

Oral History Interview  
with  
RUSSELL L. RILEY

Executive assistant, War Assets Administration, 1946-48; executive officer, Office of Educational Exchange, 1948, asst. chief, Division of Libraries and Institutes, 1949-50, U.S. Dept. of State; director of personnel, Economic Stabilization Agency (also OPS), 1951; deputy director, Office of Educational Exchange, 1951-52, asst. administrator, International Information Administration, 1952-53, director, International Educational Exchange Service, U.S. Dept. of State, 1953-58; and subsequent service as a Foreign Service officer, 1958-68.

Irvine, California

February 22, 1974 by James R. Fuchs, Harry S. Truman Library

The Harry S. Truman Library  
Independence, Missouri  
March, 1976

#### NOTICE

This is a transcript of a tape-recorded interview conducted for the Harry S. Truman Library. A draft of this transcript was edited by the interviewee but only minor emendations were made; therefore, the reader should remember that this is essentially a transcript of the spoken, rather than the written, word.

#### RESTRICTIONS

This oral history transcript may be read and reproduced by researchers for purposes of research, but it may be published only with the written permission of the interviewee. Researchers must also have written permission from the interviewee to cite or quote from this transcript.

Oral History Interview  
with  
RUSSELL L. RILEY

Irvine, California

February 22, 1974 by James R. Fuchs, Harry S. Truman Library

[1]

FUCHS: Mr. Riley, I'd like for you to give me a little bit of your background: where you were born, your education, your life up to the time you entered Government service which, I believe, was back around the middle thirties.

RILEY: I was born on a farm near Mendon, Missouri, in Chariton County about 100 miles east of Kansas City on the Santa Fe line on February 11, 1911. My father was a farmer. A year later we moved to Nebraska and my father

[2]

became a cowboy on a big ranch in northwestern Nebraska in McPherson County, 75 miles northwest of North Platte. He finally became the foreman of that ranch and lived there until I got big enough to go to school. Then he thought I'd better get into school. I went awhile in 1918, but the flu epidemic knocked that out, and, so, in 1919 we moved back to Missouri so we could be closer to school. I went to country schools and small town schools in Missouri, and finally graduated from high school in Mendon, having gone earlier to Brunswick, Mo. grammar school. That's a small town south of Mendon. I graduated from the University of Missouri with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration in 1934. I was actually in the class of 1933, but I worked my way through school, so I didn't get my degree until

[3]

1934. I worked for Montgomery Ward at the time I finished school. Then I worked for a small Mendon mercantile company up in Mendon, Missouri for a short time. In 1934 I went to work for Swift and Company working out of the St. Joseph, Missouri office as a salesman, and traveled in southern Nebraska, northern Kansas, southwestern Iowa, and northwestern Missouri for a year or so. After which I had a territory in Chillicothe, Missouri. Worked there a couple of years and quit that job around the first of October, 1937 to go to work in Washington.

FUCHS: How did you happen to do that?

RILEY: Well, when I was at the University of Missouri I took a Civil Service exam, a clerk's exam, and I passed it. Didn't pass it very high, I guess. But over a period of

[4]

from 1931 to 1937 I received a half dozen or so inquiries from the Civil Service Commission as to whether I wanted a job working in Washington and I always said "no." And finally in 1937 I got an inquiry saying, "This is the last time we're going to ask you if you want to work for the Government, on this examination. If your answer is 'no' we're going to take you off of the list."

FUCHS: Were these other inquiries for specific bureaus?

RILEY: I don't remember. I honestly don't remember what any of them were. But I went to work for the Railroad Retirement Board, at that point, in Washington, October 7, 1937 as a clerk. And I worked there a while and was still a clerk but I finally got into the economic section because of my education and experience.

[5]

Then about three and a half months after I went to work there, I got fired on 24-hours notice along with 472 other people because the Railroad Retirement Board made a mistake in its bookkeeping system and ran out of money in the first part of January, 1938. All probationary appointees, all temporary appointees, and some permanent appointees just got laid off on 24-

hours notice. And that same day I was interviewed by somebody from the Social Security Board in Baltimore and I never missed a day's pay. Just transferred over there, still as a clerk, and went to work over there in the personnel office.

FUCHS: Were they looking for employees or were they just trying to pick up employees that were being laid off? How did they happen to interview you?

[6]

RILEY: They interviewed everybody who was laid off. They were looking for employees in Baltimore, old Candler Building in Baltimore. It was a big operation IBM set up. They were really establishing the Social Security Board.

FUCHS: They were just getting started?

RILEY: That's right. I've forgotten -- they'd been underway for a year, 18 months, something like that. So, I worked over there from January '38 until February '39. Then I transferred to the Washington office of the Social Security Board and became Chief of Clerical Placement for the entire Social Security Board. Shortly after that I was offered a job to come back to the Railroad Retirement Board at a substantial increase. I was employed to go to Kansas City,

[7]

which was near my home, to help set up the regional office of the Railroad Retirement Board. So I went there in June of 1939 and we got that thing pretty well underway. Around the first of October, a fellow came out from Washington and said, "I have kind of a mess that needs cleaning up in Chicago, would I go to Chicago?" Of course, I didn't think that was a very good idea. I was close to home and I'd seen enough of the Government -- been fired once and only been with it two and one-half years -- I'll never leave home again; I might not get money to get back home: But, anyway, they gave me a two grade promotion to go to Chicago. I went to Chicago and worked there for four to six months, something like that. Then they asked me if I'd transfer back to Washington with the Railroad Retirement Board and I did in

[8]

April of 1940. Then I worked there until March of '41, at which time I went on active duty with the military. I was a Reserve officer.

FUCHS: I have read that you were with the Office of Export Control for a while in '41. Were you on active duty then?

RILEY: I was on active duty. As a matter of fact, I was hired and interviewed by the Army Air Corps to go on duty in their personnel office in March of '41 and as they were processing my papers to call me to active duty, a field artillery colonel whom I'd known in reserves, a Regular Army colonel, told me that he was active in setting up the Office of Export Control, and if I was going on active duty why didn't I come to work for him. I told him I'd made a commitment to the Army Air

[9]

Corps and he said, "I'll handle that." And he did. He got my orders changed. So I went to work for the Office of Export Control in March and worked with them until they became demilitarized in about September or October of that fall. General Russell Maxwell was the head of this organization, and at that point he went somewhere and they brought in, I believe it was Milo Perkins from Texas, a bag manufacturer, to head up this export control and all of us who were in military decided we'd rather be in military organizations than we would in a civilian organization, so we sort of abandoned ship.

I went back to the Air Corps and said, "Here I am. I didn't go to work for you when you wanted me to, but what about it?"

They said, "Sure, we still got a job for you."

[10]

So I went to work for the Army Air Corps, and very shortly thereafter I was made Deputy Director of Civilian Personnel for the entire Army Air Corps. I stayed there until February of 1943 at which time I petitioned out of there and got back to my first love which was the field artillery.

FUCHS: Had you been in the field artillery reserves?

RILEY: I'd been in reserves since 1933. I was commissioned in the field artillery reserves in 1933.

FUCHS: This was out of ROTC?

RILEY: This was out of ROTC at the University of Missouri, that's right. I was always a great admirer of one Colonel Truman, as a matter of fact, also being an artillery man from

[11]

Missouri.

FUCHS: Did you go to summer camps?

RILEY: Yes, I went to summer camp in Des Moines in '36, 1934 and '35 I couldn't go, I couldn't afford time off. And '36 I went. In '37 I was new in Washington, I hadn't gotten established there. '38 I went to camp in Fort Hoyle, Maryland, and '39, I was too busy trying to get the Social Security Board and the Railroad Retirement Board going and I couldn't afford to go to camp.

FUCHS: I've forgotten the last year it was that Mr. Truman went. Of course, after he became Senator he didn't go much.

RILEY: We never were in the same organization. I was in some Omaha outfit. He was connected

[12]

with the same general area.

FUCHS: He went to Fort Riley and that place in Minnesota.

RILEY: Fort Snelling, yes. I was commissioned at Fort Riley, Kansas, of course, at the east end close to where old Camp Funston was during World War I.

FUCHS: What were your major problems in the Office of Personnel in the early years of the war, starting around 1942?

RILEY: Well, from '41 to '43 when I was in the Army Air Corps personnel business, the first major problem was -- I went there in October and as you know Pearl Harbor hit the first of December. I'd been there about six weeks. We had to rev up real fast. We thought we were going pretty fast, but our biggest problem

[13]

was getting decentralized. Everything centered in Washington. If you wanted to hire a typist in Eugene, Oregon we had to set up the job in Washington and they had to get permission through my particular unit, that I was in when I first went there, for another \$1,200 dollars to hire one more typist. So the major problem was to get things decentralized and get regulations out to the field so the people could hire civilian personnel all over the country. As a matter of fact, I remember one of the major problems they had was in the Philippines air depot. We had a big air depot in the Philippines and the Navy was paying so much better salaries out there for the Filipinos than we, the Army, were. I had all kinds of negotiations with the Navy and everybody and his dog trying to get our wages up a little bit

[14]

so that we could compete with the Navy. Seems like the Navy has always traveled a lot better than the artillery, even than the old style Air Corps, even though I think the new Air Force does very well. To make a long story short, the Philippine air depot thing was solved by the Japanese one day, which was very unfortunate. My problem just vanished over night. I hadn't finished it yet.

But in March of 1943, I went back to my first love and was sent to the Field Artillery Replacement Training Center in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, took a refresher course for a few weeks, and immediately after that I was put into the advanced officer's course, because I was already a major -- had been since 1942, February. I took the advanced officer's course and that was a rather rough experience

[15]

for me because, really, I was a desk officer and didn't know much about field artillery; and all at once I find myself competing with a bunch of officers who had been with troops and had been with the field artillery and Regular Army and all this type of thing. But I got through all right and I was told I was in the upper 10 percent of my class, because I studied about eight or ten hours every night trying to keep up with the other people while they drank beer.

FUCHS: While they were drinking.

RILEY: That's right. On the weekends I tried to get a drink, but I didn't have time during the week. So from there I was given an assignment down in Carolina and sent down, I think, to the 12th Corps headquarters; and then I was further assigned to a battalion

[16]

in Fort Jackson, South Carolina as Executive Officer of the 696th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, self-propelled armored battalion. That was in the fall of '43 and on February 11, 1944, we landed in Scotland with this field artillery unit. We trained in England a while and then in July of '44 we landed at Omaha Beach and we had combat until 1945 in Europe. I volunteered then for the Asiatic theater and came back to Washington and was sent to the Command and General Staff School in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Our entire class was in training for going to the Pacific theater and we found ourselves in class when the atomic bomb was dropped over there and the war was over, the entire World War II, in August of 1945.

[17]

FUCHS: What divisions were you in, in Europe?

RILEY: We were a separate battalion and we were corps troops. We fought with the Yankee (26th Inf.) Division, with the 2nd Armored Division, the 4th Armored Division, the 6th Armored Division, 3rd Corps, 12th Corps. We were all over the place. We were a separate battalion, the 696th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, and they used us as kind of shock troops. Sometimes we were ahead of the armored infantry. It was kind of a rough existence being a separate battalion. We never did belong to any outfit, permanently.

Anyway, the war was over, and I'm still alive, and I came back and finally got out of the service in 1946. I met one of the old timers, actually he was a major when I was a captain, but he worked for me in the Export Control Office. At one point, as a

[18]

captain I had a bunch of Navy commanders and Army majors and people like that working for me. We were all in civilian clothes. This one, Major John S. Cooke, who had stayed in the Pentagon, worked himself up to a colonel -- he was a major in World War I -- and as I was getting out of the service in January of '46, I ran into him, and he said he was about to go to War Assets Corporation as vice president and wanted me to go with him and I did. And that's how I happened to get into War Assets.

FUCHS: Who was heading War Assets at that time?

RILEY: I remember Robert M. Littlejohn came in later. He was one of the fellows. Some general headed War Assets. He was replaced by Robert M. Littlejohn. He was the Quartermaster General in Europe. He was head of it

[19]

at one time. And then another wild man who had been the 12th Corps artillery officer, I've forgotten his name too, but he was head of it for a while. Anyway, I worked there for two and one-half years, something like that, roughly.

FUCHS: What was your title there?

RILEY: I was Executive Assistant to the man who had consumer goods sales. I think he was vice president for Consumer Goods, something like that. And then he became a different -- War Assets first had a president and vice president, and then they had administrators. I think it became an administration instead of a corporation.

FUCHS: What did your work entail there?

RILEY: Generally, we had all the consumer sales

[20]

division under our office and we had to knock heads together and keep everybody happy and try to -- just general management of a bunch of sales divisions. I never was very good at explaining what I did. I seemed to work 12-15 hours a day, but I couldn't tell you during the day what I'd accomplished.

FUCHS: Do you have any reflections about the way our war assets were handled? Do you think it was done properly?

RILEY: Yes, I think our war assets were handled reasonably well. It's a tremendous job and you have millions of pounds and millions of square yards and millions of dollars worth of stuff. Maybe it's worth three cents on the dollar, but it will cost fifty cents on the dollar just to store it. So you're wise to get rid of it; let somebody else take

[21]

over the headache of storing it. The Government wasn't prepared, of course, to use it, so you had to get rid of it. I'm sure lots of people made millions of dollars, millions and millions of dollars on it, and yet it would cost the United States Government that much to keep it and it was useless to us. I remember one interesting thing. During the course of that experience we found somewhere around Washington a bunch of World War I horse-drawn ambulances still stored in a field. We got rid of them. It would have been smart if somebody would have been wise and gotten rid of them in 1919 instead of waiting until 1946 to get rid of them. I'm sure they paid rent on that pasture or wherever they were. I didn't see them but I know it to be a fact.

That's about all I can comment on war

[22]

assets. I thought it was an interesting experience. We had some good businessmen helping us. Of course, I believe that the average civil servant is a pretty dedicated person, I've always felt that way. Maybe it's a reflection of myself because I always had a great respect for the taxpayer. But I've found that a lot of businessmen who came in were extremely dedicated and almost to the

man, of the people I met, they were impressed with the general caliber of the average civil servant. I've had any number of them say to me or in my presence, you know, "When I was in business I used to think that the Government had a bunch of deadwood but I've met as many dedicated people in the United States Government as I've met in my own firm."

And I think this is probably true. I'm dedicated to that fact anyway.

[23]

FUCHS: Any major problems that you recall in the Administration?

RILEY: No, I don't recall any. We were always, of course, very alert to prevent any of our Federal employees who were working with it getting entangled in any way. That was a preoccupation in the Administration, being sure that our compliance people would be on top of anybody going crooked. This was kind of an experience, too. You always wondered when some prospective buyer would come in at what point was he going to offer you something under the table. And there you'd be. Maybe it was somebody you knew and had known for sometime, maybe you felt rather friendly toward him. But you had to decide that if that ever happens, I'm going to turn the son of a bitch in. I mean that's all. I never had a proposition made to me. There was one fellow who was very

[24]

friendly with me; he was kind of a slimy type of guy and I was always afraid he was going to, but he never did. I told my secretary one day, "Don't ever leave me alone with him if you can possibly keep from it. I want somebody around." But he never made a pass at me on any kind of a deal.

This was one of the preoccupations of the Administration at that time and I think it speaks fairly high for not only the War Assets administration but for civil servants in general.

Notwithstanding, things like this mess going on in Watergate and things like that, I think the average civil servant probably even today is pretty dedicated.

FUCHS: Then you went to the...

RILEY: State Department.

[25]

FUCHS: How did that come about? This was '48?

RILEY: Yes, 1948. I, of course, realized that the War Assets was in its waning stages and I was looking around for another Government job. I had pretty much decided by this point that I was going to stay in the Government, although I had never until about this time made up my mind that I was going to make a career of the Government. I don't think I entirely made it up then. But a fellow who worked for me in the Railroad Retirement Board back in 1939 was working in the personnel office of the State Department. A rather menial position. But he called me at my house



one day and said, "I understand they're setting up a new office over in our Department" -- the State Department -- "and I understand this is the man you might go to see about it."

[26]

Well, to make a long story short, I got a job. I saw a lot of people, and I got a job in helping set up what was called the Office of Educational Exchange. The Smith-Mundt Act had been passed in January of 1948 I believe that was this god-awful 80th Congress, wasn't it?

FUCHS: The 80th Congress was '47 to '48, because Mr. Truman castigated the 80th Congress in his campaign in '48.

RILEY: Yes, that's right. Anyway, Senator H. Alexander Smith from New Jersey and Karl Mundt, who was a Congressman at that time from South Dakota, sponsored this legislation, and so we had in '48 -- January I think -- President Truman signed the Smith-Mundt Act, which provided for the cultural and informational part of the United States Government. This was the beginning of the Voice of

[27]

America, International Press Service, the International Broadcasting Service, which was the Voice of America, the overseas libraries, binational institutes, the educational exchange program -- which I eventually headed -- and the motion picture service. Those were the five media provided for under the Smith-Mundt Act. So I went to work organizing the Office of Educational Exchange, which was made up of the library service and the exchange of persons service. I was the first employee actually on the payroll of the combined Office of Educational Exchange. All the other people were detailed to it from the State Department. Since I came from the outside, we had to set up my job, and I became Executive Officer and helped set that up in '48 and '49. We had three principal parts of it. The exchange of persons program, the libraries, and binational

[28]

institutes program, and then an office -- I don't remember the name of it, but it was dedicated to cultural relations mainly in the Latin-American area. After working there as Executive Officer for several months, I was made Assistant Chief for the libraries operation and worked on that for about six or eight months. Then the Korean war hit -- maybe I worked longer than that. I think I did, I worked from the summer of 1949 until December of 1950. When the Korean war came along, they set up the Economic Stabilization Agency, which included the Office of Price Stabilization, and the Office of Wage Stabilization. President Truman had Eric Johnston heading that, I believe, and then he brought Mike DiSalle in to head up the Office of Price Stabilization. A friend of mine became assistant administrator of that and invited me to come over and apply for the job and I became

[29]

Director of Personnel for the Office of Price Stabilization.

FUCHS: Who was that you knew in the office?

RILEY: Richard Francis Cook. Dick Cook.

FUCHS: What was his position?

RILEY: He was Assistant Director of Price Stabilization for Management or Administration or whatever the title was. He had personnel and various other types of administrative-managerial kind of control in the outfit. So, I applied for a job and got it, and became Director of Personnel. At this point, this was before Mike DiSalle's time, I guess. I've forgotten the fellow's name. He left about the day he hired me, I think, and Mike DiSalle took over. Mike didn't hire me. I've forgotten that fellow's name. Anyway, before I was made Director

[30]

of Personnel, I had to have White House clearance. This was the first time in my career I'd ever had anything approaching political clearance. I was sent over to the White House to be interviewed by Donald Dawson and Don made it abundantly clear from the very beginning that they were hiring a personnel director and they expected me to operate under Civil Service rules and regulations, no hanky-panky, and no ward-heeling type of political appointments, this type of thing. They wanted a clean operation. He also informed me that it was customary at times for different people who worked in and around the White House to call up various agencies and say, "This is 'Joe Bloke' from the White House," and ask people to do things. But he said, in personnel administration in the Government, nobody at the White House spoke for the White House except the President and Don Dawson and Don Dawson's secretary

[31]

on his behalf. I understood that and told him I appreciated that. I had a rather interesting experience one day. John Steelman called me up and announced on the telephone who he was and began to ask me to do some things and I didn't know whether it was a trap or not. I had great respect for John Steelman but I felt obligated to inform him that I'd been ordered by Don Dawson not to take any direction from the White House except from those three people that I mentioned. So I informed John Steelman of that and that's the last I ever heard from him. I don't know whether he accomplished his mission or not through some other source.

FUCHS: Did you know him personally?

RILEY: I didn't know John Steelman. I'd seen him,

[32]

but I didn't know him.

FUCHS: Subsequently, did you have much contact with Donald Dawson?

RILEY: No, I talked to him on the phone probably three more times in the several months I was there. His secretary called many times and referred people to me, because there were lots of people always being referred, I mean coming to the White House looking for referral; and we were hiring a lot of people. In a period of about six months, we hired 11,000 people all over the United States and staffed some 45 regional and district offices. All these people were hired under

Civil Service rules and regulations. Needless to say, we were extremely busy and we were working many 20-hour days in our personnel office, and I think I worked longer

[33]

hours than anybody. I've always felt that if you're going to lead a bunch of people you've got to set an example, and I did. But of all the referrals that I had from the White House, I never had but one pressure case. And Don Dawson's secretary -- I've forgotten her name -- called me and said, "Mr. Riley, I hate to put any pressure on you but I have somebody I'd like to recommend here. He's been pestering us to death and so is the Republican National Committee." She said, "If you can do anything for him, I'd really appreciate it."

I said, "Send him over."

And she sent him over and, notwithstanding the fact that he was a Republican, he was a good man and we hired him. I don't even remember his name now; but we had a spot for him. He was qualified. I thought this sort

[34]

of characterized the Truman administration in a sense. Newspapers blasted Truman for this and that, and he was criticized for sticking by his friends and a few things like that, which I think is very commendable. But I think by and large he was an extremely honest man, and I think this permeated the entire administration during his duty. The White House never put any pressure on me, as I say, on this small job that I had in hiring some 11,000 people in six months, except once and it was a bona fide bit of pressure. They just wanted to get somebody off their neck and thought somebody should hire him. They told me he looked like he was well-qualified when they sent him over.

FUCHS: Were you in touch with Mike DiSalle occasionally or frequently?

[35]

RILEY: Very frequently. He was a great guy, a great guy. He had the best morale in that Price Stabilization Office of, I think, about anyplace I ever saw. He was a leader. He was friendly. He handled himself extremely well with the Congress and extremely well with the press. I think by and large he was well thought of and this permeated his entire organization. People were happy working for him because they knew they had a person in there who was a good, honest, hard-working leader.

In personnel business you get down in the dumps because you have a lot of pressure put on you from time to time. You know, operating people they all want to get their secretary another \$10,000 a year and things like this. When I'd get down in the dumps and really needed to be perked up a little

[36]

bit, I'd just go over and have a little chat with Mike DiSalle, say on Saturday afternoon. He worked seven days a week. He really led that outfit. And I would go over and talk with him for a

few minutes and he would kind of buttress up my morale and get me feeling better. He was a real great person.

FUCHS: In this State Department position, where you were Assistant Chief of Libraries and...

RILEY: Binational Institutes. Going back to 1938 or '39 there was a law which provided for certain cultural cooperation with the other American Republics, and under that the Government assisted in setting up in Latin America binational institutes generally in binational libraries. They put a bunch of American books down there and they'd have classes in English and classes in American literature,

[37]

and things like that. The local people would attend them, and there would be binational employees both North Americans, United States citizens, and South Americans working in them. For example, I understand that they taught English in Mexico City and they had such a big -- I've forgotten, hundreds of people went to study English at this binational institute in Mexico City. This was pretty well throughout Latin America; it was part of our public posture during the war to keep this going. And during the Nelson Rockefeller days of cooperation with the other American republics, we nurtured this type of thing. Finally, when the Smith-Mundt Act was passed, these things came under our general aegis and we had the Division of Libraries and Institutes developed and that's the outfit I was in.

[38]

FUCHS: Was this augmented under the Smith-Mundt Act?

RILEY: Under the Smith-Mundt Act we got our first appropriation for exchange of persons and things like that. Previously the Fulbright Act had been passed in 1946 and there was no dollar appropriation for that until the Smith-Mundt Act came along, and that gave some dollar appropriations to help out on the Fulbright exchange program; and that became part of this Office of Educational Exchange, too, the Fulbright Act. As a matter of fact, starting in '48 we began to set up these Fulbright programs around over the world, and this act provided for binational commissions to run them in the foreign countries. So, you'd have the American ambassador usually as the chairman of this commission, and you'd have some of the leading local educators on it, and maybe one or two

[39]

other American businessmen or American diplomats. You would have a four to five to seven man binational board, and then we'd sign an agreement with the country to use foreign currencies that we owned in their country, so to speak, because of war surplus or some other thing that they owed us for, lend-lease type of things . So that was the Fulbright Act in a nutshell.

But then we worked it hand in glove with the Smith-Mundt Act. Finally in January of 1952, they reorganized all of this element of the State Department under what was then called the United States International Information Administration, and that was part of the State Department. At that point, we set up these various services on a more clear organizational pattern. The International Broadcasting Service, generally known as the

[40]

Voice of America. The International Press and Publications Service, which was dedicated to exchange of publications, nurturing press relations with other countries, and things like this. Putting out American literature. The International Motion Picture Service which did the same thing with movies and audiovisual things. And the Libraries and Institutes Service, called the Information Center Service. That was the one I had been Assistant Chief of before, but by this time I was Deputy Director of the parent office after I'd come out of the Office of Price Stabilization. In August of 1951 I was invited to come back to the State Department as the Deputy Director of this Office of Educational Exchange. And then in January of 1952, when we had this reorganization that I was just speaking about, I became the

[41]

Director of the International Educational Exchange Service, under this International Information Administration.

FUCHS: I believe in your *Who's Who* account it says that in '52 you were Assistant Administrator of the International Information Administration.

RILEY: That's right, that was my title. I was Assistant Administrator. I had two hats. I was Assistant Administrator of the International Information Administration with direct responsibility for the International Educational Exchange Service.

FUCHS: Which you became Director of in '53?

RILEY: See, I was actually the Director of it. Honestly, this was a funny thing. I had to get my own title changed because my title was Assistant Administrator, International Information

[42]

Administration in charge of the International Educational Exchange Service. And I remember one time I was interviewed, either on TV or radio, I think radio in those days, and when the fellow asked me to give my precise title he immediately balled me out after I gave it. He said he didn't ask me to make a speech he just asked me to say what my title was. This got very, very bureaucratic, all this title; so I got them to change my title to Director of the International Educational Exchange Service, which I shortened to IES. So I was Director of IES, and that was the way we were known in the trade. I still had the same job but they changed the title about a year later. Anyway, that was a great program. It came on during the Truman administration and then when the Eisenhower administration came in, in January, or whenever

[43]

the Eisenhower administration came in, shortly after that the head of this International Information Administration left.

FUCHS: Do you recall who that was?

RILEY: Wilson Compton. Dr. Wilson Compton who had been the president of Washington State University -- I've forgotten the name of the town up in Washington -- for several years. He was the first administrator of the International Information Administration. He was replaced by Robert Johnson, under the Eisenhower administration. Bob Johnson had been president of Temple University for several years. He was a self-made millionaire. Made his money in getting *Time* and *Life* on the way, I guess. Quite a publicist, quite a political-type person, and Dulles, being Secretary of State at that time, brought him in to head up

[44]

this International Information Administration and to take it out of the State Department and to set it up as a separate agency. I was the head of the International Educational Exchange Service, which I considered the diplomatic part of this organization. All the other parts of it being more propagandistic. I had some backing on the Hill for this viewpoint. I felt very dedicated, of course; the cultural community throughout the United States, the educational community felt this way, generally.

FUCHS: Who were the principal people on the Hill that felt like you did?

RILEY: Well, Smith, and Mundt and Fulbright and all of our friends. I've forgotten the major friends of the program. I mentioned them particularly because I worked closely with

[45]

them. But, anyway, I explained all of this to Dr. Johnson and told him that under the direction of Eisenhower we had to write Reorganization Plan #8, which was going into effect on August of 1953, which was to set up the United States Information Agency.

FUCHS: This was under the Hoover Commission reorganization?

RILEY: I believe it was. I believe it was an offshoot of the Hoover Commission; I just don't recall. I worked on it, and was very much engrossed in it at the time, but I just don't recall. At any rate, I dug my heels in and said, "I think the exchange program should stay in the State Department. I don't think it should be a part of the propaganda agency." And all of my staff, of course, felt that way. Dulles didn't feel any way. He just wanted to get rid of everything but his

[46]

briefcase. He didn't want any operations in the State Department apparently. He thought we were an operating agency and we should be outside. So, I had that to contend with, not personally, but I mean as a part of the scheme of things, including my boss, Bob Johnson. I think he felt that probably the most bona fide program he had was the Exchange Program. So he wanted it to go with him when he set up this agency on the outside. Of course, this was during the McCarthy era. I don't want to go into that. I could make some comment on it, but I just don't think it's appropriate.

FUCHS: Why?

RILEY: Well, I don't know. You can sort this out anyway you want to. Remind me of McCarthy a little later on. I'll go ahead with what

[47]  
we're talking about.

We had, as an advisory commission to this exchange program, a presidentially appointed board. Two of them. One, the Board of Foreign Scholarships to supervise the Fulbright program, and an overriding commission called the United States Advisory Commission on Educational Exchange, also a presidentially appointed board made up of very prominent educators. All of them educators, and the chairman of the board was J.[ames] Lewis Morrill, President of the University of Minnesota. Great friend, I still correspond with him. He's past 80 now; he's retired, of course. So, they were holding their Advisory Commission meeting on this particular day in the summer of 1953 in our office in Washington. And Bob Johnson head of the International Information Administration

[48]  
was going in to appear before them to explain why it was absolutely mandatory that we take the exchange program out of the State Department along with the rest of the United States Information Agency. I told Johnson that I was not going into the meeting with him and back him up. He said, "What are you going to do?"

I said, "I have no other alternative, we just part ways at this point, so I'll have to resign as of now." This was ten minutes before the meeting. I'd talked to him several times, but I just dug in my heels at the door, you might say. And Bob Johnson being a great guy said, "Russ, I didn't know you felt so strongly."

I said, "I sure as hell do." I said, "I'm dedicated to keeping this in the State Department. Dulles wants to get rid of it,

[49]  
you want to take it with you and everything like that. I have no alternative but to resign."

He said, "No, you know a lot about this exchange program." He said, "I think you should go into this meeting with me and I'll make my pitch and then I'll explain to them that you have a different view."

I said, "Hell, Bob, I can't do this, I work for you."

He said, "No," -- he's not a bureaucrat like I am, see; he's a businessman, educator, millionaire -- "I think that's right, I think they ought to hear your view."

I said, "Okay, if you want to do it that way."

So we went into this meeting and appeared before the United States Advisory Commission on Educational Exchange, which was

[50]

headed by Dr. Morrill, President of the University of Minnesota. Dr. Johnson gave his pitch on why he thought the exchange program should leave the State Department, go along with the rest of the United States Information Agency and be a part of it. After finishing he commented on the fact that the Director of it, which was me, had a different view on it and that he had invited me to come in and present my view. So I did. This caused kind of a problem for the Commission. We usually sat through the meeting but Dr. Morrill said, "Well, we have kind of a problem here, we want to discuss this and we think we should go into executive session and excuse Dr. Johnson and Mr. Riley. But we'll let you know. We'd like to have you come back in and talk to us a little later."

We were gone from the office for, I don't

[51]

know, I don't recall -- maybe 20 minutes, maybe an hour and a half, but a short time; and we were invited back into the room and Dr. Morrill said, "Dr. Johnson, we must inform you that we agree with Mr. Riley."

And Johnson said, "Well, if you feel that strongly, you're advisory to the President. I'm seeing the President this afternoon," -- meaning Eisenhower -- "I'll explain to him that you feel this way."

Dr. Morrill said, "Dr. Johnson, we're appointed by the President and I expect he'd like to hear from us direct."

But, he said, "But I'm going over there this afternoon."

Dr. Morrill said, "Well, I think we can get word to him by this afternoon also."

So, I don't know precisely what happened, I wasn't privy to precisely what happened. But

[52]

in the middle of the afternoon Bob Johnson who was my boss said, "Well, Russ, I'm going over to see the President and I'll explain all of this to him, and I don't know what his decision is going to be but I'll call you at the office."

I said, "Well, I'm vitally interested in this so I'll sit here until I hear from you."

At 9 that night the telephone rang in the office and it was Bob Johnson and he said, "Russ, are you still in the office?"

And I said, "I told you I'd sit here until I heard from you."



He said, "I'm terribly sorry, I was over at the White House and I came out of the White House and I got sidetracked and I had to go out to dinner with some people, and I'm up here at such and such a restaurant. I just happened to think about you so I called your

[53]

house and was told you weren't home yet and they gave me your office number, and so I apologize." But he said, "The President said, 'All right, if the Advisory Commission feels that way, that is all right, we'll leave it in the State Department.'" So Reorganization Plan 8 was rewritten right as of that moment and I stayed in the State Department with the program. I don't know whether Dulles was happy or sad about it. But anyway that was the way it came out and that's what the President put through, Reorganization Plan 8. And I think that was the major contribution I made to that exchange program right there, I honestly do.

FUCHS: Do you recall the salient points of Johnson's presentation?

RILEY: No, I don't. Well, the salient point was that

[54]

this whole information educational exchange program should work hand in glove. That they had a cultural officer and an information officer, public relations officer overseas who did all of the things and that they should be one agency so that they could be coordinated and work closely together overseas, which they did. They still operate sort of together overseas, but it's known as the State Department exchange program and not an information agency exchange program. And, although we had a 30 million dollar budget, we had another 20 or 30 million dollars plowed into it in time, effort, and resources on the part of cultural and educational institutions in this country, and we would have cut off 90 percent of that if we would have been part of the information agency and known as a part of a propaganda agency. Educators are

[55]

extremely dedicated to the fact that they want education for education's sake and not for political reasons. And, although I ran this program with my eye on politics all the time, international politics and the security of our country -- I've had to play it out of both sides of my mouth in a way -- but we were spending taxpayer's money for this, and although I had to placate the educators and get their cooperation, at the same time I had to sharpen our program in such a way that we would score politically abroad. Now, this is a tightrope, but we tried to do it.

FUCHS: As set up under Smith-Mundt, do you feel there were any major, even minor, impediments to a more successful operation? Was there anything that you would have wished had been done differently in the Act?

[56]

RILEY: Yes, and this was later taken care of. I've forgotten the date of the Act, but one of the major problems that I had in my office -- I operated under the Smith-Mundt Act, under the Fulbright Act, under this act for the cultural cooperation with other Latin-American programs. Certain parts of the foreign aid bill had been written to take care of, for example, certain uses for India wheat money, things like this. We had a big conglomeration of acts and it was hard to

coordinate all of these activities and comply with all the provisions for all the various acts. We started kind of codifying this and getting it all together. Finally, after I left this program I think it was about 1961 -- the Fulbright-Hays Act was passed. By this time Wayne Hays from the eastern part of Ohio, a Congressman, had become interested in the educational exchange

[57]

program and so he sponsored the bill in the House and Fulbright, of course, in the Senate, and the Fulbright-Hays Act was passed which brought all of these things together. That was one of the biggest problems of the operation of it, aside from the fact that we always had trouble getting money. That Rooney Committee in the House is the hardest Appropriations Committee that anybody ever was up against, and yet I had great respect for John Rooney and the way he squeezed the bureaucrats at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. Rooney and I fought like cats and dogs and he put all kinds of pressure on me and everything, but I knew what I was doing and I was reasonably successful with him. But he kept me honest from the standpoint of looking out for the taxpayer's interest. I really think it was a great thing. Checks and balance in

[58]

our Government are the strength of the Government, really.

FUCHS: Is there anyone who really gave you a hard time, who didn't believe in the program? Did you have any problems with this, that, or the other thing?

RILEY: You know, it's kind of like childbirth, you forget all the bad things. Yes, there were a lot of people who gave me a hard time, but I couldn't name a half dozen of them. I couldn't name three of them right now. We were criticized for this and that. Of course, Congressman Gross from Iowa gives everybody a hard time, you know. I think he's a great guy, though; I mean from the standpoint of looking after the taxpayer. But I don't recall the people who gave us a hard time. Well, I've forgotten just what year it was, but I was working for

[59]

the Eisenhower administration, so I'm generally known on the Hill, which was Democratic at that time, as that Republican at the other end of the line. Wayne Hays was a Democrat and chairman of the subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee and I had to appear before him in the next few days on some legislative matter, and I didn't know him. It was my way of operating to always try to get acquainted with the people. I'd try to meet them and I tried to find out everything I could about them. I kept a book on Congressmen. All their pet peeves and how they voted and everything else. I kept up to date. So, if a Congressman would get me on the phone and said, "I wanted to ask you something," I'd interrupt him and say, "That was a great thing you did on the Veteran's bill the other day, I thought that was great." You know, all at once he

[60]

found out that I thought he was important. So I got along pretty well with the people on the Hill because of my congressional relations efforts. But anyway, this Hays, I told him I'd like to come up to see him. I said, "It will only take me three or four minutes but I want to explain to you so you'll know in advance what I'm going to talk about before your subcommittee," and he

condescended to let me come up. I went to his office and as I walked in -- I'd studied a lot about him -- and he's got over on the eastern side of Ohio a district that looks like it's about 20 miles wide and about 800 miles long and it takes the whole eastern slab of Ohio, may go up as high as Akron, I don't know. He had a picture of his district on the wall and that's the first thing I spotted when I walked in. So I said, "Hello, Congressman Hays," and walked over to the map and I said, "You know, I've

[61]

often wondered about your district here and how in the world you ever cover it?" I said, "How far is it from up here down to here?" And at that point he forgot that he was mad at me and he got up and stood and looked at the map and said, "Well, it's 600 miles," or whatever it was, and we talked about that and I said, "Well, I just don't understand how you get around over it. Take some of these city guys, they've got a small district and they can set up offices and this and that, must cost you a lot of money." Not only that but he was hep on this idea of Congressmen having to run every two years like the Senators or somebody else," but I said, "Hell, you no more get elected than you have to run up and down that district and try to get elected again."

Well, by that time we were friends, you know, I understood his problems. So, he says,

[62]

"Well, sit down."

And I said, "No, I've already spent my five minutes here. I came up to tell you what I was going to see you about when I came before your committee and there's no point in my sitting down because I don't want to take up any more of your time. I'll just tell you while I'm standing up." I told him about whatever it was in about three minutes. All I really wanted to do was get acquainted with him; I could testify before the committee. But I explained it in about two or three minutes and thanked him and left. The hearing came up a few days later and several people testified on different other things, and finally the clerk says, "We're going to have Mr. Riley now, Director of the Exchange Program, "at such and such.

And Hays said, "Hello Mr. Riley, it's

[63]

nice to see you again." And I sat down, right by his elbow as a matter of fact. He pushed back his chair and he said to the committee members: "This thing that Mr. Riley has here is sort of a simple thing. I've talked to him and it's all explained on this sheet of paper. We had a long discussion about it and it looks all right with me. It's kind of getting late and if anybody around the table has any objections, I'd like to hear it, otherwise I think we might just as well -- and thank you very much, Mr. Riley." And that was the hearing:

FUCHS: One way to do business.

RILEY: Well, that's the only way to do business in Washington. You can see from this tape that there's nothing modest about me. I'm rather egotistical except about my golf scores.

Honestly, though, I have worked hard.

[64]

FUCHS: Well, you went on then and became the consul in Malta.

RILEY: Yes, I was consul general in Malta for two years. I was consul general in Johannesburg for four years, or three and a half.

FUCHS: Are there any problems or anecdotes, anything that stands out in your memory?

RILEY: Well, a lot of things. But there are people more prolific than me who have commented on them and I don't think I could add a lot. Being a Middle Westerner and having been raised in a hat something like that hanging over there, which is a western dress hat. That's a little more than a dress hat. That's about a seven and a half gallon there I guess. I bought that hat in Laramie, Wyoming for my father many years ago, and he passed away here not long ago, so I inherited it. Anyway,

[65]

I wore a white hat something like this all the time I was overseas, and I became known as the "guy with the white Stetson hat," you might say. Part of my trademark -- you have to have some kind of public posture when you're in public life. You have to have some trademark. Go into some of these British type clubs and meet some admiral of the Royal Navy and he'd say, "Russ, I knew you were here, I saw your hat hanging outside." I don't really have anything to say about the Foreign Service. It's a great Service and a lot of dedicated people in it. I enjoyed it very much and now I'm glad that I'm a private citizen again.

FUCHS: You retired from the State Department?

RILEY: I retired from the State Department and got credit for all of my service under the

[66]

Foreign Service Retirement Act. I had 32 years of service. All of my Government service counted, used my Civil Service money and bought into the Foreign Service Retirement. I retired with 32 years of service, and when I became age 60, in 1971, I also got a small pension under the military reserves. So, I have two pensions now. And I'm working on my third one here. I must retire from here in four years, when I'm 67, and at that point I should be getting a little pension of say 20 percent of my high three average or something like that. Sixty-seven is mandatory. I don't know whether I'll hold out that long or not. I hope to. I've got a young family to raise and it's expensive now days. I don't know of any other items.

FUCHS: Well, in '56 you were chairman of the

[67]

European Congress of Cultural Officers. Do you recall anything of that?

RILEY: Yes, I do. All of our embassies overseas have cultural attaches and these were, in a sense, contract employees of mine, because the exchange program was the principal cultural program of the U.S. diplomatic service. We from time to time arranged these conferences and brought the cultural attaches in from all of the various posts for meetings, and in '56 we set up such a meeting in Brussels. We invited the cultural attaches and public affairs officers, as a matter of fact, from all the European countries, Scandinavian countries, over as far as Greece. We had people there from Greece and people from Iceland. Those were the two ends. Then from Portugal and Finland. I mean the entire area. This was about a three-day conference in which we discussed all aspects of the United States cultural

[68]

activities abroad. I took a contingent of my people with me and we brought them up to date on Washington aspects, political aspects, financial aspects, regulatory aspects. That's what that was. I tied that in with the trip that I made throughout western Europe and on up to Finland. A kind of a "snoopervising" trip.

FUCHS: I believe you represented the Department of State at the dedication of the Truman presidential library.

RILEY: July of '57, I believe it was. Wasn't it July?

FUCHS: July 6th.

RILEY: It was a hot day I know that. Were you there by any chance?

FUCHS: Yes.

[69]

RILEY: It was a boiling hot day and, of course, we sat outside there on the front porch or portico, whatever it's called. That boiling sun and the program went on and on, very interesting. I remember that at some point before the program was completely finished I found a shade tree off to one side. We could still hear what was going on but we left the main -- I've forgotten what his name was, but the head of the United States Office of Education and I went over and stood under the shade tree. That was an interesting experience for me. I don't recall how I was appointed by the State Department to go. Anyway, I was happy to go.

FUCHS: The connection between libraries and your service?

RILEY: Well, that and my home and everything; it was near my home.

[70]

FUCHS: I think there was a connection between President Truman and your home in the early days. Would you care to comment on that for the record?

RILEY: You mean down in Chariton County?

FUCHS: Yes.

RILEY: I should have looked this up. But my father always claimed that his grandmother and Harry Truman's grandmother were sisters. I haven't checked that. I have some genealogy things and I think I saw something about it; but I don't know what the connection is. My dad was a great admirer of Truman. Anyway, Truman used to come down to Chariton County to go duck hunting, I understand. This was after I left there. Although it was my home up until I came here, in a sense, and I still visit there, I really left there to go to school

[71]

and was away from there by and large after about 1929. But I think in the thirties, along in there, and maybe even up until World War II, Truman used to come down there. Tom Bash was a friend of his. Tom was from Mendon, Missouri. Tom, you may recall, at one time was the Sheriff of Jackson County. You may met him? I don't know how he got acquainted with Truman, but Tom used to bring Truman down to go hunting at Lost Quarter, which is two or three miles out from this little town of Mendon and actually within 600 yards from where I was born. That's about my closest contact with Truman, having him hunt ducks where I was born. I've seen him lots of times, been in his presence, but never had any personal contact with him, really.

FUCHS: I believe you had an uncle in Kansas City?

[72]

RILEY: Yes, Herley S. Daily was head of the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company in Kansas City. I guess he knew Truman. He was chairman of the grand jury that sent Pendergast to the pen, I think. Incidentally, I've heard a lot of comment about Pendergast and Truman. I think that Pendergast befriended Truman, and I think Truman lived beyond the dishonest aspects of it. I always paid great tribute to Truman for having the nerve to go to his funeral and never let him down, really. Although Pendergast obviously was a crook. I know nothing about it firsthand.

FUCHS: Did you ever meet Mr. Truman personally?

RILEY: No, I've never met him. I've been within six or eight feet of him two or three times in a small group. He would come in late and then he had to leave early, and by the time

[73]

he shook hands with all the people right around him, why, it would be impolite to go up and make him hesitate for one more minute to say, "I'm a Masonic Missourian, field artilleryman, Democrat," which I always felt I had in common with him.

FUCHS: You had mentioned earlier something about the McCarthy era and I wondered what your reflections are about that period?

RILEY: Well this was a very rough time for good guys and bad guys. McCarthy was, in my estimation, a phony all the way through. Kind of a no count scoundrel. But at one point, I think it was in West Virginia, he hit on this idea that he had in his hand, I believe he said a list of so

many subversives, and fairies, or whatever he had, Communists who worked in the State Department, etc., etc. This made some

[74]

sort of headline that got the public's attention and of course, lots of people in this country are dedicated against communism, naturally, our most formidable enemy, so this brought McCarthy right to the front. That's all background everybody knows who lived through that period. But McCarthy was after educators, cultural people, because, very frankly, in this general field you do find a lot of liberal-minded people and probably some Communist sympathizers, in those days and this day and any other day. Probably you would find most of the hot bed of liberalism and communism, that type of thing, in the cultural, educational endeavor. So, realizing this, McCarthy took out after the State Department in general -- weren't those the days of Acheson? I think so.

[75]

FUCHS: Oh, yes.

RILEY: I worked under so many Secretaries of State I kind of forget who they all were. I remember, George Marshall was the first one I worked under. I remember that.

FUCHS: Did you ever meet him in person?

RILEY: Yes, on several occasions. I might say as an aside I met General Walter Bedell Smith when he was Under Secretary of State. And then I learned why Eisenhower was such a good general. I think that's a political comment if there ever was one. Bedell Smith did most of Eisenhower's thinking for him. I think if Ike could have gotten Bedell in the White House he would have had him instead of Sherman Adams. Bedell Smith was one of the best staff men that I ever saw in my life. He could really get to the point in a hurry

[76]

and there wasn't any time wasted in any kind of a meeting I ever sat in with him. I heard him lam-bast two of the very top people in Government in a meeting one day. He said, "When you two guys get through bull shittin' down at the other end of the table," he said, "I'd like to go on with the meeting."

FUCHS: Who were they?

RILEY: Harold Stassen was one of them, and the other fellow later became Secretary of Treasury, and I've forgotten who that was right now, but he was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense at that point. Bedell Smith could really put people back on the business end of the deal.

But going back to the McCarthy days, McCarthy was -- Fulbright kind of took after McCarthy a little bit. McCarthy then became

[77]

dedicated to the fact that he wanted to find out what subversives were working in the State Department in connection with the exchange program, the Fulbright program, this was all part of his pattern. So here I sat at the top of the Fulbright program and all the exchange program, and felt like I was as much of a dedicated war veteran as McCarthy was. I was certainly anti-Communist and everything else, and I felt like I had the same aim in mind that McCarthy did, but I had different tactics I guess. Anyway, he had all kinds of hearings. It started out by my getting a call on April Fool's Day, 1953. It would have been a good April Fool's joke, but my secretary looked at me as I walked in the office -- I'd been around the corner in the men's room or something -- and said, "Mr. Riley, Roy Cohn wants to speak with you." I didn't say April Fool, I didn't

[78]

say anything, I could tell by her look that Roy Cohn was on the other end of the phone. So, I just went in and sat down at my desk and said, "Hello," and it was, it was Roy Cohn; he wanted to see me. He wanted to see me immediately. He wanted to talk to me about the Fulbright program and so I went. This was a sign of the times, when McCarthy's group spoke, you jumped. So I went over and cooled my heels for three or four hours waiting until he could see me. By this time I was fit to be tied. I didn't know what he wanted to see me about, what he wanted to ask me about. So, I went into his office and I was a wreck by this time and he said, "Are you in charge of the student exchanges?"

I said, "I'm in charge of all exchanges."

And he said, "Tell me how the students are selected."

[79]

I said, "Do you really have time for me to explain this to you?" I said, "It will take three or four hours."

And he said, "No, I just want to know briefly how they are selected."

I said, "I can't tell you briefly how they're selected. I can write it out for you, I can explain it to you, I know how they are selected, but I'm not going to do it in a couple of minutes."

"All right, you write me and tell me how they are selected."

I said, "Fine." He asked me about three other questions and I've forgotten what they were, but I gave him roughly the same type of answers and told him I'd furnish it for the records, so to speak. He said, "Thanks very much," and I got up and I was so excited I walked through a door and walked right into

[80]

a goddamn closet. And I turned around and had to come back and go past his desk again.

Anyway, I sent him the information on how students were selected and I knew all the time he wasn't even interested in how students were selected. What he wanted to know was how



professors were selected, because these were the people he was after. But I got him on the student thing and kept him on it for the purpose of my dealings with him.

Then McCarthy began to hold hearings on different professors and there was a lot of news in the newspapers about he had this Fulbright professor doing this and this one doing that and so forth. He was making big broadcasts about it and, incidentally, at the same time there was a liaison officer appointed in the State Department to work with the McCarthy committee, and this liaison officer

[81]

worked with my office as a pipeline for information. We just had all kinds of calls, we had to make all kinds of surveys. One time, I remember, I had to make some kind of an international survey by telegram and had to get the answer back to McCarthy and the committee in, you know, 14 hours or 48 hours something like that. To make a long story short, I spent \$9,000 in about three days and I kept account of it just because I thought someday it might become of interest, to furnish some damn bit of information that you didn't need. It wasn't of any importance.

A kind of a highlight of the tricks that people play, they had some poor professor and his wife on the pan in New York City, the McCarthy committee, for about a week, and announcing all of the time that he was a Fulbright professor and this kind of thing;

[82]

and when they rung this fellow clear out, and rung him dry, then I let the cat out of the bag through my liaison officer that they're barking up the wrong tree. This fellow never had anything to do with the Fulbright program and just kind of jerked the rug out from under them on this end. That's one way to expend the enemy's ammunition. But actually I couldn't agree more with the things that McCarthy said. You know, he was against communism, he was for motherhood and all this type of thing. I always did agree with that. But I thought he was the most devastating thing that ever hit the United States Government. The day after I was called before Roy Cohn I was just beside myself. I was just so excited. That evening going home I drove through a red light out in Arlington, Virginia and damn near got run over by a car coming cross traffic. I went right through a red light; I was so preoccupied

[83]

that I never saw the light at all. But that brought me back to earth right then, and I thought, "My gosh, don't let this get you down," and I kind of got a hold of myself.

I remember one day Fulbright was in a meeting down in the State Department and I was so concerned about McCarthyism and everything that I was about ready to climb the wall. Fulbright went out to his car and I walked out with him and told him that I was very concerned and he said -- I remember he put his hand on my shoulder and he says, "Russell, McCarthy's not after you, he's after the program." He said, "You must have a pretty good record because if he was after you, if there was anything in your background, he would have had you long before now, so you just relax and just remember that he's after the program, he's obviously not after you."

[84]

Well, that was consolation to me coming from a fellow in Fulbright's position. I remember we had a hearing before the Appropriations Committee. I believe Styles Bridges was the chairman of the subcommittee. I believe he was. I think this was under a Republican Congress; I've kind of lost track. But anyway, I was supposed to appear before the Appropriations Committee for an appropriations hearing for the exchange program, in the regular basement room of the Capitol. I went to the room at 9 o'clock in the morning, when I was supposed to go, and there was a little sign, handwritten, hanging on the door saying that the hearing has been transferred to the Senate Caucus room over in the Senate Office Building. That was a big building, a big room. And we went over there and found the klieg lights were all set up and the press was there, and instead of having a nice little

[85]

hearing, cozy hearing, we're having a great big one. The hearing started and the Senators first got in a fight; "Why was the room changed?" They laid it on McCarthy and it was obvious that he had made the arrangements. I don't know how he made them but, anyway, he wanted to get some mileage out of this darn thing. So Senator [Allen Joseph] Ellender, and -- golly, I've forgotten who some of the other Senators were -- they took on McCarthy there for fifteen minutes before the klieg lights and press, and God and everybody. But during the course of the thing, McCarthy got over the point that today the witnesses were going to be sworn in, which was not common for appropriations hearings. This was a hell of a day, I'll tell you. So, here I sat, you know, had to appear before this Committee. McCarthy announced that all of these subversives

[86]

in the State Department running this program, he was going to find out who they were and he wanted everybody under oath. Because of the popularity of the exchange program we had all kinds of people who would testify on our behalf. That morning I remember that Bedell Smith was one of the first people to testify, and some Senator said, "You don't have to swear in General Smith." And McCarthy said, "No, no, no." And General Smith said, "Well, if all the other witnesses are going to have to be sworn in, I'm going to have to be sworn in." So he raised his hand and was sworn in. He testified, and then Senator H. Alexander Smith testified under oath, and Senator [Bourke] Hickenlooper testified under oath. I remember those three. Others testified. Pretty soon we'd had so much fight among the committee, including McCarthy, that we ran out of time for

[87]

that room and they had to move the meeting again. So we moved to the old Supreme Court chamber in the Capitol and we went on and on and on. And I'm the principal witness. I still haven't been able to get in the witness chair. So, during the course of that afternoon at that hearing, I remember -- I've forgotten who the acting chairman was but I think this kind of mild-mannered Senator from Michigan -- anyway, at some point McCarthy was trying to interrupt him and he just kept on talking, and McCarthy picked up a big, heavy ashtray and began to pound on the table. I mean you can't understand this in a civilized world, really. And finally he broke this big, heavy ashtray all to pieces in his hand. Unfortunately, it didn't cut his damn hand off. Fulbright finally was testifying, also under oath. He was very mild-mannered and McCarthy

[88]

was glaring at him and yelling at him, and Fulbright was talking very quietly. They got into an argument about people taking the fifth amendment, and Fulbright replied by saying that normally he didn't think that persons should take the fifth amendment before a bona fide committee of the Senate, but these were not normal times and when you had irresponsible committees acting in an irresponsible fashion, he could well understand why -- and of course McCarthy was just glaring at him. So, this went on and Fulbright argued with McCarthy in his way; and about 6 o'clock in the evening or something like that -- we'd been there all day and I still hadn't been on the stand -- McCarthy announced that he had to leave the chamber or the room to go somewhere to make a telephone call or something and that he would be back in a few minutes

[89]

and not to let the Senator get away, meaning Fulbright. Whereupon everybody took after McCarthy and said, you know, "Since when are we holding a Senator against his will? If he wants to get away he can leave." I mean this went on for another five minutes, and McCarthy left the room and the moment McCarthy left the room Senator Fulbright said, "We have the principal witness here, Mr. Riley." He said, "I'd like to give up my chair here and have Mr. Riley answer any questions the committee has." So, we had a small hearing there and I answered about a half dozen questions, and the Senator got back in the chair and by the time McCarthy got back I'd already testified. That's the way I got out of that one. Anyway, that was a low point in my life.

FUCHS: What about your anecdote about Vice President Nixon that you mentioned earlier?

[90]

RILEY: Yes, Vice President Nixon was interested in the exchange program. I think his attention was attracted to the exchange program through Senator Mundt. Senator Mundt was a close friend of his and, of course, the Smith-Mundt Act, I think he got the Vice President's attention. Of course I was trying to capitalize on that. Anytime you get the Vice President's attention on anything if you're in bureaucratic Washington, why, it's to your advantage. And so, I fed tidbits to Nixon and to this Mary Louis, or whoever this woman is who's his secretary. I worked with her very closely and saw her, of course, more often than I saw Nixon. But I kept them abreast of what was going on in the exchange program because I wanted -- as you know, in anything like this any support you can get even from the garbage collector is helpful. If he's helpful it's helpful.

[91]

Nixon said that he planned on testifying before the Appropriations Committee if he could possibly make it to tell about what he thought of the exchange program because he thought it was a great thing. And so right in the middle of a hearing in the Senate appropriations main hearing room, which is on kind of the main floor of the Capitol, I'm in the witness chair and all at once somebody looks up and says, "Hello there, Mr. Vice President," and everybody got up and the Vice President shook hands with the chairman and then he went over across the room and said, "Hey, Russell," and called me over to the corner and asked me about three questions. He was a little mixed up on an item or two that he wanted to talk about and he just asked me about two or three questions with our heads stuck back in the corner where nobody could hear us. Took about

[92]

30 seconds, I suppose. Then he came around to the chairman and said, "Where do you want me to sit?" And he sat on the principal witness' chair and testified for probably 45 minutes. To my knowledge it was the first time a Vice President had ever testified at the appropriations hearing and to my knowledge it was the only time. But that showed something of the general popularity of this exchange program, and all the time that I had anything to do with it in Washington we had great friends on both sides of the aisle in Congress and everywhere else. We tried to run it properly.

FUCHS: Who of the Secretaries of State that you served under impressed you the most?

RILEY: Well, I'll just have to speak from my viewpoint. I was more impressed with Acheson as a diplomat's diplomat than anybody else.

[93]

I was more impressed with Dulles as an intellectual person, but I don't think he was a good operating head of the State Department. Marshall, I only served a short time under him. He was a great man in his own right; I don't know what kind of a Secretary he was, very frankly. And the fellow who was Johnson's Secretary of State, and Kennedy's. I knew him before he became Secretary from the Rockefeller foundation; he was Secretary quite a while. I thought he was a smart fellow. Rusk, Dean Rusk, I had met Dean on several occasions in connection with my work before he ever became Secretary; had very little to do with him. When I was around Washington there I used to see the Secretaries on certain occasions, when I had very prominent visitors or people like that.

FUCHS: Well, Kennedy went in, of course, in '61

[94]

and by that time you were in South Africa.

RILEY: Yes, that's right.

FUCHS: Well, thank you very much.

RILEY: Yes, you bet.

[95-97]

INDEX

Acheson, Dean, 92

Appropriations Committee, U.S. Senate, 84-89, 91, 92

Army Air Corps, 8-10, 12-14

Army Field Artillery, 10, 14-17

Army Reserve, 10-12

Baltimore, Maryland, 5, 6

Bash, Thomas, 71  
Board of Foreign Scholarships, 47  
Bridges, Styles, 84  
Brunswick, Missouri, 2  
Brussels Conference (1956), 67, 68

Chariton County, Missouri, 70, 71  
Chicago, Illinois, 7  
Chillicothe, Missouri, 3  
Civil Service, 3, 4  
Cohn, Roy, 77-80, 82  
Compton, Wilson, 43  
Cook, Richard F., 29  
Cooke, John S., 18

Daily, Herley S., 72  
Dawson, Donald, 30-33  
Des Moines, Iowa, 11  
DiSalle, Michael V., 28, 29, 35, 36  
Dulles, John F., 43, 45, 46, 48, 53, 93

Eightieth Congress, 26  
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 53, 75  
Ellender, Allen J., 85  
England, 16  
European Congress of Cultural Officers, 67, 68

Foreign Service, 65, 66  
Foreign Service Retirement Act, 66  
Ft. Hoyle, Maryland, 11  
Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, 16  
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, 16  
Ft. Riley, Kansas, 12  
Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, 14  
Ft. Snelling, Minnesota, 12  
Fulbright Act of 1946, 38, 39, 53  
Fulbright-Hays Act, 56, 57  
Fulbright, J. William, 77, 83, 87-89  
Fulbright program, 77, 78-80, 82, 83

Gross, H.R., 58

Hays, Wayne L., 56, 57, 59-63  
Hickenlooper, Bourke B., 86  
Hoover Commission, 45

Information Center Service, 40  
International Educational Exchange Service, 41, 42, 44-63, 90  
International Information Administration, 39, 41-44, 47-63  
International Press and Publication Service, 40

Johnson, Robert, 43, 45-53  
Johnston, Eric A., 28

Kansas City, Missouri, 1, 6  
Kennedy, John F., 93  
Korean War, 28

Latin America, 36, 37, 56  
Libraries and Institutes, State Department, 36-40  
Littlejohn, Robert M., 18

McCarthy Committee: see Senate Government Operations Committee  
McCarthy, Joseph R., 46, 73, 74, 76, 77, 80-83, 85-89  
Malta, 64  
Marshall, George C., 75, 93  
Maxwell, Russell, 9  
Mendon, Missouri, 1, 2, 3, 71  
Mexico City, Mexico, 37  
Missouri, 1, 2, 3  
Morrill, James L., 47, 50, 51  
Mundt, Karl E., 26, 90

Navy, U.S., 13, 14  
Nebraska, 1, 2, 3  
Nixon, Richard M., 90-92

Office of Educational Exchange, 26, 27, 38-40  
Office of Export Control, 8, 9, 17  
Office of Price Stabilization, 28-36  
Office of Wage Stabilization, 28  
Omaha Beach, 16

Pendergast, Tom J., 72  
Perkins, Milo, 9  
Philippines, 13, 14

Railroad Retirement Board, 4-7, 11, 25  
Reorganization Plan No. 8 of 1953, 45, 53  
Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), 10  
Rooney, John, 57  
Rusk, Dean, 93

St. Joseph, Missouri, 3  
Scotland, 16  
Senate Government Operations Committee, 80-82  
Smith, H. Alexander, 26, 86  
Smith-Mundt Act, 26, 27, 37-39, 55, 56, 90  
Smith, Walter Bedell, 75, 76, 86  
Social Security Board, 5, 6, 11  
Stassen, Harold, 76  
State Department, 25-27, 36-46, 48-69, 73-75, 80, 86, 93  
Steelman, John R., 31  
Swift and Company, 3

Truman, Harry S.:  
    Army reserve, as officer in, 10-12  
    Chariton County, Missouri, visits to, 70, 71  
    honesty of, 34  
    Pendergast, Tom J., relationship with, 72  
    Riley, Russell L. related to, 70  
Truman Library, dedication of, 68, 69

U.S. Advisory Commission on Educational Exchange, 47-51, 53  
U.S. Information Agency, 45, 48, 50  
University of Minnesota, 47, 50  
University of Missouri, 2, 3, 10

Voice of America, 26, 27, 39

War Assets Administration, 18-24  
World War II, 12-17