

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

**SENATOR CHARLES H. PERCY**

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy*  
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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Born September 27, 1919 in Pensacola, Florida.

Mom and Dad meet 1916 in Pensacola, Florida. He's a banker and she is with her quartet.

The family lived in Rogers Park, buying the groceries, and friends call me Charley.

Selling the Saturday Evening Post.

Newspaper route, bank failure, and bankruptcy.

Relief Program

Sell cookies and brownies with 100 pounds of sugar and Mother joins Illinois Symphony.

Hope that Hoover wins and Sullivan High School.

Wilmette, Illinois, New Trier High School and Art Neilson.

Needing a job, going to the school registrar and the Rotary Club.

Teatro Del Lago, Sister Doris, Brother Howard, and The University of Chicago.

Jobs for room and board for college, "swirl arm," Alpha Delta Phi fraternity.

Met Maurice Rinella, and met Joseph McNabb.

Dad joins Bell & Howell, CHP as apprentice, Robert Maynard Hutchins and type of student.

Hutchins bans Baseball and CHP plays Water polo.

Great Books Program of U of C and Dr. Robert Goldwin

Bible is #1, dental work for Doris and senior year U of C.

Armstrong Cork Company and Bell & Howell job offers.

War Coordinating Department for Bell & Howell and December 7, 1941.

Working with the U.S. Navy and enlisting in the Navy.

G-7 Program at Dartmouth University, work in DC and proposed marriage to Jeanne

Dickerson.  
Lived in Arlington, Virginia, an ensign in the Navy.  
ABATU and Alameda, California.  
Twin girls born, Cow Palace and the United Nations.  
United Nations created.  
U.N. principles and purposes. Represented U.S. Senate at U.N. Susan Eisenhower.  
CHP and Paul Simon article. Reporting back to Navy Commander.  
Letters to President Joseph McNabb and globalizing Bell & Howell  
Cinemascope developed by Bell & Howell, business with Britain, France, Germany, and  
Japan.  
Lens manufacturing, urged trading between Germany and France.  
Built Factory in Japan, George Stryker, and letter from Yoshio Osawa.  
Bell & Howell in Japan.  
Returned to Bell & Howell, Chairman of Committee on Program and Progress. Interest in  
politics.  
Jeanne's operations and passing on, raising 3 children and Art Neilson's sister in law.  
Sailing. Joseph McNabb dying, elected President & CEO of Bell & Howell and book on  
B & H.  
National Award at age 29, John Paul Stevens and meeting David Rockefeller at USC.  
Harold Geneen and CHP go to Sun Valley, saw Loraine fall in snow and talked to her on  
bus.  
Dinner with Loraine, went to Altadena, MGM Studios and Elizabeth Taylor.  
Elizabeth Taylor visits Senate office concerning John Warner.  
Free trade advocate and integrating Bell & Howell.  
Mother was a dynamo, a great influence on my life and hiring women executives at B &  
H.  
Chicago Club, began interest in politics after war, met Don Rumsfeld and fundraising.  
Family meeting about running for office, Bob Galvin and New Illinois committee.  
Meeting with Everett Dirksen, 10 CEOs and run for Senate against Paul Douglass.  
Won election against unbeatable Paul Douglass.  
Vietnam War, China and the U.N.

Arriving in the Senate and home ownership for low income people.  
National Public Broadcasting, Adult Education, Milton Eisenhower, and WTTW.  
Sharon Percy Rockefeller, PBS and WETA.  
Many Democratic friends, Kennedy Center and Roger L. Stevens.  
Roger and Christine Stevens, Kennedy Center, Colin Powell and Georgetown Waterfront  
Park.  
Senate Committee's, appointing judges and Everett Dirksen.  
Turned down Everett Dirksen's appointments for Judges.  
CHP the responsibility for appointing judges and John Paul Stevens.  
Valerie Percy.  
FBI, Bob Galvin, Bible Lesson with family, "Volunteers for Percy" and election  
campaign.  
Grandchild named Valerie and James Carnegie.  
First experience with United Nations, family history and David Rockefeller.  
University of Chicago's International House and IIE.  
Ronald Reagan and George Shultz.  
Built lens plant, purchased Taylor and Hobson company and flight simulator.  
Used Bell & Howell equipment during the war, Bell & Howell goes public.  
Isolationism, Went to England as a Director at age 25.  
Built factory in U.K., J Arthur. Rank, Chicago Club, Foreign Relations, John and David  
Guyer.  
Diana, John Guyer, sales at Bell & Howell and Joseph McNabb dies.  
Council on Foreign Relations and GOP precinct captain.  
Don Rumsfeld, Pope John Paul II and ethnic groups.  
CHP Chairman of the Republican Illinois Finance Committee and running for Governor.  
Vietnam became a big issue and Polish votes.  
China and Taiwan.  
Sworn into the Senate January 4, 1967 and committee assignments.  
Foreign Relations committee and Banking Committee.  
Mergers, free trade and Banking Committee.  
Mission to Italy, Arthur C. Neilson, Vietnam and Home Ownership Bill.

Mission to Vietnam, Caravelle Hotel, U.S. and foreign correspondents.  
Proposed all Asia Peace Conference and Village of Dak San.  
Came under fire and garters.  
Negotiate a peace and supporting U.S. troops in Vietnam.  
Talked to students at the University of Chicago and Stanford University.  
Take positions on issues, Senator Ed Brook, Senator Howard Baker and Senator Mike Mansfield.  
Canadian relations and trade.  
Canada, Mexico and the United States.  
Prime Minister Trudeau and the trip to the U.S.S.R.  
Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin and Defense Minister Ustinov.  
Ambassador Tom Watson, Mikhail Gorbachev and President Reagan.  
Afghanistan invasion.  
President Nixon, Ambassador Hue San, Senator Jack Javits and Senator Claiborne Pell.  
Trip to China, birth control, abortion and Italy.  
Worked with the Chinese Embassy while in the U.S. Senate and Taiwan.  
Worked with many ethnic groups in Illinois.  
Richard Nixon and Soviet relations.  
Henry Kissinger and President Carter.  
Panama Canal Treaty.  
Israel and Prime Minister Begin and AWACs.  
President Reagan, AIPAC and illegal spending by Michael Golan.  
AIPAC and the vote for the AWACs.  
Chairman of the Pax Foundation, President Assad and the Middle East trip.  
Unusually long meeting with President Assad.  
Paul Simon and 1984 election.  
Prime Minister Peres, Netanyahu and a Palestinian State.  
Institute of International Education and Senator Jesse Helms.  
Howard Baker and Jesse Helms.  
Begin each day with Bible lesson and Candy.

## INTERVIEW

[Note: Additional remarks by Senator Percy in 2001 are included in brackets.]

*Q: Today is June 11, 1998. This is an interview with Senator Charles H. Percy. It is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I am Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Senator, let's start at the beginning. Can you tell me when and where you were born, why you were born there, and how your parents met?*

PERCY: I was born in Pensacola, Florida. Stu, I'm just delighted to have this opportunity to work with you in the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program and the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, in which I have been interested for a number of years.

I was born on September 27, 1919. My mother was originally a Chicagoan. Her mother had been born in Stuttgart, Germany. My grandmother lived in Stuttgart until 1922, when I was three years old and she moved to Chicago to be with us. My mother was a violinist and for 26 years was head of a quartet. The members of the quartet traveled around the country on the Chautauqua circuit, giving concerts. The quartet was scheduled to be in Pensacola, Florida giving a series of concerts. A southern gentleman kept coming to every concert. He was a little shy, did not speak to members of the quartet but continued to attend the concerts. Finally, he came to a concert in the afternoon and asked the violinist if she and three other members of the quartet could have dinner at a restaurant with him the next night. She talked to the other members of the quartet and then said: "Yes, we'd love to have dinner with you."

So they had dinner together. During the dinner he leaned over to her, so they told me years later, and whispered to her: "Miss Harting, after dinner, could we go to a movie?" She answered: "Oh, yes, I think that we'd all love to go to a movie." My father whispered again: "I don't mean all of you. I mean just you and me." She replied: "Well, all right," and so they went to the movie.

That began their romance. They saw each other frequently after that in Pensacola. Months later the quartet went on a concert tour, but they kept in touch with each other and when she returned to Pensacola they were subsequently married. I was born about a year and a half after that.

*Q: What was your father's occupation?*

PERCY: He was a banker. He was born in Mobile, Alabama. He had worked in a bank there and then went over to Pensacola, Florida, because during World War I Pensacola had become a very important naval base. He went to work also for an automobile dealership in Pensacola, Florida. But he returned to banking when we moved to Chicago

in the spring of 1920.

My father later claimed that when I was six months old in Pensacola, Florida, I stood up in the baby crib, shook the bars, and laughingly said: "This is no place for a Republican! [Laughter]. Let's go north to my mother's city of Chicago!" So he used to say to friends, "I took my son's advice and every winter after that, I regretted it," having lived in the south all his life.

He became a banker in Chicago. He was finally vice president and cashier of his bank. We lived on Sheridan Road in the Rogers Park section of Chicago, just a block and a half from the shore of Lake Michigan. When I was a young boy, I used to go down to the lake with my parents and friends to swim, and I swam in Lake Michigan for almost 50 years, because later on, when I was married to Loraine, we bought a house on Lake Michigan, in Kenilworth, Illinois. I just loved living on the lake. We lived in that house for 17 years before we went to Washington, DC when I was elected to the Senate.

*Q: What was the name of this bank?*

PERCY: It was the Rogers Park National Bank of Chicago.

As a boy I loved to work. When I went to school and was about seven years old, my mother would give me money to go and buy groceries at the store. She would give me a list, and I would buy the groceries, pay for them, and bring the groceries back home. She'd give me 10 cents for this job. My mother always called me "Charles," by the way, but other boys, my school friends then, called me, "Charley."

We lived in a third floor apartment. One day she called down to us, as I was playing in the courtyard with my school friends. My school friends had been calling me, "Charley." She called down and said, "Boys, his name is 'Charles.' It's not 'Charley.'" Well, they told me that they couldn't call me "Charles." So they called me "Chuck," and I've been called Chuck ever since then, by everyone.

My mother spelled her name, Elisabeth, with an "S." I once said to her, "Mother, why do you spell 'Elisabeth' with an 'S'? All of the friends I have in school by that name spell it with a 'Z.'" I never could say anything to her without her having a ready answer for my question. She said: "Well, Charles, it's spelled twice in the Bible with an 'S.' Isn't that good enough for you?"

When I was eight years old I started a little shopping business. I was getting 10 cents from each of the neighborhood women for whom I was doing the shopping. It would sometimes take an hour to go to buy the various things from the stores and bring them back in my wagon. I remember one woman, Mrs. Barrett, who used to order only one can of Campbell's tomato soup each day I shopped for her. On one occasion, when I brought the groceries home to her, she said: "Now Charles, I only ordered one can of Campbell's tomato soup, and you brought me three cans. Why?" I said: "Well, today they were on sale. Three cans of Campbell tomato soup for 39 cents. So you saved 10 cents by buying three cans. Every time I shop for you, you buy a can of tomato soup." She said: "Well,

aren't you a smart boy! Here, here's an extra nickel for you." So that got me started on profit sharing. [Laughter]

One day, when I was pulling my wagon along Pratt Boulevard, right near Clark Street in Rogers Park, on my way back to our apartment, a man drove up to me and called from his car window. "Sonny, come over here." I went over to him, and he said: "How much do you make carrying those groceries? I see you going back and forth frequently." I said: "I make 10 cents." He held up a dollar bill and said: "How would you like to make a dollar?" I said: "A whole dollar! How?" He said: "Just sell this pile of magazines - the *Saturday Evening Post*, published by the Curtis Publishing Company."

So that was how I began to sell *The Saturday Evening Post*. I also began to sell their *Ladies Home Journal* and then *The Country Gentleman*. It was hard to sell *The Country Gentleman* in the city. However, then I went down to my father's bank. I started to sell *The Saturday Evening Post* there first. I was a little kid at the time, but was the son of the cashier of the bank, and I was able to go right behind the counters, talk to the tellers, and say: "Would you like to buy a *Saturday Evening Post*?" I remember what a teller said to me one day. "Well, I already bought a copy last night on my way home." I said: "Well, would you wait next week until I come, and I'll bring it to you each week." He said: "Of course. Next week and every week bring it to me." So this was when I learned what "clout" meant. Practically everyone in the bank bought *The Saturday Evening Post* from me. Then I started selling *The Ladies Home Journal* and *The Country Gentleman*, in addition to selling the magazines to many of our neighbors and other people in the community. One year I won a year's scholarship to the Evanston YMCA from Curtis Publishing Company for selling more *Country Gentleman* magazines in a city than any other sales boy in the United States. Then I got a newspaper route also, when the so-called "Great Depression" [economic downturn of the 1930s] came. During the Depression, my father's bank failed.

The New York stock market crashed in 1929. The Rogers Park National Bank failed, and my father later went into bankruptcy. Not in the sense of bankruptcies now in the news, concerning which Congress is passing new laws. My father did not go into bankruptcy until some time later, after he was out of a job. While working at the bank he had borrowed a lot of money to invest in his bank's stocks, and still owed a substantial amount of money on these loans. When the bank failed, he was out of a job, and the stock was worthless. Without a job, there was no way he could pay his debts much less provide for our living expenses. So he went into bankruptcy.

By then I could type. I had learned to type in grammar school. I typed something like 20 letters to companies on my father's behalf. Only seven of these companies even replied, saying something like: "He's too old. He's over 40. We have no jobs available," or something like that. At that time during the Depression companies weren't hiring people who were that old. My father just couldn't get a job in Chicago.

By then I enjoyed working and earning my own spending money, as well as helping feed my mother, father, sister, and brother. I started getting more important jobs which paid

more money. I had a morning newspaper route. I left our apartment at 4:30 a.m. to deliver *The Chicago Herald-Examiner*, a William Randolph Hearst newspaper back in those days. I also delivered the paper on Sundays, seven days a week.

Because of our poverty we became eligible for one of the federal "relief" programs started by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. On Saturday mornings, every week, we received a bundle of groceries, delivered to our apartment. We lived at that time on the third floor, in a tiny one bedroom apartment. There were five of us living there, including my brother Howard, sister Doris, both of them younger than I, myself, and my father and mother. My brother and I slept in the dining room on the floor.

I had no closet for my clothes. Whatever clothes I had we just piled them in a corner of the dining room floor. My brother and I slept there for several years. However, one day when the relief agency delivered our food, they made a mistake and got us mixed up with a nursing home or something like that. They left 100 pounds of sugar instead of the usual 5 pound bag.

My father was a very honest man. Mother kept the change and managed the household accounts. He said to my mother: "Can I have a nickel [5 cents] please to go across the street to the drug store and use the telephone?" "I want to telephone the relief people and tell them that they made a mistake." But mother said: "No, let me sleep on this matter tonight and maybe call tomorrow morning." So, the next morning, my father said: "Now can I have the nickel to go over and phone the relief people and tell them that they delivered too much sugar to us?"

My mother said: "No, I prayed last night, and the thought came to me that the Lord brought that sugar, and only the Lord can take it away." She then said: "My thought is that Chuck is delivering his newspapers and magazines. He's up every day, early every morning and during the afternoon, calling on people to get more subscriptions. Then he goes and collects money for what he sells." I did have to collect weekly for every copy of *The Chicago Herald-Examiner* that I delivered to people's homes. The newspaper didn't have a collection system at that time. I had to collect on its behalf, but was paid extra for this additional service. Then I would take more time and solicit people for new subscriptions and so build my list of subscribers, against competition from the huge *Chicago Tribune*, then a competitor of *The Chicago Herald-Examiner*. My mother said, "While he was out there doing this, I could make cookies and brownies with that 100 pounds of sugar. Charles could sell those, and we could make enough money to buy more ingredients to expand and continue our new business and even pay the relief agency for the original 100 pounds."

We did make enough money from selling the cookies so that we could buy another 100 pounds of sugar, and she kept doing this. I look now and see some cookies selling for over a dollar apiece, when I had been selling ours in 1933 for 15 cents a dozen. Imagine that!

Then, after President Roosevelt was inaugurated, he proposed, and Congress approved, the establishment of the "New Deal" with the WPA, or Works Progress Administration.

An important part of it provided jobs to 8-1/2 million unemployed American people, including my mother. One of the programs under the WPA was the sponsorship of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra. So Mother applied for a job as a violinist with the WPA-sponsored Illinois Symphony Orchestra and received it. The Illinois Symphony Orchestra gave concerts in many of the state schools, retirement homes, and for the public. It was a wonderful program. The income from this job made it possible for us to get off of relief then, because Mother was making enough money from this WPA program to feed our family. We finally had dignity once again.

I first became really interested in politics in 1932 when Republican incumbent Herbert Hoover ran against Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt. My father was a "Southern Republican," which, in those days, was very unusual.

On the occasion of the November 1932 election day, at age 13, I took their hands and walked between them going to the polling booth in Rogers Park, Chicago. I saw them vote. Then, while walking back home to our apartment, my father said: "Well, I sure do hope that Hoover wins." Mother didn't say anything. Then my father said to my mother: "Well, Dear, don't you hope that Herbert Hoover wins?" She looked up at him and said: "Hoover won't win with my vote." My father shouted: "What! You voted for Roosevelt? Why? Why?" I'll never forget what she said. "I voted for Roosevelt because he promised to help the poor and bring relief and jobs to the unemployed." Mother was right because Roosevelt did establish the WPA (Work Progress Administration) when three out of four U.S. workers were unemployed. Often people vote from their stomachs. When you look today at President Clinton's favorable rating despite his tragic personal problems, if the economy was "down" and unemployment was high, and more people were on relief, and so forth, he wouldn't have as favorable ratings as he has had.

*Q: Oh, yes, they really do. I think that this is one of the things that you are pointing out. There was a lot of complaining about the WPA, particularly by Republican supporters. They made fun of it in general. Yet, it was the first time that jobs were actually created. There were WPA programs in support of local symphony orchestras, the arts, and all of that. These programs really gave people jobs and, as you said, a sense of dignity. This was a very important consideration.*

PERCY: Another thing that occurs to me is that I had been attending in Chicago, Armstrong Grammar School. Then I attended Sullivan Junior High School and then Sullivan High School. Since then I have continued to receive their bulletins. I was made "honoree" of the year of Sullivan High School a couple of years ago. We still have reunions of that group.

At that time the Chicago public schools were very poor. They had been bad for years. During the Depression there were interruptions in paying the teachers. The city authorities couldn't pay the teachers for months on end at times. In many cases the teachers simply refused to teach. We students still had to go to school, but we just had to sit there in the classroom. We had no instruction for several months. It was a terrible situation.

Finally, my father, even though Dad and Mother had very little money at the time, decided that we just had to do something to find a solution to the education problem. We scraped together enough money to pay one month's rent in advance for a house in Wilmette, Illinois. It was probably the lowest cost house in Wilmette at the time. So by the beginning of my junior year in high school, since we had moved to Wilmette, Illinois, I did enter New Trier Township High School. This was known then and since, as a truly great high school, one of the best in the USA.

I used to play tennis with a great friend, Doug Coyle, in Rogers Park. I liked tennis. Doug Coyle told me about a fellow that he played tennis with, a great tennis player, named Arthur Nielson, Jr. Doug said that Art Nielson was a student at New Trier Township High School. He suggested that I look up Art Nielson when I enrolled at New Trier.

By a strange coincidence, on the first day of my junior year in September 1935, I was assigned to Mr. Condon's "home room." I went to this home room at 8:00 a.m. I sat down and put my hand out to the fellow next to me and said: "I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Chuck Percy." He replied: "Don't tell me that you're Chuck Percy from Rogers Park! I know of you from Doug Coyle." I said: "You don't mean to say that you're Art Nielson!" He said: "Yes, I am." Years later, I told this story at a memorial program, when I was able to present Art Nielson with an award. He still remembered that story.

*Q: You're talking about school. Could you tell us a little bit more? Here you were, getting up at 4:30 a.m., every morning, running errands, and doing all of these things. What about schooling in the sense of reading and getting yourself educated? How was this coming along?*

PERCY: Well, I worked hard at school. I loved education. Previously, at my various schools I cannot remember a teacher that inspired me very much. I had wonderful friends at Armstrong Grammar School and Sullivan High School, and we kept up with each other.

However, by comparison with my other schools, the teachers at New Trier High School were absolutely outstanding. They were paid more than many college professors. New Trier was and still is one of the great high schools, if not the best high school in the USA.

*Q: My brothers went there.*

PERCY: Yes, it's just absolutely a great high school. I was chairman recently of my 55th reunion at the University of Chicago and I attended the 60th reunion of my class at New Trier Township High School in 1997.

When I began attending New Trier High School in September 1935 as soon as my family moved to Wilmette, I went to the school Registrar. I said that I really needed a job. If there were any kind of a job in which I could be helpful, I needed to make money to help support my family. We really needed to raise the money to pay the next month's rent on our house. I said that we didn't have enough money now to do that.

Most of the families of the boys attending New Trier High School were reasonably wealthy. Chicago's north shore was one of the wealthiest communities in the country. Practically none of my classmates needed to work. The Registrar said: "Oh, absolutely. Does your family have a car?" I said: "No, not at all. We don't even have a telephone." So the Registrar said: "I'm going to put you in charge of organizing this." He said: "Some of the students drive to New Trier in their family cars, or their families drop them off. We need someone to be in charge of parking the cars." Then he also helped me get a job working with the local Rotary Club [then a national and now a worldwide community service organization], dealing with problems of delinquency involving boys who got into trouble with school officials and sometimes the police, counseling them. Then I became owner and manager of what we called the "Fraternity Cooperative Purchasing Agency" at the U of C.

Furthermore, I got a job as an usher at the "Teatro del Lago" movie theater in an area known as "No Man's Land," right between Kenilworth and Wilmette near Lake Michigan. I worked there every single night, seven nights a week. In those days, there were no laws regulating hours of work. I would go to work at 5:00 p.m., work until 10:00 p.m. at night, and then every Saturday and Sunday from noon until 10:00 p.m. My father also was able to get a job selling fruits and vegetables at a food store in Wilmette. Then we could pay our rent for the house and other expenses. My wonderful younger sister, Doris, and brother, Howard, did well in school and also in their work.

Then, on the basis of my scholastic record at New Trier High School, I was able to apply for and was offered scholarships by three different universities, two of them outside Illinois, including one in Pennsylvania and one in California, in addition to one at the University of Chicago. The scholarship at the University of Chicago covered just half of the tuition which amounted to only about \$300 a semester in those days. I had to make the remaining \$150 to cover the tuition at the University of Chicago, plus room and board and still continuing to help my father, mother, sister, and brother to pay their expenses. But the U of C was a great university with Robert Maynard Hutchins as president.

So, I then established residence in Burton Court, which was a residence hall at the University of Chicago, and being in Chicago I could visit my family frequently in its suburb, Wilmette, going to and coming back on the elevated train. The supervisor of the residence hall appointed me a "Proctor of Discipline" which covered my room cost.

Also, I had a job in my freshman year, waiting tables in the residence hall, which paid for my board. I remember very well one time when I was serving the freshmen and sophomores then living there. I was told that a candidate for a "Ph.D." [Doctor of Philosophy degree] was coming to visit the residence hall. He was described as a "very important student," one of the most important students at the University of Chicago. I was advised to be "very careful" when I served him and to take good care of him.

So that night I first served him his main course. Then I majestically put the dessert down in front of him, like this, with a "swirl" of my arm. It was pecan pie with whipped cream

and sauce on top of it. I looked down and saw, to my horror, that there was no whipped cream or sauce on top of the pie. Instead, it was all over his coat's shoulder! [Laughter] He gave me a kind of angry look. I thought: "Oh, here I am supposed to take special care of him and look at what I've done!" But I said to him: "Oh, don't worry about that," he sort of relaxed, and then I said: "I'll get you another piece of pie." [Laughter] He had to have his coat cleaned. I'll never forget that incident.

Then I was invited to join Alpha Delta Phi fraternity. I said: "Really, I can't afford this. I need all of the money that I can make. I can't afford the annual dues." The fraternity people said: "Well, we have a 'fellowship' arrangement here." (It still continues and is now part of the Title I (C3) program set up under federal law.) They told me that they could give me some fellowship assistance at the fraternity and that I would have a job as a waiter and steward of the fraternity for its meals. They told me that they understood that I had experience in buying food. They said that I could buy the food for the fraternity and wash the dishes after the meals. They said that I could do that, and that would pay for my room and board at the fraternity.

So I gave up my job over at the residence hall and moved over to the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity house. After I had been steward of the fraternity for some time and was buying the food, I saw a fellow pushing a cart, with fruits and vegetables on it, selling them from door to door in the Woodlawn area. I said to him: "I've bought some fruits and vegetables from you, and they're always very fresh and good. Where do you get them?" He said: "Well, I've managed to buy them from the truck which buys them from the central food market and then delivers them to the university area. I go over and buy them and then have to push this cart about a mile to get to this university neighborhood to sell them." I said to him: "Instead of going from door to door to sell them, I could form a "fraternity purchasing agency" and how would you like to sell them all to us? All these fraternities are reasonably close together, and I am working with the Inter-Fraternity Council here. Why don't I propose to the Council that you buy the fruits and vegetables, not just for the 40 members of my fraternity but for about 500 members of other fraternities? With that volume, you and we can get lower prices." So he agreed to try that and was enthusiastic about the idea.

He then needed money to buy a truck. I went to a bank, where our fraternity had an account. I had a good relationship with the bank because of my father having been a banker. From time to time I had borrowed money from the bank and always paid it back. So I got this man a loan to buy a small, used truck. His name was Maurice Rinella. Some years ago, my wife, Loraine, and I attended his 50th wedding anniversary. By then he had become the largest purveyor of fruits and vegetables in the Chicago area, selling to many of the large hotels. He was just a wonderful, wonderful man. Now his son is head of the company and they have a large number of trucks.

I had a Sunday School teacher at age 16, in 1935, Mr. Joseph McNabb, at the First Church of Christ Scientists in Wilmette, who was president and a large stock holder of a company called Bell & Howell. I said to him one day: "My father needs a better job. He's a very talented banker and accountant. Now he's just got a job as a nighttime hotel

receptionist. Could you have somebody interview him to see whether or not he could get a better daytime job with Bell & Howell?" So they interviewed him and soon hired him. He was put in charge of the mailroom at Bell & Howell, handling all incoming and outgoing mail, a much more dignified job, and day work hours.

*Q: What was Bell & Howell doing at that time?*

PERCY: They were in the motion picture camera and projection business, but as a modest-sized company then with a few hundred employees or so. That was when I was in high school at New Trier. When I later went to the University of Chicago in 1937, Mr McNabb asked if I would like to work for Bell & Howell as an apprentice. He said that he was impressed with how I wanted to help my father, mother, sister, and brother, and said I could come up north by the "elevated" train system to the Bell & Howell plant from the University of Chicago, since I was living on campus. The fare just cost 10 cents in those days. He said that I could work any hour of the day or night, because Bell & Howell had three shifts per day, and work any number of hours consistent with my scholastic schedule.

So I became an apprentice for the Bell & Howell company in 1938. I worked there as an apprentice for four years, the whole time that I was at the University of Chicago. That was one of five jobs that I had.

*Q: My God!*

PERCY: Robert Maynard Hutchins, who was president of the University of Chicago, said to me when I was a sophomore: "You are the exact kind of student that I've been trying to keep out of the university, ever since I've been in this university business!" He continued: "While going to the University you are working at five different jobs. Why didn't you make enough money first so that you could then come to college and then spend full time studying?" I said: "Well, I felt that I should get my college education when I did, but help my family at the same time." I had worked hard at doing this. He said: "I know," but he seemed unconvinced. But in my senior year at the University of Chicago, I was elected by the faculty, "Marshal" to President Hutchins, who also happened to be a member of the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity from another university. In my senior year, 1941, I was president of the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity and of the University Inter-Fraternity Council, and captain of our water polo team. President Hutchins, however, was also against so much emphasis on intercollegiate sports.

*Q: Yes, I know.*

PERCY: President Hutchins was very much against baseball, which he banished from the University of Chicago. He didn't see why I should spend time on sports. However, during his tenure as president of the University of Chicago, this was the last time that the university won a "Big 10" championship. When I was captain of the water polo team, the water polo team did win the "Big 10" championship [the "Big 10" was and is an association of Midwestern universities]. I went out for water polo because I liked to

wrestle and I liked to swim and in my freshman year was doing both. The two coaches, for water polo and wrestling, told me: "You ought to make up your mind as to which one you want. One sport strengthens your muscles and the other one loosens them. So the two sports may be working against each other." I was combining the two sports when I switched to water polo, where you kind of wrestle in the water against your opponents. [Laughter]

*Q: Let's talk a little bit about the University of Chicago. Robert Maynard Hutchins brought in the "Great Books" program, which was basically focused on the classics, and everything filled out from there. However, the classics were the core of the program. What were you studying at the University of Chicago, and how did the "Great Books" program appear to you?*

PERCY: I took the "Great Books" course taught by President Hutchins, who taught this one course together with Dr. Mortimer J. Adler, a well-known professor at the University. It was in my junior year at the University of Chicago. Only 30 students were selected who were allowed to take that program. Getting into it was very competitive. Academically, I was doing well so I was encouraged to take this very special course. That's when I really got to know Robert M. Hutchins well. That's when he first repented for what he had said to me originally about holding so many jobs while at the U of C. I loved the "Great Books" course and still love the books covered in it. That course had a marked impact on me.

*Q: Chuck, in what way?*

PERCY: It was one of the best courses that I've ever taken. After I had graduated and was working at Bell & Howell I still continued to study the Great Books with a treasured friend, Dr. Robert Goldwin.

In my opinion now, it is important for every American, and perhaps even more so for those who hold public office, to study the great works of Western Civilization. In these writings we encounter the original and authoritative source of the fundamental principles that shape our country. From Plato's Republic and Aristotle's Politics and Ethics, we learn the first teachings of justice and law. In the writings of John Locke we encounter the teachings about civil rights and religious tolerance that so powerfully influenced the American founders and to this day distinguish our system of government from so many others in the world. And of course there are the Federalist Papers, the great exposition of the way the United States is constituted, written by the principal authors of our Constitution, James Madison, John Jay, and Alexander Hamilton.

In addition to the political works, which I naturally tend to emphasize, there are the great works of literature - the Greek tragedies and Shakespeare, to mention only the most obvious - that have so powerfully shaped our understanding of the meaning of life. And, finally, I would put The Bible at the top of my list as the one I have found to be indispensable and that I read with my wife daily.

*Q: Did you see yourself as "pointed" toward anything in particular? Here you were working long hours at your various jobs. I'm not quite sure whether you got any sleep during the time you mentioned. Did you see your education at the University of Chicago "leading" to anything, other than just getting an education?*

PERCY: My education, particularly specializing in economics, plus the jobs that I held, really led to a business career after graduation, because I related so much to business. However, I also started to get interested in public affairs. After all, public affairs, in national trade, and in economics, were important factors of life in those days.

However, going back to my experience with Bell & Howell, when I graduated from the University of Chicago, I still needed money to help support my family. My brother and sister had their own needs. My sister, for example, had vital dental work which she needed to have done, and they didn't have the money to pay for that. So I paid for her dental work.

That reminds me of something which I had forgotten to mention. After I had worked for Bell & Howell for four years and was graduating from the University of Chicago...

*Q: You mean when you were about to graduate from the University of Chicago.*

PERCY: Well, by that time I had worked as an apprentice for Bell & Howell Company for four years while I was at the University of Chicago. Towards the end of my senior year in 1941, the university invited business representatives to come to the campus to interview those of us who were about to graduate and wanted jobs. I was interviewed by the representatives of many of these companies. One of them was the Armstrong Cork Company. They offered me a job to replace a district sales manager, because they said that I was good in marketing and had an impressive working experience. They offered me a job that paid twice the salary that anyone else in my class had been offered.

So when Bell & Howell asked me what I would like to do after I graduated from the University of Chicago, I said that I felt obligated and deeply grateful to Bell & Howell. My father had a challenging job with them now, and things were moving along better for my family. However, I said that I felt an obligation to accept this job offer from Armstrong Cork, as that paid too much for Bell & Howell to match. I said that Armstrong Cork was a much bigger company. The job they had offered me was a wonderful job. I said that I didn't expect to be paid as much by Bell & Howell.

In response to this comment the Bell & Howell Personnel Manager in May 1941 said: "Well, look, if you came to work for Bell & Howell, what kind of a job would you like?" The Personnel Manager then said: "You've worked in practically every department of Bell & Howell. You worked as an apprentice even in the Engineering Department. You were in the Manufacturing Department, and spent a lot of time out in the shop as well as in marketing and accounting. What department would you like to work in if you came to work for us on a permanent basis?" I said: "Well, I would have liked to work in a department that doesn't exist." He said: "Well, what department would that be?"

I said that all of the metals I had worked on in the shop were "light weight" metals, such as aluminum and magnesium for cameras and motion picture sound projectors that they sold for use by adults but also by children in school. They had to be made out of "light metal." I then said that I thought that the United States might get into the war, that we were going to be drawn into it, somehow. If we were drawn in, the USA was going to need many more military aircraft. The U.S. Government would requisition all of the light metals for aircraft for war production. I asked whether then Bell & Howell would have to make cameras and projectors out of lead? How could the kids in the schools carry lead projectors around their school classes? So I thought that Bell & Howell would then need to get into war work. That's the department that I would want to work in. However, as I had told him, Armstrong Cork had offered me too much money compared with what Bell & Howell could offer and I needed the extra money for me and particularly my family.

The Bell & Howell Personnel Manager said: "Well, would you continue to work here for awhile and let us think about this?" I said: "Okay," as I hadn't quite graduated from the University of Chicago as yet. Two days later the Personnel Manager called me in and said that Bell & Howell would increase the salary they offered me beyond what I had been offered by Armstrong Cork. I said: "What job would I have then?" He said: "We're going to create a War Coordinating Department, if that's what you want to call it." So I said: "Well, who will head it that I would report to?" I was then told: "It was your idea, and you'll head it."

*Q: You were then, what, 21 years old?*

PERCY: Well, that happened in May 1941. Yes, I was then age 21. So the Personnel Manager said: "You'll not only head this new department but you'll report directly to the president of the company, Joseph McNabb, because he thinks that this is such a great creative idea."

We started this department. I was very much interested in the U.S. Navy, and soon obtained a contract for Bell & Howell to manufacture "gunsight aiming point cameras" to put in Navy aircraft. I also was able to get Bell & Howell a contract from the Navy for "torpedo directors." That was totally different from anything that the company had previously manufactured, but they had the necessary skills. I knew that they had the engineering and manufacturing skills to do it. So we were "under way" with both of those contracts. Then on December 7, 1941 Pearl Harbor was bombed by Japanese naval aircraft and the United States became deeply involved in World War II. So the Navy sought me out to procure the lenses for these two and other devices. At the time, Bausch and Lomb was the only lens company of any size in the United States. We had previously bought a lot of lenses from Germany and Japan. Now those sources of supply were cut off.

So I applied to the U.S. Government Defense Plant Corporation for money to build a plant to manufacture lenses on Bell & Howell property. This was a project involving millions of dollars, and we were successful in getting the money to build that plant. Then

the Navy designated a Commander to be in charge of this project and to be in contact with us from Washington. He was in charge of war work being handled by Bell & Howell. He went back and forth and I worked with him for about two years.

The military draft program was in operation but the Wilmette, Illinois Draft Board had exempted me from military service because they said that I was more valuable here, with the military work I was doing. That made me "draft exempt," and I was informed that I would never have to go into military service. This bothered me because my friends, such as Art Nielson, were almost all going into military service, and here I was still back home. I finally went to see Mr. McNabb and said: "President McNabb, I just have to tell you that my conscience is so hurt by my staying here in civilian life. I love this work, and I run for Bell & Howell a department that you say is going well. I have a replacement, however, who can fully take over my duties. I feel that I must resign from Bell & Howell and enlist into military service."

President McNabb said, "Well, Chuck, I was afraid that this might happen. I fully understand and know how you feel. Would you promise one thing to me? Because it was your idea about what we should do before the war broke out, and we are doing well, while you're in military service, think about what Bell & Howell should do after the war. Just write me a letter, say, every three months, and tell me what you think we ought to do after the war. Don't resign - take a leave of absence from Bell & Howell and we'll keep you on a partial salary, so that you'll have a little extra money, which you can save or do whatever you want to do with it." I said: "Well, I may even want to get married! We'll see. I accept with pleasure."

However, I added, "What I'd like to do is apply to enter the Navy Air Force but I am afraid that the Navy might not take me because I need glasses." I said: "Let me talk to the Commander assigned to Bell & Howell and see what can be done." I talked to the Commander, who said: "Chuck, I will do everything that I can do to see that you get into the Navy. I think that I can get you into the Navy in what is called the "G-7" program." However, he said: "You'll start in immediately as an Apprentice Seaman and you'll have to go to some place like Dartmouth College for a 60-day basic training program. If you complete this program in 60 days, you'll be commissioned an Ensign as an officer in the Navy. Promise me that you'll come to work for me in Washington for one year. Then you're free to go any place that you and the Navy want you to go."

So I did that. He arranged for me to serve in the Naval Air Force as a gunnery officer. I went to Dartmouth University, had a wonderful 60 days of training there in the Navy. I loved the Navy. Then, after completing this training, I went down to Washington, DC and reported to him for a few months. I also proposed marriage to a young woman whose family lived in Kenilworth who had graduated from Northwestern University, Jeanne Dickerson, that I had been dating when I was going to the University of Chicago. We had a saying at that time: "Get your education at the University of Chicago and get your dates from Northwestern University!" [Laughter] She was a lovely young woman. I proposed to her, and we were married the first year I was in the Navy.

When I originally proposed to Jeanne Dickerson she said: "You know, I have ulcerative colitis and must take drugs for it. Her mother was a chronic invalid and was more or less always in bed. Her family lived in Kenilworth, Illinois, near Lake Michigan. Jeanne was sort of "flustered" by this situation because she took constant care for her mother. I said: "Well, I know that you have it, but that's all right. We can pray and we'll hope to solve this problem. It's caused probably by extreme anxiety and concern. You have concern about your mother. You can be healed." Then Jeanne said: "What you don't know, and what you have to know is that the doctors tell me that I can't have children." I said: "Well, if that's true, and I hope that it isn't, we can always adopt children. The nearby Evanston Illinois Cradle is the best adoption center in the country, I have heard." I said that I was not marrying her just to have children. So Jeanne said: "Yes," and we were subsequently married.

We lived in the Washington, DC area, in Arlington, Virginia. I took a bus every day to my office in the old Naval Munitions Building, on Constitution Avenue. It was so very hot in Washington that first summer of 1943. There was no air-conditioning on the buses, which were very crowded in those days. I usually had to stand up on the crowded buses and was dripping wet by the time I got to my office. I worked for this commander, who had in his very large office quarters only one window air conditioner. He sat near the air conditioner. As I was only an ensign then, the lowest officer rank, I sat practically out in the hall! It was uncomfortable, but I was there for a full year.

Then, at the end of the year, the commander said to me: "You've been wonderful to stay with me for a year. Now, I know that you want to 'get going' and get out there with the fighting Navy with greater activity. Go over and talk to Bill, the Chief Petty Officer who writes the personnel orders. There's an organization that we have just created called Advanced Base Aviation Training Units. I want you to get a job as head of ABATU, as we will call it. Tell Bill to write the necessary orders for you, and I'll see that they are signed." I've told him to write good orders for you, very flexible, as you will see, commensurate with your strong business background."

So this Chief Petty Officer wrote the orders. I was ordered "to proceed to the place or places that you see fit in the performance of your duties. You will have a Class 3 Priority on Navy aircraft, with permission to fly and the right to draw whatever services and goods you need from any Naval Air Station." I was also given the right to request the assignment of Navy personnel to help me to carry out my duties in the Advanced Base Aviation Training Unit. They wanted me to start out training people, including pilots and ground crews on Naval Air Bases, to put the fires out on aircraft that crashed and to try to save the lives of the pilots and the other crew members of these aircraft. To also train gunnery officers to use gunsight aiming point cameras that had been manufactured by Bell & Howell. I was ordered to begin work immediately on this project.

What I did was to requisition sailors who had had some experience in these activities. I put the request in to get skilled personnel. I decided to move my headquarters base to the Naval Aviation Station in Alameda, California, across the Bay from San Francisco, because there were aircraft carrier planes coming in there on ships frequently. They went

out from there into the Pacific Theater of Operations starting with Hawaii. So it was agreed that the headquarters of ABATU would be at the Naval Air Station, Alameda, California, so I took my wife out there with me.

After we'd been there for a year or so, Jeanne became pregnant. Apparently our prayerful calm life together had eased her ulcerative colitis condition. When she started to have labor pains, we phoned the Naval Hospital at the Oakland Naval Air Station and were instructed to come right down. So I just dashed down to the hospital with my wife. The Navy doctor looked at me and said: "You certainly are flustered, aren't you?" I said: "Yes, I certainly am. How did you know?" He said: "Well, you're wearing one black shoe and one brown shoe with your uniform!"

I went back to the house to get my wife's clothes as the doctors said that she should stay overnight. Then they called me when I was at home and said: "Your wife has just given birth to a baby." I said: "What? She's had the baby already?" The doctor said: "Yes." I said: "What is it, a boy or a girl?" The doctor said, "She's had twin girls. They are very small but fine." I dashed down to the hospital. And so Sharon and Valerie were born. I'll pick this up later, when we had a boy, before my wife died. I'll tell you then how she passed on.

On arrival in Alameda, I gave a copy of my orders to the Duty Officer at the Alameda Naval Air Station when I reported in for duty there. The orders just said that I was to report to the base or bases as I saw fit in the performance of my duty. I said that I had decided that the Alameda Naval Air Station was the best place for ABATU to fulfill its purpose.

Two days later the Commander of the Alameda Naval Air Station sent for me. His name was Admiral Ragsdale. He said: "You know, I've been in the Navy for many years. However, I've never seen a set of orders like this. How did you ever get orders like that? It's unbelievable. However, I'm going to do exactly what these orders say. I'll see that you get a good office right down next to the landing field at the Air Station. We will see that you have whatever personnel and services that you need to carry out your duties." So I ended up with about 300 men reporting to me to undertake all sorts of aircraft gunnery training. We selected 50 of them who had previously been professional fire station attendees. We went out on the aircraft carriers to train the crews.

Then months later, oddly enough, Admiral Ragsdale said to me: "You know, here in San Francisco, at the Cow Palace, there's an organization of people that started working at Dumbarton Oaks initially in Washington, DC. At the Cow Palace they're creating something to be called, when organized, 'the United Nations.' I'd like to know, and the Navy would like to know, what is going on there. Let me see if I can get permission for you to go over there. Take a jeep. You can just drive over or have someone drive you over. You can stay there and report back to us each day on what's going on there, what's happening there, other than what we see in the newspapers, so that we can understand it better."

So that's how I really got interested in the United Nations. This interest continued, and ultimately I was sent as a delegate to the United Nations during my early Senate years. I have strongly supported the United Nations ever since then. I still take the position that we ought to pay our dues to the United Nations. But more about this later.

*Q: I'd like to stop here and just ask you if you could talk about your time when you were observing the development of the United Nations? What was your impression of it?*

PERCY: Well, I thought that bringing together representatives of all of these countries was a great idea. I thought that it was important for them to talk with each other on a regular basis. Not just one country deciding to talk to another country, but rather to bring them all together for the purpose of deciding what kind of world we should be living in and what improvements we can bring, especially to bring more peace to the nations of the world.

The official United Nations was established in 1945, shortly after World War II ended and I had returned to Bell & Howell. Its purpose was to try to prevent such a world war ever starting again. A charter of the United Nations was drawn up and about 50 nations signed it in 1945. Afterwards, as we know, more than 100 other nations joined including our former enemies, such as Germany, Italy, and Japan, and they have contributed leadership and funds greatly to the UN.

Seven principles of the United Nations were established. They are 1) All members have equal rights, 2) They will carry out their duties under the charter, 3) They agree to the principles of settling their disputes peacefully, 4) They agree not to use force or the threat of force against other Nations except in self-defense, 5) Members agree to help the UN in every action it takes to carry out the purpose of the chapter, 6) The UN agrees to act on the principle that non-member states have the same duties as member states to preserve World peace and security, 7) The UN accepts the principle of not interfering in the actions of a member nation within its own borders, providing these actions do not adversely affect other nations.

The charter of the UN also lists four purposes of the United Nations. The first purpose is to preserve world peace and security. The second purpose is to encourage nations to be just in their actions toward each other. The third is to help nations cooperate in helping to solve their problems. The fourth purpose is to serve as an Agency through which nations can work towards these goals.

The major divisions of the UN with which I worked while in the U.S. Senate were 1) the General Assembly, 2) the Security Council, 3) the Secretariate, 4) the Economic and Social Council, 5) the International Court of Justice, and 6) the Trusteeship Council.

I represented the U.S. Senate at the General Assembly of the UN but had to keep up my Senate work at the same time, with the help of my great staff. But I remember one day in particular that I had to fly from UN headquarters in New York to the Capitol in Washington, DC three times to vote on important issues and return each time to New

York for the UN session that was also under way.

On August 4, 1999 *The Christian Science Monitor* newspaper carried an article by me concerning the United Nations finances and the U.S.' non-payment of our dues. I worked with Susan Eisenhower, Director of the Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Washington, DC and former U.S. Senator Paul Simon on this, and a copy of the article was also inserted into the Congressional Record by Senator Peter Fitzgerald of Illinois.

*Q: Did this effort to organize the United Nations involve mainly American and foreign diplomats? Was this a "confusing period"?*

PERCY: No, there were diplomats, politicians and other political office holders, and various foreign agents and representatives from the various Embassies in Washington. Many countries sent Foreign Ministers from time to time for these discussions. It was a big organization, and it was well handled.

To go back to my service in the Navy, when I reported back to my Navy commanders at the Alameda Air Station a couple of times a week, they were just thrilled with these preparations for the United Nations. Of course, I kept up my supervision of ABATU at the base as well as on aircraft carriers in the Pacific.

*Q: What were the concerns of the U.S. Navy? You were going to these sessions as a Navy observer.*

PERCY: Well, the Navy's concern was what the world was going to be like after the war. Actually, the Navy knew that I was interested in what the world was going to be like after World War II. I had talked to the Commander at the Naval Air Station in Alameda about that. That's why he said to me: "Here's a real chance for you to see the formation of an organization which may have an impact on the world after World War II is over." So that is what we did.

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*Q: Today is the 10th of July, 1998. To begin with, the war is over in 1945. Were you pretty well decided you were going back to Bell & Howell?*

PERCY: Oh, yes, no question about that. I'd never really left Bell & Howell but was put on leave of absence. As I mentioned before, they kept me on the payroll at part-salary, providing I would write letters to the company. I wrote a letter every three months to President Joseph McNabb - and he usually acknowledged them. What should Bell & Howell do after the war? The essence of what I was saying was that they should globalize. They should become more international in Europe, not just a company in the United States and Canada, but go worldwide, particularly with our allies such as Great Britain, France, and so forth, but also with our enemies - with Germany and Japan - taking into account my solid belief that political friendships through the centuries have tended to follow the trade lanes. Therefore, we should resume relationships with those

countries, not in war, but in peace and in trade, to bind our economies together, to make our friendship and relationships more lasting. So when I returned to Bell & Howell after the war had ended in victory, they immediately put me in charge of the globalization program. I flew over to Great Britain, sat down with an outstanding producer there, J. Arthur Rank, who was in the motion picture business, producing films and so forth, and jointly formed the idea for a Bell & Howell-Rank Company, to be established right there in England, a factory to manufacture Bell & Howell equipment there for what I hoped would be at lower costs, so we could sell them into Europe and other markets competitively.

*Q: Had Bell & Howell always had a movie element?*

PERCY: Yes, I should say so. It was founded by Donald Bell and Albert Howell in Chicago (then the movie capital of the nation) in 1907. They started business making movie cameras. Their original products were rooted in much older photographic products, but they made modern movies possible, silents at first followed by sound. Later, the most expensive lens made was developed by Bell & Howell called cinemascope. And that began a whole new industry of wide-screen movies.

*Q: Cinemascope.*

PERCY: For professional, as well as for amateurs.

*Q: Just prior to the war starting in 1939 in Europe, what was the professionals' movie camera?*

PERCY: We had competition obviously from Eastman Kodak who were a very huge company, and of course, they were the biggest maker of film. So the more cameras we made, the more film they sold. So that's why I wanted also to get into the film business. And we did work our way into that field.

*Q: Yes. I was just wondering, I would have thought that going back to Britain, it's a good idea, obviously, to get your foot in the door, but movies, particularly small cameras, are a luxury. We're talking about a bankrupt Britain, a destroyed Germany, a destroyed France, and a destroyed Japan.*

PERCY: After the war we successfully did business with Britain, France, Germany, and Japan. Our biggest manufacture of products was in producing cameras and projectors for these countries. We made a projector for sound movies, so educational films could be shown in their schools. Our biggest market for sound projectors were the schools - universities, high schools, grammar schools. They could show films of the war, films of biology, psychology, history, everything that was being produced. We could enrich the lives of children by bringing the world to them on screen. This was before big television days, of course.

*Q: J. Arthur Rank. Did you find at that point that the British way of doing business was*

*different than the American way of doing business?*

PERCY: Our marketing was more creative and war production had modernized our manufacturing procedures. Researching and engineering war products had given us the means to develop more approaches for products sold overseas. Obviously we got along well with the British, as we had the same language and we had fought the war together. We were friends and they did not commercially manufacture lenses, so we sold all the lenses to them from the lens plant at Bell & Howell for the cameras and projectors they manufactured. I had helped Bell & Howell build a large lens plant before I went in the war through a contract I obtained from the U.S.' Defense Plant Corporation, to build a large factory in Lincolnwood, Illinois, just outside Chicago. Bell & Howell then moved their headquarters from Chicago to Lincolnwood, Illinois. We had to import, before the war, lenses from Germany and Japan. They were cut off with the outbreak of war. So, after this war, we became a big manufacturer of lenses for the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Europe, and other countries.

*Q: At the time you went to see J. Arthur Rank, did you also look at Germany and France, too?*

PERCY: Oh, yes. On those trips, I would go over to Germany to see whether we couldn't open up a branch there and in France. I urged them to trade together. When I was in Bell & Howell and later in the U.S. Senate, I worked with European countries to develop trade with us and each other. We kept talking about the fact that Europe had been a source for centuries of battling and fighting. Yet here we have America, with minimal guarded borders between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. They're our biggest trading partners. We have infinite friendship. I told them that they must start to trade together. We encouraged some of the early trade between former enemies France and Germany. I was thrilled when in 1999, France and Germany became each other's biggest single partners in trade. After a century of conflict and fighting, you can't imagine a war between Germany and France now.

*Q: As you were working on this, how did you see Germany? The Olympus and other cameras? Were you trying to develop ties with those factories, the ones that moved over to the West?*

PERCY: We had no compelling reason to work with German manufacturing companies. We did manufacture ourselves, and then we sold, from England to Germany. But after a while, costs got very high. Labor unions were tough and seemed to be having very great difficulty. And that's when I decided to go over to Japan.

I did go over to Japan and subsequently made many trips there. We built a factory there. I talked one of our top production men, George Stryker and his wife, into moving over to Japan so that he could be the head of our Japanese company. Also, I established relationships with Japan's government right away. As soon as I came back from World War II and was put in charge of the international work for Bell & Howell, we received a letter in 1946 from Yoshio Osawa, who pre-war had been the exclusive agent for Bell &

Howell Company equipment. He had been the exclusive Japanese agent for distributing Bell & Howell equipment before the war but was obviously cut off after Pearl Harbor in 1941. He said in his letter: "Now I'm bankrupt. I haven't any money to buy Bell & Howell equipment, but what I would like to do, when you appoint a new agent to distribute your cameras and projectors in Japan, as I did before, I would like to work as a consultant to them." I wrote back and said, "I'm sorry Yoshio, you cannot be a consultant to any new agent of Bell & Howell. Here's why: We were required by law to seize all the deposits you had made with us, that is all the money you had deposited with us to buy equipment before the war. We seized approximately \$100,000, as you will remember. We took the money and invested it in U.S. war bonds. Now it has become \$125,000, we will give this amount of credit to your account. You can start to buy immediately. We want you to be our agent once again." But I told him also that a modest part of this money should be used to enable his son, Zenro, to go to Princeton University (where Yoshio had graduated years ago). But also Zenro could be an apprentice at Bell & Howell each summer and learn the business and I could provide summer lodging for him. And all this happily came about. Therefore they became our agent, and they were so overwhelmed. I went over later for his company's anniversary party. While he told that story after the banquet dinner, to the crowd that was there, he started to cry, but then told about how grateful he was that we forgot the animosity, and he was able to start again in his business with his son Zenro someday to succeed him. He became our distributor and did extremely well in Japan. Later, when I flew over again to establish a factory in Japan, we formed a new company. The law in Japan at that time was that no outside company could own more than 49 percent of a Japanese company. We formed a company with Bell and Howell owning 49 percent but providing 100 percent of the financing with just a verbal understanding that whenever the law permitted us to go higher, we would hold a majority and then control the company. But we guaranteed Osawa he would always have a minority interest in it. Several years later, the law was changed in Japan. What we did then was take 90 percent of the company and left 10 percent to be owned by Osawa. But we by then manufactured many products there that provided more worldwide distribution for us because their costs were very low at the time compared to ours.

*Q: This was when? When did you set up this production line in Japan?"*

PERCY: It would have been early in my presidency. That would be in the early 1950s.

*Q: Very early on. As far as installations went.*

PERCY: Yes. But I'd established relationships with Japan right after the war in 1946 when they became our distributors once again.

*Q: How did you find Bell & Howell when you came back? Was it a changed place?*

PERCY: I was away three years. Of course when I came back it was somewhat different. But we now had to convert from war production products back into essentially motion picture equipment. But then I started the process of diversifying the company and getting into other product lines. We got into microfilm, and acquired other companies.

*Q: I was wondering, with movie equipment. I can see it as a rival - television. I mean, were you watching television, as you did this, as a growth industry?*

PERCY: We never really looked upon television as competitors, even as substitutes. I began investment in television broadcasting for Bell & Howell. We began the whole philosophy of news programs that would be related to things that were extremely important to the world, knowledge of which would be for the good of the country. That eventually led to my involvement with public broadcasting.

*Q: During these early years, I think around '48, '49, did you find yourself tied at all into the Marshall Plan? European reconstruction at least? Were you talking to people in Washington about putting more investment into more countries?*

PERCY: Oh, yes. I worked very closely, especially with President Dwight Eisenhower. His brother, Milton, who was president of Johns Hopkins University, was a treasured friend also and I worked very, very closely with him. That would lead me into the whole process of my starting work with the Republican Party. Early in his Presidency, I convinced President Eisenhower to create a Committee on Program and Progress. It would be a committee established in 1959, and would show where the United States ought to be 25 years from then and how to aim towards getting us there. He agreed and appointed me chairman of the committee. We issued a report and I'd like to add extracts from the report that we made to President Eisenhower. That committee report led to my being asked to be chairman of the Platform Committee for the Republican Party Convention in 1960.

*Q: Let's move back a bit. You were saying, after the war, sort of on the personal side, your son Roger was born shortly after the war in 1946. Your wife became ill?*

PERCY: Well, as I have said, she told me that she had ulcerative colitis. Now, when she came back to Illinois, the doctor said to me, "We have an operation we could perform on her that would completely cure her of that. As it is she is much better now than she was before your marriage." They said, "We know you're a Christian Scientist, but we can just assure you that this is an operation that she wants." He had talked to her. I said, "Are you sure it's safe? Is there any risk involved?" They said no. I said, "If you say there's no risk, and that she wants it, then I guess you will go ahead." They did it and it worked out fine. A few months later, they said, "There's just one more operation we have to do and she'll be completely healed of it." "Any risk?" I asked. "No risk whatsoever," they said. But she was allergic to penicillin and died a week later in the hospital at the age of 27. The pastors and doctors at the hospital were very humiliated. They couldn't apologize enough.

It just struck all of us in the family so hard. We decided we would have to find a way to keep on going. I decided I would just raise the children with the help of a housekeeper that worked for me and lived in my Wilmette house. Every trip I took, if there was a possibility of taking the children with me, I took them with me. After many months, my friends were anxious that I find someone else to marry and help raise my three children. Art Nielson, one of my dearest friends from high school on and still is, had a sister-in-law

who was not married. And he told me he'd like to have his sister-in-law date me. So I took her out. She went with me on a sailboat that I had. When I was racing in Lake Michigan on my sailboat, kept in the Wilmette harbor, if a boat was trying to cut in on me, I'd generally yield to them. When she sailed with me one time, she would just call out to them. I've forgotten what words she used, but the essence was, "Get out of our way!" So we just kept going and we won the race, the first time that I ever did. She was a very wonderful young woman, but I just wasn't interested in getting remarried. So for several years, I just raised the children myself. But I needed an excuse not to date so I went to night law school at Chicago Kent College of Law. But after January, 1949, when Joe McNabb died (McNabb was president and CEO of Bell & Howell Co.), he had left a sealed statement in the company safe. He had told the lawyers - one of whom, Ed McDermott, head of McDermott, Will & Emory Law Firm, had been on the Bell & Howell Board of Directors for years and he was the director that proposed that I be on the board originally.

*Q: You were saying that when McNabb died, he'd left a statement in the company safe?*

PERCY: Yes. In which he'd indicated that as the largest stockholder, he felt it would be desirable to have me elected CEO, and the board knew me because I'd been a board member since I came back from the war. They had read my memorandums to Joseph McNabb on what we should do after the war - Harold Geneen, who was vice president and comptroller and was a member of the board, knew me very well, seconded the motion made by Ed McDermott and on January 4, 1949 I was elected president and CEO. Albert Howell, co-founder of Bell & Howell Company and chief engineer, was elected chairman on my nomination, but always asked me to conduct the board meetings. The public interest was pretty high at this point. It was described in a book published in 1982, long after I had left the company, called "Bell & Howell Company - a 75 Year History" by Jack F. Robinson, pp. 78-89.

*Q: Yes, I recall that. I recall it was quite well known.*

PERCY: It was very high. In fact, I won a national award at age 29 for being the youngest president of a major American business company, without a relative that was head of it before me. There was a tremendous amount of interest in it. I had enrolled at a Chicago night law school because I loved the creation and enforcement of laws, but also to have a good reason to not have to date anyone at night. I'd finished two years of law school. Ed McDermott discovered that I was still going to night law school months after I had been elected president and CEO and he said at a board meeting: "Here he is becoming the new CEO at Bell & Howell Company and now still going to night law school! How unbecoming!" So I dropped out. I'm a law school drop-out! But I maintain that I'm the only law school drop-out I know of that now has 22 sitting federal judges, that I named, sent to the president and confirmed by the U.S. Senate; including John Paul Stevens, who is now the Senior Justice on the Supreme Court. He was one of my earlier recommendations. He was a fellow member of my class at the University of Chicago, Class of 1941. I was head of the Inter-Fraternity Council and he was head of the Senior Men's Honorary Society because he was smarter than I was. [Laughter]

I, about that time, had been asked to join the Board of Directors of the Chase Manhattan Bank, by its chairman, David Rockefeller. After one of the Chase Board's meetings in New York, I told him that I wanted to diversify Bell & Howell and asked if he knew of an outstanding investment banker I could approach to help me in making acquisitions and mergers.

Incidentally, now let me tell you, I first met David Rockefeller, as I mentioned earlier, at the University of Chicago in the late 1930s. He was getting his doctorate degree there and I was getting my bachelor. We became friends there and that's when he introduced me to a great many of the students at the University of Chicago from foreign countries. I loved going over and having dinner or lunch with him at International House, built by the Rockefellers, with foreign students from around the world. That's what first caused me to become interested in foreign countries' affairs.

*Q: How did you move to your second wife, then?*

PERCY: Two months after I was elected head of Bell & Howell, there was so much to do about it on radio, TV, and press conferences. I was asked to be on radio and TV programs. I said to Harold Geneen, our comptroller: "Why don't we get out of here for a bit; get up in the mountains, ski, and let's just plan the next five years for our company. Just sit down, think about the future for Bell & Howell, and quietly talk and not have all the pressures?"

He agreed and we flew out to Sun Valley, Idaho. One morning, I was on the ski lift, going up, about 9:00 a.m., on Dollar Mountain at Sun Valley, and while on the lift, I saw this young woman skiing down the mountain, and just as she got underneath my elevated chair as I was approaching her, she fell and hit her face in a snow bank. I hollered down, "Are you all right? Are you hurt?" She pulled her head up, smiled and quickly wiped the snow off her face and called up, "No, I'm fine." I noticed the clothing she had on.

I didn't see her on the mountain again that day. The next morning, however, I got on the bus to go over to Dollar Mountain, and there she was in the same clothes sitting in a seat with an empty seat next to her. I said, "Aren't you the young lady who fell yesterday?" She said, "Oh, are you the man who was up on the ski lift?" I sat down with her and that began our friendship. We skied together quite a bit with Harold Geneen. Then she had to leave. She was there after her father had recently died. She lived in Altadena, California, just outside Pasadena and Los Angeles. So she was invited to come up with a friend's family skiing. They invited her to get her away from the sorrow of her father's death, the funeral, and the sadness of it. She could celebrate there the joy of their family life together. When I invited her to come to dinner with Hal Geneen and myself, she said, "No," but then invited me to have dinner with her friend's family that night. I sat next to her. She had a boyfriend there, too, but I said to him, "You take the place of honor down there next to our hostess." So I sat next to Loraine and we had a friendly conversation.

But soon she and her family friends went back to Altadena. I said to Harold Geneen, "On

our way back, instead of going right to Chicago, let's fly down to Los Angeles and visit our Hollywood office. I haven't been in the office and our Hollywood factory since becoming president. Why don't we both see that?" Harold said, "And see Loraine, too?" [Laughter] "Well," I said, "That would be nice."

So we went to Los Angeles. I went over to her house in Altadena, met her fine mother, who was a Christian Scientist, and her two great brothers, David and John Guyer, all of whom were very cordial. It was the first time I'd ever seen a city home where they had orange trees in the front yard, where they picked fresh oranges for their breakfasts. They had a lovely swimming pool there also. I said to Loraine, "Harold Geneen and I are going to the MGM movie studio this afternoon. I suppose having lived near Hollywood all your life, you're tired of seeing studios, but if you'd like to come, you can certainly come with us." She said, "I've lived here all my life but I've never been to a film studio. I'd love to come." So we went and Les Peterson took us around as public relations vice president of MGM, and in one section a new movie was being shot. He said, "You want to see this? There's a new unknown leading young lady who's only 17 years old. She's playing the female lead. And Van Johnson is the male lead. I said, "What's her name?" Les said: "Elizabeth Taylor."

So we watched the picture being produced for an hour or so and afterwards Les Peterson had a picture taken of us with Elizabeth Taylor, Van Johnson, Loraine, and myself. That's the first picture we had taken together. It was in 1949. The next picture I had with Elizabeth Taylor was after I was married to Loraine in 1950 and I went into the Senate, which was in 1967. John Warner, to whom she was then married, was thinking about running for the Senate and she came to see me to ask some questions.

I will tell you this much. She came down the hall to my office, with 15 photographers following her. It was unbelievable. She walked into my office reception room, and there was the picture of her with Loraine, Van Johnson, and myself on the wall. She shrieked, "Oh, I was never that young!" Then we went into my office and I now have a picture of us in my office holding that original picture.

She said, "You're the only U.S. senator I know. My husband, John Warner, wants to run for the Senate. Should he run? Would he like it? Do you think he would win?" I said, "Well, I can tell you this. He can win, if you travel with him when he's campaigning, and stay with him just like Loraine stayed with me when I ran for office, as did my family. You will help attract a crowd wherever he speaks. And I do think he would win because he's a good man. Second, would he like it? I think he'd love it. Will you like it? I'm not so sure. I'm not so sure my wife likes the Senate from the standpoint of family life. You have no control over your time. You can't even get home for dinner many nights. You leave early in the morning, you get home late at night many times. You spend all the time you can in your home state traveling around. I don't know whether you'll like it or not." But anyway, that's the way it worked out. She did campaign for him, and he did win and has been a treasured friend and colleague of mine ever since.

*Q: Anyway, you established Bell & Howell as an international corporation that you're dealing with. How did you find the market? Was it a growing market?*

PERCY: Yes, it was, but David Rockefeller had a great influence on my ability to expand Bell & Howell's business abroad. Much about that later.

*Q: Had you been at all political during this post-war period? Had you kept up with the Party or not?*

PERCY: Following the war, I became more politically-minded because federal government policy involves such vital decisions as to whether you get into war or not, whether we win or lose, the state of the economy, rate of inflation, unemployment, relations with other countries, and in general the well-being of the American people. I was really captivated always by the thought that political friendships through the centuries have tended to follow trade lanes and exports and trade between countries is terribly important. Even though we did have a lot of foreign competition, I still thought that free trade would keep tariffs down and open markets so that they could import and compete with us, providing us with the added incentives to become more efficient. I've always been a free trade advocate.

*Q: I would have thought that being so internationalist coming out of Chicago is difficult. I mean, you had Senator Taft - I think of some of the powerhouses that were politically active at the time and particularly in the Republican Party. I mean isolationists weren't dead. They were dormant during the war and then started to creep up again. Did you find yourself, I mean was this making you, I'm talking before you officially entered the list. How'd you find yourself looking at...*

PERCY: I was known as a progressive, moderate Republican but also as a financially conservative person. That made some enemies on the strictly conservative side with the Republican Party. Sometimes they even voted against me or pushed me into a primary election. Sometimes they felt strongly about it in general elections. But also I was known for the free trade position. They also knew that I was very open on the integration of Blacks, now more regularly called African-Americans. When I became president of Bell & Howell, I had a meeting with my foreman, and I said, "We have not a single black employee. I served in the war with Blacks to defend our country. We must integrate our company." I did recall that during my earlier years at Bell & Howell, the relatively few Negroes we had at one point were laid off after there was a night shift fight between the Whites and the Blacks. It was a very bad situation. It was said that the Blacks were in error and were not hired thereafter. I said, in 1949, "We're going to begin the policy of hiring Blacks on an equal basis, based on ability and past records. (We didn't call it "affirmative action" in those days.) We're going to lean now toward trying to find jobs for these people and adding more women executives."

My mother had a great influence on my life. I had been raised by a mother who was a dynamo, a great violinist, an earner, the leader of our family, really. We didn't have enough women executives in our country in the early 1950s. This was a policy I talked to our board about. They agreed on it. "We're going to diversify our company and board even more. I need experts in various fields. I'm going to try to get high tech CEOs of

great companies with backgrounds in engineering, marketing, manufacturing, legal, and accounting.” Sears Roebuck for instance - the chairman of the board of Sears Roebuck & Company became a director of our company.

I said at a meeting of all of our department heads, “Any of you who don't agree with this policy of adding Blacks to our work force and upgrading women to executive positions, based on ability, and will not adhere to that policy in your department, your resignation from the company will be accepted.” They all agreed. Not a single one left. We began to hire African-Americans. We were way ahead of any legislation on it. We started to hire more women for important positions. Several years later, I did get an award from the Women's Business and Professional Association of America for having more women executives at Bell & Howell than any other company our size in America.

Also, I belonged to the Chicago Club. At a meeting I said, "You know, there's one thing wrong with this club. Only on rare occasions can women, or wives even, come in. It's an all males club. We don't have a single woman member. I just think that's wrong. I would like to nominate a woman." They said, "Well, who would it be?" I said, "Her name is Hannah Gray. She's now at the University of Chicago (and later became president). She's intelligent, thoughtful, a great conversationalist, she's terrific.” They interviewed her and subsequently voted for her to become a member, which she accepted. Other women followed, joining the club as members.

*Q: Good. Tell me, how did you start putting your toe in the political waters?*

PERCY: I think in the late 1940s. When I came back from the war, I founded an organization we called “North Shore Veterans for the Republican Party.” I later became a GOP precinct captain in Wilmette, Illinois. One winter night a young man came to my home, after we had moved to Kenilworth, Illinois, knocked on the door, and said, "You're interested in the Republican Party and you've done some fundraising for them and been a Republican precinct captain. I want to run for Congress in this District. The incumbent has retired. I think my philosophy is close to yours." I said, "Don't stand in the doorway. Why don't you come in and let's talk about it? What's your name?" "Don Rumsfeld." So I talked to him for about an hour or more, and as he left I said, "Don, you've got my support. I'll campaign for you. I'll make a contribution to your campaign," and I did. That got me started with a man who served as congressman from my district from 1963 to 1969 and subsequently Secretary of Defense and Chief of White House Staff for President Ford and then as ambassador to NATO in 1973 and in 1983-84 as Special Negotiator for the Middle East problems for President Reagan. [In 2001, he became Secretary of Defense for President George W. Bush.] He has always been a treasured friend also. I just kept on going with ideas for the Party including fund-raising. I was chairman of a Committee which developed a new policy for the Party in Illinois - a more progressive program. Then I was selected to be finance chairman for the Republican Party in Illinois. I then became vice chairman of the National Republican Finance Committee. Through fund-raising, you make a widespread field of acquaintances, supporters, because if you ask people for money for the Republican Party they give you a reason many times why they're not going to give the Party money. That gave me the

chance to learn what could be done to overcome objections. So gradually I did more and more in politics as time permitted. And then I finally decided in 1963, to run for Governor in 1964. Before I did that, I had a meeting in my home in Kenilworth in the living room with every family member including my wife, Loraine, my brother, Howard, and sister, Doris, our children, my mother, who was only age 78 then. The only non-family member who was there was Bob Galvin, the CEO of Motorola, and a treasured friend. He also later became my campaign fund-raising chairman.

I proposed that we have a vote as to whether or not I should take a leave from my position as president of Bell & Howell and run for public office. "I would like to, but I do not want to unless it would have your wholehearted support. I say that because it would change your lives, it would affect your lives, if I do something like this. It's one thing to work as a volunteer in all of these political activities, but it's another thing to actually run for office because that does involve the family and I'd love you all to participate and be part of the effort. For instance, Mother could be chair or head of the Senior Citizens for Chuck Percy Committee."

They all voted. It was unanimous that I should run for office in 1964. I ran for Governor of Illinois and had a fine campaign, but lost. And Barry Goldwater himself, at the next meeting of the Republican National Committee, stood up, giving his speech after his disastrous defeat. He pointed down at me and said, "There's Chuck Percy. I feel so badly about his loss. If I hadn't lost the Presidency in the same election by over 700,000 votes alone in Illinois, his state, he would have won, because he lost by only a fairly small margin."

After I lost the election, I formed a committee again to see if I couldn't carry out the pledges I had made as to what I would have done if I were elected governor. We called it the "New Illinois Committee." I began with volunteers in poverty sections of Chicago, having volunteer tutors train children, black children essentially, in a private volunteer program. It included immigrant children that came in from Mexico or other foreign countries, who couldn't speak English at all or very well. We taught them English. We tried to help with housing for needy families so that we could help them. So the New Illinois Committee began quite a program which I greatly enjoyed working at, with the help of family members, friends, and other skilled volunteers, some of whom had helped in our governor's election campaign. Then one day Senator Everett Dirksen called and wanted to see me.

*Q: He was a senator from Illinois.*

PERCY: The senior senator from Illinois. And he wanted to see me at my Bell & Howell Company office. He said, "I want to bring with me some friends." He brought about 10 CEOs of companies, all of whom had helped Dirksen in his political life. He said to me, "I brought them along with me to hear the proposal I'm making to you and to hear the pledge that I'll also make to you. You lost the governorship because of Barry Goldwater - but also before that you had a primary within the Republican Party which you won overwhelmingly. It was a new conservative Republican who ran against you. And he

spoke against you." Then Senator Dirksen said, "I think a lot of the conservatives in the Republican Party didn't work or vote for you in the Governor's race. You supported Governor Nelson Rockefeller to run for president originally, even though you did actively support Goldwater when he ran with you in 1964, even though some Republican candidates for governor in other states did not want to be with Goldwater when he came into their states. When Bob Taft was running in Ohio and Goldwater came in, he would go to the other end of the state. He wouldn't be available. When Goldwater came in, you met him at the airport or the train, and took him with you. You pledged to support whoever was nominated, even though you had backed Nelson Rockefeller against him at the convention. You said, "I will support the candidate who is the choice of the Republican national convention."

Senator Everett Dirksen then said, "Now, I know you want to run for governor again in four years, but Paul Douglas is now the other Illinois senator, and he's running for reelection in '66. We want you to run against him, because you've got the best state-wide organization, but we know you'll never win, as he is unbeatable. I said then, "He was my professor in economics at the University of Chicago. I liked him immensely." Dirksen said, "He'll understand. But if you run against him, we'll get back some of the seats in the House of Representatives that we lost. We'll get back the Illinois State Legislature seats that we lost. We had a disaster with Barry Goldwater on the ticket. You'll do better against Paul Douglas than anyone else and it will help every other candidate that runs. Then, I will guarantee you, and these men deep in finance here and in the party will guarantee you, too, they will try to prevent any primary against you. So when you run for Governor again in 1968, you won't have a primary election, you won't have Goldwater on the ticket, you'll be able to win. All I'm asking you to do is do the best you can to get as good a vote margin as you can, but you won't be able to win."

So I agreed I would, and I called Paul Douglas's office in Washington, DC. It turned out he was in Mexico at the time. I finally reached him by phone there and I explained the situation. He said, "Well Chuck, I was afraid you might find yourself in this position. I understand." I said to him, "I pledge to you, professor and senator, that we will have a fair campaign. There will not be personal charges. It will just be on issues. I do honestly differ with you on some issues, but we'll have a clean campaign." He said, "We'll have a clean campaign, but I understand why you must run against me." So I ran against him, but actually won!

*Q: This is 1966.*

PERCY: Yes, 1966. What I did say about him is that "He is a fine person, but (I didn't say he was old.) a man of old-fashioned ideas." For instance, he formed an organization called "A Million Americans to Keep Red China Out of the United Nations." Keep China out of the UN? And I would then simply say during the campaign: How can you have a United Nations when you would want to keep out of it the largest nation on earth? I was in on the founding of the UN and it would be wrong to keep China out.

The other major thing I differed with him on was the Vietnam War. He was all for the

Vietnam War. I was very much against it. I kept saying it was the wrong war, the wrong place, the wrong time. It was not in our national security interest. We will never put enough into it, like we did World War II, to win it! And it's too far away! It's going to divide our country. That's what happened. It really divided the USA badly. And that became quite apparent to everyone. So I was elected to the U.S. Senate in November 1966 and sworn in as a member to represent Illinois in January 1967 and served for 18 years.

*Q: I would have thought that the Republican Party, particularly conservatives, and certainly Senator Everett Dirksen ranked as a conservative, would have found that this idea of doing anything with China would be abhorrent because if there was anything that marked out the conservative Republican - it still does today - is somehow you don't deal with Red China. I mean, it's sort of an article of faith almost.*

PERCY: I know. But I seemed to attract the attention of the young people particularly, and I was able to tell the story about how I'd seen the United Nations put together at the Cow Palace in San Francisco when I was in the Navy Air Corps, during World War II. That made a deep impression on me as to what it could accomplish and do in the world to help bring peace to the world. Because, after all, we had two world wars. Are we going to have a third? A fourth? But now we've got nuclear weapons, as have other nations. What is it going to lead to but disaster? We've got to find a basis for peace, and the United Nations can be the foundation on which we can work, but you've got to have the countries in there that will be the ones that will affect the world. The former communist countries, Soviet Union, China, and others, should be members of the United Nations as well as the World Trade Organization and others.

*Q: Did you find, I would have thought you would have found the same reluctance - even more - on the part of the conservatives in Illinois, Republican conservatives, by taking this stand.*

PERCY: Well, I did have, but on the other hand, Paul Douglas was very vulnerable from several standpoints. As I say, the Vietnam War I think was a very, very big issue. And it divided the country, as you know. It was terrible. That was why the young people, particularly, could cheer me. They didn't want to go to Vietnam, whereas my experience with World War II was that virtually everyone wanted to go! In fact, I was draft exempt because Bell & Howell established a Defense Department that I headed. But I just couldn't let my friends go to war and leave me sitting back there at Bell & Howell Company making a big salary. So I did volunteer and joined the Navy Air Corps and became a gunnery officer.

*Q: With this election, how did it hit the Republican Party when you arrived at the Senate because you were supposed to be a sacrificial lamb and all of a sudden here you are?*

PERCY: Well, I was treated very, very nicely. After all, Everett Dirksen was the Republican leader in the U.S. Senate there. He embraced me. Things began to happen right away that they began to really work with me on. I began working on issues that I

had worked on running for the Senate and running for the Governorship. Home ownership for low income people became an early piece of legislation that I proposed and worked with my staff to enact into a new law. I just told the story to the Senate of the observations that I had made in my lifetime as to the difference it made to us when we were able to finally buy a house after renting apartments and one small house all our lives. The difference was even more apparent to me as I visited families in government-owned public housing which they provided to low income people. They had no ownership in it whatsoever. They'd throw the garbage down the stairs; windows were frequently broken; and the apartments weren't taken care of. When I went into homes that were modest homes, but owned by people, maybe families had just struggled to buy a house, they were usually very well kept. Even those in public housing, if they had an old, broken-down car that they were able to buy cheap, and had that car, they shined it, kept it clean, and so forth because it was theirs. That was the difference between a dwelling that wasn't theirs and one that was. We made it possible, through this legislation, for people to pay as little as one percent interest, and to not have to pay the loan back until they had earned enough money to make payments, but actually owning a home gave them much more incentive to increase their earnings. Home ownership for low income people became the law of the land. Within a matter of a few years, we had 500,000 people and families who took advantage of the legislation. And it became a piece of legislation that was looked on by my colleagues and Illinois and the country with great favor.

I was also part of the initial conceptualization of a national public broadcasting system. I had been asked by Robert Maynard Hutchins, when he left as president of the University of Chicago and became president of the Ford Foundation, to come to New York City and have a meeting with him to see if I could do something in adult education to continue education for adults. Would I be the founding volunteer chairman of a fund to encourage such an activity? I accepted. We decided to call it the Fund for Adult Education of the Ford Foundation. He said, "Who would you suggest to be on it?" And I said, "Well, I've gotten to know Milton Eisenhower, the President's brother." He was an educator then, but became president of John Hopkins University later, and was a wonderful man and treasured friend, and I asked him to be vice chairman and a director of it. The two of us worked together with the board we selected to look for a big idea, just like the Carnegie Foundation did, to start so many public libraries throughout the USA and the world. And so I asked our board to vote on this program to establish public broadcasting television and radio stations throughout the country. We provided money from the Ford Foundation source, to start a couple of local stations such as WTTW in Chicago. When I got to the Senate in January 1967, very early on, I said, "This is something that ought to be done - to set aside a national network now for public broadcasting." We didn't want to have just a couple of stations; we could have a whole network of stations across the country. And one vacant TV national channel was left. ABC, NBC, and CBS supported our concept, either because they thought it was a basically sound idea, or could it have been that they didn't want another network that also advertized products and services! Our Board knew that there was another channel that could be set aside for public broadcasting and be called PBS. We decided to draft legislation that would set that aside. I remember Senator Margaret Chase Smith on the floor of the Senate objected to it. "What business do we have spending money for public broadcasting?" I said something like, "Well, to have TV

and radio stations that emphasize education, that emphasizes the quality of the programs they're doing, would be very much in the national interest." So we won the fights and passed legislation that designated a network for education on public broadcasting. PBS was set up. I never dreamed my daughter, Sharon Percy Rockefeller, would become a leading director of National Public Broadcasting. Now she continues to be a director of it, and for years has been CEO and president of one of the most important stations, WETA in Washington, DC! And she has devoted more than a quarter of a century of her life to public broadcasting - when it originated programs such as "The McNeil/Lehrer News Hour," now "The News Hour with Jim Lehrer." Among the cornerstones of WETA's current productions are such traditional favorites as the "National Memorial Day Concert," which ran again on May 28, 2000, and "A Capitol Fourth," two stellar holiday events broadcast from the lawn of the U.S. Capitol.

"Washington Week in Review" has been a trusted source of news and analysis for more than 33 years, and "The Kennedy Center Presents" has been a gala salute to the icons of music, dance, and drama. Other great programs with large numbers of steady viewers would include "All Things Considered," "Morning Edition," "Wall Street Week," "NOVA," "The American Experience," and many other truly great programs.

"Imagination, Discovery, Laughter, Learning, Understanding" is what WETA's extensive children's programming is all about. "Sesame Street" and "Barney and Friends" to "Wishbone" and "Reading Rainbow" offer young viewers the kind of innovative, quality programs that teach as they entertain, "all made possible by members like you." [Sharon Percy Rockefeller, President and CEO of WETA, added this insertion in the February 2001 issue of *WETA Magazine*:

"One of the most important aspects of WETA as a public broadcaster is the station's relationship with the community we serve. Founded almost 40 years ago, WETA remains committed to creating and broadcasting educational and entertaining programs accessible to all. A particular strength of WETA's television and radio programming is our diverse slate of cultural offerings that bring the arts from our community - at the center of the national stage - into your living room.

Each month WETA creates and airs captivating local performance and arts programs, from the Dumbarton Concerts series on 90.9 FM to TV 26's ongoing concert series *In Performance at the White House* and *The Kennedy Center Presents* and Washington Opera productions such as *La Rondine*. In the nonperformance arts genre, WETA's offerings are also plentiful. The weekly program *Around Town* offers unique and valuable insights on arts tours of major local art exhibitions in programs such as *John Singer Sargent: Outside the Frame* and *Van Gogh's Van Goghs*. More such cultural shows are always in the works - presently in production are a program on the art of painter Mary Cassatt and a Kennedy Center Irish gala."]

My expectations expressed to the Senate for public radio and television programming have been far exceeded by everything being done by public broadcasting's achievements today.

*Q: How did you find the Senate when you first arrived as far as ability to work within it? Was it a contentious place when Johnson was President? Who was the Senate Leader at that time?*

PERCY: Senator Mike Mansfield (Democrat) was Majority Leader from 1961-1977. Everett Dirksen (Republican) was the Minority Leader of the Senate from 1959-1969. The Senate was not nearly as contentious then as it is now and not nearly as partisan. I treasured many, many Republican friends, but also had dear friends on the Democratic side. Senators Ted Kennedy and Bob Kennedy were very good friends. Ted and I were fellow directors for 18 years of the Kennedy Center. Senator Mike Mansfield was also a dear and treasured friend as well, as were many others.

When the idea for the Kennedy Center initially came up, even just as an idea, the suggestion was made by the White House that the Senate have two representatives, a Democrat and a Republican on the Board. And Everett Dirksen said to me, "Why don't you represent the Republicans on the Board of Directors? Your mother was a violinist in orchestras and you've been raised in music and support it. You helped bring the Lyric opera to Chicago." So I joined the Board of what we were to call the Kennedy Center and I was then elected the founding vice chairman. The founding chairman, Roger Stevens, a long time Broadway play producer, lived right across the street from us on 34<sup>th</sup> Street (Georgetown area of Washington, DC). So we worked together constantly. I had a hearing problem from World War II as a naval aviation gunnery officer. I'd have breakfast at our home with him every morning we had a board meeting so I'd understand fully what he wanted to bring up. I told him the issues that I thought we ought to work on because I was getting the money from Congress for the Kennedy Center then, so he and I worked closely together for years. He and his wife, Christina, were treasured friends of Loraine and myself. The biblical admonition to "love thy neighbors" was certainly implemented by the four of us and still is with widower Christine Stevens.

That was one of our greatest accomplishments in DC. I'd worked so hard in Chicago, for the Lyric Opera Company to bring opera to Chicago and make it a greater city. To be able to do that with the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts was one of my greatest challenges in DC. The Kennedy Center, with headquarters for many of the performing arts, would enrich life there and make Washington, DC a truly greater city.

*Q: The Performing Arts.*

PERCY: I think helping to build that was so wonderful, and now I'm working on the Georgetown Waterfront Park Commission. I'm now the founding chairman of that organization, working with the city officials and leaders and the National Parks Service and many wonderful volunteers. We want to beautify the city with a great park right on the Potomac riverfront. Here is what former General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had to say to me in a letter dated August 11, 1997:

“Dear Chuck,

Congratulations to you for accepting the chairmanship of the Georgetown Waterfront Park Commission.

I am confident that under your leadership and with the dedicated help of your colleagues and partners, you will bring about a restoration of the Georgetown waterfront that removes an eyesore and adds a place of beauty to the nation's capital.

Best of luck,  
Colin”

*Q: When did you get on the Foreign Relations Committee?*

PERCY: Very early. The first committee Everett Dirksen got me on was the Banking Committee. Everett Dirksen said, "You usually have to wait quite a while to get on that committee." But he also said, "Your father was a banker and I know you're a trustee at the Harris Trust and Savings Bank in Chicago and David Rockefeller asked you to be a trustee of the Chase Manhattan Bank in New York. So you know a lot about banking. You should be able to go on the Senate Banking Committee now." So I went on not only the Banking Committee but also the Select Senate Committee on the Elderly because of my long interest in the aging, an interest that gets greater each year that passes! He got me on these committees my first year in the Senate. In several years, I was selected to serve on the Foreign Relations Committee and later became its chairman when my Hollywood friend, Ronald Reagan, became President.

By the way, I want to discuss with you also another responsibility senators had. Both senators [of each state] have to sign on for any district court judges and judges for the Circuit Court of Appeals. Candidates for judges are officially nominated by the President, but they must be approved by the U.S. Senate. So the President always wanted to have most nominations come from the Senate. For Illinois, Everett Dirksen did this as the senior senator. But he had to have my signature on each nomination also, as the junior senator, to have it approved by Senate rules. So I set up a committee of senior lawyers, heads of law firms, and former judges - just a small committee - to help me appraise his selectees. During my two years of night law school, I developed a great respect and learned a great deal about the legal system of our country. So I said to Everett Dirksen when he gave me the names of nominees, "I will send them to my committee for their review first and give him their recommendation." On the first nominee they said, "This guy did nothing but raise money for Everett Dirksen. He's not really qualified to be a judge. His staff has advised him badly on this one." Everett Dirksen's staff said to me, "Look, we've got no other way to pay these guys back and also we think he is good." And I said, "They have to be approved by my legal committee, and I just won't approve him, despite my very high regard for Everett. I'm terribly sorry."

I always went to his office to look at the names. Finally he came to my office, after we hadn't named a judge for almost a year. He came to me and said, "Now I've got a name that you'll approve." I said, "Fine, who is it?" He said, "I know you'll approve him. My

staff says he's great." I looked at it and I said, "Why do you think I would approve him?" And he said, "I understand that he was a lawyer for Bell & Howell when you became president and CEO." I said, "Yes, he was. But did he tell you what happened to him?" "No, what happened to him," he said. "Well, he was a lawyer for us, that's true. About three months after I became president, he asked for an appointment with me. He came in to see me. He said, "I'm a lawyer for Bell & Howell, as you know, but I've never had any dealings with you because your predecessor always wanted to handle these things with me directly. For instance, I do the taxes, too, and approve them. The Cook County official that sets our taxes with our accountants is a good friend of mine. I take good care of my friends, if you know what I mean! We pay about a third in Cook County what they normally charge a company our size. He's really good to us."

I said, "You mean to say the taxes that are used to pave our streets and sidewalks, that are used to educate our children, and to pay the police to protect our citizens, we're making money by cheating the government?" He then said to me, "Well, I wouldn't put it that way." So I told Senator Everett Dirksen that I then said to this lawyer, "That's not the way I want to make money for Bell & Howell. So as far as I'm concerned, you're fired now. We'll get another lawyer to replace you."

I said to Everett Dirksen then, "For that reason, I certainly would not want to see that man a Federal judge."

Everett Dirksen in his own remarkable way said, "Well, you set up this new unique system. It is remarkable. I'm a lawyer, but you did at least go to night law school. I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm so busy as Minority Leader on a lot of other things, why don't I turn over the responsibility to you to name all these new judges, and you show me their background and your advisory committee's comments. I will probably accept whoever you'll name and sign the form with you." That even strengthened the wonderful relationship I already had with Senator Everett Dirksen.

Early on the Committee came up with the name: J.P. Stevens. I asked if that was John Paul Stevens? They said yes. I said, "He was a classmate with me at the University of Chicago. In our senior year, in 1941, he was chairman of the Senior Men's Honorary Society, while I was chairman of the Inter-Fraternity Council. [Laughter] He was the smartest senior in our class. He's a brilliant fellow; he's a wonderful man." I tell you that name was the perfect name for me. That was one of the three names they gave me. "I'll interview the other two but I don't have to interview him." But I did interview him because the other two were also outstanding. But I determined he was the best. So I told him he would be our selection. Instead of accepting immediately he said, "Let me think it over and talk to my family. I just can't give you an answer now." He went home and called me back the next morning and said, "No, I can't do it. I've really got to educate my kids. I've got to make enough money for that and other expenses. Why don't you name me six years from now and that would be fine." I said, "Look, John, in six years, I may not be a senator. In six years, we might not have a Republican president either. In six years, you ought to be on the Supreme Court. This appointment is the Circuit Court of Appeals. This isn't the district court. It's the Circuit Court of Appeals. The next step could

be the Supreme Court. Take another night, talk again to your family, and think it over."

He then accepted the next day. In five years, he was on the Supreme Court, and now he's the senior judge. I've named 22 judges to the federal courts so I'm the only law school drop-out with 22 federal judges sitting there now and they've all been wonderful.

*Q: On the personal side, do you want to talk at all about the tragedy of your daughter, Valerie, or not?*

PERCY: Yes, I will. On Sunday morning, September 18, 1966 at 5:00 a.m., in our home on the shore of Lake Michigan in Kenilworth, Illinois, my wife, Loraine, was awakened and heard my daughter moaning. Her bedroom adjoined ours. With my hearing loss from World War II, I couldn't hear that moaning. But Loraine heard it, and she woke me up and said, "I'm going in Valerie's bedroom to see her." Valerie was Sharon's identical age 21 twin sister, but they had separate bedrooms. She opened the door and looked in and saw this man standing there with a flashlight. He had stabbed Valerie, we learned later, 13 times. We don't know how he happened to come in that room but he dashed out of the house immediately and left in a car, we presume, with a driver accomplice. He had broken a glass window in our home's first floor, then put an arm in and opened the door on the lake side, and for some unknown reason went up into Valerie's room, probably awakening her. What I did was immediately turn the alarm on, connected to a siren on the roof. The siren went off. Three houses down, on Sheridan Road, was a well known doctor. He heard the alarm go off while in bed. He knew it was in the direction of our house and ran down to our door just as we were calling the police. He came up, examined Valerie, and told us his conclusion that there was no heartbeat.

The Kenilworth Police, of course, came immediately. They'd never had a murder in the city of Kenilworth to their knowledge, and they didn't know how to handle it, so they turned it over to the Chicago Police. (Charles Ramsey knows about it. He left the Chicago Police force to become Chief of Police in Washington, DC in 1998).

They worked hard on it. The FBI came into it and kept the case open for 14 years. But they never solved the mystery. The supposition was that it was related to the story of an Illinois politician who had died while running for office again. They found in his house a lot of money in cash. It was a big story in the newspapers. It could be that they thought, Chuck Percy has raised money for his campaign and might have some of it in his house. President Eisenhower had come out to Chicago to campaign for me and he addressed a very large fund-raising dinner. Actually, I never saw a dollar of it. It all went into the bank account for the U.S. Senate campaign. Bob Galvin, a treasured friend and chairman of Motorola Corporation, was our finance chairman. On September 18th, they broke in and probably were looking through the house for campaign cash. That Sunday morning, we didn't go to church. We read the Bible lesson with the family grouped around us on the porch. At the end of reading the Bible lesson, I said to the family, "Let's just do this. I'm going to suspend my campaign for the Senate. I'm going to announce this tomorrow. Let's just go away together someplace and get away from here to think and pray. Maybe go out to California. But let us spend the rest of our lives doing

the kinds of things that would make Valerie proud of us. Certainly she was a wonderful daughter to Loraine and myself, sister, and granddaughter to you. Her spirit will go to Heaven. She did so much good, particularly with the children, minorities, the disadvantaged, and low-income families in Illinois. We can all be very proud of her."

Valerie had been in charge of "Volunteers for Percy."

Then Senator Paul Douglas, whom I was running against, and it couldn't have been more thoughtful of him - suspended his campaign for two weeks. Finally the thought came to us in California, what would Valerie want us to do? It was unanimous with the family that she would want us to go back to the campaign. We had just another month, and then November and the election.

I called Senator Paul Douglas and thanked him very much indeed for suspending his campaign, and I expressed my deep appreciation to him for that. But I said, "Now let's both go out and do the best we can." So I did, and the family all returned to the campaign and we won.

So we have a grandchild now, Sharon and Jay's daughter, who was named Valerie, after Sharon's twin sister. She is the godmother now of one of our other grandchildren, Raina, our other daughter's (Gail's) daughter, and also [in May, 2000] was married at National Cathedral in Washington, DC to a great young man, James Carnegie, from Australia and is living there now.

*Q: I was thinking this might be a good time to stop. I've got a car parked and all that. I thought we might pick it up the next time when you're in the Senate. We've already covered the judicial appointments and your work on housing for the poor. I think then we should pick up the rest of the Senate, particularly because of our particular focus on the International Relations Committee and all that.*

PERCY: Very good.

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*Q: Today is the 20th of July, 1998, and we thought we would go back and look at your development of your interest in foreign relations even prior to your coming into the Senate. We'd already touched on the United Nations effort early on. Before we move even farther, I'd like to ask again, what was your impression when the United Nations was being developed when you were in San Francisco? You were a young man. How did you feel about it?*

PERCY: I had my first experience with the United Nations when based at the Alameda Naval Air Station, across the bay from San Francisco, while the idea was being put together and organized, as I told you. I was terribly excited about it. Because after all, we were in a war and the whole country was concentrating on the war, foreign policy, relations between countries, between ourselves and Germany and Japan and so forth. All

of these things were so important and so engrossing, that to find a way to get countries to work together like our states work together, and like we work together with Mexico and Canada, seemed terribly important to me. I did develop my early interest when I realized that we were quite unique in that the only original native inhabitants of the U.S. are really native Indians. Almost everyone I knew, including myself, had origins that went to other countries outside the United States. For instance, the origin of my father's side was in England. They came to the United States before the American Revolution, settled in the South, in Virginia, Mississippi, and Alabama. My father was born in Mobile, Alabama, but his family had a long heritage in Great Britain.

My mother's family came from Germany. So here we were in World War II, Germany, our enemy, was one of our enemies and my mother's heritage from Germany and my father's, Great Britain, our ally. Fortunately, while I was stationed at the Alameda Naval Air Station outside San Francisco, California, we did have training working with British pilots and gunnery officers, so I then had an opportunity to talk with them about the future of the world afterwards, what were we going to be doing after the war, how could we work together, how we could find a way to get together peacefully with Japan and with Germany? That's what led me, of course, to take very positive steps at Bell & Howell Company to internationalize.

In my freshman year at the University of Chicago, I met David Rockefeller. He was getting his Ph.D. at the time I was getting my bachelor's degree. He knew that I was a poor boy and was working my way through. He was the richest student on campus. His grandfather had founded and financed the University of Chicago. At that stage in his life, and then throughout his life, David Rockefeller was interested in foreign countries, and he spent a good deal of time over at the University of Chicago's International House, which was also established by the Rockefeller Foundation. He frequently invited me over for lunches and dinners to sit down with students from various countries - from Europe, from Latin America, from Asia. We had a great many foreign students at the University of Chicago. We would sit and talk with them about their countries - why they came to this country for their education, what were they going to do when they went back, if they're going back, or were they going to stay in the U.S.?

And that developed in me a great interest in foreign affairs and education, though at that time I had never been out of our country.

And that led me, years later incidentally when I left the U.S. Senate in 1985, the first thing I did was to take on the job as president of the Institute of International Education (IIE), which handled all foreign students in the U.S., and all U.S. college students that went abroad to study. International House at the University of Chicago gave me the first opportunity I had to discuss at great length the differences between the people, culture, business, and government of the United States and the rest of the world.

While mentioning IIE, I will add that just after leaving the Senate in January 1985, President Ronald Reagan asked me to join him and Secretary of State George Shultz in the Oval Office at the White House for a talk. He said to me, "You have had a longtime

relationship with India and have had a close relationship with every Prime Minister since 1952. George Shultz and I would like you now to be our U.S. ambassador to India. Would you accept this appointment?"

I quickly thought, that I desperately wanted to spend more time with my wife and family because of the tremendous demands on my time during my 18 years in the Senate, and my mother was then 92 years old and I did not want to put 6000 miles between her and my whole family even though Loraine could go with me. (Later in our conversation I told President Reagan that.) I thanked them both for their thoughtfulness, but then said, "I am sorry, I cannot accept your kind and exciting offer because I have just accepted another job offer to be chairman and CEO of the Institute of International Education (IIE), and the salary I would get as ambassador to India is fully taxable, but the salary I will get at IIE has no tax on it at all and I need funds to pay off my large campaign debt."

The President looked startled, and then said, "Well, tell us, how much is the salary that you will be receiving?"

I said, "Mr. President, I was afraid that you might ask me that. It is a volunteer job, but they promised to pay me \$1.00 a year, but they also promised to never give it to me, so there is no tax!"

Then I told them the real reason about the family, but thanked them again profusely for the offer.

He then replied, "I know your family and I know what your schedule has been for 18 years and I fully understand your reluctance to go to India despite your love for it, its democratic government, and its people, Amen!"

*Q: We're going back now to the development of your feeling towards international affairs.*

PERCY: That's right. I mentioned the British pilots and gunnery officers who were training in the United States and I worked with them.

Before I went in the Navy, I did get a contract from them when I was put in charge of defense operations at Bell & Howell Company, as I said before. And now to expand on this subject, I called it the Defense Coordinating Department and I was head of it. I did very soon get a contract from the Defense Plant Corporation of the U.S. Government to authorize a transfer of land in Lincolnwood, Illinois for us to build a plant there. We moved our main offices from 1801 Larchmont Avenue in Chicago to 7100 McCormick Road, Lincolnwood, Illinois. It was a very large plant and by the time I went into the Navy, the plant was finished so that Bell & Howell could manufacture their own lenses. Before the war, most of our lenses came from Germany and Japan. The purpose of the whole building was for Bell & Howell to contribute to the military to build products that would help train Naval aircraft gunnery officers. A gunsight aiming point camera was developed in 1941 by us that was first used in training, but later used in combat to record

the accuracy of machine gun fire. Bell & Howell sights were described at the time as the "eyes" of the B-29 bomber. And the Bell & Howell new EYEMO camera, as it was called, was adapted to military use therefore and became a very standard military camera. It was commonly and humorously rumored in the Naval Air Force that everybody above the rank of a First Lieutenant should get a Bell & Howell EYEMO camera! They thought it was such an exciting product.

In the earlier years, it was the company's British affiliate that produced many of the lenses, but war conditions, of course, changed that. I worked out the arrangement for us to purchase Taylor, Taylor, and Hobson Company in England and we used them to train our personnel so that we could become manufacturers of optics and lenses at our Lincolnwood plant during World War II. Bell & Howell then maintained the largest engineering and research laboratory in the world, devoted to development of motion picture and applied apparatus exclusively, and was fully equipped with machine tools and trained personnel necessary for such precision manufacturing. Among the major World War II products that did not fit the pattern of a pure mechanical device was the "flight simulator." This device was used for training airborne pilots, navigators, and bombardiers in the use of radar by simulated flights over enemy territory and bombing targets, specifically in the Pacific area. The flight simulator was a very large and complex device incorporating technologies with ultra-high radio frequencies, ultra-sonics, optics, and mechanics. This very unusual device was on demonstration display in Chicago's Museum of Plant and Industry many years after World War II. The advent of the 16 mm motion picture sound projectors in 1932, four years before my time at Bell & Howell, of course, became very famous during the course of the war in training and upgrading the quality of our soldiers. I frequently used Bell & Howell equipment, as did my large staff, during my three years of naval service during World War II in the Pacific Ocean area.

*Q: 1945.*

PERCY: I returned to Bell & Howell in 1945 after the war ended. It was a private company until then, but when I came back, I strongly supported President Joseph McNabb's idea that in order to get enough money to do the kind of things we wanted to in the post war period, to globalize ourselves, we needed to go public. All the impressions I'd had while in the Navy, and while at the University of Chicago, led me to believe that Latin America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world, would be great future markets for American products, but for us to reach them would require far more funds.

Therefore, we did go public. The change required the transfer of four and one-half million dollars from earned surplus to the capital account, thus making available 150,000 shares required for Bell & Howell Company to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange. The directors, of which I was one by then, accepted the offer of Joseph McNabb, the president and CEO. I was granted a stock option by the company and by the directors. At that time, I did not own a single share of our stock. Joe McNabb sold 37,625 of his shares but he wanted to buy the same number of shares back when it became a public company. The official statement was issued, and they did offer 150,000 shares of common stock, and 30,000 shares of cumulative preferred stock to the public. The banks we worked with as I recall were the First National Bank of Chicago, Investment and

Loaning Bank, City Bank, and Farmers Bank and Trust Company of New York.

*Q: Let's talk about during your time at Bell & Howell, you did mention that you had taken a trip to Germany and to France, and to England after the war to see about developing trade. The Chicago area had been the heart of isolationism at one point prior to the war. Senator Taft and his group, Borah, and others were mid-Westerners. Was there a residue of isolationism in the area and people you knew? Were you fighting that? Right after the war did you find that there was a feeling among some of the influential people maybe to return to a certain amount of isolationism or not?*

PERCY: There were a great many businessmen in the Middle West in those days, including Chicago, that were isolationists, who believed that the United States should hold itself separate and aloof from other nations. Isolationists believed that it was a mistake to get involved either in international trade agreements or in mutual assistance pacts.

The America First Committee was formed just before my 21st birthday in September 1940, and became the most powerful isolationist group in America before we entered World War II. It had more than 800,000 members who wanted to keep America neutral. It tried to influence public opinion through publications and speeches. However, America First was dissolved 4 days after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Some isolationism still remained but I remained a strong free trader and my wartime letters to Joe McNabb proposed postwar globalization. I did go to England very soon after returning to the company. I was, by the way, elected a director in 1945 at age 25 when I came back from the Navy Air Corps. I was the youngest director they ever had. I was given the responsibility to globalize the company. So I did first go to England to meet with the notable J. Arthur Rank, and suggested the idea of our establishing a joint company in England with the Rank organization and Bell & Howell. We would build a factory outside of London and manufacture our line of products in England so that we could also have a distribution office there, where we could then develop agencies all through Europe and distribute into that area.

*Q: Were you thinking of doing anything sort of connecting with any political powers in, say, the Chicago, Illinois area about internationalism at that time?*

PERCY: I did join the Chicago Club. I became interested in the Council on Foreign Relations in Chicago and became the youngest member of both of those organizations. They did have business members who had interests abroad. The lectures and meetings they had were very good indeed. I did concentrate a majority of my time on company activities. But of course I had my three children (Sharon, Valerie, and Roger) to look after alone, although I had bought a house in Wilmette, Illinois, and had good household help. After I was elected president (I told you the story of when I was elected president and then went out to Sun Valley.), I met Loraine March 7, 1949, while skiing, and we were married in 1950. We lost our first baby at birth, but subsequently did have two children, Gail and Mark. I was concentrating on family concerns but also did do a great

deal of work in continuing Bell & Howell's worldwide expansion efforts because Loraine, who was a wonderful mother to all my children, was also very interested and helpful, as she had lived abroad for several years. She loved to travel with me and sometimes we were able to take our children. Both of her brothers also lived and worked abroad. John Guyer joined the Peace Corps in India, and was country director of the program in Afghanistan. Later he started and was director of the Asia Foundation project in Sri Lanka. David Guyer was with the United Nations and later was president of Save the Children Foundation in New York. So we had a family that was very much interested in international relations and worthy causes, as were their wives (David's wife, Carol Penny Guyer, and John's wife, Diana Guyer). Meanwhile, the Bell & Howell sales had gotten up as high as 22 million dollars in 1945, the year the war ended. But they dropped down the next year to 10 million, less than half.

*Q: This was mainly because no more war work. Was that it?*

PERCY: That's right. Even by the time 1949 came, my first year as president, the sales were only \$13,238,000. The net profits were only \$447,000. The number of employees were 1813 in 1949 when I was elected president. From that time on it was my responsibility to build the company. We did so by internal growth through intensive research, engineering, manufacturing, and marketing, and also by merging with or purchasing other companies. Some of the companies we purchased had operations abroad already, which helped us very much indeed. One big purchase got us into the microfilm business. I had long wanted to diversify the company and get into other fields. We purchased the microfilm division of Pathe Manufacturing Company in July, 1946. Our microfilm division included engineering, production, sales, and services which we organized. After we had the company two years, we expanded it with recorders, readers, and automatic feeders, so the recorder could photograph more than 23,000 checks in 80 minutes.

We also signed a contract in 1948 with Burroughs Adding Machine Company, making them the exclusive worldwide distributors of the entire line of microfilm equipment. We started to really get going then. We felt that we ought to be doing far more abroad.

The death of Joseph McNabb, Bell & Howell president and CEO, occurred late in 1948. It was a real setback for us and hurt me deeply as I treasured his friendship.

*Q: During the fifties, you became president in 1949, was it?*

PERCY: January, '49.

*Q: And you didn't run for the Senate until 1967?*

PERCY: I ran for the Senate in 1966 and entered in January 1967, but I had made the decision in 1963 to go into public life.

*Q: Oh, yes. In that period from '49 to '63, how did you find, for example, the Council on*

*Foreign Relations? Did you find this a useful place? What was your impression of it?*

PERCY: Oh, yes, very much so. Mainly businessmen or academicians, presidents of universities, professors, doctors, and so forth, were members. There was a good cross-section of people that were members of that organization (and I am still a member), and also in the Chicago Club. But the general impression I had from the members, and the thing I learned most from them, was that we needed a stronger and more creative political system in our country. Very much so. And so I did get interested in politics and became a Republican precinct captain. I never did get into politics at all when I lived in Chicago, but I didn't move to the North Shore of Chicago until I became a junior at New Trier Township High School, and I had that volunteer position there in Wilmette.

*Q: You were saying you were a precinct captain in Wilmette.*

PERCY: Right. In Wilmette, Illinois. Acting as a GOP precinct captain got me interested in causing people to come out and vote, having meetings to encourage them to vote. I wasn't telling them how to vote, but on the other hand, I was a Republican precinct captain. I wanted them to look at our party and study it carefully. The Republican Party was a popular party on the North Shore of Chicago, whereas Chicago then was largely a Democratic city. But we were a northern suburb. Then I began to indicate that raising money for the party would help candidates get elected. As I mentioned earlier, later in life, when I had married Loraine and we lived in Kenilworth, Illinois, Don Rumsfeld, whom I had never even met, came to our home one evening. When he introduced himself to me, I said, "Don't stand outside. Come on in." We sat down and talked for an hour and he said we both had graduated from New Trier High School and he was interested in running for Congress. As he left, I said, "I will absolutely support you without any ifs, ands, or buts about it. I'll support you, and we'll see if we can't help you financially as well as with political support." That began a young man's distinguished career.

*Q: What about on the North Shore, as a Republican, getting out the vote? Was there much of an ethnic vote there? I'm thinking of Chicago, one thinks of the Germans, the Jews, the Poles, maybe others. For the group you were aiming at, were they pretty much what today we would call sort of WASPs?*

PERCY: No. I think of the very fact that after I got in the Senate, Mayor Daley invited me to come to Chicago when Pope John Paul II, head of the Vatican in Rome, made his first visit to the United States, and having come originally from Poland, he didn't come first to Washington, DC, he didn't come to New York City, he came direct to Chicago. He went through the New York airport, but flew right on to Chicago. When he landed at the airport, the Mayor and I met him there. I stayed with him for three days. He came there first because Chicago was the second largest Polish population city in the world. Ethnic groups were terribly important in Chicago particularly. Attracting the ethnic groups, showing your interest in their countries of origin, was always very important.

*Q: I was just wondering whether during this period, before you got into the Senate, was the Republican Party able to make much of an inroad into the ethnic groups in that area?*

*You think of the Democrats for years, for generations, had been sort of the ethnic party; the New Deal and all that. I was wondering whether you were one of those working to make the Republicans reach out more?*

PERCY: I became, later, chairman of the Republican Illinois Finance Committee and after that I became vice chairman of the National Republican Finance Committee. Cliff Folger was the chairman. My principle orientation in both jobs was toward businessmen and women, but also many important ethnic groups. You get them organized behind you, interested in your candidates, and when I ran for office, to ask their support in electing me. Many of my Polish friends, for instance, would say, "This man understands Poland; he's been there, he can work with us." That was the way we approached them, by working very, very closely with ethnic groups. We always had a chairman for each ethnic group in any particular campaign, particularly when I ran for the Senate the first time in 1966.

*Q: How did you find when you ran for governor, you ran for governor when?*

PERCY: In 1964.

*Q: In 1964, when you ran for governor, how did the ethnic vote come out for you?*

PERCY: In that particular race, the ethnic group was influenced greatly by the fact that Goldwater was on the ticket. He was running for president. My preferred candidate originally was Governor Nelson Rockefeller. I thought he would appeal to a broad section of the ethnic group. But Goldwater didn't have those interests and he didn't have the kind of attraction that would appeal to ethnics. However, I had pledged I would support whoever won the Republican nomination. So I did support Goldwater in 1964 when I ran for governor and that helped defeat me, which turned out to be a blessing for me because I love my life after the Senate, but also loved my 18 years there.

*Q: Because we're concentrating on the international side because of our organization and we're trying to get an American senator on the Foreign Relations Committee during a very crucial time and where he was coming from politically, what about during the senatorial campaign - this was 1966 - you said you'd developed an ethnic captain, so to speak, for various things. Can you talk about what did this cause you to do? I mean, how would you deal with a very large Polish vote, for example?*

PERCY: In that particular race, it wasn't as much the ethnic vote as it was dominated by Vietnam. That was the big issue. That became a major issue in the campaign as well as, as I mentioned to you, Paul Douglas was the founder of an organization called "A Million Americans to Keep Red China out of the United Nations." Those two things - Vietnam and the United Nations - became the two biggest issues that we debated constantly in that campaign - as to whether we should be in the Vietnam War and raise all the resources that would be necessary to win that war, or whether this was wasn't really in our national security interest, as I constantly maintained.

*Q: I would have thought that the Polish American vote, that many of the ethnic votes, would have been more to support our cause in Vietnam than not. I mean, these are people*

*who traditionally come from countries where there were communists and opposed to communism. And have traditionally been a solid supporter of military action. I mean, many people go into the ethnic places; this is how you move up in society by going into the military, moving that way. Did you find this true, or not?*

PERCY: No, I really didn't. I didn't have any trouble getting the support of the Poles. They really supported me. They realized that I had been a strong proponent of Poland against the Soviet Union, for instance.

*Q: How did that, I mean, during the campaign and all, were there any attempts to sort of label you as a Red if you were for opening the UN to China and you were opposed to our action in Vietnam? I would have thought this would have made you sort of vulnerable to be known as a real left-winger.*

PERCY: I was looked upon as a moderate in social issues, but as a businessman in economic matters. You don't generally look on a businessman as "liberal" - we fight for the free enterprise system, we fight for the competitive system, we fight for democracy against communism - and there were no ifs, ands, or buts about my anti-communist feelings.

*Q: What about China - the recognition of China? This was pretty early on. How did that go during the campaign?*

PERCY: Well, I felt very strongly about this issue and I think there was a general feeling that the largest country on earth ought to be in the United Nations. It is the United Nations and why not bring them into it to see if we couldn't bring peace to this area and make them a friendly member of the international family? I had the strong feeling that political friendships through the centuries have tended to follow the trade lanes. That therefore we really ought to emphasize much more trade with China. And that's why I started so hard right after World War II to encourage trade with Japan and Germany. Look at what that has done now to bring us together to become allies and friends through the years. Just as I mentioned, the strength that Germany now has with France for the first time is largely in trade. They've become in 1999 their respective largest trading partners. You couldn't imagine another war between France and Germany as a result of that now.

*Q: What about Taiwan? I'm sure that in debates if you were talking about recognition of China, that's always been the most complex. It's a problem that hasn't been solved yet. There were very strong proponents in the United States Senate, particularly on the Republican side, but also there were some on the Democratic side, of great support for Taiwan. Of course, Senator Knowland from California, Senator Cranston at the time. But, you know, I mean, how were you dealing as a Republican candidate for the Senate, with the Taiwan issue?*

PERCY: I've always supported Taiwan's right to be a member of international organizations. But China has always considered me a good friend despite this. As I mentioned, they asked me to head the first delegation from Congress that ever came to

China sponsored by them, after relationships were opened up by Nixon and Kissinger. Yet they knew that I had questions about their Taiwan policy. They just didn't want me to make a big issue of that on that trip. [Laughter] But they knew and were fully aware of the fact that I did have respect for Taiwan's right to greater independence.

*Q: You got into the Senate in '67.*

PERCY: I was sworn into the Senate January 4, 1967.

*Q: What were your initial committee assignments?*

PERCY: My initial committee assignments were the Banking Committee and the Select Committee on Aging and also Government Affairs. I wrote a book, "Growing Old in a Country of the Young." I spent a lot of time in my early public life going to the elderly, making them a part of our public affairs program, to seek them out, male and female. Not too many politicians did that in those days. I also went to the poor, the low income families on the south side of Chicago, the African American community. Jesse Jackson, early on, became a friend and met with me occasionally. The elderly were a group that I really worked hard with, to make them a part of the organization and to see everything that we could do to help the elderly renew their purpose in life. I worked heavily on all the legislation to assist and help the aging, such as Medicare.

*Q: When did you go on the Foreign Relations Committee?*

PERCY: I went on in 1972. I would have liked to have gone on earlier - but I was put on very early at that. I was put on the Banking Committee early by Everett Dirksen, another more difficult committee to get on. Did I tell you the story about when I resigned from the board at the Harris Trust and Savings Bank and the Chase Manhattan Bank?

*Q: I don't recall that.*

PERCY: I was on the Banking Committee and I just decided that it would be wise to resign from both the Harris Trust and Savings Bank Board in Chicago and the Chase Manhattan Bank Board in New York. I felt that I should devote my time entirely to the Senate. Going to board meetings would take me out of DC. In 1967 there were no laws or regulations requiring me to give up these positions. (Now, of course, the laws and regulations have changed.) But I said to the Chase Manhattan and its chairman, David Rockefeller, that I felt I should resign now that I am in the Senate, and they said, "Oh, no. You're on the Banking Committee! More than ever, we want you to stay on our Board." I said, "Look, if I am on the Banking Committee, and a vote comes up on an issue affecting banking, that would affect either the Harris Trust or the Chase Manhattan, I would personally feel obligated to simply tell the committee and the Senate that I would not be voting on that issue because I'm on a bank board that would be affected. Whereas if I resign from the Board, I'd still have my whole banking background. You know how strongly I feel about the banking industry and its remarkable effect on our personal as well as our business lives. Then I could vote. And I would be voting in a way that would

be very favorable to the future well-being of the banking industry. But if I'm accepting a fee as a director, then I don't feel it would be right for me to vote on any of those issues." Many business people thought I was wrong and foolish for resigning when I was director of two important banks. When I told the other directors I would abstain from voting on bank issues if I stayed on the Board, they could hardly wait till I resigned! When I left the Senate, the Harris made me a life trustee. And the Chase invited me back to an annual meeting at the Rockefeller Estate for many years.

*Q: Of course, you are absolutely right. In fact, it's rather difficult to understand the reasoning of people who would be in a position and do that. Talk about conflict of interest. On the Banking Committee, did any international issues come up? During the time you were there, did any issues that dealt with foreign banks, foreign trade, come up?*

PERCY: I don't really remember any particular things that would be important from the foreign standpoint except our relationship with the World Bank.

*Q: While we're on it, though, during the time you were there, what would be the major domestic issues that were dealing with the Banking Committee?*

PERCY: Mergers, of course. And should investment companies get into banking or should they be separate? But I had done so much merging in Bell & Howell, which I headed. In 1946, we took over the manufacturing and distribution of products abroad by merging with J. Arthur Rank Organization in England. The international division of Bell & Howell was established in 1947, two years before I became president. We worked with banks in all of those countries we were in - they were extremely important, so I just felt that our banks over here could expand if we encouraged other countries to do business with us. There were many who really wanted to be isolationists and put tariffs on imports. I came down and testified before the Senate when I was at Bell & Howell, in favor of freer trade. Kodak and others didn't want foreign companies to be shipping products into the U.S. I said, "No. We have to expose ourselves to business relationships abroad, and if they are more efficient and lower cost than we are, then we've got to know how they're doing that, and learn how to compete by lowering our costs and still increase our efficiency and quality. That's why I went over and studied companies abroad, studied how they were operating. That led President Dwight Eisenhower to appoint me as chairman, after the war ended, of a mission to go to Italy. I selected six CEOs of diversified companies to go with me, including Arthur C. Nielson. We went over to help reconstruct the economy of our former enemy, Italy, and help them rebuild. But we also said, "We are opening our markets to you. Rather than fighting us, let's trade and work together that way." I invited them to come over and see our headquarters and our Chicago area factories, tour our manufacturing plants, go through them and see what techniques we were using.

*Q: Were there any issues, you came in in 1967, and you didn't get on the Foreign Relations Committee until when?*

PERCY: 1972 was very soon. It was unbelievable that I got on that early. I had seniority

over everyone in my class that came in. Senator Howard Baker was in that 1967 class, as were Senators Mac Mathias and Ed Brooks. I was the first one to get on the Foreign Relations Committee and was elected chairman from 1980 through 1984, when Ronald Reagan was President.

*Q: Prior to that, say early '70s, Vietnam was going strong between '67 and '71. Did you make any trips to Vietnam?*

PERCY: Yes, I did. In the fall of 1967, I decided to go to Vietnam - a decision that I never realized at the time would be a near fatal one. I talked to Scott Cohen who was my chief staff adviser on foreign affairs. We began preparation for this trip. Scott Cohen had previously been with the CIA and Army Intelligence, and he and his wife Rita continued to be dear treasured friends of ours in Washington, DC. In the fifties he had established and operated a bureau of Broadcast Information Service in Saigon, and, since then, had followed developments there very closely. We had hoped to leave in early October 1967 but it was postponed until November because my Home Ownership Bill for Low Income Families was hanging fire in the Senate. Home ownership for low income families was just so precious and dear to me, to see if we couldn't pass a bill that would make it possible for low income people to own their homes rather than just be renting and then just not caring enough about the property. My bill would make it possible for them to have practically interest-free loans so that they could more easily buy a house for their family, and feel the pride of ownership, so I delayed the trip to Vietnam, but in the first week of December 1967 (my first year in the Senate) we left for Saigon, Vietnam, spending a day first at Stanford University with an Asian studies specialist.

My wife, Loraine, went with us. We had together visited Vietnamese orphanages and hospitals in the United States to get a little feeling for habits and customs of the Vietnamese people. We didn't want to confine our talks to government officials and politicians; we wanted a much broader view. In the U.S. we had talked with Vietnamese newspaper correspondents and business and professional people to make sure that we had an understanding of both the anti-communist and anti-government positions. Our ambassador to Vietnam was Ellsworth Bunker and he had invited us to stay at the home in Vietnam of an American official who was in the United States at the time. Instead, we arranged to be quartered in the home of an American businessman in Saigon. We hired private guards to ensure our security. Scott Cohen went out a week early and stayed at the Caravelle Hotel where many U.S. and foreign correspondents were living. Everett Martin, *Newsweek* Bureau Chief - Mertin Perry and Francois Sully of *Newsweek*, Georgianne Geyer of the *Chicago Daily News* were based there. Tom Buckley of *The New York Times*, and from *The Christian Science Monitor* Miss Beverly Eap were there also, and Peter Arnett, a New Zealander, of the Associated Press, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the Vietnam War.

We visited Guam en route to Saigon, and we were interviewed by the editor of a paper from the Utah State University, Jack Peterson, about my feelings about Vietnam. I said to him at that time, "I have always felt that our greatest mistake in Vietnam or Southeast Asia was that we have taken the initiative of the war away from the Asians. This was a

land war in Asia and the Asians, I said, must be prepared to sacrifice for it and take the initiative and responsibility. Our withdrawal would be a disaster for the South Vietnamese and yet they refused to commit themselves wholeheartedly to the conflict. This is why I had proposed an All-Asian Peace Conference to be attended only by Asian nations." And that I made as a very strong point to the Senate and the U.S. public on my return.

My wife, Loraine, was interested in the care of orphaned children, the poor and the disabled, and the sick. She gathered information for an article that *Redbook*, a women's magazine, asked her to write for them. I felt that we should have knowledge of the Vietcong atrocities. I decided, therefore, that I wanted to go to Dak Son, a newly abandoned village in the highlands where the previous week, "the Vietcong, in a flame throwing rage, had burned to death more than 200 people." The pilot of the embassy's helicopter that was to fly us to the village of Dak Son, and who made the arrangements, assured me that officials now considered the area reasonably safe. The ambassador seemed to also feel that there was no problem about our flying out there. So I took Scott Cohen and my wife, Loraine, out in the helicopter. Our group also included Kenneth Schmid, who was owner of a Chicago Printing and Engraving Company, who had been a Navy aerial photographer in World War II and had brought his equipment with him to Vietnam. Actually it was Schmid who took the very dramatic action shots of myself and our group under fire. Fred Ward of Black Star, one of the nation's top news photographers, was with us also on assignment.

After we landed, we walked away from the helicopter in Dak Son, but Loraine intuitively said, "I'm going to stay on the plane." So the rest of us went out, Scott Cohen and I and the others, went into the village and as we roamed around looking at the burned-out shacks, the place where so many had died, and children had suffocated (there were pictures in *Time Magazine* of this terrible village atrocity). All of a sudden we heard gunfire and the heavy thuds of mortar shells around us. I started to run to get away from the firing and all of a sudden one of the rubber garters that held up my socks broke and I stumbled over it and fell right down on the ground. I just stayed flat on the ground, and that probably saved my life!

When the firing started, the helicopter immediately took off with Loraine on board. We thought, what do we do now? We learned later that the helicopter pilot had immediately radioed to tell the embassy what had happened. U.S. planes soon came in view with their guns blaring on both sides. The only one of our party who was armed was Dennis Smith of the Mutual Security Agency, who was with us. He had a carbine and a .38 caliber snub-nosed pistol, which he handed to me. It was while we huddled in the dirt bunker that the helicopter pilot took off, flying Loraine to the town of Song Ven about a mile and a half away. Loraine said, "There was nothing I could do about it but pray." But she knew that they were notifying the embassy and military forces. After the helicopter landed, a nurse came up to her that was treating the horribly burned victims of the December 5 attack and counseled with her. Our helicopter, which was accompanied then by four U.S. Army helicopter gunships, returned to Dak Son to rescue us. We saw these four helicopters come in. It was absolutely wonderful! None of us were seriously hurt. We

were merely scratched and bruised. Scott Cohen said his main reaction during the brief episode was one of disbelief. "I couldn't believe it." He said, "Why were we in this situation? We were told this area was secure. If I get seriously hurt here, how can I explain this to my wife and baby?" That's what he recalled. The reaction in Saigon was very strong. They really felt that we had tried to do something to highlight the plight of the poor people in the village of Dak Son. Another U.S. helicopter flew out to pick us up, despite the gunfire.

After we came back to the Vietnamese capital and embassy, reporters questioned us and on television they asked us all kinds of questions. I told the story about the garters. When I returned to DC, I received 10 pairs of used garters from people that had seen our television interviews, who sent garters to me, and the only garter company left in the United States sent me a couple of pairs of new garters. [Laughter]

*Q: After your talks with Ambassador Bunker, how did you feel about what we should do in Vietnam?*

PERCY: I just had the conviction that this is something the Asian countries had to work out, that we could not serve our interests by war. That we had to find a way to mediate it and negotiate.

*Q: By the time you got on the Foreign Relations Committee, what about your colleagues? Say you came back from Vietnam talking about negotiations. What were you getting from them?*

PERCY: It was a mixed feeling. But on the other hand, I think the decision was made that we would try and negotiate this out. I constantly got more support for an All-Asian Peace Conference.

*Q: One of the problems was it's very difficult to get the other side, basically the North Vietnamese, to negotiate. And also the South Vietnamese, because essentially the North Vietnamese wanted to take over all of the South, and the South Vietnamese didn't want them to. In a way, the way the things ended was the North Vietnamese did take over the South. So, with all negotiation, were you getting the feeling from others that you can't negotiate unless somebody's willing to negotiate with you?*

PERCY: I supported the concept that we should keep American troops out there just to have them available to steer off the North; if we took those out, that would impede any peace efforts. There wouldn't be any North Vietnamese incentive there for them. But an outright, all-out war, I just didn't see that that would have a purpose. The Vietnam War was dividing the United States very badly. It was just so unbelievable. Did I mention to you what happened at Stanford University and the University of Chicago?

*Q: No, you didn't.*

PERCY: The University of Chicago asked me, as a U.S. senator then but also as a

graduate in 1941 and as a trustee of the University of Chicago since 1950, to speak to the students in a large assembly hall. The students had recently seized in anger and violence two university buildings and would not even let the professors in them administer or teach. They were so enraged about the Vietnam War. The president of the U. of C. asked me to speak because they all knew that I had opposed our entry into the war and the students would really listen to me. The meeting went well and they accepted my condemnation of their violent reactions.

That same year our son, Roger Percy, was graduating from Stanford University. Then the chairman of the board of trustees called me and said, "We want to warn you that there is a lot of difficulty and violence here. We want you to address our students on their violence. If you don't want to speak, we'll understand."

I knew I was going out for my son's graduation anyway so why not try to help out. So I told the Stanford chairman and then the president, "I feel even stronger about the fact that I ought to come out and speak, because of what's happening on my own University of Chicago campus as well as yours. So I did go out with my wife, Loraine. In my talk, I mentioned that the students had wrongfully taken the law into their own hands. Here in school, they were studying democracy, they were studying how to live together and how to work together. And they had broken the law by destroying property. I said that future students and faculty would condemn those that participated in violence, including those in this graduating class. I was booed by some of the students; not all of them, but some of them.

But then, I said, "On the other hand, I do feel and I know why you're so upset because I do feel strongly about this Vietnam War. I think it is splitting the country, just like it's splitting your campus and my campus at the University of Chicago. We have to find a way to stop this violence and stop this war and solve the foreign problems diplomatically. Some of the right-wing parents booed me for saying that I was against the Vietnam War, but others applauded. Afterwards, some of the trustees told me, "We're so glad you did this. We're so glad we decided to go ahead with the assembly because you really laid it in to the students, but they ended up basically with you." That was a very interesting event that my family will never forget and an exciting graduation for our son, Roger. But one of the things you face when you're in public life, is you have to take positions and you can't always take positions that are popular. You must take a position that you think is absolutely right - that you believe in and can live with the rest of your life.

*Q: Did you find yourself - and we're talking before you went on the Foreign Relations Committee - the Tet Offensive was in 1968 - did you find yourself - was there a particular grouping about the Vietnam War who sided with you within the Senate? I mean, did you coalesce around this idea?*

PERCY: I had fine support from some of my colleagues. Senator Ed Brooke was with me, and Senator Howard Baker was with me, my Republican classmates. I had a lot of support for my position, including Democratic Senator Mike Mansfield, a leader of the Senate.

*Q: I thought we might stop at this point and I'll put where we should go from here on.*

PERCY: Thanks.

*Q: We haven't talked about your view of the Soviet Union. We talked about the time you went into the Senate before you got on the Foreign Relations Committee, '67 until around '71 or '72. So next time we'll talk about your view of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Bloc and also about China.*

PERCY: That would be in what year?

*Q: About '67 to about '72. And then we'll go on to when you went on the Foreign Relations Committee, but we haven't touched that yet. And were there any other issues, foreign relations, that you got at all involved with? For example, were there any problems with Canada when you first came on because I'm sure in Chicago, Chicago looks more towards trade in Canada than anywhere else. Chicago is very oriented towards Canada. Not just Chicago, but all of Illinois.*

PERCY: Oh, yes.

*Q: Were there any particular problems with our relations with Canada that you came to know?*

PERCY: No problems, as I had a great relationship with Canada. First of all, I had an office in Canada. I opened an office in 1948 and established a small plant up there for Bell & Howell which was a dramatic thing at that particular time. Then I joined the International Advisory Board of the Bank of Montreal and used to go up there frequently for board meetings and had close relations with Canada during my 18 years in the U.S. Senate.

*Q: When we pick this up the next time, we'll pick up this early period before you were on the Foreign Relations Committee. We've talked about Vietnam, but we'll talk then about China, the Soviet Union, Canada, and were there any particular problems with Western Europe during this particular time? Trade problems or anything dealing with foreign affairs? So we'll pick it up then.*

\* \* \*

*Let's follow through on Canada. During the time you were, again, in the Senate, both before you went on the Foreign Relations Committee and until the time you left the Senate, were there any particular areas that you dealt with as a senator concerning Canada that come to mind?*

PERCY: First, again while at Bell & Howell Company, in the early 1950s, we not only built a plant up there, but we gave them preference on products and product lines that

were scarce after World War II. My belief that political friendships have tended through the centuries to follow the trade lanes, not only strengthens one country but binds them with another. You see around the world so many adjoining countries that quarrel and fight with their neighboring countries over border problems. India and Pakistan have had terrible difficulties through the years. But to strengthen our relationship, bind ourselves together, and to have Canada be the first country we would ship new scarce products to, at Bell & Howell Company, for instance after the war ended, was the right thing to do.

*Q: Well, I am trying to concentrate on the time you were in the Senate.*

PERCY: That background kept me constantly connected with Canada. Everything that came up, whether it was a problem with Vietnam, problems with the Soviet Union, problems with China, I worked with the Canadian government always, to be certain we were speaking with one voice. This gave us a more powerful voice, when we could say that Canada, and Mexico, were with us, countries on both sides of us. I replaced Senator Mike Mansfield as chairman of the U.S. and Mexican International Council. That strengthened our position in the United States immensely, when we were speaking and could say that both Canada and Mexico agreed with us on a position that we were taking on a particular international issue.

*Q: Did Prime Minister Trudeau cause any problems? He took a rather strong stand against our role in Vietnam, but also in other things. Of the various Prime Ministers he seemed the prickliest toward the United States. Did you get involved with that at all?*

PERCY: I didn't get particularly involved in it then. I did work with him later in his second term 1980-1984, when he was prime minister and I was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee when Ronald Reagan was President. I did help Trudeau when economic recession struck Canada in the early 1980s.

*Q: Before you got on the Foreign Relations Committee, what was your view of the Soviet Union particularly, when you were in the Senate?*

PERCY: I looked upon them as a great power to be taken fully into account. If we could not find a way to live with them, it could be an extraordinarily dangerous situation. And for that reason, I went to the Soviet Union, as a matter of fact, with my wife's brother, David Guyer, who was president of Save the Children and also had been an officer with the United Nations. The most important trip I made to the USSR, however, was in November 1980, just after President Reagan was elected.

Some in the USSR government had a distrust of his predecessor, President Carter. As a matter of fact, they did finally reach an agreement on arms control between the two countries. The President signed it, but he could not get the Senate to ratify it. So I flew over to the Soviet Union, with Bob Galvin, CEO of Motorola, just after Ronald Reagan had been elected President, to see Ambassador Tom Watson, former CEO of IBM. He was a treasured friend, as was Bob Galvin.

*Q: Tom Watson at that time, he was either the ambassador or his brother was the ambassador to Moscow?*

PERCY: His brother, Dick, had been ambassador to France but Tom was our U.S. ambassador in Moscow at that time.

So we flew over to see him. That was when Anatoly Dobrynin was the USSR (Russian) ambassador in Washington, DC. The night before we left for Moscow, Prime Minister Kohl of Germany, who was visiting Washington, DC., invited me to have dinner at the German Embassy and I sat next to him, because they knew that I would be the ranking senior member on the committee, and I would be elected the new chairman. He said to me, "You are going to the Soviet Union I understand tomorrow. I am sure you will see the Prime Minister, the President, and others, but you want to be sure that you try to see the Defense Minister Ustinov. None of us have been able to meet with him. He is a tough and very able, and powerful man. Try to see him."

The Defense Minister was apparently under orders not to meet with any foreign leaders. Even at receptions he would not talk to foreigners. So I called Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin, who had been a good friend and with whom I'd had many meetings, and said I would be meeting with Gorbachev and some others. But then I said I particularly wanted to meet with Minister of Defense Ustinov while I was there and that I was leaving for Moscow that very day. He said to me, "Why would you want to meet with him? You are going to be the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. Why would you want to meet with the Defense Minister? He just doesn't have meetings." And I said, "Well, I want to meet with him because after all, isn't it a fact you have Russian troops now in Afghanistan, and you are fighting in that country? Isn't that a matter of foreign policy? Besides, Anatoly" (because I did know him well as a friend despite the Cold War atmosphere and he'd been for dinner and lunch in our home), and with a laugh said, "I'm just asking to see whether you've got any clout back in Moscow, to see whether you can get me an appointment with him, because no foreigners can get an appointment with him!"

So when I landed with Bob Galvin, there was Ambassador Tom Watson at the airport to meet us. And I said, "Do we have any appointments?" And he said, "You know, I've been here six months and have not met but a few official people. This is a Cold War period. I just thought we could go down close to the border of Afghanistan, to talk to people down there to see what is happening there with the USSR invasion."

There hadn't been time for Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin to arrange anything yet, I knew. We went down to the Afghanistan border and stayed for two days. Then we flew back to Moscow and Ambassador Watson's chief of staff was at the airport to meet us and said, "You won't believe this, you have a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev at 4 o'clock this afternoon, followed by the Foreign Minister. But now, hold your breath. Tomorrow at 10:00 a.m., a meeting had been set with Defense Minister Ustinov. And no one from the U.S. has ever had a meeting with him since the Cold War started!"

So we did have a meeting with Defense Minister Ustinov. We discussed the fact that heretofore, no agreement on arms control had been ratified by the U.S. Senate under President Carter. But in the recent election, Reagan had carried 44 states and Carter only six states and DC. I convinced him that with Ronald Reagan now President, that whatever arms-control agreement he agreed to sign, President Reagan was tough-minded and could carry it much better with Congress to passage. I assured Defense Minister Ustinov that as the new chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, I would be able to see to it that whatever he agreed to, that whatever he negotiated with President Reagan, would be confirmed by the Senate and would become law. When I returned to Washington, DC, I reported fully to President Reagan and to the Foreign Relations Committee about our meetings.

And, as a matter of fact, it did work out that way. The Defense Minister pushed forward to get another agreement and they were able to visit with President Reagan, deal with him and got along well with him, and we got an outstanding agreement. We never ratified SALT II. Reagan said he would abide by it, as did the Soviets. The next treaty we negotiated was START I, which was ratified later (possibly as late as early Bush) without any problems. So, in this case, a so-called hard-liner conservative like President Ronald Reagan was the one who was better able to deal with this difficult situation.

Going back to the importance of Afghanistan, in late 1979 and early 1980 Russia invaded Afghanistan with thousands of troops to battle against the so-called freedom fighters. The fighting continued until the mid-1980s. The Russians and Afghan government forces bombed many villages. Large numbers of villagers were forced to flee. Many moved to neighboring Pakistan.

*Q: This was often the case. Nixon going to China. Just very recently Ariel Sharon of Israel being involved in peace negotiating with the Palestinians in the last week. You sometimes need somebody with credibility with the most difficult and obstinate side in order to get something done.*

*During the time you were in the Senate, did the Afghan invasion, which was in December 1979, and lasted for four or five years, did that make quite a difference in how we approached the Soviet Union?*

PERCY: Very much so. It was a very devastating thing.

*Q: I would imagine that many people in the Senate who had hoped that maybe we could do some business with the Soviets, would have found that this sort of ended that for awhile.*

PERCY: You are right.

*Q: How about with China? What was your feeling towards China? We had opened relations under Nixon with China. During the time that you were in the Senate, was that met with approval, basically, within the Senate?*

PERCY: When President Nixon went over there, he and Henry Kissinger opened things up. During my 1966 campaign I focused on this as one of the major issues with my opponent, Paul Douglas, who had formed an organization called "A Million Americans to Keep Red China out of the United Nations." To keep China out of the United Nations, the largest nation on earth, was just nonsense. Now, post-war, we want a new kind of world, one of peace and prosperity and progress for nations. But you shouldn't keep huge China out of the UN. I fought him on that and it was one of the major issues that we had.

I think I told you the story about when the Chinese ambassador, Han Sue, came to see me and asked if I would select a group of senators and congressmen to come over for the first visit that senators and House members would make as guests of the Republic of China, and said we could also bring our spouses. I agreed and first selected Senator Claiborne Pell, and Senator Jack Javits, who ranked over me in seniority and whom I greatly admired. After we had selected our group, I talked to the White House chief of staff, who said he would talk to the President and they would think about helping us in any way they could.

Ambassador Han Sue said to me that China wanted me to be chairman of the group. I said I couldn't be chairman because Senator Jack Javits had more seniority than I had and so he should be the chairman of the group. The ambassador said no, that they were hosting it and I had seniority by their rules because I had, for longer than anyone in the Senate, argued that there should be good relations between China and the United States and I had beat "that bad man" Senator Paul Douglas. I said that he was not a bad man, but a good man and I liked him. He said, "No, he is a bad man because he had formed this organization called a Million Americans to Keep Red China out of the United Nations, and you fortunately beat him. So we want you to be the chairman."

I told this to all the other members of our group at an impromptu meeting, and said I thought maybe I could be a vice chairman. They said I should start serious negotiating as chairman, and Senators Javits and Pell could be vice chairmen, as the Chinese were the hosts of our visit, and wanted me to be chairman.

The White House then said they would provide us an airplane to fly us over and fly us back. It would be a two-week visit, we could take our wives, too, as there would be plenty of room on the plane. So we went and it was a fabulous trip that we made over there. The Chinese couldn't have been nicer and it brought our relationships much closer together.

*Q: One of the very hot issues that remain with us today is birth control, particularly abortion. The Chinese are a quarter of the world's population, so obviously birth control and abortion are major issues. Did this come up at all?*

PERCY: Oh, yes, I was a pro-choice senator. I urged the Chinese to do whatever was necessary to control population growth so that the food they were producing would be adequate. I recommended very strongly that birth control practices be used.

*Q: Was this a hard position to maintain within the Republican Party during most of your time?*

PERCY: It was. I loved Italy and went there many times, but at that time Catholicism was very much opposed to birth control. Now Italy is one of the few countries in the world with a declining population. They have changed, with a lower number of children per family.

*Q: Knowing the Italians, I think, probably abstinence is not the preferred method.*

*With China, how did the Chinese Embassy work with the Senate? You know, some countries understand working with Congress, and some don't. I was wondering with China?*

PERCY: They couldn't have been better. While in the Senate every ambassador had been a good friend of mine. You know, a lot of the embassies just had the feeling you should come to them. The Chinese many times came over to see me. We still continue going to the Chinese embassy, as Loraine and I have good friendships there.

Where I differed with them was Taiwan.

*Q: I was trying to ask, on Taiwan, because the Taiwan representation, which is now the American Institute Taiwan, and they have a trade representative, how did that work during the time you were in the Senate?*

PERCY: Well, I took the position that we wanted peace out there in Asia. Our country had the right to declare independence from Great Britain in 1776. The great feud that we had originally with Great Britain, we worked out, and I think that Taiwan can some day work this out with China and still maintain a good relationship.

*Q: But did you find that the Taiwan representatives were pretty aggressive in their dealings with the Senate?*

PERCY: Not too much, not too aggressive. I didn't feel any real pressure from them at all.

*Q: Particularly when you were on the Foreign Relations Committee, I know for example that Chicago is the second largest Polish city in the world, next to Warsaw, and this is probably true. I don't know about German Americans, but I assume with Czech Americans, did you find representing Illinois, which has a very large, particularly Central European population, second and third generation, did you find that this was something you had to keep in mind all the time?*

PERCY: Oh, yes, of course. After all, my father's family originally came from England; my mother's came from Germany. My grandmother, when I was three years old, came over from Germany and lived with us for the rest of her life. So I quite naturally felt

somewhat close to the UK and Germany and understood the loyalty that many Americans had to their families' native countries.

Yes, I did have many Czech and especially Italian and Polish American friends and they were very helpful to me in my political campaigns. When I was in the Senate and Pope John Paul II first flew to the United States, people were astounded that he didn't fly to New York City or Washington, DC, first as he hadn't been to either during his life. He did come to Chicago first as I previously mentioned.

*Q: Well, now, did you find during the time you were in the Senate, Poland was working hard under Lech Walesa and others to free itself from the Soviet Bloc? Did you find that you were getting involved in this process?*

PERCY: Very much so, and when I did go over with my brother-in-law, David Guyer, we went first to Poland and then Russia, and they knew that we had just been in Poland. But I simply said to them as strongly as I could, that they had to have and should work out an agreement, an arrangement with them, and I began urging that they start trading with Poland and have an intermix of the two economies.

*Q: Were there groups within Chicago, Polish-American groups, that were pressing you to be more anti-Soviet at all or did that come up?*

PERCY: I didn't have that feeling. They knew that I had publicly taken positions with respect to the Soviet Union. During the 1966 campaign, for instance, my position against Douglas on the Soviet Union and China was well known. But they didn't try to push me too hard.

*Q: Talking about the Soviet Union, Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin was quite a fixture in Washington, the Soviet ambassador, for twenty years or so. Did he work the Senate? I mean, was he up on the Hill, entertaining, meeting, discussing?*

PERCY: Richard Nixon, when he became President, said to me one day, "I know that you and Ambassador Dobrynin are good friends, I know that you have meetings, I understand, and lunch together at least every month or every other month. You rotate back and forth between his Embassy and your house." He then said, "Could you have him over," and this is now summertime, "Could you have him over and just talk in the garden, and have lunch in the garden?" He knew my house.

I said, "Well, what if it rains? Why do you want him in the garden?" And he said, "Well, we're concerned they feel we're taping everything they do through the CIA, and I want him to be absolutely free from any concern about that. He only would be in your garden. Then I want you to find out from him what it is that we need to do to find a way for the U.S. and the USSR to live and work together."

So I invited Anatoly Dobrynin and we had a wonderful conversation in the garden. He talked about the things that were necessary to bring us together. That led to some very definite agreements. But, as I say, it was very hard to get ratification by the Senate of any

treaties or agreements with the USSR at that time. That changed when Ronald Reagan took office as President.

*Q: What about Henry Kissinger during the Nixon Administration? Was he sort of difficult to work with from the senatorial side?*

PERCY: No, not at all, because Henry Kissinger and I were very good friends. We had worked together on many projects. We had a very good working relationship, very friendly, and we saw eye-to-eye on many things.

*Q: Well, during the time he was National Security Advisor did you have many informal meetings and all, keeping the Senate well informed?*

PERCY: Yes. As a matter of fact, you see, I got to know him through David Rockefeller. He was a top staff officer for Nelson Rockefeller, and that's when I started, really started, a close working relationship with him. Henry Kissinger did a lot in opening up our relationship with China.

*Q: Oh, yes, oh, yes, he was the key person. What about when the Carter Administration came in '77, to the beginning of '81. Did you find this a difficult Administration to work with?*

PERCY: President Carter and I got along wonderfully well then, and that relationship continued after he left office. I arranged for him to have a book signing in a bookstore, just a half a block from my first private office after I left the Senate, in Washington, DC. It was on the corner of H and 19<sup>th</sup> Street in NW, Washington, DC. He came and signed all books being bought and then gave me an autographed one also. We kept up our good relationship. He was always working for peace, prosperity, and progress as well.

*Q: During the Carter Administration, one of his major concerns was the Panama Canal, coming up with a Panama Canal Treaty which was really far out and for the most part, particularly the more Conservative Republicans, but also some Democrats, were quite opposed to this. How were you on the Panama Canal?*

PERCY: I was in the leadership working to have an agreement with them. I felt that what we needed, and what they needed, were compatible, and we could work that out. And I really worked hard on it and I led the fight to get the Treaty approved as it was.

*Q: You must have had some real difficulties with your colleagues on that.*

PERCY: Yes, I did.

*Q: Who were some of the people you had more problems with?*

PERCY: Oh, even my seatmate for years, Senator Strom Thurmond. But we got along very well, despite some differences, such as the Panama Canal treaty.

*Q: How about with Israel? The Camp David Accords, or even prior to that. What had*

*been your relationship with Israel?*

PERCY: The relationship was very close for many, many years. I did receive from Jewish-American Associations several awards. Dr. Robert Goldwin, who is still a dear friend, was my long-time special tutor for me on the Great Books. Scott Cohen was also a Jewish friend and I appointed him chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee staff. He later went with me on a large Middle East peace tour that I headed for the Pax Foundation of Washington, DC. Because I did have a good relationship with the Soviet Union, as Israel was trying to expand its population, I negotiated immigration rights for tens of thousands of Russian Jews that lived in the Soviet Union to get out of the country and to be able to migrate to Israel for permanent living.

But when Ronald Reagan became President, Israel used our arms that we had given them for their own protection, to invade parts of Lebanon and Syria - they used our arms to seize land from a sovereign country and take it away from them, such as Lebanon. I said to Israel at the time, "It was easy for you to get into Lebanon, but it will be very hard for you to get out." And AIPAC, Israel's American lobbying group, went after me hard on that issue. Also AIPAC fought President Reagan and me on our right to sell AWACS intelligence planes to Saudi Arabia. AIPAC just vigorously opposed this as did the Israel government oppose it. President Reagan was very distressed about this situation.

When Israeli Prime Minister Begin came to Washington, DC. I hosted him at lunch in the Foreign Relations Committee room with 20 Senate members and staff. After lunch finished I said, "Now we'll take time for questions. As chairman, I'll ask the first question of you. Let me put it this way, setting aside the AWACS question and the desire of Saudi Arabia to buy these planes from us, putting that aside, I want to ask you another question. Don't you feel it best for the United States to have a good strong trade relationship with Arab countries, because that then gives us much more leverage to work with Arab countries to support your independence and well-being and, I hope, eventually your trade with them?" Prime Minister Begin said, "Oh, Mr. Chairman, you mentioned AWACS. Let me talk..."

I said, "Now just a minute, Prime Minister, I said, besides that." He said, "Oh, no, you mentioned AWACS." Begin then just tore in on reasons why the United States shouldn't sell AWACS to Saudi Arabia, as he knew President Ronald Reagan wanted to do.

Then Senator Pell asked a question that had nothing to do with AWACS, he didn't even mention it, and Begin answered more on AWACS. The next question came to Senator Howard Baker, who was Minority Leader but second to me in seniority, but still had decided to serve on one committee, the Foreign Relations Committee. He said, "Mr. Chairman, no matter what question we ask, the Prime Minister is going to answer on AWACS. Why don't we just let him get it off his chest, and then we are finished with it, and we can get on to other issues?" So, he did continue on AWACS and spoke at great length condemning our proposed sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia.

I called up President Reagan afterwards and told him about that. I said, "You are going to

see Prime Minister Begin soon, I just want you to know what he did. He had promised you he wouldn't." President Reagan confirmed that he [Begin] would not take a position while he was here as our guest against this particular AWACS plane sale."

Well, President Reagan was really angry, and he then started having meetings with the key senators, with me present. We had eight different meetings, because there was a bill coming soon in the Senate authorizing the AWACS sale by the USA to Saudi Arabia. We had the vote in the Senate, and we won, but by just two votes. That is the only time that AIPAC, the Israel lobby, has ever been defeated on the floor of the Senate that I know of. President Reagan was just thrilled with the vote, that we had saved the right to sell the intelligence planes to Saudi Arabia that otherwise would have been sold to them by the UK or Germany. They didn't invite me for the Israeli National Day celebration at the embassy for a number of years after that vote.

A California wealthy activist, Michael Goland, a trustee of AIPAC, illegally spent \$1.6 million in my 1984 reelection campaign against me, when my own Illinois citizens, as well as anyone else, were limited by law to \$1,000 each. Two years later, they found him guilty, and fined him \$5,000! Imagine that! But that was a year and a half after the 1984 election, which I lost.

Now, however, in recent years, the Israeli ambassador has thoughtfully invited me each year to their National Day celebration. When he took me around the first year to greet other guests, many people would say to me, "You were so right about these two issues. Invading Lebanon, we are still stuck there, and the AWACS intelligence planes are what saved Israel from President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, who was not intending to just go into Kuwait. One man said, "Like Nebuchanezzar 25 hundred years ago, he intended to go in and take over what is now Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and then Oman, and they would have controlled 60 percent of all the world's oil resources."

*Q: Oh, yes, we're talking about 1989, '90, during the Gulf War.*

PERCY: Right, the Gulf War.

*Q: Within your constituency did you find that your Jewish constituents pretty well followed the line of AIPAC?*

PERCY: Very much so. However, some came out against AIPAC and voted and worked for me. AIPAC was the strongest, most influential lobby in the United States at the time.

*Q: Well now how did you find it within the Senate, was AIPAC particularly powerful?*

PERCY: Very powerful.

*Q: But in certain areas. I would imagine New York and Florida and California? How was one able to put together a coalition to vote for the AWACS system?*

PERCY: Well, we just did it. President Reagan and I sat down with these senators and convinced them how important it was to the safety of the United States that we sell the AWACS plane to Saudi Arabia. Our requirement was, as we told them, that they could not fly those planes without one USA intelligence person on board so we would be able to see everything that was happening, whereas the competition against us, both German and British firms, who were trying to sell them similar planes, had no such requirement. They used the argument, that they could have our planes and it was up to them what they did with them. But on the other hand, the AWACS were better intelligence planes, and enabled them to better protect themselves, and other Arab countries, even more. So they bought the U.S. AWACS.

*Q: This is for the historical record, the AWACS is an airborne radar control system, very sophisticated, which allowed airborne radar to peer into countries such as Iraq without penetrating air space.*

*Did you feel, too, that the way Begin conducted himself when he came to visit before this in a way helped your cause because he was so difficult to deal with in the Senate?*

PERCY: Once we confirmed we were going to do defense matters in the interest of the United States, we decided that no other country could force us into a position where we do things contrary to our own national interest.

*Q: You were saying once you had gotten it.*

PERCY: Again, I was chairman of the PAX Foundation Commission, that went over to the Middle East, and we selected a commission of former members of Congress and leaders knowledgeable in the Middle East, some key Arab-Americans, and there were nine prominent Jews on it, including a rabbi from Chicago and Scott Cohen. It was not a fact-finding trip. Everyone was well aware of what was happening in the Middle East and were experts in it. But everyone had to agree that they felt that a Palestinian State, a homeland for Palestine, was essential for peace in the Middle East. And the nine Jews in the group agreed to that, including the rabbi, as did my Chief of Staff of the Foreign Relations Committee, Scott Cohen. Our aim was to meet with the heads of state for a number of Mid-East countries. We had 42 members of our group. The first country we planned to stop at was Syria and that was where we had expected trouble. President Assad said he would be happy to meet with me again and even Congressman John Anderson who was our vice chairman, but not with the whole group. He had never met with a whole group of foreign visitors, he said. I told him that this would set a bad precedent for the other countries where we planned on meeting with the heads of state with the entire group. I also said that if he had enjoyed our own previous meetings, I assured him that he would learn and enjoy more meeting with the group. He finally did agree to meet with all of us, and after 45 minutes I suggested to the Foreign Minister that we could end the meeting then. The Foreign Minister talked to President Assad and then came back to me and said that I shouldn't end it yet because he was enjoying the meeting and he was learning a lot.

The next day the newspapers noted how unusual it was for President Assad to have such a large meeting. The key note of our discussion was the Palestinian-Israel relationship, a subject of great importance to him.

It was just a wonderful experience that we had with him. And that was the first meeting of our PAX Foundation trip, which set a pattern for our subsequent meetings with the chiefs of state and foreign ministers of Israel and Saudi Arabia.

*Q: This was when, after you had left the Senate?*

PERCY: Oh, yes, in 1985 shortly after I'd left the Senate.

*Q: Within your Jewish constituency, your statements about Lebanon, about the invasion of Lebanon, this was not very popular with a fairly broad sweep of Jewish Americans. I mean, did you find that this was as much of a problem as AWACS, as far as your stand?*

PERCY: Well there were two things they hit me on at AIPAC. The first was my criticism of Israel for using arms supplied by us to Israel not only for their own defense, but using them to invade and occupy parts of the sovereign countries of Lebanon and Syria. Second was supporting President Reagan's desire for Congress to approve the sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia. Of course, I should have given AIPAC a present afterwards because I have greatly enjoyed my life after the Senate. Eighteen years was enough time for me there. And my wife didn't want me to run again, anyway, so she was just as pleased as could be.

*Q: The election you lost was when?*

PERCY: November, 1984.

*Q: Who was your opponent?*

PERCY: Paul Simon.

*Q: Now did he take a strong pro-Israeli stand?*

PERCY: Oh, yes. He was elected because of it.

*Q: Did you find yourself getting pushed into a corner on Israel?*

PERCY: Yes, it was a controlling issue. But also, I must say, I wouldn't give them full credit for defeating me. [For further information, please consult "They Dare to Speak Out," Paul Findley, Chicago Review Press, Inc., 1989.]

I was forced into a primary election first by right-wing Republicans. I won the primary easily, but many members of the right-wing of the Illinois Republican Party sat on their hands during my November 1984 election. Many of them didn't want to see me re-elected because they had opposed me in the primary. But in consequence they elected then a

Democrat who was far more liberal. I was moderate; he was a real liberal, but a great one! The combination of Israel and AIPAC fighting against me, and all that money from Michael Goland coming in against me, that was the thing that did it. But I have enjoyed greatly my life after the Senate and it has all worked out for the best.

Paul Simon and I have remained friends and, in fact, we wrote an article together in 1999 that supported the USA paying its agreed upon dues to the United Nations. The article ran in *The Christian Science Monitor*, a worldwide newspaper, and was placed in *The Congressional Record* by a senator. [We have also both become trustees of a commission on U.S. policy towards Colombia in March 2001, a Republican and a Democrat.]

*Q: Did you find in your trips to Israel and all, did you find that AIPAC was more right-wing Israeli, than maybe Israeli public opinion in Israel itself?*

PERCY: I think so. They were extremists. I found much more moderate feelings inside Israel. Even when I took the PAX trip, I met with Prime Minister Peres and we had good meetings with him, and they knew that we supported a Palestinian homeland strongly. The Palestinians have been there, their ancestors have been there, as long as the Israelis.

*Q: There is going to be a Palestinian State?*

PERCY: I'm sure there is.

*Q: But it's very difficult to bring certain elements to accept this.*

[PERCY: On August 4, 1999 *The Washington Times* ran an article that I wrote on Peace, Prosperity, and Progress in the Middle East. That article answers your question. Let's put it in this record now. It was inserted in *The Congressional Record* also.

Netanyahu was a great disappointment to me. I noted that he was a student in this country, and upon leaving the Senate I headed the Institute of International Education for five years, covering all foreign students in this country and all American students who go abroad. I have found that when they are students here, just like a majority of the King of Saudi Arabia's cabinet graduated, got their Ph.D. from universities in this country, that they understand our country so much better. Actually the relationship with Israel, they understand that much better. I originally thought with Netanyahu there would be such understanding. Not only that, he was Israeli ambassador in New York to the United Nations. But he was very extreme. And I was terribly disappointed in the way he approached the peace process. I was more hopeful of his successor, Prime Minister Barak.]

*Q: It is a very difficult time. Tell me, within the Foreign Relations Committee. What was your impression of the dynamics? How important was the minority and majority staff there?*

PERCY: Both majority and minority were very important. Sometimes I had problems,

however, with colleagues like Jesse Helms. But we had a good personal relationship, and we were friendly with each other, but on the other hand we had a lot of different ideas and approaches.

*Q: Well, with Jesse Helms, he is the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee now, and has been a very difficult person on foreign relations. I mean, he seems to be against most things. What was your impression of, particularly when you were dealing with him, where was he coming from? Was this just good politics or did this come from within inside him?*

PERCY: Well, we got along fine. After all, he is from North Carolina and my mother lived down there and I bought a house there for her and visited frequently. My sister, Doris Straus, and her husband, Bob, live down there. So I had some close ties with his state. He invited me back to a committee lunch meeting after I left the Senate, when the Dalai Lama was there. Jesse was a little stunned, I think, when I walked in the room a few minutes late. I had told him I would be a little late, as I had another meeting. But the Dalai Lama just stood right up when I came in, and came over and hugged me because we had such a good long relationship.

*Q: What did you think was the source of Jesse Helms' attitude toward, essentially, foreign affairs, which is very much in a way staying out of getting too involved and then a certain willingness to accept rather right-wing type people abroad?*

PERCY: Well, Howard Baker, when he became Minority Leader, resigned from a couple of committees because he felt he should spend his time on the leadership. But he stayed, he told me personally, he stayed on the Foreign Relations Committee and he said he would only come to the meetings when I asked him to come to the meetings. When I thought, for instance, I might have an issue with Jesse Helms, for instance, that I might have trouble with, he would come and reason with him also. So he did that, the whole time I was chairman. And Jesse Helms and I got along fine.

*Q: That was mainly to keep Jesse Helms from getting too much control?*

PERCY: I suppose that's right.

*Q: Why was Jesse Helms so almost anti-international?*

PERCY: I don't know of any background to cause that. But we had some fun together, too, because I was very anti-tobacco. I saw my father die too early of it. He died at 70, 37 years ahead of my mother. Mother never smoked a cigarette in her life and Dad smoked for many years before he finally was able to stop. She lived to be 102. Senator Jesse Helms' state, North Carolina, was a big producer of tobacco. Jesse Helms and I'd walk down the Senate hall together to vote. (That was in the days when people could smoke in the hallways and in the rooms.) And he'd see someone standing there smoking and he'd go up and he'd bow his head to them and say, "I thank you for smoking." And I would usually make some comment back like, "I wish you wouldn't, if you want to live longer!"

*Q: There may be something we haven't covered. I'll have this transcribed and if there is anything more you feel we should discuss, we'll do it.*

PERCY: Wonderful. May I add: I have always been very religious in outlook. In my original family, we had a Bible lesson every morning. We started and ended each day with prayer. And my wife, Loraine, and I still do, and have for the past [more than] 50 years of our marriage.

For example, this morning, when I started reading *The Bible and Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, our little dog, "Candy," a tiny dog, a lovely dog, again jumped up on my wife's lap. Loraine listens while I read the Bible and this leaves her hands free while she listens. So she pets the dog around his ears and so forth. But I think Candy jumps up into her lap in the early morning because Candy loves to hear the Bible stories about Jesus and his disciples! [Laughter] We end by saying, "This is the Day the Lord hath made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."

*Q: Great. Well, thank you very much.*

PERCY: Okay.

[Note: Additional materials provided by Senator Percy on his life and career are available at the offices of The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training.]

*End of interview*