for this a recess for that. A "working period" at home. That's a bunch of bull!

BAKER: It seems now that freshmen members, and there are a lot of freshman members, have a lot more power than they might have had in earlier times.

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BALLARD: And that's the leadership. The leadership /of the Senate and House/ gives it to them or they wouldn't have it. A leader today plays ball with them because he gets a chit in his pocket and he'll call it back later and they'll wish to Hell they hadn't given it to him, but it's too late. Those old boys in those days, they didn't have to give out chits. They told lem to stay in line. It's like Speaker Rayburn who had the "Board of Education Room" He controlled them. If you want to get along, go along. And he wouldn't even recognize them from the floor. They might be there a year before held even point a finger at them. But he had everything under control. The yeas and nays to him were what he wanted, regardless of what came off the floor. "The ayes have it." Everybody knew he was wrong, but they weren't going to say anything. But, I think it was better when it had some control.

BAKER: Had a sense of direction.

BALLARD: That's right. Which they don't have now.

BAKER: Well, when you think back to the first day you arrived here, and you were walking by the office building and you looked up and weren't even sure what it was, and you went up to see your senator . . . At that point you must have had a sense of awe about Capitol Hill. Does some of that still last after all these years?

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BALLARD: Oh, yes. It does with me. The Capitol Building at night. I'll never get over it. Regardless. You see it on TV. It is still the Capitol Building. I was working one evening on the West Front. An Army captain came strolling by. I was leaning over the rail looking down toward the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. He said to me, "What is that statue down there." And I said, "Which

one?" And he said, "That tall shaft." And I said, "Are you kidding me!" And he said, "No. I'd like to know. It is my first visit here." I said, "You mean to tell me, captain, that you don't know the Washington Monument?" He says, "Is that what it is?" Well, I thought that every school child knew, but there was an Army captain who didn't know. That surprised me. It took me a long time to get over that.

I'll never change in my thoughts about the Capitol. I never get tired of it. I used to have lots of people come to town to visit me. And I always brought them up one trip at night. And, they'd say to me, "Don't you get tired of seeing this?" And I'd say, "No, I never do." I'd take them by the Lincoln Memorial at night. Now, that's a beautiful scene. Everybody should see that. They don't have to be lovers of Lincoln to appreciate that scene.

BAKER: It sounds as if looking back over your time here, that you don't have many regrets.

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BALLARD: I don't have any. The jobs have been good to me. Of course, I worked at it. I came here under patronage and my member was defeated six months after I got here. Patronage was tough, but I made up my mind that I was going to stay here. That I liked it here. That it was a good job. I was interested. The Capitol Building was right up my alley. I'd always liked history. I could never get enough of it and that Capitol Building. It was there. All you had to do was look for it. And I did. And that's one of the reasons why I stayed. Because it got to the point where people would come to the Capitol Building hunting me about history in the Capitol. I've enjoyed every day of it. That's one reason why I won't leave.

BAKER: You have done it all. You have had every off ice a person could hold [within the department].

BALLARD: And I was the first man ever to work up through the ranks from the patronage system. The only one who survived it. The first one ever to break the barrier and come out of it. We had lieutenants, but never a captain. They always brought those fellas in. And then when the opening came, I was made the first captain. I was proud of that, because that made it possible for other men to come up as captain after I was captain, they made it, which was all right. It has been an interesting life. And I've been able to pass it on to other people . . . to school groups. School groups from West Virginia. I've gotten some beautiful letters from kids.

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I had one experience with an exchange student from one of the Scandinavian countries. She had been in my home town going to school and she was going back to New York to join the rest of the group and go back home. Well, a girl from home came up with her. I knew her parents real well. Her father called me and asked if I would help them out at the Capitol. So, they came up one morning at

9:30. Dean Rusk and I were awfully good friends. Dean Rusk told me stuff that he didn't tell anybody, especially about his personal life. Anyhow, I told them, "I've got to go over to the House side because Dean Rusk is coming up to meet with the speaker and I have to go over to the House side and pick him up and take him to the speaker's office. So, I took them over and set them right outside the door of the chamber. The speaker's office is here (pointing). Couple of chairs there for the doormen. And I said, "You wait here until I go down and get him." I brought him up the elevator and I introduced him to them. He shook hands with them. I took him in the office and he had to wait a couple of minutes. So he came back out, and he said to them, "You all have never met the speaker have you?" I said, "No, they haven't." He said, "You all come in with me." So he took them in and introduced them and brought them out. So, we visited until he came out and I took him back to the car.

Then I took them through the building and over to the Senate galleries so they could be there for the opening [of the daily session]. They came out in a few minutes. As they came out, going into

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the gallery was the congressman from West Virginia, Ken Hechler. Now, he was great with young people. It is a shame that he got defeated because he did so much for the young people. He was going in with Supreme Court Judge Browning from home. And I introduced them. He said, "We are going to be out of here in a few minutes. You take them over to the House Door because I'm going to take them to lunch and I'll be over there in a few minutes." So we walked over. It wasn't very long before he and the judge came by. I said, "They got more of a break out of you. I wasn't about to take them to lunch." Well, this kid, she couldn't get over what she had seen. She went back home to Norway and it wasn't very long 'til I got a letter from her thanking me. But she asked me if I would write down and send to her what we had done that day at the Capitol. "They won't believe I met the Speaker of the House and the Secretary of State. But, if you will write it down, I think they will believe that." So I did. She wrote back and said, "I finally impressed them."

BAKER: She will never forget you as long as she lives. I guess that would be the ideal situation. If everybody who came to the Capitol could have that kind of experience.

BALLARD: Yes. I had an old school teacher from near home. It was a one-room school house. They had grades up to the eighth. He brought them every year. He would tell them before they started out,

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"Take notes, because when you get back home there will be questions." I don't know how many years I took him through, and finally the old man died. He'd write me a letter when he was coming, on Saturday. And if I wasn't working, I'd

go in, 'cause I didn't want to disappoint him. I would get letters and at Christmas, I'd get packages.

BAKER: I bet every family in that town knew your name before very long.

BALLARD: Even in the state. People from all over the state. I had a woman from up in the northern part of the state who sent me preserves every Christmas. She had come down here with a 4-H group and I had taken them through. She was so impressed with the Capitol.

BAKER: When those people think of the Capitol, they think of you.

BALLARD: Apparently.

BAKER: Well, this might be a good place to stop. I have kept you moving for almost two hours today.

BALLARD: I enjoy it. It is interesting to me, because I don't have a chance to recall those things except on an occasion like this.
[End of Interview #8]

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