

Riki P. Sheehan

SR 1343, Oral History, by Michael O'Rourke
Senator Mark O. Hatfield Oral History Project

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SHEEHAN: Fredrica "Riki" Poster Sheehan

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Tape 1, Side 1

1988 June 2

MOR: Okay, there we go. This is Michael O'Rourke with the Oregon Historical Society. The date is June 2, 1988 and I'm interviewing Riki Sheehan. And this is Tape 1, Side A.

So, why don't we start out, and maybe you could tell me a little bit about your family background, where you grew up and what your family was like, and what were their politics, and a little bit about your education and your early career plans.

SHEEHAN: All right. Well, I've been on the staff of Senator Hatfield in one capacity or another for the past 14 years. And I came to the Hatfield office in March of 1974. I was hired, despite the fact that I was not an Oregonian. I had never been to Oregon, and that wasn't a factor, apparently, in my hiring. The majority of staff members are from Oregon, and that's important, but the Senator recognizes that he can't have 100 percent of his staff from Oregon at any one time, and I was delighted that I was one of the exceptions.

I grew up in the New York city area, actually the suburbs of New York, the Hudson Valley area, about 40 miles north of New York City. My family was always very politically interested and active. They, for the most part, consider themselves Democrats, although at times they were "Javits" Republicans, which I think Senator Hatfield would fit comfortably. My parents were always very active in campaigning and volunteering, and I remember them working for Adlai Stevenson and John Kennedy. And as a little girl I would go with them to meetings and rallies and help out.

I was educated in New York, and went to college – graduated from Cornell University in 1973 with a Bachelor of Science, and came right to Washington to defer graduate school for a while and get a job preferably in government. But the first job I landed was Information Specialist for the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation, a foundation that was started by Eunice Kennedy Shriver in honor of her late brother, Joseph Kennedy. They run programs for handicapped and retarded children, including the Special Olympics program. And I was the information specialist, as I indicated, for the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation. A very exciting time to be in Washington as a young, idealistic, eager person to get involved in government, in politics, in social services. And in 1973 when I came to Washington, it was, of course, a rather tumultuous time. The Vietnam war was beginning to come to an end. Or at least, the American involvement.

We were living through the height of the Watergate era, and the Senate Watergate panel and House Judiciary meetings were beginning, and it was a very interesting time to have hands-on experience in Washington. It didn't take me long to realize that I would very much like to work on the Hill, and after about a year with the Kennedy Foundation I started to look for job opportunities on Capitol Hill. My main contacts were with Senator Kennedy's office because of my involvement with the Kennedy family and the Kennedy Foundation.

So my first job interview on the Hill was with a gentleman who was Senator Kennedy's political director and chief of his office by the name of Paul Kirk, who today, June 2, 1988, is the chairman of the Democratic party. At that time, though, he was Senator Kennedy's top aide and interviews me, and indicated that he thought I would be ideal for a position that he heard about in Senator Mark Hatfield's office. Although Senator Hatfield was a Republican, I've certainly learned that Senator Hatfield's personal friendships with members transcend political party labels and ideology, and he has close working relationships with many senators. And I was sent over to Senator Hatfield's office to interview for a position as a case worker. And very surprisingly to me, since I wasn't from Oregon, I wasn't a registered Republican, my family had no involvement with Oregon or Republican politics — although I had family in Oregon, but that didn't even come up [that] I had cousins and family there — I was interviewed, and not long after, I was offered a job

as a case worker for Senator Mark Hatfield. In fact, the interview itself was very interesting. After interviewing with Senator Hatfield's staff, I also interviewed with a few other senators' offices, and in every case, with the exception of Senator Hatfield's office, I was asked about my party affiliation; I was asked about my political background; I had to take something of a litmus test, if you will, to determine how Republican I was, or how Democratic I was, or for whoever, whichever office I was applying to for a position. But not in Senator Hatfield's office.

In Senator Hatfield's office, I was asked about my background in terms of education and interests. I was asked about my views on a variety of key issues that were before the Congress and before Senator Hatfield on his agenda – the war in Vietnam, my view of the role of government in people's lives, for social programs, what I thought of revenue sharing – really key and substantive issues as opposed to who my father was, whether he contributed to political campaigns or not, and I was very impressed with that. I'm delighted that I guess they were impressed with my answers, because they did hire me. So there I was as a case worker for Senator Hatfield, and...

MOR: And how did you answer those questions?

SHEEHAN: Well, I don't remember exactly, but I guess I answered them to his, to his liking. I felt that the role of government in people's lives obviously was to be an enhancer, and essentially, assistance of a last resort. But that there was a significant role of the government to play in people's lives, and to help out with personal and social and other kinds of problems. My view of the war in Vietnam was very compatible with Senator Hatfield's. I had been active in college in anti-war activities, and marches and mobilizations, and in fact, remembered when Senator Hatfield came to Cornell to speak at an anti-war rally.

And that's not to say that that Senator Hatfield only hires people who agree with him on every subject. That's quite the opposite, as a matter of fact. He's probably one of the few senators or members of Congress who enjoys having discussions with staff; who

enjoys having a difference of opinion on issues. It helps him to understand the other side of an issue when he goes home to Oregon. Someone will raise an issue and be on the other side of it – whether it's abortion, or the war in Vietnam, or whether it's some kind of a military weapons system, Panama Canal Treaties – whatever the issue was, he always appreciated discussing the other side of an issue.

MOR: So, in what ways you were able to be a foil for him?

SHEEHAN: Well, he would – not just me – he would often walk around the office every day and chat with everyone. “What are you doing?” What are you up to? What kind of mail are you getting? What are the people in Oregon saying? What problems have you been encountering, or they have been encountering?” That curtailed somewhat when he became chairman of the Appropriations Committee, because his time was much more limited, but prior to 1981, I would say that we had incredible access to him and a very fruitful exchange of ideas on a variety of issues. Now, he certainly wouldn't assign somebody many issues with which they disagreed with him, but he did appreciate a difference of opinion, and asked for free expressions of such differences.

MOR: Can you recall any specific examples of differences that you may have had with him?

SHEEHAN: Well, yes, I probably can. I'm trying to think of a good example, and the only one that right now comes to mind – well, I think of a couple, I guess. One would be relating to the Middle East. Although I was never in a position of handling the senator's foreign policy matters, it wasn't my background, I come from a Jewish family, and with fairly strong feelings towards Israel's survival. And the U.S.'s relationship with Israel – Senator Hatfield has been labeled as someone who has been, through the years, perhaps less supportive of Israel than some other members of Congress. I think that's misunderstood, frankly, but he has taken some heat from the Oregon Jewish community, and perhaps some, in some

press accounts because he is, he doesn't believe that we should be selling arms anywhere around the world, whether it's to the Israelis, the Arabs, anybody, to heighten the conflicts in the Middle East. And that has been interpreted by some as being anti-Israel.

MOR: But not by you?

SHEEHAN: No, no, certainly not, certainly not. But be that as it may, we had very fruitful discussions about Israel, about Jewish communities' perceptions of Israel, and you know, "your position looks this way to them and surely there are other issues we can get involved in relating to Israel that might change people's perceptions." And he's always been very supportive of aiding Soviet Jewry, of human rights, and certainly very opposed to any kind of terrorist attacks anywhere. And of course, in those days, there was a great deal of terrorism leveled at Israel on the part of the P.L.O. [Palestine Liberation Organization] or other Arab groups. But those are the kinds of things he would sit down and say, "Let's talk about this issue. How is this perceived? How do you think this is perceived? And let's discuss this, and maybe come up with some thoughts of how I can clarify my position."

MOR: Would he do this in sort of a round table with all the staff, or one on one, or...

SHEEHAN: Either. He might just come over to my desk and sit down and tell me that he was troubled by something that he had read in the paper or heard about his position, and we'd just chat for a bit. Another issue that's been very difficult and very volatile through the years has been the issue of abortion. Senator Hatfield has consistently taken a position that the government should not be funding abortions, and it's perfectly consistent with his views of life. He's truly a pro-life individual – against the death penalty, against military escalation and indiscriminate military operations – anything that takes life, chemical warfare, things that destroy life, or make people suffer unnecessarily at the hands of governments. And abortion fits into that, against the taking of human life. There are a number of people on the staff, and very frankly myself included, who take somewhat a

different view of a woman's right to have an abortion in certain, under certain circumstances. Certainly not wholesale abortion, but we had — I remember Senator Hatfield and I and another member of the staff having a long walk, taking a long walk around the Capitol one day, discussing the issue of abortion, and under what circumstances should the government, if ever, become involved in this issue or provide for funding or support of abortion. And he maintains his position, of course, and that's his position, that government should not be involved in funding any abortions for any reason, and yet he was interested in knowing how other people felt about it and under what circumstances I or someone else might have felt that it would be acceptable.

And we had a very long discussion about it and about life, and he also expressed his frustrations with members of Congress who claimed to be pro-life, and yet their pro-life position stops with an infant is born. They don't seem to care a whole lot about what happens after the infant is born in terms of what kinds of services are available to unwed mothers or to low income families who need nutritional services, immunization — as well as those members who seem to support instruments of death, or the government's development of instruments of death and capital punishment, but claim they're pro-life. So we had very, very good discussions about those kinds of issues that were hot topics.

Those are ones that I was involved in, in just an informal way, and I never handled either of the issues that I mentioned for the senator. But he was interested in my perspective, and I was always, I was very flattered, for one thing, that someone as brilliant as Senator Hatfield — he is truly a brilliant man — would seek out the opinions of others on his staff, on those issues.

MOR: So did you first meet the senator then, when you came to interview?

SHEEHAN: I didn't meet him on my first interview. I believe I first met him when I was — I came back for a second interview, and I was offered the position, and then I met him.

MOR: And do you recall anything about that meeting?

SHEEHAN: I was awestruck. It was a very brief meeting, but he's a very attractive man, and he comes across, I think, in the beginning as a bit aloof, when you first meet him, perhaps. He is one of the warmest individuals that I believe has ever served on Capitol Hill, in terms of caring about people, commitment to people, relationships with staff, which are really phenomenal. And I can tell you something about that. And I think you just need to get to know him a little bit, and I think it's very smart for a senator to expect someone to earn his trust, and I think that's what he does when he, when someone is hired. Certainly they're given every benefit, but they do have to earn his respect and trust in their abilities. And it always takes a little while, and once you've earned that respect and that trust – become a trusted aide – you're given a great deal of authority and autonomy and respect, and a good substantive position.

MOR: You've just described the relationship between the senator and his staff as phenomenal. Why don't you tell me a little more about that?

SHEEHAN: Certainly. One thing I was very impressed with, and I continue to be impressed with – I understand it's still rather the exception to the norm on Capitol Hill – is that whenever there is a staff meeting, the Senator reports on a trip that he's taken back to Oregon, which are frequent, every ten days or two weeks he's back for long weekends. When he returns from a trip – and there's a lot preparation that goes into those trips, everyone on the staff has a part, whether you're advising him on a particular issue, whether you're typing a speech, whether you're indexing the trip book – there's a great deal of involvement in all aspects of the staff, planning his scheduling. When he returns from a trip, he calls a staff meeting, and every member of the staff is invited to attend, in fact, encouraged to attend – whether you're a receptionist, a typist, the legislative director, the press secretary – everyone on the staff comes to those staff meetings; participates in them; is briefed on them.

And that's always been the case, that the entire staff is called into the staff meeting, because everyone is considered a key element of that trip preparation, and should know what the results of the trip were; what each town meeting produced; the kinds of questions people in Oregon were concerned about; the kinds of receptions or the kinds of bungling. On occasion, it doesn't happen often, but on a rare occasion there might have been some miscommunication, and the senator might show up and no one else, or something like that. We all needed to know that, or he felt we did. And also when anything of significance happened on the political scene or in the country, the Senator would call a staff meeting to discuss it. Give us his perceptions, his account of what happened in a White House meeting, just to let us know, to really keep us well informed of what was happening on the national agenda, what he was involved in, what his opinions were, so we could be better briefed and be able to explain them to others.

When he became chairman of the appropriations Committee, he was deeply involved in White House negotiations on budgets and legislation and funding, and he would often give us, without betraying confidences of the president, he would often give us a first-hand account of what the meetings were like, who was there, who said what, what the president did. That was very interesting. So he does share quite a bit with the staff, even at times when he is the most busy because he feels it's real important.

Also, there was a time in, back in the mid to late 1970s, when the senator and Gerry Frank, the administrative assistant, felt that staff could use some enlightening, and had a series of staff meetings which were actually more like seminars, in which they invited what we used to call a mystery guest to the office — we never knew who it was going to be — for an hour of lecturing and discussion. It was almost like an advanced senior seminar, and we were all encouraged to attend. Usually it was someone like a columnist, like Hugh Sidey of the *New York Times* or George Will; Joe Sisco, who was then president of American University, but former Undersecretary of State; Austin Kiplinger, the economist from the Austin Kiplinger newsletter — we had a number of these sessions that, where we discussed issues, we heard a presentation, and came away with something that was above and beyond what we did every day, above and beyond what we did every day, above and

beyond the day-to-day workings of a congressional office. And I was very impressed with that. It was kind of a continuation or a life-long learning process the senator felt was very important. And I think, partly that comes from that fact that he's a well-educated human being who reads a lot, but also from his academic background. He feels that you never stop learning or should never stop learning and opening up your horizon. So I was very impressed with that.

MOR: What sort of role do various staff members play in terms of supporting the senator? What's the day-to-day duties of a staff member like, and what kind of, say, somewhat more official communication do you have with him?

SHEEHAN: Well, I can give you an example of the perhaps the day in the life of a legislative assistant.

MOR: Sure.

SHEEHAN: Each legislative assistant is assigned specific issues to follow for the senator. When I was a legislative assistant, my responsibilities included legislation and funding matters concerning education and health, human services, immigration, communications, cultural affairs. It was my responsibility to be, number one, on top of legislation that was before the Congress in those areas, perhaps in committee or on the floor; advise him on votes that were coming up — at noon there'll be a vote on such and such an amendment — and discuss his position on them with him, maybe an issue that he was unaware of or uninvolved in because he didn't serve on the committee that the legislation came from. But we would sit down and certainly, in advance, and discuss the issue, and he would formulate his opinion or his position, and how he was going to vote. So that would be one responsibility. That's far from the only responsibility of a legislative assistant.

A legislative assistant also responds to constituent inquiries or questions or opinions about legislation; drafting mail for the senator to approve, his position in letters

and correspondence. A legislative assistant will also, or I would when I was a legislative assistant, help prepare speaking material that he would use in his speech on the issue. He would perhaps address a group of educators and ask me to put together some material that he could go over to put into his speech. Meet with lobbyists, constituents, other staff members to draft positions and initiate legislation. Certainly wed' do a lot of that too, where the senator would call me into his office, or call a group of us into the office and discuss an area that he would like to get more involved in, or he would like to take the lead on or co-sponsor. And we would help craft his position; perhaps draft the legislation, or with the assistance of the legislative council draft the legislation.

So it's a very long day – it's a very busy day, and of course, the more active the member is, the more involved you are and busy you are. Senator Hatfield was very active in the areas that I described, in my responsibilities. I always felt I had his ear.

MOR: And so on issues, maybe, where he wasn't following it that closely, would you recommend a position to him that you thought was consistent with his...

SHEEHAN: Certainly. He wouldn't always agree, but he might agree 85% of the time. And it's impossible for a member of Congress to know every aspect of every piece of legislation. There might be a major re-authorization of education programs. Every four or five years there's some significant re-authorizations. And there might be 16 pending amendments – some of which are on obscure education programs, some of which are on major programs. Or it might consist of a formula change. Someone may propose a change in the way funds are distributed among the states or among school districts, and that's something that Senator Hatfield would not have been deeply involved in, so we'd have to discuss the ramifications of that on Oregon. And he may not have been involved at all in that issue, but would have to become so, because there'd be a vote on it in 20 minutes.

So there are a number of issues that he just cannot be up to speed on, and that's what staff is for. Obviously, the significant issues he would be aware of, through discussions with constituents, reading the paper, talking to other members. But it's up to

staff to be on top of all the issues that going to come up, particularly those that will come up for a vote.

MOR: And how would the staff interact with each other? What were the sort of key roles in the office? How was that organized?

SHEEHAN: Well, I guess Senator Hatfield's office is in some ways very similar to other offices, and in some ways very different. In many offices, the administrative assistant is involved in virtually all aspects of the legislation. In Senator Hatfield's office, Gerry Frank, who's certainly aware of a lot that's going on, is not as deeply involved in all the issues – only perhaps the really significant issues. He delegates. He feels that that's what legislative assistants are for, and a legislative director.

So the day-to-day tasks of following legislation falls to each individual legislative assistant and the legislative director who helps coordinate or is someone to bounce ideas off of. You may have an idea for some legislation, or someone may come to you and say, "Senator Hatfield has always been concerned about thus and so. Would he sponsor a bill that would do that, or that would provide a new program to do so and so?" And I would take it to the legislative director and say, "What do you think? Do you think this is something he might get involved in. How much does it cost? What would he – what would be involved? How would it change existing programs?" And then if I got the green light from the legislative director, then I'd take it right to the senator. Rather than he or she taking it to the senator, I would take it right to the senator. And generally I would get the green light to go ahead. If an idea was squelched at the legislative director level, that would probably be it. You wouldn't go much further than that. But that didn't often happen. If you thought it was a worthy idea, and you brought it to the attention of the legislative director, you usually got the encouragement to go ahead and go right to the senator.

And in many offices, probably most, you don't have that kind of direct access to the senator. You wouldn't be able to take an idea right to him, do a memo, or ask him for a few minutes of his time to talk about it. You would have to go through the legislative director,

and perhaps the A.A., and then the senator. They would present it to him. But in our office, we always felt that we had direct access to him to discuss ideas.

MOR: Would there ever be a situation where there might be a disagreement among the staff, that the – like between the legislative director and the assistants, that..

SHEEHAN: I'm sure that was the case. I can't think of one that I was involved in offhand, but I am sure that there were areas where – or perhaps a disagreement about the extent to which he should be involved. Should he be the primary sponsor of a bill, or a co-sponsor of a bill? Should he be the one to take the lead, or if he didn't have time, should he certainly lend his name, but not be the one to pursue this as the lead member on that?

MOR: Would those differences, when they arose, be worked out between the staff members, or would the senator become involved?

SHEEHAN: Well, it really depends on the issue. I don't – again, I'm trying to think of something, kind of a key area where that may have happened. I think there have been times when the legislative director might say, "Well, let's take it to the senator. Let's sit down and see what he thinks." And we'd go into a meeting together and discuss it with him and work out a position. I mean, if it was some idea that the legislative director had said, "This is a terrible idea for the following reasons." But if he said, "I'm not sure about this. I could see the down side because of a reason, but let's take it to him and let's see what he says." I'm sure there have been times – I know that there have been some very difficult decisions the senator has had to make as chairman or ranking member of Appropriations, regarding the allocation of funding among different areas in the budget.

The Appropriations Committee is, most people know, is responsible for funding the federal government, basically; funding all discretionary activities, and many non-discretionary activities. And the Appropriations Committee is carved up into 13 separate subcommittees, Defense being the largest, then Labor, H.H.S. [Health and Human

Services], Education, which is the subcommittee that I'm presently involved in; and then 11 other subcommittees. There have been times when the committee has to meet as a group to determine how much general funding should go into each subcommittee area, and to be further allocated by the subcommittee members and carved out.

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

Tape 1, Side 2
1988 June 2

MOR: This is Michael O'Rourke with the Oregon Historical Society, interviewing Riki Sheehan. The date is June 2, 1988. This is Tape 1, Side B.

So why don't you back up just a little bit and continue – you were talking about, I guess, the Appropriations Committee.

SHEEHAN: We were discussing times when different staff members might have had different opinions about the way the senator ought to proceed on something. And there have been times when one staff member might advise the senator to not rock the boat and to go along with the rest of the committee on the allocation of funding. Another staff member might say, "Well, yeah, but you can't turn your back on this particular issue area which is very important to you," whether it would be in the energy and water area, or labor, health, human services. And he would get two different opinions about how he should vote, and he'd go in there and vote his conscience, which is certainly his job and his right. Senator Hatfield, as I think I indicated earlier, is not someone who thrives on, on people saying yes, and people saying what he wants to hear all the time. He will get advice from staff; he encourages it, based on their best perceptions on what he ought to do, and then makes his own judgments.

MOR: Can you recall any real problems among the staff that maybe had to be resolved or where a staff member had to leave or something?

SHEEHAN: I've never known of a staff member having a problem with – in fact, it's astonishing that there is such longevity on our staff in terms of people staying on in various capacities. Very few people have ever left, as far as I know, because they were dissatisfied with the senator or he with them. Most people go on to other stages in life whether its marriage and children, moving away, going back to get an advanced degree at school, going into a family business – but very few have ever left, that I am aware of, out of being

dissatisfied with the senator or he with them. It's astounding, as a matter of fact. There are very few offices that have that kind of record.

MOR: Maybe backing up just a little bit – at the time that you joined the staff, you made reference yourself to the fact that it was just sort of at the tail end of Watergate, and so you joined the staff as the Republican party was entering the post-Watergate era. In what ways do you think that Watergate changed the party and/or affected the senator?

SHEEHAN: Well, affecting the senator – I don't know that Watergate changed him any more than he perhaps was changed by his involvements in the anti-Vietnam war effort. I think that probably changed him more than anything. I think there were many in the Republican party who viewed him as not only being a maverick but even being a traitor to the war effort. I was not involved in the staff at the time of the, most of the war in Vietnam, but I know that the senator had a very challenging and trying time, being that he so strongly opposed the war effort. I think, perhaps, that contributed to his souring of relationships with the Nixon administration. Senator Hatfield – it's no secret that well, supposedly – I never saw evidence of this, but I heard that he was on the White House enemies list and not particularly welcome in the Nixon White House most of those years.

MOR: This would have represented a real deterioration in his relationship with Nixon because I think at one time he was even under consideration as a vice presidential running mate for Nixon.

SHEEHAN: Well, of the reports that we heard, and we heard it publicly stated that a number of President Nixon's advisors, or candidate Nixon's advisors, had encouraged him to select Mark Hatfield to balance the ticket as his running mate. In fact, Billy Graham, who was considered a trusted advisor to Mr. Nixon, had indicated that if Nixon wanted to go "conservative," he ought to pick Spiro Agnew; if he wanted to go "liberal" he ought to pick Mark Hatfield. Of course, the rest is history. [Laughs] Bad mistake that he made. But that's

true. That was under consideration, although one must say that a vice presidential candidate under consideration does not necessarily mean that the presidential candidate and he or she have a great relationship. It can simply be a ticket balancing. Lyndon Johnson and John Kennedy were never particularly friendly, in fact, quite the contrary. But Johnson was selected to balance the ticket. So I'm not sure if Senator Hatfield, or Governor Hatfield, ever had a very close relationship with Richard Nixon, so much as he would have been an asset in the opinion of many on the ticket. But I was not really involved, and I can't really speak with authority on the Nixon years with Senator Hatfield, only to say that he certainly became increasingly disillusioned with what was going on in the country, and was very close to the situation both as a member, a standing member of the Senate, and a political historian by training and by interest. So he was very much on top of the situation.

MOR: But — you mentioned that some labeled him as a traitor for his stand on Vietnam. Before we move on to the Watergate question, which I originally asked you, maybe we should talk just a little more about that, exactly how his Vietnam position has affected him, with all of his various constituencies.

SHEEHAN: Well, again, I don't really feel qualified to speak to that since I was not on the staff for most of his anti-war involvements. I only came at the very tail end of the Vietnam conflict. I had heard stories, however, of particularly Oregon constituents who were very disillusioned — thought he was a traitor. I think there were even threats to him personally. I don't know that, from first-hand or even second-hand, but I'd heard stories that there were threats to him. And people who thought that he was just selling our country down the river with his Hatfield/McGovern amendment; efforts to cut off funds for further military involvements; linking up with someone like George McGovern to begin with.

I have always found Senator Hatfield to be a very secure and self-contained individual, and he may have been shaken up by some of the things that he had heard or people felt about his position. But I'm sure he never questioned it, and he felt very secure in what he was doing. He felt alone, and yet he felt that he was right. And I've seen that on

a number of other areas where he may be the only one to cast a vote against a bill. In one case there was a defense authorization bill which passed by the vote of 92 to 1. Senator Hatfield being the one. And that was never a deterrent to him, knowing he was going to be the only one, or one of the very few on the other side of an issue -- was never something that troubled him. Many other members would do anything but be the lone voice in the wilderness, or the outcast, or the black sheep of the party. That never seemed to trouble him a great deal, if he felt he was right.

MOR: In some ways his Vietnam position may have grown out of his religious convictions, but at the same time, I think, that was one constituency that was upset by his Vietnam position, or at least portions of that constituency. Do you know anything about that, or can you say anything about that?

SHEEHAN: Again, not from real personal involvement. I'm sure that there were many who were upset with him, many that today we call the "religious right". And Senator Hatfield is a deeply spiritual and religious man, but never one to wear it on his sleeve, never one to walk in lock step with any religious entity. If he didn't feel that he agreed, he would certainly take a different point of view. And certainly there are those who feel, well, because he is so religious, that he must believe all the things that the Baptists believe, or that the so-and-sos believe. And I think the senator has to be viewed in the sense that he is a very complex individual, probably one of the most complex people who have ever served in Congress, multifaceted. And sometimes people don't quite understand him because of it. He has so many varied interests.

His personality is so interesting. He's a deeply religious, spiritual man, who takes the weight of the world very seriously. Yet he has a tremendous sense of humor, sometimes a tad irreverent, even. He has a delightfully spontaneous sense of humor that maybe not a lot of people always see. He has an eclectic staff to match his eclectic interests in life. And he's very well read on a variety of topics, he doesn't just read political books. He's a man of letters and the arts, he loves opera and cultural affairs, he like a good joke

and tells a good joke, appreciates spontaneous humor on the part of the staff, will do things that will really astonish people. I remember one year there was a drive to collect toys for tots for low income children. And our office was involved, and a number of other offices, and they were – it was around Christmas time and they were gathering all the toys out in the hall to be shipped to low income neighborhoods. And there were some tricycles sitting in the hallway, and before we knew it, Senator Hatfield was riding one down the halls of the Senate. [Laughs] And I think Senator McClure was joining him and there were two respected senators who were not considered to be silly senators riding bikes down the halls of the Senate; riding bicycles and having a wonderful time. I think they were caught up in the Christmas spirit, frankly, but – there are even some photographs which you might want to look through the archives I think, of Senator Hatfield sitting on the tricycle that day. Someone had a camera and took it.

MOR: Then would this be in the office archives?

SHEEHAN: So he's a very, very interesting, interesting man. And what I was saying before, too, about his caring about the staff, and treating the staff with respect. And he's also someone who encourages – is very encouraging of staff and supportive. Everybody needs a little encouragement now and again, that, "You're doing a good job. You're on the right track. I appreciate what you're doing." There are very few pats on the back around here. There are so many egos on the part of members who don't like to publicly or even privately recognize the efforts of staff because they like to take all the credit. He's never been like that and in fact I remember one instance where Senator Howard Baker, who was the majority leader of the Senate, had apparently, had sent a note to Senator Hatfield mentioning something that I had done for his office, and how much his, he and his staff, appreciated my particular efforts, and the senator must be proud of what I had done. And I got a copy of that letter by way of my parents who were sent the letter first. I didn't know about it until my family in New York called one day, very excited because Senator Hatfield had received a letter from Majority Leader Baker, had written a personal note to my mother

and sent it to her. And the note said something along the lines of, “You must be very proud of your daughter, as I am, and you might like to have a copy of this letter.” And that’s how I heard about it. And that’s the sort of thing that means so much to people, and really develops the kind of loyalties to him because he cares about you. And my family wasn’t from Oregon, and he had, you know, there was no ulterior motives for sending them something like that. He wasn’t looking for their votes; he was just indicating that they might be proud of this and that he was, and certainly it made their day. [Laughs] Made mine, too. So those are the kinds of, of personal, little personal things that he would do for people to be supportive and encouraging.

MOR: Okay, can you think of a good example of a good Hatfield joke?

SHEEHAN: Oh, boy. We might have to come back to that. Let me think. [Laughs]

MOR: Okay. You mentioned also his complexity. It would seem that at times all of these varied interests might wind up in conflict. Can you think of any examples where maybe he might have had to really wrestle with something because of feeling differently about it, depending upon which facet of his personality he brings to bear on the question?

SHEEHAN: I can give you an example of an issue where religious organizations, perhaps, might have expected his position on something but his position was quite different. I don’t know that it caused him a great deal of conflict, but many religious groups – I won’t say all of them, certainly – but many, many religious organizations are supportive of some kind of school prayer, whether it would be mandatory or not mandatory, but where, where school prayer should be allowed in any form, or whether it should be of a voluntary nature. Most of the religious organizations assumed that Senator Hatfield would at least be for some kind of voluntary school prayer or some such thing. But, he’s very strongly opposed to school prayer in any form, other than the ability for someone, at any time, to

bow their head and say a prayer. He doesn't feel that the state should be involved in organizing, designing, planning for, or encouraging prayer in the school.

But on the other hand, he doesn't feel that prayer has been disallowed in the school. No should be or ever has been denied the right to bow their head and pray, for a moment of silence, or to go to church in the morning before school, or to be excused for some religious reason, or to pray at any time. It's the organizational aspect of prayer that troubles him a great deal. He, for example, would not want a teacher writing a prayer for his children or for anybody else's children or even a volunteer get up and leading a group in prayer in the public schools. He feels there are constitutional problems with that, and that religion is a very personal matter and shouldn't be organized or mandated in the schools.

So I know he's heard from many, many, many religious organizations who are very upset with his position, thinking, "Well, you know, you're someone that we expected to be with us on this issue."

And he said, "But, I'm not. And I can't be. And I think you're barking up the wrong tree if you want the state to become involved in this, even on a so-called voluntary basis." Whatever that means. What does that mean? Does that mean that a student who doesn't want to pray can stand out in the hall and be ostracized, while 99% of the class is praying? He saw all kinds of problems with that in terms of religious liberty. So that's an issue where I think others saw it as a conflict for him, but he didn't see it as a conflict.

MOR: You mentioned yesterday when we were talking – my notes have it that you said that Mark Hatfield's Republicanism underwent changes in the post-Watergate era, and that you mentioned that the Wednesday group, which he was a part, of became dysfunctional as a result of subsequent events.

SHEEHAN: Well, I don't know that his Republicanism changed. What I think I was alluding to was that his Republican party seems to have changed. When he first served in the United States Senate, it was with a number of individuals with whom he shared, probably, many views and world outlook and ideology. They were considered the moderate or liberal

Republicans. And there were quite a few – Senator Charles Percy, Senator Clifford Case, Senator Ed Brooke, Senator Mac Matthias, Senator Jake Javits from New York – there were many, many of them who would get together and they had sort of a Wednesday Club, I think they called it, for lunch and discussing issues. And one after the other they left, whether they were defeated, retired, passed on, and the Republicans who came in, particularly in 1980, the 1980 election, were a very different kind of Republicanism – very, very conservative for the most part, very ideological, who interpreted President Reagan’s landslide victory as a mandate for everything President Reagan stood for, and they stood for all those things, too: much less government but more military, and a lot of areas the senator had strong ideological problems with. And that there were fewer and fewer in the Republican party who shared his view.

And today, I would say, that the ones in the Republican party [who] share his view on these issues are probably two or three, including Senator Weicker, Lowell Weicker of Connecticut, and perhaps one or two others. But for the most part, that kind of comraderie or the numbers of senators who agreed on many issues and saw the Republican Party and maybe the party of Eisenhower as opposed to the party of Reagan – there are fewer and fewer of them. And I think that’s been troubling to him to a large extent because he sees the party is shifting. And that’s been difficult for him.

MOR: It’s sort of interesting that the Republican party shifted in that way, considering that it almost seems like that was the wing of the Republican party from which Watergate grew, and that – and yet it moved further in that direction. Did it feel at all – I mean, was there any discussion when you first joined the office about the future of the Republican party because things must have looked pretty black in those days?

SHEEHAN: Well, I don’t think the discussions were so much then as they were in 1980 and 1981, after President Reagan came into office and the Senate turned Republican. I think that’s really when, Senator Hatfield and others sort of took stock and stepped back and said, “Hmm. What’s my role in all this? I’m not like that.” And he never pretended to be. He

was probably one of the very few voices down at the White House in all those meetings on budgets and other issues, because he certainly, as chairman of the Appropriations Committee, was very much involved with all such major decisions on budget and defense spending and all. He was often a single voice, always pointing out to the president, although the president didn't want to hear this, perhaps, or wouldn't acknowledge it, that when the president said that Congress spends too much, Senator Hatfield pointed out that for many years in a row under the Reagan budgets, Congress has spent less than the Reagan administration requested but Congress spent more on other areas than the Reagan administration would want. For example, we spent in total much less because we spent less on defense than the president wanted, but we spent more on social programs, or more on other domestic programs. And when the president talks about big spending Congress, Senator Hatfield is always the lone voice to point out that we weren't the big spenders because we didn't spend as much as he wanted. It's just a question of priority. Didn't go over too well, I don't think.

MOR: Well, let's back up a little bit now, and talk about some of the specific things that you did right after coming to work for the senator. Your first assignment was as a case worker? Can you tell me a little bit about that work, and maybe give me one or two examples of cases that were interesting that you worked on?

SHEEHAN: Yes. When I was hired as a case worker, I was told that this was one of the most important jobs in the office. Well, I thought, sure, sure. [Laughs] I'll try to do my best job, but I'm not sure that's the most important job in the office. I became convinced that they were right, that the senator places a great deal of effort and emphasis on constituent service.

Case work is an effort where an individual would contact Senator Hatfield and say, "I'm having a particular problem with a federal agency, or with a federal law, or a federal regulation, or some kind of problem that the government has not been helpful on. What can you do to help? It could be an immigration problem. "Please help me bring my mother

over from Poland.” Or it could be a request for a military discharge for a hardship reason that had been denied by the military. Or it could be relating to a social security disability matter, that the Social Security administration turned down, but the person really felt that they had been done a dirty deed by the government, and that they deserved it. “Could Senator Hatfield intervene and ask them to review his case once again?” type of thing. So those were the kinds of issues that we would become involved in, we’d be asked for help on.

And the senator always wanted to know what issues we were working on, always wanted to know how he personally could be involved, never hesitated to pick up the phone and call the Immigration director or call the Social Security administrator or the secretary of a cabinet agency if he felt that they weren’t doing enough and that this case really merited special consideration. There were a couple of specific cases that I can think of that I worked on that the senator was very deeply involved in, to the point of making a personal appeal.

MOR: Go ahead. Start from the beginning, then, of that case.

SHEEHAN: I remember a specific case where an Oregon woman by the name of Joanne McDaniel had been arrested in Turkey with two other Americans and charged with smuggling drugs, a very serious crime in Turkey, and particularly so because our government had been increasingly critical of countries like Turkey who hadn’t been hard enough on drug trafficking. And they wanted to make this case an example of how they could be tough on drug trafficking.

Without getting into all the merits or the problems with the case which included allegations that this had been a set-up, that the three individuals did not know that drugs were in this mini-van they were driving across the Turkish border – these young people were tried and sentenced to, I believe, it was thirty-six years in jail, in a Turkish prison. And Senator Hatfield was certainly sympathetic to her plight – had been in touch with the family and tried to see what he could possibly do to end her stay in Turkey, to bring her back

home – even to the point where he was negotiating, or trying to negotiate bringing her home so she could serve time in an American prison. He was working on all aspects of reducing the sentence, bringing her back here, trying to make contact with her to make sure she was all right, assuring the family she was all right, working with the State Department. And the case actually dragged on for quite a few years, but the senator never gave up his efforts to communicate with her, to work with U.S. officials and Turkish officials, to the point where he had met personally with the Turkish Ambassador to the United States. I was in on that meeting, where he made his personal appeal again to him to please consider the plight of these young people and have compassion; commute her sentence, or let her come over here.

Well, eventually his efforts did pay off, because she was released to the United States. I think she may have served some time in a U.S. prison, I don't think too much, and then I think she was paroled. So eventually his efforts did work out. So instead of service the 36 years, she served maybe five or six years over there and then came home.

MOR: Hold on for a minute. We're out of tape again.

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

Tape 2, Side 1

1988 June 2

MOR: This is Michael O'Rourke with the Oregon Historical Society, interviewing Riki Sheehan on June 2, 1988. This is Tape 2, Side A. Okay, so did she serve time both in Turkey and in the United States?

SHEEHAN: She may have served some time in the United States. I don't think it was very much. And then she was released.

MOR: And was the office and the senator convinced that, in fact, it was a set-up, that she was innocent?

SHEEHAN: I don't know that that was so much the issue. He thought that that was certainly a factor to consider, that she — if there was some drug trafficking that had been done — she was certainly not the leader of it. But they did maintain, she maintained her innocence through and he did tend to believe her, and felt if she did have some knowledge of it, it was a mistake of youth, she would never have gotten a sentence — actually, I'll be very honest with you, I think other original sentence was death. I think she got the death sentence, now that I recall, and then it was commuted to life. A life sentence, I think, over there was a minimum of 36 years, something like that. So I think she was originally given the death sentence. And he felt that was awfully harsh, and really took her case on to try to interject some compassion and mercy and reasonableness.

MOR: So part of it was that he felt that she was innocent, and the other part was that he felt that, in any case, the penalty was just way too extreme.

SHEEHAN: Yes. Yes.

MOR: And what – I guess you mentioned some of the things that were done, but what, what kinds of activities did bring about the conclusion? There was – I mean, were the contacts all through the U.S. government, or were they direct contacts with the Turkish government?

SHEEHAN: It was both. He never let up in his level of interest, his inquiring about her well-being, his request for reconsideration of her sentencing and contact with the State Department constantly to make sure she was all right, to see what else he could possibly do for her, as well as repeated contacts with Turkish officials, culminating with this, this personal plea, face to face plea to the ambassador, to release her.

MOR: And were there any other outstanding examples you can think of in case work at that time?

SHEEHAN: Yes, well, there were certainly many. The senator never said “no” to a constituent who asked for help. There may have been only certain things we could do, but if he felt that we needed to go the extra mile, we’d go the extra mile. Another case of interest that received a great deal of press attention in Oregon was the case of – actually, it was two older gentlemen, Mr. Mackey and Mr. McKay, both whom were not born in the United States. One was born in Finland; one was born in Canada, but grew up in the United States and had the unfortunate experience of being involved in the 1930s in some worker organizations that were considered Communist fronts or Communist organizations. And they were members for a brief time. I think one was a painter’s union, and one was something else, another workers alliance group. And subsequently started families and became members of the community in Oregon.

But in the 1950s, and the tone and temper of the times, were tried and found to have considered to be communists because of their membership in those organizations and were found deportable. As a result, they took their case all the way to the Supreme Court and lost in 1960, and were subsequently deported to their home countries. One was

Canada, which wasn't as much of a hardship; the other was Finland, where the individual had not been since he was nine months old as an infant. And he was miserable. He was away from his family, his job; he didn't know the language.

Efforts were stepped up in the mid-1970s to bring these folks back to the United States and perhaps become U.S. citizens. They both steadfastly maintained that they were not Communists, that they had no intention of being Communists, they never were. And the senator was very much involved in working with the State Department, the F.B.I., whomever, to try to find a way to bring these gentlemen back. He'd been in repeated contact with Immigration and State Department and Justice Department. And finally was able to convince them to allow these gentlemen to come back under certain terms and conditions, one of which was to disavow that they were Communists and had never been Communists.

One gentleman said, "I'll do anything of course," and the other one said, "I'm an old man, I'll stay in Canada, but I want to be able to come back into the country whenever I want to visit my family." So it really worked out very successfully for both of them. They eventually got what they wanted. But he was dogged in trying to help these older gentlemen in their declining years to have some compassion and not to be punished for something that they indicated they certainly had not done. He felt they had been caught up in the red-baiting times of the 1950s and early 1960s.

Other cases, immigration cases – I can think of one where Senator Hatfield was very involved in trying to help a family that was rather well known in Oregon, the Nason family, Diane and Dennis Nason, who adopted quite a few multi-racial or handicapped or children from other cultures who have no place to go and no home and no loving family. Senator Hatfield was helpful in assisting them to adopt children from other countries where there were restrictions on doing so at the time. Usually children who had very severe handicaps, who were ill, who were in orphanages. He personally intervened with the Immigration Service, calling the director of the service, writing, trying to help in any way to bring these children over, and he was successful every time he helped.

MOR: And you said the limit at the time was two?

SHEEHAN: At the time, I believe the law specified that one could adopt no more than two foreign-born children. There was some concern, back at the end of the Korean War, that there was a black market selling of Korean babies, and I think there was a law put into place at that time that you couldn't adopt any more than two or bring two over from another country. One could clearly see that this family provided a loving environment and structured environment to children who had otherwise no hope at all. The senator was convinced that that law should be, if not changed, certainly made more flexible in cases where a family was clearly going to adopt the child and give them a home they wouldn't have otherwise had. So his personal intervention assisted there.

Interestingly, too, some of the other domestic kinds of cases that we handled — we would get letters from people who would say, “Senator Hatfield, I was very much opposed to your position on the war in Vietnam. I thought you were selling our country down the river. But I understand it now — and besides, you have helped me immeasurably with my veteran's pension, or my military discharge, or bringing my mother over from Eastern Europe, and I will be forever grateful to you and will do anything I can to see that you are re-elected.” And as Tip O'Neill said in his recent book, “All politics is local,” and the Senator knows that people will appreciate your personal involvement and personal contact, and maybe forgive you for a national position with which they disagree, as long as they know that you're responsive; you're there when they need you; you're listening and you'll help.

MOR: And so that would be one of the reasons why you regard work with constituents as the most important work in the office.

SHEEHAN: Absolutely.

MOR: So after you did — you worked for how long as a case worker?

SHEEHAN: Oh, I guess 1974 to about 1978, '77, '78.

MOR: And then your next...

SHEEHAN: Oh excuse me, 1974 to 1977, and then for a short time I was involved in the projects area of the office which is similar to case work. It's assisting, instead of individuals, it's assisting local communities with problems or projects or those who are seeking federal funding for particular projects. We might intervene with agencies also to help interpret new regulations that may have resulted from new legislation that had been passed. Or if a new program had been put into place, helping the community apply for the federal funding, whether it was a community development block grant, or funds to start a health clinic, helping to smooth the way for the application, making sure they had all the information they needed; writing supportive letters for good projects and so forth. Very important, as well, because it's hard for particularly small communities to understand and to have access to information regarding a myriad of federal programs and opportunities for federal funding. They may not have expert grants-people in a little town, but they know they need a new library and they don't know how to get it; they know there's federal funding to help pay for it. So we would do that, and I would say, fairly successfully, where we would get a lot of letters of appreciation for things that the senator was able to help them do that they would not have been able to do on their own. And again, it's because of his responsiveness.

There's a rule in the Hatfield office that's generally followed — it's not always, but almost always — where any correspondence that comes in has to be responded to within 48 hours in some way, whether it's a postcard saying, "Your letter has been received; we're working on it" — a phone call, some kind of acknowledgement, or actually the letter itself being answered. People appreciate that, and we often will get acknowledgements of, "I wrote to the entire Oregon delegation, and you're the only one that responded," or, "You responded first, and then I heard from the other members a month later." That sort of thing. And that's very important to the senator, too, to have people know that he is on top of their

concerns and prepared to deal with them, problems, issues. So that's, that's a strict rule that we really try to adhere to.

MOR: That must be quite a job.

SHEEHAN: Yes. However, with the help of modern technology, it's a little easier.

MOR: With word processors and what not? Okay...

1988 June 7

MOR: Okay, first of all, this is Michael O'Rourke of the Oregon Historical society continuing an interview with Riki Sheehan. This is Tape 2, side A continued, and the date is June 7, 1988. I think it's the date.

I thought we'd start off today, and maybe you could tell me a little bit about your observation of sort of the senator's interaction with colleagues and people that he has worked closely with here in Congress and, well, just starting with Congress. John Stennis in someone, I think, that has a sort of a special relationship with Senator Hatfield. Can you describe that relationship to me a little bit?

SHEEHAN: Yes, I'll be happy to. I like to preface it by saying the Senator Hatfield is as successful a politician as he is, as effective a leader as he is, for a variety of reasons, one of which, I would say, would include the personal relationships that he's developed with various members of Congress over time – relationships which transcend party labels, ideological boundaries. And he's highly respected by, I would say, virtually the entire Senate – both sides, all ideologies, and it's kind of unusual, I think, that he has such good relationships. He's certainly not close to everybody and a lot of people in the Senate, but very, very highly respected. When he was chairman, he was always very courteous, very considerate, very respectful of other members and their priorities; patient with members interests; and even some of the delaying and stalling tactics that were used on the floor

for a variety of reasons, made sure that no one was cut off from debate. That's the kind of way he operates.

With Senator Stennis, you know, you'd say, "Well, what do these men have in common? They're from different parties; they're viewed very differently in terms of their political ideology; their interests in defense issues are very much the opposite ends of the spectrum, although they both are very patriotic individuals. I don't know the genesis of their strong relationship, but I do know of an incident that you may have heard about that's sort of a fairly well-known incident by now where back in the early 1970s – I think it was in 1973 – when Senator Stennis was assaulted, and in fact, held up at gun point and shot in the District [of Columbia], mugged you could say, and rushed to the hospital. Senator Hatfield heard about it on the news and rushed to the hospital to be at his side. When he walked into the hospital, he noticed that it was late at night – there was one receptionist at the hospital and the phone was ringing off the hook – everyone wanting to know how John Stennis was and what could they do? And Senator Hatfield simply sat down at the reception desk and said, "Let me help you," and spent the entire evening answering the phone, all night answering the phone, and trying to be helpful with information and take messages and just see what – how he could help in any way he could. And I believe he visited him quite regularly until he was out of the hospital. When Senator Stennis heard about that later, he couldn't believe that Mark Hatfield had taken the time to do that and to help out on his behalf. Like I say, I'm sure they had a relationship before that, but there was a special bond that formed after that point, I'm certain of.

And I think the way they operate – given all the differences in their views and beliefs and so forth – I don't think their style is very different. They both have a great deal of respect for the institution of the United States Senate, and more specifically, the appropriations process. They have a sense of tradition, a sense of propriety, and pretty much operate – although Senator Stennis is very much getting on in years – I'm sure when he was younger he operated very much the way Senator Hatfield does, by giving members every opportunity to say their piece, to fight for their priorities, their funding issues; and are very respectful of the institution. I think that's maybe the basis of their friendship which has

grown. And some liken it to kind of a father-son relationship. I think there's probably something to that, as well, but I think it's mostly the respect for the rights of the individual members and of the institution itself, and not trying to bypass or come up with gimmicks for reducing the deficit, but using the normal processes and procedures to operate the committee and get about the business of funding the government.

MOR: Who else would you say maybe has a special relationship with the senator among...

SHEEHAN: Among current senators?

MOR: Yes, or anyone during your time with the senator.

SHEEHAN: My perception has been that – well, Senator Hatfield is not one to take the time to buddy-buddy with the other senators. There are many who do go out for drinks and do all that sort of thing – socialize together. Senator Hatfield has many friends, close friends, but I would say, of current senators, probably there aren't many among them. He was very close to Howard Baker when he was in the Senate. He was very close to former Senator Brooke, Ed Brooke of Massachusetts – again, in the moderate wing of the Republican party. I would suspect that he was friendly with Senator Mac Matthias and Clifford Case and many with whom he shared ideology.

Among current senators, and I'm not privy because that's a very private part of this life – and very frankly, the time that he has to spend to socialize, my impression has been that he spends with his few very close personal friends who are not in the Senate, as well as his family. He does spend a lot of time with his family. What little free time he has he devotes to his family, his wife, his children, his grandchildren. That's not to say they're not social. They certainly are.

When he was chairman, and continuing today, he is invited to hundreds and hundreds of things that he has to turn down, some of which he accepts because he wants to or feels obligated to – social dinner parties or functions or fundraisers or benefits or

cultural activities. But I think he's rather selective about who he spends time with given that his time is so precious. But in terms of current senators with whom he is close, I think he has a very decent relationship with Senator Sam Nunn – again, not exactly cut from the same mold, but a basic respect for each other's intelligence, compassion, patriotism; respect for the institution of the Senate. And I think they have a very nice relationship. Senator Chiles from Florida, who is retiring this year, is someone else with whom I think the senator has a good relationship, personal relationship – and there are many others with whom he feels a common bond, but I wouldn't say he's a very close personal friend.

MOR: What about Senator Stevens?

SHEEHAN: I think they have a very nice relationship, yes. I don't know how much they seek each other out socially, but I would say that they work very well together; they respect each other and probably counted as fairly close allies despite the fact that they are often on other sides of defense issues, and really battling on other sides of defense issues. I also think that Republicans were very impressed – well, the Democrats as well, but both sides were very impressed with Senator Hatfield as chairman of Appropriations, and how effectively he fought the Appropriations cause down at the White House, for example, in those years when Senator Hatfield was chairman and had to discuss funding issues with David Stockman, the O.M.B. [Office of Management and Budget] director and the president himself; and how effectively he made the case to convince the president in many instances not to veto certain appropriations bills as he was inclined to veto; and made a very effective case for the appropriations process.

MOR: Okay. Well, expanding a bit beyond the Senate, you mentioned that he spends what limited time he has with his very closest friends and family. Who would you put in that first category of close friends?

SHEEHAN: Well honestly, I think it's probably better for you to talk with his personal secretary or some others who do his scheduling. I don't know, very frankly, all the people, or how often he sees certain friends. I know he has a very close friend named Gene Arnold who recently suffered the loss of his wife, and the senator's been very close with him through the years and especially in his time of need, a great deal of time with him. But I think that – I mean, I'm not really privy to that kind of personal aspect of his life all that much.

MOR: What about Gerry Frank? That's a relationship that is a friendship away from the office as well as a professional relationship. Have you had a chance to observe that relationship?

SHEEHAN: Oh, sure. They are very close, professionally and personally, although I don't know how much time they spend together outside of the working environment. I know that Gerry is close with the family, and on holidays and occasions he's always included as part of the family. But they both lead very independent lives. Gerry Frank travels quite a bit on his own; he writes books; he runs businesses; he has a bakery, a *konditorei* in Salem. So they spend a lot of time together, especially when Senator is back in Oregon, which he makes regular visits, of course, every couple of weeks, at least. And Gerry does all the scheduling and arranging and accompanies him on most of the outings. So they are close from that standpoint. But because they're so busy and really do lead independent lives – I don't know how much socializing they do outside of the, of the professional arrangements.

MOR: And how much time does Gerry Frank spend, then, here in the Washington office?

SHEEHAN: Hard to say because I'm not in the personal office anymore. My guess is two or three weeks every month he's back here, better part of two or three weeks, and then he goes back to Oregon for the one or two weeks that he's not here. He also spends

weekends in New York writing his latest edition of his book about New York, his very successful guidebook. But I'd say he's either here or in Oregon most of the time.

MOR: Well, is he preparing a subsequent edition of that book?

SHEEHAN: Well, he's had so many [Laughs] that it's hard to keep track of which edition it's in, but it's, he has the Midas touch. He's very successful at whatever he does.

MOR: And so then you haven't – haven't you spent much time around the Hatfield family, with Antoinette, and...

SHEEHAN: Yes, a little less so since I have a family of my own, and their family – their children are now grown and all over the country. But they've always been very kind in including staff at various functions, we've been invited to dinners at their home. Also when they entertain individuals in a particular field that I'm involved in professionally, I would be invited, or my husband and I would be invited to a dinner party, for example, with the director of the National Institutes of Health, and the president of the Oregon Health Sciences University, and other scientists. I might be invited to attend and talk about issues at a dinner party at their home.

I have a very warm feeling for Mrs. Hatfield and the children. I know them individually and had various dealings with them socially, or they might come to me for information on something that they're interested in professionally in my area. And they're a delightfully warm family. Mrs. Hatfield has been especially kind and warm toward me. I remember her telling me one time when I was single, before I met my husband, not to rush into anything with anybody because she waited until she was almost 30 years old, and look what she got. And it's worth waiting for because there are great people out there but you don't rush into marriage. And I said, "That is quite a recommendation, Mrs. Hatfield."

MOR: Okay. And you say you know the children fairly well, too. Can you give me a personal profile on the children?

SHEEHAN: Well, I wouldn't want to do that for each one. I just would say that they all have very engaging personalities, very bright – very much individuals, though. I don't know what their personalities are all alike in any way, shape or form. But all seem to know what they want to do – a very impressive family.

MOR: Turning back to the subject of your involvement with the Appropriations Committee – can you describe to me your personal impressions of the Appropriations process when you become involved in it?

SHEEHAN: Sure. Completely baffling. [Laughs] Completely confusing. I had been a legislative assistant on Senator Hatfield's staff, as I indicated before, and one of my responsibilities was to follow the process. This was before Senator Hatfield was chairman – he was a Republican member of the committee – ranking on one subcommittee, and a member of some others but certainly not chairman. And no one expected – maybe, well, very few of us expected he'd be chairman so soon – meaning, after the 1980 election. That was quite a shock and surprise to everybody, most of all to Senator Hatfield, when he woke up the next morning after the 1980 election and realized he was chairman of the Appropriations Committee, when the Senate turned from Democratic to Republican majority.

But on the legislative staff, I was to monitor his interest and priorities in certain areas on the committee, and you don't have to have the level of detail of the process or the tedium of what's involved in writing the bill, in writing report language, in dotting the i's and crossing the t's and making sure every comma and zero is in the right place. So it was less confusing, but once I was appointed to the committee staff and he became chairman, I realized that there was so much I didn't know.

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

Tape 2, Side 2
1988 June 7

MOR: This is Michael O'Rourke of the Oregon Historical Society, interviewing Riki Sheehan on June 7, 1988. This is Tape 2, Side B.

SHEEHAN: We were talking about the appropriation process, and I was saying, as confusing as it is, there are some common elements every year. It is a cyclical process. And it is an annual process as opposed to other committees who, for example the Finance Committee may not have a major tax bill for ten years. An authorization committee may not authorize programs but every four or five years. The appropriations process is every year, and like clockwork, like the rising and the setting of the sun, we have budgets submitted the early part of the year by the president, whichever administration. We have a hearings process that commences shortly after the budget is released. We have the period of analysis and formulation of recommendations. We have the budget process going on at the same time whereby the aggregate numbers are agreed to on the part of Congress; and the Appropriations Committee decides how much of the total allotted to appropriations goes to each of the 13 functions — or actually subcommittees I should say, not functions — based on what the assumptions are on the budget resolution, and then we begin the process of marking up our bills in subcommittee, in full committee, taking them to the floor, going to conference with the House; and finally, attempting to get a signed bill by the president, whether it's in the form of a continuing resolution which encompasses many bills in one legislative package, or an individual bill. And so there is this common kind of cycle that in a sense is kind of predictable because things don't happen as much out of left field when you stick to the process.

But there are surprises and changes every year, as well. The most cumbersome change that we've had to deal with in the past few years is this Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction package, which has been with us now for a few years, which is an imposition if you will of across the board cut or mechanism for controlling the deficit if deficits exceed certain levels. Senator Hatfield was a vociferous opponent of the Gramm-

Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction plan, with many others – unfortunately not enough to turn the tide because the tide was in favor of anything to reduce the deficit, including imposing these artificial, or rather arbitrary mechanisms like across-the-board cuts, which Senator Hatfield strongly feels violates the process and the Congressional prerogative to make decisions on funding. He’s been a very effective spokesman for opposing this, but unfortunately, not enough members, and particularly, on either side of the aisle, felt the same way. Many of Senator Hatfield’s fears and predictions about what would happen are still happening, or have come true. Many good programs are getting cut which should not be cut.

For example, in 1986, the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law kicked in, and as a result we had to reduce all discretionary spending by 4.3% from what we had agreed to, from what, in our best judgment, was needed to operate programs. And these are some very, very crucial programs, in the labor – H.H.S. area in particular.

MOR: Now you said “discretionary spending”?

SHEEHAN: Discretionary, right. Meaning, meaning the controllable spending – not things like Social Security, and not programs like Medicare and the so-called entitlements, but programs for which we decide what is the appropriate spending level.

MOR: And that, but that would include defense.

SHEEHAN: Well, defense is always treated a little differently. Defense has its own kind of category, and that’s something that I’m really not equipped to go into great detail about – only to say that there’s the rest of the budget and then there’s the defense budget. But in the areas that I deal with, the human service programs, the “people” programs, we like to say, are the ones that have suffered a lot anyway, under the Reagan administration, either by real or perceived cuts. A lot of it was perception.

The Reagan administration budgets were so bad in requesting huge cuts from other programs that people assumed these cuts were occurring. They didn't, and they didn't only because Congress didn't allow these cuts to occur. The Department of Education would have been gutted; H.H.S. would have been shredded. A lot of discretionary areas would see the removal of the federal role, such as in health areas and education. Job training programs would have been cut or substantially changed, leaving a lot to the private sector, a lot more than actually happened. The problem with Gramm-Rudman-Hollings was that it knows no limits when it comes to these programs.

For example, a 4.3% cut was imposed on the childhood immunization program. Now that's a program that should not be cut. It should be increased. We tried to increase it, and we increased it some, and then this cut came along and took away a lot of that increase. Bio-medical research through the N.I.H. [National Institutes of Health], AIDS [Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome] funding, programs for Senior Citizens like Meals on Wheels or Congregate Meals for the Elderly, education programs for the lowest income youngsters to enable them to get to college through the Pell Grant program – all those programs suffered cuts at the hands of this Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law.

And members would come to Senator Hatfield and say, "How can we restore funding in these programs?" And he'd say, "You should have thought of that before you supported Gramm-Rudman."

It's a very serious problem. And it happens, you know, even still. We are forced to impose another 4.2% cut on our programs in FY '88 [Fiscal Year 1988] as a result of these untenable, simplistic solutions to very complex fiscal problems.

MOR: It would be possible, though, to avoid the arbitrary across the board cut if the Budget and Appropriations Committees could bring the total spending in underneath the Gramm-Rudman limit, though.

SHEEHAN: Right.

MOR: But I assume that's very difficult to do.

SHEEHAN: It's not impossible. It's not impossible at all. And it doesn't just involve the Appropriations Committee. It would involve the revenue side of it as well, raising taxes; reducing defense spending in some ways; changes in other programs, entitlement programs, perhaps; not cutting entitlements but maybe doing some changes with limiting the growth of entitlements for a while. There are a number of ways that are beyond the appropriations process, but I think the appropriations committee has been fairly responsible, particularly when you look at what percentage of the federal budget is actually discretionary and controllable.

We're talking about a very small percentage, and the increases – also, if you look at the federal budget, you look at the increase of entitlements which has been significant; and at the same time the percent of the budget which is discretionary has shrunk considerably. And what you're doing is, you're shrinking even more the same little portion that's been shrinking over time, and you're not controlling the real wildfires. You're not controlling entitlements; you're not trying to raise taxes; you're not trying to control defense as much as could be controlled. So even interest rates aside, we don't have a lot to say about interest rates and how that affects the budget. But there are many other areas that we do have control over that Senator Hatfield has always felt that we really haven't been able to focus on for political reasons, mostly. And we've done our job pretty effectively in limiting spending and focusing on priority areas that need to be increased: in such areas as medical research.

We've been able to provide necessary increase, significant increases in a lot of areas including AIDS funding at a time when deficits were large and there's a lot of pressure to reduce federal spending in a lot of areas. Well, we were able to prioritize and say, "Okay, some areas we can, we can slow down on, but other areas must not be short changed because society's problems are too great, and these programs are the only programs that are effective in addressing these problems so far. So I think we've done a

fairly good job of being responsible without these arbitrary impositions on top of the process.

MOR: Is there any chance in the future that Congress might overturn the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act?

SHEEHAN: Who knows? It's really hard to say. It was such a majority of – I think it was something like only 31 members opposed Gramm-Rudman-Hollings in the final analysis. So unless members are convinced otherwise, or enough membership changes hands in the Senate, I don't know that that's going to happen real soon. But we face all the time members saying, "Gosh, I didn't really mean to cut education," or "I really didn't mean to cut health programs. I just thought it was a quick fix way of dealing with the deficit." Well, all of these actions have their serious consequences. Senator Hatfield, Senator Lowell Weicker, another one of his close allies on these issues have been saying all along, "You have got to look at the micro-economics of what you're doing. You're hurting people. You're not coming up with some program that faceless and nameless and doesn't affect people. It does."

MOR: You mentioned a little bit earlier about Senator Hatfield and his effectiveness in going to the Reagan White House and arguing for certain programs that were funded by Appropriations. Backtracking just a little bit, can you talk about in general the relationship between Senator Hatfield and the Carter White House, and then subsequently, the Reagan administration?

SHEEHAN: Well, that'll be a little difficult, but I – I'll take a crack at it. I wasn't as involved, certainly in this process, when President Carter was in the administration. And I do know that Senator Hatfield has always had a great deal of respect for President Carter, for his intelligence, his doggedness, his sensitivities, his spirituality. I would say that probably, under different circumstances had they met as friends, they probably would have become

very close friends. And I think that helped. Actually, I believe they met when President Carter was governor of Georgia, and I think Senator Hatfield had some occasion – I don't know the details of this – to spend an evening with the Carters. Governor and Mrs. Carter, and Senator and Mrs. Hatfield spent a delightful evening together and really hit it off. And I think that helped when President Carter came to Washington. I do think they had a very nice personal relationship. I also felt that the Carter White House, while not being terribly politically savvy, tended to be a lot less partisan than the Reagan White House. And that appointed officials in various departments and agencies seemed to be a little more responsive to congressional inquiries and congressional interests than the Reagan people who are, in my agencies especially, very partisan and very ideological. And it's a bit of a different world now.

When President Reagan came into office, Senator Hatfield was very involved in the Inaugurations as Chairman of the Inaugural Committee. As head of the inauguration activities, he planned it, and he was standing right next to the president in 1981 when he was sworn into office. And there was a genuine fondness, I think, they felt for each other. I think the senator's views soured as time went on in terms of the administrations' commitments to certain things like reducing the deficit because the administration was adamantly opposed to any kind of tax increases or controlling defense spending. I also think they've had their major differences on foreign policy and defense. So I would say that probably to some extent it's soured. That's not to say that he doesn't have a great deal of respect for individual members within the administration, but I think that he's had some real problems with things.

MOR: One of the things that I found interesting was that Senator Hatfield came to sort of the peak of his power on Appropriations as a liberal Republican at the time when the federal, or the administrative branch of the government, in fact, was – fell into the hands of the right wing of the Republican party. And it – to what extent did that limit his power as chairman of Appropriations? I mean, for example, in the 1981 Reagan budget there were

cuts of something like 41 point some billion dollars in federal programs, which I assume must have included some of the programs that Senator Hatfield would have supported.

SHEEHAN: Oh, many, many.

MOR: And so he had to, as Appropriations chairman, sort of oversee that budget.

SHEEHAN: And reject them. [Laughs] Reject the budgets every year. Oh yeah.

MOR: But then they were ultimately approved, too, at least the first one was, I believe.

SHEEHAN: Well, their first year was a honeymoon year, where the administration was given some leeway in proposing cuts and making some cuts. There was this whole cut-recision bill in 1981 and a majority in Congress said that the president came in with a mandate, so let's give him a little bit of a chance to see what could happen. And after that first year, I think, you saw consistently, though, every budget the president had proposed, the majority of his assumptions and requests were rejected or changed substantially by the Congress, particularly in the areas that I'm the most involved in, which were the areas that probably would have suffered the largest cuts. The president's budget, for example, for fiscal '83, would have reduced the Department of Education by some five billion dollars or over one third of its budget. And every year up until FY 1989, the fiscal year that we're working toward, those budgets would have been slashed significantly, whether it was Secretary Bennett or Secretary Bell, Secretary of Education, O.M.B.'s administrative top people were bound and determined to get rid of much of the department of Education. Congress consistently rejected those budgets every year and provided real increases.

FY 1989 is the first year, interestingly, where the Department of Education budget would actually get an increase according to the president's request, and many are speculating that that's purely political. Some are saying that, "Well, maybe they finally learned their lesson. Congress wore them down. The leadership run Congress and

members of Congress said, “They’re barking up the wrong tree, they’re not going to get these kinds of cuts.” And finally you know, if you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em. Senator Hatfield had to be on the other side of a lot of the funding issues from the administration. He’s no stranger to adversary, and being a lone voice and to being one of the few on the other side of an issue.

I think I talked about his security in knowing that he’s right on issues. Wherever it comes from, he takes a position and he sticks with it. You don’t see him changing. Senator Hatfield takes a position, that’s it. You don’t see his arm being twisted, or lobbyists convincing him, or members of – other members of the administration. He feels strongly about something he sticks by it. And he was very effective in persuading the president to sign, for example, the Labor, Health, Human Services and Education Appropriations Bills.

It was one of the 13 subcommittees that had not had a separate funding bill for several years before, I’d say, 1983 or 1984. For a variety of reasons it was always included in a continuing resolution. And also with Senator Weicker’s leadership as chairman in convincing the administration that “we’re going to send you a bill, and you better sign it.” And so for about four years in a row we were actually able to get a separate bill instead of a continuing resolution [C.R.]. Last year we had to go back into a C.R. The senate wasn’t in Republican hands any more, and you can draw conclusions from that, I suppose. We couldn’t get a separate bill for our programs. The president would have vetoed it or there would have been other problems.

MOR: And when say the Senate wasn’t in Republican hands anymore, but do you mean by that then that Senator Hatfield was no longer the chair of Appropriations and that that was...

SHEEHAN: In part. In part. And other, other players weren’t involved as well. I think you’ve seen a different in the way this committee has been run, a significant difference, partly due, unfortunately to Chairman Stennis’ failing health and the fact that he’s had to delegate a lot of his responsibilities. He’s surprisingly capable, given a man of his age and

with all of his infirmities. But he doesn't have the endurance, and has to delegate a lot of the day to day running of the committee to other members. So there really isn't a central leader on the Democratic side for Appropriations anymore. Whereas Senator Hatfield was such an able and effective chairman.

MOR: What kind of, I mean, what kind of things could he accomplish as chairman of Appropriations that maybe he isn't able to as easily accomplish now that he's the ranking minority member?

SHEEHAN: Boy, that's a hard one. That's a real hard one. I think you have to fight a little more for your programs. I don't think it's automatically assumed that — because when you're chairman of the committee you can pretty much achieve what you want. When you're not, you have to negotiate a little more closely with members, and you have to work things out. It's a little bit of a less, I don't want to say autocratic, but — a chairman is able to get a little further than a ranking member is. But having said that, Senator Hatfield has done incredibly well in continuing to get for Oregon projects and programs that are important, and also nationally, the programs that he cares about. He's still very effective, and that's largely because he's so respected, and he does have a senior position on Appropriations as a ranking member, and he has good personal relationships with key people like Senator Stennis. But it is harder.

I think he'd be the first one to tell you that it was a bit of an adjustment, and once he realized that he wasn't in the hot seat all the time, he began to relax and enjoy it a little bit more. With power comes responsibility, and that responsibility can be overwhelming at times. You're constantly in the hot seat; you're constantly on the floor; you're constantly being barraged and badgered and interviewed and called to the White House. And while he still gets a lot of that, I think he has welcomed the respite, actually. Once he got adjusted to it, he realized that there was very much of a plus side. And that was taking a little more time for those things that he cared about, and having a less frantic life.

MOR: Any specific examples of challenges he had when he was the chair come to mind?

SHEEHAN: Challenges...

MOR: When he was, was really...

SHEEHAN: Every day was a challenge. I would say that, as I say the Appropriations process is constant. It's cyclical and it never lets up. There is always something going on, whether its analyzing the budget that just came out; running the hearing, formulating funding recommendations; dealing with supplemental appropriations bills on the floor; negotiating budgets, going to the White House; passing bills; going to conference with the House. At then that's the end of the year.

Usually Congress is not very good a finishing its work by October 1, so that you would think well, that would at least give the members a couple of months to catch their breath before January when the new budget comes out. Usually we have to operate on a Continuing Resolution, at least for part of the rest of year, maybe through November and then sometimes even later. I remember a couple of years where we had continued resolutions through Christmas, and then finally passed a bill Christmas Eve, or two days before Christmas, only to come back in January and start all over again. So it doesn't let up.

But the biggest challenge of all is that period towards the end of the fiscal year, perhaps the month of September, between September 1 and October 1 when the attempt is made to get out as many appropriation bills as we can, individually, and send them down to the president to be signed. You have 13 subcommittees on Appropriations. Few of them are able to mark up their bills ahead of time. I think this current year that we're talking about, FY 1989, will be an exception, that we're trying to get a jump on it because it is an election year. But for the most part, in a non-presidential election year, especially, most of the action takes place in September where you have 13 subcommittees meeting, and then 13 meetings of the Full Committee to deal with the subcommittee programs. Now you may

have a full committee meeting that would deal with two or three of those bills. Or you may not. You may just have the full committee meeting to take up the Defense Bill, say. And then each bill has to come to the floor individually, or for the most part individually. Then you also will have to be a Continuing Resolution for those bills that didn't get passed in time, or those programs that didn't get authorized and have to go into a continuing resolution.

And the senator has lost his voice. For a couple of years he had laryngitis on the floor because he just lost it. Being the chairman, you manage each bill. As the chairman, you are responsible for every bill. And you often have very difficult social legislative items that are attached to appropriations bills, like abortion, school prayer, busing, various aspects of AIDS issues. Groups or individual members like Senator Jesse Helms who has made life very difficult for a lot of people with some of his social legislative items. And as chairman, you have to deal with all of them.

MOR: What are some of examples of – these are amendments to bills?

SHEEHAN: Amendments.

MOR: What are examples of some of the difficult Helms amendments?

SHEEHAN: Oh, too many to go into. He had a number of amendments promoting school prayer, for example, an issue that I think we talked about which Senator Hatfield personally does not agree with. But he was very respectful of Senator Helms' right to bring up these issues and tried to negotiate compromises – issues like abortion, various riders that have to do with abortion in one way, shape or form. Senator Gordon Humphrey had many through the years were he has tried to cut funding to any organization that, using its own funding, for example, any health organizations that would give abortion counseling or various aspects of family planning counseling with which an individual member didn't agree with. Senator Humphrey didn't agree with. We've had anti-busing riders; we've had

amendments to close bath houses because of the spread of AIDS; we've had challenges to civil rights because of AIDS or homosexual rights issues. They get more and more complex as time goes on, and they get more in number, I think.

MOR: Are these amendments offered...

SHEEHAN: To appropriations?

MOR: To the full Senate? So it's a bill that Appropriations reports out to the full Senate and then it becomes amended with...

SHEEHAN: That's right. And it could be non-germane. It could be relatively unrelated to the issue at hand, but it's the only vehicle that could be attached to — or it's the last bill that's coming down or it's the first bill that's coming down the pike or. The Senate has a lot of rules, but the rules can all be changed by a majority of the Senate agreeing to change them. So things happen on bills that oftentimes don't relate, or don't seem to be appropriate.

MOR: It must be a real conflict for Senator Hatfield if he has an appropriations bill which has come out of his committee that he supports, and then have an amendment attached to it that he doesn't support. In that case, what happens? I mean, he, I assume, still has to wind up supporting the bill, in the end.

SHEEHAN: Well, it really depends. It depends on the issue. I can't think of one right off hand where he has been very supportive of a bill all the way and then an untenable amendment is attached to it. I'm sure I could, or someone like Rick Rolf might be able to think of something in the defense area. Although he wouldn't be supportive of a defense bill, for the most part, but I'm sure there are some issues that we can think of.

For example, the Energy and Water bill is probably an area where he has been really challenged. He would have to decide for himself. Is it more important to get the bill out and down to the president for signature, or is this other issue that's attached to it so bad for the country, or so difficult to live with that it's not worth it, and that the bill should be killed and they should go back to the drawing board and try again? It's basically what the president has to decide very year, when an appropriation bill come before him, too. Are these funding levels so difficult for him to accept, or are the legislative language provisions so difficult for him to accept that the whole bill should go down in flames? Like the recent trade bill, with the plant closing amendment, where he decided that even though there was a lot that he liked in the trade bill, that it was worth vetoing it for the language. So you do a lot of weighing at the end of the year. Now, Senator Hatfield has had a lot of problems with the Contra aid, and he's had those kinds of decisions to make. Will he vote against the whole bill because of the Contra Aid Amendment?

MOR: And how has he decided that particular issue?

SHEEHAN: You've got to talk to the Contra Aid folks.

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

Tape 3, Side 1
1988 June 7

MOR: This is Michael O'Rourke for the Oregon Historical Society. The date is June 7, 1988. I'm interviewing Riki Sheehan and this is Tape 3, Side A. You said that, that as chairman of the Appropriations Committee, the chair can get pretty much what he wants. What's the mechanism by which that power is exercised?

SHEEHAN: Well, I don't want to leave the impression that the chairman can get anything that he wants, but the chairman is very powerful. The chairman has the right, the authority to convene meetings or not to convene meetings; to provide a wealth of advanced information, or not to provide advanced information about the schedule, or about what's in the bills – for a lot of reasons. Any chairman holds the power. And also, when it comes to the house, a chairman can be very effective in negotiating issues on behalf of members, or not as effective in negotiating issues on behalf of members in meeting with the House. And it's really up – I have to say “him” because there have been no women members of Congress who have been chairman of Appropriations, at least, not yet. But he really kind of – he runs the show. Now, having said that, Senator Hatfield has been on the losing side of a number of issues, particularly in the defense area or Contra aid. But he – that's...

MOR: In the committee?

SHEEHAN: In committee, or chemical warfare amendments, where he may have lost by a couple of votes. But in terms of getting a lot of, you know, much or most of what he wants, the chairman is usually very effective and has various means of persuading members at his disposal, as I said: convening meetings, trading some issues that he feels comfortable in trading on. And I don't mean compromising his ideologies, but there's some tit for tat that goes. I'll support this if you support that. This is too important for Oregon so I have to have this, for that reason and, but I'm willing to talk to you about something that you might like that I can be helpful on.

MOR: Can you think of an example of that process?

SHEEHAN: Given some time I might be able to, but I'd rather not go into that right now. It happens a lot with, you know, not just Senator Hatfield.

MOR: I'd like to just backtrack. There was one question I was going to ask you about the Carter years but we moved on to Reagan before I got to ask it. You said that President Carter maybe wasn't – that Senator Hatfield had great admiration for President Carter's intelligence, but that perhaps he wasn't politically as savvy as he could have been. How did that manifest itself? What did you mean by that?

SHEEHAN: I can only speak, really in general terms, but with the exception of one or two individuals in the White House, most of the Carter people came in with very little Washington experience. And kind of an attitude – these are my words, but kind of an attitude that, well, if it worked in the Georgia State House, it'll work in Washington. The director of Congressional Affairs was a gentleman by the name of Frank Moore, and he was not terribly effective in the way they managed the day to day operations with members, and just was not as responsive to members as he should have been. Phone calls were not answered right away, if at all, and a lot of the, in a sense, the nurturing of Congress, which is important when a new administration comes in, didn't happen. There were others in the White House who were pretty tuned in, but there were many who weren't and maybe learned too late. I think former Speaker O'Neill talks about it in his recent book, *Man of the House* – his disappointment with many in the Carter White House, for not seeming to care too much about working all that well with Congress, or that closely with Congress; whereas the Reagan Administration – although there were a lot of outsiders that came in, too, but there were also a lot of Washington insiders that they had in the White House. And they learned early on that personal contacts were important; powers of persuasion were most effective when you had the members' attention; when you were

responsive, when you left no stone unturned and tried to respond to a member, or personally contacting members at key times for support; even Democrats.

So politically, I think, the Reagan White House, certainly in the earlier years, was very effective in getting its programs through because they really understood that Congress needs to be fully considered as a full partner in everything that went on.

MOR: Okay. Well, maybe this is a good place to stop.

1988 June 11

MOR: Okay. This is Michael O'Rourke with the Oregon Historical Society interviewing Riki Sheehan, and the date is the 11, June 11, 1988. This is a continuation of Tape 3, Side A.

And I guess I'd like to continue talking to you about Hatfield interests in the project area. The one that I don't think we've talked about so far is the Oregon Health Sciences University. So can you tell me a little bit about his interest in O.H.S.U., and what sorts of things he's been able to do for them?

SHEEHAN: All right, sure. His interest in health programs, health research has always been great. As governor – I know he was involved in many areas of research, encouraging research and development in Oregon. He was very instrumental in starting the Oregon Graduate Center, for example, when he was governor, and encouraging scientific inquiry and R&D [Research and Development] in Oregon. As his involvement with the Appropriations Committee grew, and then he became chairman, he realized that there was more he could do for Oregon from that capacity in terms of encouraging more R&D growth, particularly in the health field in Oregon. And of course, we have one medical school, and that's O.H.S.U.

And as I say, his interest in that institution has always been strong, but when Dr. Leonard Laster came to O.H.S.U. as its new president of the health-sciences establishment there, he and Senator Hatfield began a remarkable professional friendship, where Dr. Laster became a very trusted aid or advisor, I should say, on health matters, and really

excited Senator Hatfield about the potential of O.H.S.U., and convinced Senator Hatfield – it didn't take much convincing – that one way O.H.S.U. could achieve greatness is to have the physical surroundings, or the physical campus to attract some of the best and the brightest in research. It's sort of a chicken and egg situation, but I think most people are now understanding that without a state-of-the-art laboratory and state-of-the-art technology you're not going to attract people who are really at the forefront of research.

So Senator Hatfield had some discussions with staff and I was privy to a private conversation we once had, probably at the beginning of his tenure of the committee in the early 1980s where he said that there's a lot he is very proud of in terms of his accomplishments and what he's been able to help attract to Oregon in terms of the infrastructure, I guess, -- bridges and roads, and corps of engineer projects, and many water projects, and other projects of that sort; but his real hope for the future of Oregon and the legacy he would like to leave would be in the health area because he feels that that, above all, is what will truly enhance the quality of life in Oregon. If Oregon becomes a premier research site, and can be responsible for developing new treatments for diseases or the prevention of diseases, that is the kind of mark he would like to have contributed to Oregon and for the country. It's the most important thing to him. We then began to strategize on what O.H.S.U. could use. The needs were great. It was an institution that had done remarkably well despite the fact that its physical plant, physical campus was sorely lacking. And of course, the state of the Oregon economy was such that the state didn't feel it could kick in too much in terms of support.

So the senator – I guess he began by working with Dr. Laster to become advised of their top priority, which was establishment of the Advanced Institute for Biomedical Research. That was sort of the first main research facility that they felt they needed to consolidate a lot of the basic research that was going on there. And remarkably, Senator Hatfield, with his persuasive powers and the use of the chairmanship was able to convince the Congress to provide roughly a \$20 million appropriation. I guess it was back in 1983 – I'd have to check my files, but I think it was somewhere around 1983, FY '83 – to provide a direct grant to Oregon through the Department of Health and Human Services. It would

be closely monitored, and H.H.S. would help with some of the development and make sure that O.H.S.U. was in compliance with all central guidelines and statues and so forth, but it was a grant of \$20 million with few strings attached other than quality of product.

And just last year, I believe it was, that the institute was completed and dedicated. And while I've not seen the final product – I haven't been out to Portland since it was finished – I've seen many pictures. I saw the plans. I was involved in the development of it, and it's supposed to be one of the most exciting, most innovative of institutes. And as a result, they have begun to attract some really first-rate national and international scientists, and they're continuing in that quest. So that's one area. They'll be focusing on a variety of research areas including brain research, which is obviously very important and of which there's really too little known. So that was Senator Hatfield's first proud accomplishment in working with O.H.S.U. in developing the plans and finally convincing all of Congress that this was a worthy project.

Following that effort, the senator proceeded with number two priority for O.H.S.U., which was the establishment of the Biomedical Information Communications Center, also known as BICC, which would become kind of a mini-library of medicine at O.H.S.U. There's the National Library of Medicine here at National Institutes of Health which is the premier institution, probably, in the world for medical information and technology and the transfer of information. And Senator Hatfield felt, with Dr. Laster and others advising, that it goes hand in hand with research, that a center like that would not only serve the needs of all of Oregon in terms of connecting, if you will, hospitals throughout the state, doctors' offices, other research institutions with that central library in Portland; but also connecting the region and perhaps the rest of the country, so that there'd be information and retrieval opportunities all over the country, particularly the region, because there isn't really anything like that in the region. And it could be a situation where a doctor's office in Baker, Oregon, might have some questions about a particular kind of treatment or a patient that they've been seeing, and they can hook into O.H.S.U. to the central facility and share information; find out what other physicians around the state, or the research institute was learning about this condition and how to treat it. It would really be an incredible information

transfer system. And Senator Hatfield, again, was able to convince his colleagues in Congress and the American people, I suppose you could say, that this investment was also very important, and it was another about \$20 million federal appropriation through the Department of Health and Human Services. Part of the funding would come from the National Library of Medicine, and part of the funding would come from other offices in H.H.S. concerned with facility development. That has been a little slower in progressing. That hasn't really gotten off the ground in terms of being built as yet because the planning of it is so complex and technical, and it encompasses complete planning on the part of the top, top scientists and technologists, if you will. But it's very close to beginning, very close to groundbreaking and we're real excited about it and hope it'll be, it'll be forthcoming in the next couple of years; it should be.

MOR: And in what way, I mean, exactly how will this – what are the unique sorts of hardware or organizational aspects of this communication center.

SHEEHAN: Well like I said, it could be hooked to every doctor's office in the state or the region with their own terminals, and they could have access to information on anything, virtually, that's in the system – on any kind of treatments and methodologies, information, data on epidemiological aspects of disease or conditions. Possibilities are almost infinite in terms of the application and the transfer of information.

MOR: Okay. I think I interrupted – you were going to say something more about...

SHEEHAN: No, well I think, no, I was going to go on and talk about some other, some other projects the Senator has been involved with O.H.S.U. through the appropriations process.

Let's see, he had very specific projects in mind – with the help of O.H.S.U. officials and some state officials, as to what would be the most, most important federal investments. And this is not to say that the federal government is building O.H.S.U. because obviously

it relies on the lion's share of support coming from the state to operate. But in terms of these kinds of specific facilities where the senator felt there was national interests, or at least regional impact – the federal government could become a partner in an occasional project of this nature with an academic research facility.

Moving on down the line, the senator, I believe – I'm not quite sure of the exact order, but next on his top priority list to help Oregon was the hospital renovation project, helping to renovate the basic hospital facility. I guess it used to be called the South Wing Project – and to make sure it was upgraded and some of the functions consolidated better and was able to obtain a \$10 million appropriation through the Economic Development Administration funding under the Department of Commerce for that purpose. And that was, I believe, FY 1985 or FY 1986. I to go back and check my files, but it was, I think, FY '86, on the supplemental – the senator was able to convince his colleagues to take the amendment and assist in funding the hospital renovation project. And that passed, and they received the appropriation to do that, and that project has been underway very successfully.

Another project the senator is particularly proud of is in assisting the Kresge Laboratory on the campus of the Oregon Health Sciences University, which is a sort of clinical research center for hearing impairments. And he was very impressed with a Dr. Jack Vernon, Ph.D., who runs the Kresge Laboratory and his ambitious program for providing clinical assistance to hearing impaired throughout Oregon and in the region. The Senator was able to obtain approximately five million dollars in appropriations from the Department of Education, Office of Rehabilitation Services, to assist this laboratory in developing and operating over the next several years. It has since become the Oregon Hearing Research Center, and holds great promise in assisting the, I don't know how many, hundreds of thousands of hearing-impaired folks throughout the Northwest. It's a very popular facility, and they're doing some great work, real cutting-edge kind of work in hearing implants, and treatment of hearing impaired. Last year, the FY 1988 Appropriations Bill for Energy and Water, believe it or not, contains a 10 million dollar appropriation for an addition to the O.H.S.U. basic sciences building. And the senator has had to be a little

creative, I must say, in finding the right government agency or appropriations vehicle. Times are tough, and the economy is such that we need to be a little mindful of how it looks in terms of going back to the same well for the same projects. But the senator has been able to be very creative in finding a vehicle for this and justifying it.

The Energy and Water Bill is a very large appropriations bill and there are many projects throughout the country of varying types. And lately it has frankly been seen as something of a vehicle for some projects that perhaps Senators were not able to get through other means, projects that Congress has not yet authorized or put its rubber stamp on first and then you go for funding. That's usually the way projects develop where the member or committee provided the legislative language to create a program of project and then the Appropriations Committee funds it. But that doesn't always happen, and members have top priorities which often don't make the authorization process – the authorization process can be a very time consuming and cumbersome, so they've had to be a little creative in finding places to fund some of these top priority projects, and the Energy and Water Bill has been helpful, recently, for that. So last year, the senator was able to provide the 10 million dollars for the extension or additional facility space for the Basic Sciences Building, which has energy aspects to it as well. But it is a science research facility. But that was matched by the state with about one million dollars, I think, which the senator was very proud of working out with the governor. Governor Neil Goldschmidt also sees the importance of facility development in terms of the growth of R&D in Oregon and has committed state resources to this project if the federal government could come up with its share. And the project costs a little over \$17 million that actually may be growing by now. The federal commitment is 10 million and the state commitment is 7.1. They may need to expand that, but they'll have to raise the money elsewhere. The senator was very proud of the fact that it's a federal-state partnership, which is really the way it should be. And Oregon's economy is just getting back to the point where the governor is able to make certain priorities so that the state ought to be able to put in some more support, and that's happening.

MOR: Well, you mentioned the creative search for places to fund some of these projects. I wonder if you could maybe comment a little bit more on the kinds of processes that a senator goes through in order to fund special interests of their own. I mean, in terms of perhaps trading off with other senators to help them out on their specific interests, or any other kind of negotiation that might go on in order to accomplish these projects.

SHEEHAN: Well, it's...

MOR: Particularly Senator Hatfield's style in the course of doing this.

SHEEHAN: Okay. This whole issue of academic facility projects has really kind of come into the forefront. The process by which members sometimes direct project funds to their state has come under heavy criticism on the part of, or by, some of the mainstream academic research organizations. For example, the American Association of Universities, A.A.U., national organization representing the top 100 or top 50 research institutions in the country, such as Harvard, and Yale, and Stanford, and M.I.T. [Massachusetts Institute of Technology], and Cal-Tech, and places like that – tend to be somewhat threatened by, or at least, the interpretation of many is that they are threatened by the process by which some members have been able to direct some funds to their state. Oregon is not in the top small percent of research institutions in terms of federal research dollars that it attracts. And Senator Hatfield felt and has always felt that part of the problem has been the economy, and part of the problem has been that Oregon's research facilities just haven't been able to develop fully for a variety of reasons, and that with some federal initiative, they will. And that's already been happening.

But the process by which these funds have been directed to Oregon over the past few years through Senator Hatfield's efforts has 'by-passed' what the A.A.U. and some other groups call "the peer review process," where all research institutions would be competing for this project. Senator Hatfield makes no apology for occasionally bypassing the peer review process – for example, the N.I.H. peer review process, where a research

facility would be competing and all interested institutions would put in their application. The Senator has felt that Oregon, for a variety of reasons, in the past has been unable to attract the kind of dollars, and is considered as somewhat of a “have not” university. Often those universities that have received the biggest research grants, Johns Hopkins, Harvard, etc., have grants people on board who are well connected to the peer review process; and their universities, many of their own scientists sit on peer review panels and have a lot to say. I mean, it’s sort of an old boys network, if you will. And Oregon hasn’t really been part of that old boys network and as a result they have been at somewhat of a disadvantage. They have good science and good people, but they’re not known, they’re not perhaps as known as others. So they really have had something of a disadvantage in terms of competing.

And the Senator feels that an occasional project for one of these so-called “have not” universities will help them get a leg up so that in the future they will be able to compete. But right now, perhaps, they’re not able to compete as well. And he makes no apology about directing an occasional project of federal dollars to Oregon. In fact, he’s very proud of it. And he’s taken some heat from some of these so-called “have” institutions or “have” organizations, but that has not deterred him in any way, shape or form. He’ll continue to do all that he can for Oregon, and is convinced that in a short period of time, Oregon will soon be able to compete with all other top institutions for federal dollars for research.

Now the process by which funds are appropriated – I mean, there is no, there is no neat and orderly process. It does, as I say, take creativity; it takes powers of persuasion; it takes personal relationships. For example, in the Labor H.H.S. Education Subcommittee, where one would think most of the funding would come for these kinds of projects – their dollars have been scarce and funding limited to a great extent such that there really isn’t a facility program in place; there really isn’t a kind of big dollar facility mechanism to get dollars out to all the different academic institutions to build research facilities. So in the early 1980s, Senator Hatfield was able to convince members of the Labor H.H.S. Subcommittee to provide some funding through this mechanism, through the direct appropriation. But then something called Gramm-Rudman-Hollings kicked in, the budget

deficit control mechanism, and there were across the board cuts. And very frankly, it's a little harder to justify \$20 million projects and \$10 million projects with ongoing service projects and research are being cut. So the Senator decided to look elsewhere...

[End of Tape 3, Side 1]

Tape 3, Side 2**1988 June 11**

MOR: This is Michael O'Rourke with the Oregon Historical Society, continuing the interview Riki Sheehan on June 11, 1988. This is Tape 3, Side B.

SHEEHAN: We were talking about the process by which funding is provided for academic facilities and research, and I was saying how lately the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, which is no stranger to specific projects for states, is used as a vehicle. I guess in a sense, these projects don't stand out as much, whereas in an HHS bill it might be the only one, or one or two. The Energy and Water Bill is known for various projects and research, and R&D for academic institutions, and this would be another one. And the senator has been very successful. In fact for FY 1989, we're in the very beginning of this process for funding for FY '89 because we're still in FY '88, but in the committee recommendation to the full Senate for energy and water for FY '89 is, I believe, a \$12 million appropriation for the development of an Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing and related research areas.

I'd hate to jinx it by even talking about it now, but the senator is very pleased that he was able to convince the Appropriations Committee to include this funding. It's far from a sure thing because we still have to pass the bill through the Senate, and then the bill would have to go to conference with the House. And the House is not too friendly to Senate projects, and I suppose vice versa, and that's where I suppose the real negotiating will take place. The hardest part is not so much convincing the Senate, but convincing the House that a Senate project is worthy. And Senator Hatfield has been very persuasive in getting the projects that he has wanted to get for Oregon.

He is unwavering in his commitment to these projects. He doesn't give them up. He doesn't say, "Okay, not this year, we'll go for it next year." He is bound and determined to do all that he can for Oregon, and I've never seen anyone so committed, so dedicated to getting these kinds of projects for the state. He – I'm sure – I couldn't go into details about how he was able to get, for example, the Basic Sciences addition. I don't know all of the

machinations that go on in a committee appropriations. I'm fairly sure that there would be some, "I'll support yours if you support mine" kinds of discussions. But I think that Senator Hatfield's seriousness and commitment to these projects and to speaking at great length about their importance in conference with the House would be enough to convince folks that they're worthwhile, that he's not going to let up and that we better go along with this – for the sake of the process so we can get on with it. [Laughs] And that's probably the main reason why he's been so successful.

MOR: What about what has undoubtedly become one of the hottest health issues in the country right now, which is the funding for AIDS? How has the senator been involved in that?

SHEEHAN: Well, I guess, like most of the Senate and Congress, it's a relatively new emergency concern. In fact, the Senate Appropriations Committee, when Senator Hatfield was chairman, took the first initiative of any committee or individual in Congress to provide some funding for the condition that we used to call "Kaposi's Sarcoma" – we didn't know anything about it, really, until probably 1981, when the Appropriations Committee in the Senate held hearings with the director of the Centers for Disease Control. And through some questioning, the director of the C.D.C. talked about a new and emerging health problem that they found among homosexual men called "Kaposi's Sarcoma". That's all they knew about it, that young men between certain ages were being affected. And we were so troubled by it that the first opportunity to provide some direct funding for it, we did.

The Senate subcommittee on Labor H.H.S., on which Senator Hatfield serves, as well as being the full committee chairman at the time, directed 500 thousand dollars in 1981 in supplemental to study this problem, just direct appropriation. And that was one of the very first times that Congress ever says, "X amount of dollars for this disease" because Congress has always been very reluctant, and rightfully so, to telling scientists how much they should spend on what disease research. We usually provide general guidelines and funding levels based on their request. The C.D.C. or the N.I.H. might say, "We need X

million dollars to look into heart, lung, and blood problems, or to look into cancer, to do this or to do that.” And then we provided some general guidelines. But rarely, if ever, does Congress say, “X million dollars, or X hundred thousand dollars specifically for this purpose”. But we felt it was so important. And we had worked with C.D.C. on a funding level, that we provided this money for the first time. Of course, unfortunately our knowledge level had to grow on this terrible disease, and all of the funding virtually, for AIDS research and screening and detection, and epidemiological studies, and education has come, almost all, from the Labor H.H.S. Appropriations Subcommittee, as I say, on which Senator Hatfield has been a very active member.

Funding for AIDS has grown from that \$500 thousand appropriation to – well, the president’s request for FY 1989 is about \$1.1 billion for AIDS efforts. It’s somewhat misleading to say that it’s all that is going to AIDS, because that’s been set aside for AIDS, but information on AIDS or we hope, a treatment, or perhaps even a vaccine, may come from any number of different research areas. It could come from something that we’re doing in cancer, or something that we’re doing in other immunological disease areas. And AIDS is a disease, unfortunately, or a series of conditions that know no single kind of boundaries – it could take the form of cancer, or pneumonia, or serious mental disorders which are all debilitating.

So one thing that Senator Hatfield has always been supportive of is increasing our research base through the N.I.H. in general because he feels that one area of N.I.H. research could vastly contribute to something else that’s already happening. We’ve learned so much about diseases from some of the unlikely places that research has been done. And so he’s been committed, every year, to increasing, fairly significantly, even given the economic times, the N.I.H. funding levels by pretty good percentages each year, and also the training of scientists to go into these various areas because it would be foolish to increase AIDS, but not increase research training budgets, or increase AIDS, but cut back on cancer research. So we’ve provided meaningful increases for new and competing grant awards, for research centers through the N.I.H. – N.I.H. budget is up over seven billion dollars, roughly, now. And many would say that’s not enough; Senator Hatfield would be

among them, but that it's certainly in the right direction of increasing. So he's been very involved in that, and terribly troubled by the AIDS problem.

In fact, it was also our subcommittee, the Labor H.H.S. Subcommittee that directed the Centers for Disease Control to provide the mailer that went to virtually every household in the country. It was the initiative of our members to provide the funding and the direction to the Centers for Disease Control to produce this mailer which has just gone out this past month, and I think has generally – not exclusively – but generally been very well received as a good, honest, frank discussion about AIDS and prevention efforts. So that was, that was the initiative of our Appropriations Committee.

MOR: That, the first 500 thousand grant back in 1981 that you mentioned, was that specifically a Hatfield initiative, or...

SHEEHAN: It was a subcommittee initiative. The members discussed it. He wasn't the chairman of the subcommittee—he's never been the chairman of that subcommittee, but as a member of the subcommittee they discussed it and agreed to it, and with universal support.

MOR: What about the senator's position on funding for a national health plan? I know that that idea has been discussed a couple of times in the Senate. Does he have a position on it?

SHEEHAN: There's so many different plans around it's hard to say, but generally, yes. He's very supportive – he's always been supportive of catastrophic health insurance plan as the first step, and I'm sure, ultimately, he would like to see some kind of a national health insurance coverage program for all the uninsured. At this point, because of the economics of it, he feels that we ought to start with what we can do, and that is the catastrophic health insurance plan similar to what's been under consideration in the Congress. But his view is that if the country isn't healthy, then we're destined for tragedy. And the health of the

nation is what's ultimately most important. And it's a somewhat different view. He feels that you can trace the growth and development of countries from the kind of health care they have and the kind of immunization programs and infant mortality rates. And why are third world countries third world countries? Very often it's because of health conditions or serious health problems, relating to the economy. You can't teach democracy if people aren't well. You can't teach anything if people aren't well. And that has been his real focus. He supports the United States' leadership role in sharing information. We've also been very involved in international immunization programs – the senator has been quite supportive of – in Africa and South America in exporting our knowledge. And he feels that's probably the most important foreign assistance we can give – health care knowledge and education – much more so than military hardware.

MOR: He was influenced, at least to some extent, by a trip he took, I believe, in 1974 to Calcutta where he met Mother Theresa for the first time. Do you know about that, well, about the impact that that experience maybe had on him, and/or what's followed from it – his interest in not only immunization programs and other third world issues, but specifically, world hunger?

SHEEHAN: I'm really not the one to talk to about that. I do know that he was profoundly affected by her and her cause, but you're better off talking to someone like Walt Evans or Wes Michaelson about that. I know that she remains someone he holds in great esteem. She's visited him on a couple of occasions when she's come back here. We as a staff contribute to Mother Theresa's causes at different times such as for the Senator's birthday and Christmas. We make contributions in his name because that's really one of his top, top priorities. But I really am not the one to go into great detail about the changes that occurred in his life as a result.

MOR: Okay. I also, well, understand that the senator has traveled many times to the third world, and in some cases, has brought along staff members with him and feels that the

experience is a good one in terms of, you know, coming to a firsthand realization of what the problems are. Have you had an opportunity to make any of these trips with him?

SHEEHAN: No. No, I haven't. And in fact, I think there have been very few staff that have been able to go along, and generally, if it is, it's someone who is an administrative assistant to help him keep track of his scheduling, or perhaps on or two others, if it's foreign affair, those who have a great deal of knowledge in foreign affairs – or the refugee expert on the staff. But for the most part, I don't think he's taken too many staff. Gerry Frank has gone with him, again, to also help him with scheduling and other things, but there hasn't been too many others. My issues that I handle are domestic, for the most part, education and health. And I've gone to Oregon when he's been there and been with him for various speaking engagements and hearings that he's conducted.

And for example, in 1984, he conducted, probably the only ones of its kind in any state, hearings specifically on biomedical research in Oregon, where research is happening in the health fields. And although O.H.S.U. is the only medical school in the state, there certainly are some other very fine research institutions that are doing work in health research – Oregon State University does a lot with pharmacology issues and animal sciences; and the University of Oregon does a lot in molecular biology and basic sciences; the Oregon Graduate Center does a lot of research. There's a primate center in Beaverton which does work in human health – a lot of research, it's a federal funded institution. So he conducted a very broad, a very excellent hearing – Senator Domenici from New Mexico came and also helped him conduct the hearing, where all the top scientists from around the state came and talked about what's going on in Oregon and what Oregon's capabilities are for the future. It helped to continue to excite him about Oregon's possibilities with a little federal help.

MOR: Maybe we can sort of wrap up this discussion with, about these specific issues with the, well – the question I have, I guess, is what Senator Hatfield's overall philosophy is with respect to human services, and sort of balancing that against how much the programs cost,

since you did mention economics a little bit earlier with respect to that national health plan? It's sort of been a Republican philosophy for years that people should be encouraged to, you know, be independent, and be able to, you know, get up on their own two feet and, and support themselves, and yet at the same time there are these needs that people have and definitely some cases can be made for government intervention. And, but that costs money. So what do you think, in terms of the Hatfield philosophy, his approach to all of these problems would be?

SHEEHAN: Well, if the traditional Republican philosophy is self-help and less government, then Senator Hatfield is not a traditional Republican. I tend to think that the "traditional" Republican philosophy is not that, but is more along the lines of Senator Hatfield. But I'm talking about Republicans like Eisenhower, not like Reagan, who exemplifies the sort of the new Republican philosophies – less government and self – help. Senator Hatfield's view of government really hasn't changed, and it has always been that there is an appropriate federal role in many areas, and that federal role must be maintained – not that the federal role should be to do less, an example being education.

The federal government, for all of the conservatives' complaining about how much we're spending on education – the federal government's role is very limited. It's something like six percent of all elementary and secondary spending on education is federal. Ninety-four percent is state, local and private. But that six percent is very well targeted. It's targeted to programs serving the handicapped; programs serving non-English speaking children such as refugee children; programs serving the economically disadvantaged; groups that have fallen through the cracks and for which funding would not be possible because states are unwilling or unable to provide the funding – that there is a continuing role for the federal government in those areas in providing access to quality education that otherwise wouldn't happen for special populations.

In health it's probably much the same: the government must maintain its commitment to low income; to those who would not, for example, receive vaccines if they had to pay for it themselves because they couldn't; so the state and the federal

government have to continue to pay for vaccines, have to continue to provide maternal and child health, and expand the programs, not just say, “Okay, here’s some prenatal assistance, and once the baby is born, we don’t care about you” – continuing through life, through whether it’s food stamps, or continued access to checkups and health care.

In research, Senator Hatfield feels very committed to continuing a strong federal presence in medical research. The dollars are not there nationwide without the federal involvement. And what’s probably even more important is that federal research is relatively objective, in the sense that we provide research support to great ideas and to scientists who have perhaps no other interest except to find out more about diseases and prevention – as opposed to the commercial aspect of it, where left to the private sector, you might see scientists in bed with corporations, and working toward the profit motive of developing, for example, maybe pharmaceutical products to treat certain diseases, but abandoning the inquiry, the breadth of knowledge that otherwise would come from federal support for research. And it’s this independence, and this studying to build our knowledge base that the federal government has been successful in supporting, and the senator feels very strongly that we much continue to provide substantial federal support for medical research because of that.

It’s not to say that it isn’t terrific that private companies and researchers can get together and come up with a product that’s useful in treating diseases. That’s very important. But the research end of the federal involvement is, he feels much more objective, broader based. You research something, like I said, you could be looking into problems of sight and come up with a way to treat Alzheimer’s disease by generating certain nerve cells that have applicability to the brain cells, i.e. the optic nerve cells. And that’s the beauty of federal research, is that’s it’s broader based with all kinds of unlimited possibilities and applications. And he also feels that it must be increased, not “We’ll support it until the private sector can take over.” He has never believed that, in areas where the federal government he feels must maintain its role. And there are areas where he feels federal government’s role should be expanded – refugee education, even in economic development – helping communities to get back on their feet when there’s a recession.

For example, in 1983, there was such a severe recession in the country which affected Oregon because of the timber industry suffering and housing starts going down. He authored the Jobs Bill, the 1983 Emergency Supplemental for providing billions of dollars to states and communities that had high unemployment rates, suffered severe recession. The federal government must step in at that point and provide jobs, provide support, job training, food stamps, whatever is needed. So he is not reluctant to direct the federal government to get involved where he feels the priorities must remain.

MOR: Okay. Fiscally, how would you describe him, I mean, in terms of – I know you talked of, already, about his reaction, negative reaction to the Gramm-Hollings-Rudman bill. Does he believe in the balanced budget?

SHEEHAN: He'd love to see one. He's yet to see a president who has submitted a budget that has balanced. He'd love to take some direction from an administration that could achieve that. He's not reluctant to talk about the "T" word, which is "taxes", which is – many of his colleagues in the Congress won't even breathe. He feels very strongly that a sound economy is based on a compassionate government, but also with the American people paying for the services they get, or the services that are needed. So I think, as we talked about earlier, I think he would like see taxes increases to pay for many of the things that most people want – and closing the corporate loopholes, you know big corporations not getting away a lot of things they tend to get away with. So I don't know if that's a conservative or liberal fiscal view, I'm not sure.

He believes in responsible spending, and was very successful the Appropriations Committee's scrutiny of a lot of programs within the hearings process and analysis – programs aren't automatically funded – they're taken a careful look at, justified. He believes in good, sound management of programs; is critical when they're not; is very critical of priorities that he feels are out of whack, particularly in the Pentagon, where we may be cutting back on certain health programs, or the administration trying to cut back on education and health programs, but they're providing millions of dollars so the Air Force

can provide leather jackets to their flyers, for morale boosting. And he's – does not hesitate to point out what he feels are the skewed priorities; has been successful in reversing some of those priorities, and trying to limit the growth of excesses that are requested in the name of national defense; or other programs. There are programs in perhaps the Labor Department or in H.H.S. that he feels are excessive, or out of kilter in terms of priority. He'd rather see money go into other things.

MOR: Okay.

SHEEHAN: He does not, for example, support a program just because it's been supported for the last 10 years. There are – there are certain programs, for example, there's a program called Job Corps, which is in many states, but Oregon has some excellent Job Corps programs providing comprehensive job training, residential living, education for young people, kind of disadvantaged youth who perhaps have had a brush with the law. But he doesn't support the program's continued expansion if some of the local projects aren't any good. You know, he feels that every program should be evaluated and continued if it's justified. He's not a knee-jerk in other words because he's said, "Well, if this program is worthy, I'll support it to the hilt, but if it's not, I'm not going to pretend to support it just because politically, it might sound good to support." So he'll take gutsy positions like that.

He's often the lone voice in the wilderness, too, on things like defense spending. As I'm sure you know, there was a time when he was the one voice against a defense authorization bill that passed ninety-two to one. [Laughs] The day after that particular vote, I ran into him in the coffee line, and he said, "Are you sure you want to associate with me?" [Laughs] I said, "Proudly." [Laughs]

MOR: Okay. I'd like to ask you a little bit about what is probably the only real scandal in Mark Hatfield's long career, which is the Tsakos affair, and I know that probably – I don't know how closely associated you were with the events leading up to it, but certainly you

must have had an opportunity to observe the kind of impact it had. And why don't you tell me a little bit about what you, what you do know about it.

SHEEHAN: Well, again, not a lot, as my job has nothing to do with things relating to personal finances or what Mrs. Hatfield's involved in, or the senator, other than through my professional work on the committee.

One couldn't help but notice that this was something of a dark cloud hanging over the office in 1984, which was also an election year. And there was concern about how it would look, this so-called scandal. But I don't know that I ever ran into anyone who thought that Senator Mark Hatfield was capable of any kind of a conflict of interest. In fact, I was in Oregon twice in 1984 doing some work --- one was the medical research hearing I told you about, and it was in the summer, the height of the campaign, and perhaps the height of the so-called Tsakos issue. And one day when I was there, I picked up a local newspaper, and they had the enquiring reporter asking 10 people at random on the street what they thought of this and Mark Hatfield's involvement in any kind of conflict of interest, or ethical problem. And not one said that they believe that he was capable of any kind of conflict of interest. One thing that Senator Hatfield has always maintained is a very clean image; a very moral image; a man of conscience. He's not a wealthy man, and if he wanted to be, he wouldn't be in Congress. I was quite pleasantly surprised -- maybe I shouldn't have been so surprised -- in the overwhelming outpouring of support. "Not our senator, not our senator, not our senator." And there was political motivation behind it, you know. He had an opponent who was continually raising the issue. But although that was probably one of the worst issues he'd ever have to deal with, I think he won his election by the greatest margin he's ever won before. So I think, In Oregon people reacted very negatively...

[End of Tape 3, Side 2]

Tape 4, Side 1**1988 June 11**

MOR: This is Michael O'Rourke with the Oregon Historical Society, continuing the interview Riki Sheehan. The date is June 11, 1988. You were saying he'd just won the election by...

SHEEHAN: The greatest margin, I think, of his career, in the Senate, anyway. Something like 65/30-something percent of the vote, or greater, I can't remember the exact percentage. But I think people in Oregon reacted very strongly to this supposed hint of scandal by overwhelmingly coming to his support and his aid. Had they not known him as governor, had they not known him as the pro-Oregon senator he is and a man of conscience, it might have been different. But it was something that was just unbelievable to the people of Oregon, and fortunately, ultimately too he was exonerated by the Ethics Committee and the Justice Department: "There's nothing here. There's nothing here."

MOR: What was your reaction when you first heard about it?

SHEEHAN: Surprise that the issue would even be raised. One thing that Senator Hatfield has always been is generous with his time and offers of assistance, and he will go out on a limb for people who want meetings with federal officials; who want to talk to other senators about interests or problems; and I think one of the allegations was that he arranged some kind of meeting on this pipeline. I have seen him offer assistance to virtual strangers who have an interest that he thinks, you know, he could help along somehow in some way, shape, or form by putting people together. Maybe someone who has an idea for a new drug and wants to talk to someone at the F.D.A. [Food and Drug Administration], or someone who wants a research grant at N.I.H. and would like to talk to an official there about how to apply or see whether they're doing research like that.

He's also very helpful when someone contacts him about a medical problem, and they may not be from Oregon; they may just be someone who cornered him on the street

and aroused his sympathy. He'll have us contact the N.I.H. to find out where the best research and treatment is occurring in the country on a particular condition, so this person can get the right help and treatment. He's very generous with his offer of assistance. He feels that his role is as a facilitator; and the federal government is at our disposal, in a sense, for information.

So when someone said, "Well, he arranged a meeting with the Energy Department," or something, that didn't surprise anyone here because he's always doing that for someone, whether he knows them well or not. If someone needs assistance and he thinks he can be of help in arranging a meeting or sharing information, he'll do it. So it was a surprise that there was some hint of scandal to that meeting because he may not have even remembered doing it. He just, he does it. He wants to be as helpful as he can.

MOR: Was there – what was the reaction here in Washington around the Hill among colleagues, and can you remember how the staff was feeling at the time, generally, about it, whether it was really going to affect, you know, day to day business in the office?

SHEEHAN: Well, feeling for him because – it's hard to ignore when you pick up the newspaper, and *The Washington Post*, particularly, is making a big issue out of it every day. *The Washington Post* loves any hint of scandal. I mean, right now [speaker of the house] Jim Wright is all over the front page because of his supposed conflicts of interest. And ever since Watergate, that kind of get them going. That kind of justifies their existence.

It wasn't an easy time because it was an election year, you've got – you take every election seriously, very seriously. You never take anything for granted. In 1980, too many incumbent senators took their reelection for granted and lost. And Senator Hatfield has never taken his reelection for granted, no matter who his opponent was, or even whether the other party couldn't find somebody to run against him for a while. And so you have the added pressure of campaign appearances and all of that that people are scrutinizing a candidate more during an election year. So it was very trying. Plus, he was chairman of the Appropriations Committee at the time, probably the most demanding job in the Congress,

I would think. Because you're constantly working on bills and budgets and negotiating and fighting and it's annual, as opposed to other authorizations or tax committees that don't see that kind of process but every four years; it's constant. So it was a very trying time in terms of his, the energy level that he had to have to keep, to maintain himself. But the support he got from everybody was overwhelming. And I think it changed him, too, in the sense that he became even more philosophical about people around him – staff, family, friends, colleagues.

He got expressions of support from unlikely places; unlikely colleagues; other side of the aisle. "Mark, don't worry. You know, we love you. We know that there's nothing to this." And I think it really enabled him to take a step back and see — kind of feel good about his legacy, the Mark Hatfield legacy. Because something like this for maybe a more junior member who people didn't know, or had questionable practices in the past would be a lot more difficult to shake or to prove otherwise. But with Mark Hatfield, his record speaks for itself, and I don't know anybody who believed it. I mean, maybe there were some opponents who wanted to believe it, but as difficult as it was, I think he came away even stronger and perhaps even prouder of his legacy, of his record, because that's what really carried him through.

MOR: During the worst part of it, did you notice any signs of strain on the senator himself?

SHEEHAN: Oh, well, fatigue. Oh, I mean, utter fatigue. Between, as I say, running the Appropriations Committee, running for reelection, and dealing with press inquiries every five minutes, and you know, reading all this stuff in the paper – he was exhausted. But no, I think, it also goes back to what I said about him – he's a very self-contained individual, and he's very comfortable with who he is. I've never seen anyone – I mean, and I've dealt with many, many members of Congress – different chairmen of subcommittees, fairly closely – I've never seen anyone so secure in who he is, and where he's been, and what he does. He doesn't waver. When he's convinced of something, that's it. That's it. I mean, he listens; he's open minded about listening, but if he feels strongly about a position, or

about what he's done, he never tries to backpedal. He takes a position and that's it. And I think that's true about his -- the life he's chosen.

He's very proud of his family and certainly stuck by them through some trying times. Everyone has trying times with their family. Everyone's turned out beautifully, [Laughs] but maybe it was tough and go with some of the kids for a while, like all families. Just a very self-contained individual.

And his faith. His faith certainly carries him through. He's a very deeply spiritual and religious individual. But it's very personal. He doesn't wear it on his sleeve. He finds nurturing and sustenance from his faith -- from private prayer and studying. So a combination of all those factors got him through it beautifully, whereas other members may have -- may still be wearing the scars. Mark Hatfield is on to the next issue.

MO: Okay. Maybe just touching briefly on the family, you said that it was maybe touch and go in the case of a couple of the kids. Did you have specific examples that were specific [Inaudible].

SHEEHAN: No, not really. No. I think he was, you know, concerned when his son dropped out of college, for example, to work on the Reagan campaign and then to work in the Reagan White House. But Mark Jr., has really done terrifically. He's now married; he has two children; he's finishing school and working, and made his father very proud. But there were times -- you know, someone who believes so strongly in academics, for example, would be disappointed by a child not pursuing his education. And the children are all very much individuals with strong personalities.

But two of them are married, now, and the other two have done very well for themselves. They're all very bright, very personable, very independent. So I kid; I joke, you know. It's nothing that any family hasn't been through with some worries. But it's remarkable that there haven't been any serious problems in that family, given that members of Congress always have pressures and less and less time to spend with their family. And he's really made his family a priority.

I know that when the Senate is in session late, Mrs. Hatfield comes up to have dinner with him in the senator's dining room, and you don't see that too often. He insists that they spend what little time they have together. She accompanies him on a lot of trips, and back to the state, and appearances, and he always makes time for his family. Whenever anyone in his family calls, no matter what he's doing, he could be in a meeting with the president practically, he'll stop everything and take the call. And it's just the way he is. They don't call a lot, but – because they don't like to do that because they know that no matter when they call, they'll always get through. Everything stops, and that's the most important thing to him is talking to his wife, or talking to his daughters or sons. And it sets a very good example for a lot of us who get so wrapped up in our business. "Oh, tell my husband I'll call him back later," or, "Tell my daughter I'll call," you know, that kind of thing. He doesn't do that. He thinks, if it's important enough for them to call, it's important enough for him to take the call. And there's nothing more important. So, we've been in staff meetings; I've seen him with other senators or constituents, and as important as they are, if his family member needs him, that's it. Everyone else can wait five minutes. You don't see that too often on the Hill.

MOR: Okay. What else should I have asked you?

SHEEHAN: I don't know, I think that's enough. [Laughs] You get the sense I kind of like this man. [Laughs] There are a lot of staff members who, the more you know somebody, the less, the less you like them. You know, it's sort of like the old adage, that I wouldn't want to eat in a restaurant where I work because I know too much about it. The more people are close to Mark Hatfield, as staff, the more you love and respect that man. You see it in the incredible amount of loyalty -- years of loyalty in the staff. And people don't like to leave. We've all had other job offers. Maybe more money, maybe different kinds of things. But when you have someone to work with like Mark Hatfield who gives you a lot of respect and autonomy and treats you like a human being, like a professional; who's compassionate and considerate – it makes it very difficult to ever think about leaving. And

I think in terms of staff years, we probably have one of the most remarkable offices on the Hill, people who have been around for a very long time, who leave only for life transitions rather than for other jobs. Maybe go on to graduate school, or maybe to get married or have families or move away from some reason. But people don't tend to use a staff position here as a stepping stone maybe for two years. Many people consider it a very honored career to be a legislative assistant to Mark Hatfield, or a staff member. There are a few other members I can think of who have staff like that, but very few. And it makes his job easier to know that there are people on staff who know him who can speak for him in some instances; who can work with him very closely and anticipate what he wants or he needs or he supports, as opposed to reeducating someone every two years – a new staff person. So it serves to his advantage as well to have people who are loyal and understand him and know him. But he's a truly remarkable individual, and I don't know that we'll see the likes of Mark Hatfield in other members in the future to a great extent. And it's unfortunate because he has respect for the institution of Congress; he has respect for people; he's intellectual and philosophical, and quite a remarkable man.

MOR: Well, apart from everything that you've just finished saying, what do you think will be the Hatfield legacy? What are his specific or unique contributions to the Senate as an institution, or to the country as a whole?

SHEEHAN: I think in terms of specific accomplishments or specific record, it would be his effort to stop the war in Vietnam. I think he'll always be identified with that, and I think he'll wear that proudly – his lone voice in the wilderness to stop the escalation of the war in Vietnam and the military involvement. And, I think, in other military involvements, too – to try to stop the use of military solutions to complex world problems. So I think he'll always be seen as a man of conscience, and a courageous individual. And I think his overall decency and intelligence, compassion and his friendships on both sides of the aisle and of all political ideologies.

Probably the greatest compliment is the Democrats always wanted him for their own. There was much talk about Mark Hatfield running maybe as a Democrat and a Republican; or that there'd be a Democratic write-in vote for him. So, I think both parties would like to claim him, although maybe the Democrats more than Republicans, sometimes [Laughs]. But in Oregon, that's okay. I think that's certainly a badge of honor. So I would say that his anti-war efforts, his conscience, his decency, and his respect for the institution, his respect for history, for his place in history, and Congress's place in history.

He's well-read and understands the ebbing and flowing of political cycles and economic cycles. His love of books and history, the presidency – I think that'll all contribute to his legacy – what he's done for Oregon. He's never lost sight of the fact that Oregon comes first. Many members have been defeated because they lose sight of the fact that their own state or district comes first. But my guess is that if he chooses to continue to run, he'll continue to be elected for as long as he wants.

MOR: Okay. What do you think is going to happen in 1990? Any guesses?

SHEEHAN: I guess wrong so often [Laughs]. I thought he wouldn't run in 1984. So I hope, for his sake, it's whatever he wants to do, and not that he feels so duty bound to continue to run if he really doesn't want to run again. I hope that his sense of time – “it's my time now, that I can retire and pursue what I want to pursue.” Because he's given his whole life to public service. But if he chooses and wants to run again, and feels he can continue to contribute to Oregon and to the country, which he certainly could, then I hope he does. But it's got to be his personal choice, and nobody else's. He does say that depending on the kind of day he's had, he'll tell you whether he's going to run again or not. [Laughs]

There are some days when he just wants to get out, go back to his farm in Oregon and plant trees, and read his books, and other days where he feels a great sense of elation and accomplishment at something happening, and, you know, sure, “I can do six more years of this.” So it depends on his day. But I hope that the decision will be his, and his alone. And no one else can help him make it; should help make it.

MOR: Have you ever recommended any books to him?

SHEEHAN: Oh, dear. Quite the other way around, usually. Oh, I've shared a few with him that I found topical, of interest, such as a recent book that came out by Terrell Bell on the Education Department called *The Thirteenth Man*, I recommended to him. There have been a few. But for the most part it's quite the other way around. He'll recommend books to us – give us assignments, and we'll read them. Or excerpts from books that he feels we'd benefit from.

MOR: What kind of books, normally?

SHEEHAN: Oh, trying to think of some specific examples: philosophy, world history – I can't think of a specific one now, but I know he's done it many times in the past.

MOR: Okay. Well, unless you can think of anything to add...

SHEEHAN: I think that's about it.

MOR: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

SHEEHAN: My pleasure.

[End of Tape 4, Side 1]

[End of Interview]