

An Oral History Interview

with

John J. Rhodes (part 3)

Mesa, Arizona

conducted by
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PS: Mr. Rhodes, when we left off you'd just finished describing your efforts to get the CAP appropriations as a regular budget item. I believe, if my memory serves me right, after President Carter was elected in the fall of 1976, and took office in January of 1977, wasn't there an effort on the part of the Carter White House, or some threat of rescinding of funds that caused, at least from some of Mo's comments and some of his letters, caused great concern?

JR: Great concern is what it caused.

PS: What was President Carter trying to do, what happened there?

JR: Well, at one time there was a real danger that the CAP would be brought to a screeching halt. It was mainly caused by opposition from conservationists and from the Fort McDowell Indians. The project called for construction of a rather huge dam at the confluence of the Salt and Verde Rivers.

PS: Was that the Orme Dam?

JR: Orme Dam. As I say, the McDowell Indians didn't want any part of it, because it would inundate their present reservation. Stew and I knew that this could happen, and that if we were going to have the Orme Dam, we were going to have to find some way to move the Fort McDowell Reservation. On the present site of.... Anyway, we were going to move it up the hill, Fountain Hills, where it now is. And we probably could have made that work. And then the Fort McDowell Indians would have had the concession for fishing, boating, *et cetera*, on this lake, which would have been very good for them. But in the meantime, the McCullough Saw people arranged for an exchange of land, whereby they would become the owners of that site where Fountain Hills now is. Stew and I said, "We can't have this, because if that happens, what are we going to do with the McDowells?" And so we let.... The Agriculture secretary had the jurisdiction because it was Forestland that they were using. I figured that we would be able to inform the governor of Minnesota, who was then secretary of Agriculture.... I just assumed that if Stew, his brother, secretary said no, that he wouldn't do it, but he did. So as a result, President Carter decided that Orme Dam would have to come out. Well, if Orme Dam had to come out, then we had no place for storage which would allow the project to proceed on down to Tucson, and to store water until it was needed for the Phoenix area. So that's when they brought up another plan. In the meantime there was actually a movement afoot to just scuttle the whole project. Mo and I asked for a hearing in the Department of Interior, and we went down, and there were people who were in favor of doing it because of the project and the conservation people. And there were two bald eagles involved. These bald eagles had a nest in a cottonwood tree along the banks of the Verde River, and it would be inundated by the waters of Orme Dam. That was a cardinal sin, "You can't do that to those two bald eagles!" So that was one of the reasons why the dam was undammed. We were able to convince the departments that "you mustn't do that, there's got to be another way." So anyway, one of the hearing officers of the department said to me later—I had not known him before. He said "I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Rhodes, if I ever am in trouble, I want the firm of Rhodes and Udall to represent

me." (laughter) So I guess we did a fairly convincing job in making sure the project did go on. So the thing that happened was that they used Lake Pleasant for the storage, which was necessary to make the project work--terribly expensive, and expensive to operate. Orme Dam would have been the way to go, but we finally had to give up on it. In fact, my remark was, "All right, I'm not going to build a dam at the Orme site, but I bet my grandchildren do!"

PS: That then was really the last real threat to the continuation of the building of the CAP (JR: Yes.) because once the Orme Dam controversy had been settled, and an alternative found from 1977 to 1978 on, it pretty much proceeded reasonably on schedule. There were obviously cost overruns, like there always are on those projects.

JR: That's right. It proceeded on schedule. The only thing was, and that I've always resented, was that the project cost so much more than it had to cost. Again, the big picture was that we had to get it done, and if we had to do it in a way that we didn't particularly like, we would still do it.

PS: Were there any reasons you think the cost rose? Was it just 'cause it took so long to do it, and just costs went up over time?

JR: And inflation.

PS: Inflation and labor costs and materials costs--all that sort of rose. This wasn't something that was built in one or two years?

JR: It sure was not.

PS: It took a long time.

JR: Yes.

PS: Jumping back to a little more general question, given the long public service you and Mo provided the state, would you say that the two of you contributed to a common, enduring Arizona approach to policy-making, and if so, what do you think some of the features of that approach might be?

JR: (laughs) Well, I'd like to say that we contributed something that lasted, but some of the antics we're seeing in our present state government make me wonder if maybe somebody's going to have to reinvent the wheel. We thought we had invented it once, but... Well, sometimes memories are short. I really do think that Mo and Stew and Senator Hayden, Senator Fannin, Barry Goldwater--and I'll put myself in there--they say we were the golden age of Arizona as far as representation in Congress was concerned. And I've got to admit--it's a self-serving admission, but I'm going to admit it, and I think it's true. And it's remarkable that a state this small was able to do all of these things, because of the caliber and the seniority of its congressmen. It is remarkable.

PS: I think one also tends to forget, too, that in addition to the people you just mentioned, we also have two distinguished jurists on the Supreme Court from the state who have both been there a long time. Considering Arizona's population, compared to other states, the record is rather remarkable.

JR: Two members, yes--and both of them very good.

PS: Yes. I want to talk about another topic, the Vietnam War. Did you and Mo ever discuss issues directly relating to the Vietnam War?

JR: Oh, yes! Oh, we did, we did, I tell ya'. Mo and I were both, in the beginning, really defending President Johnson and the conduct of the situation in Vietnam. In ... I'm tryin' to remember exactly when it was, probably in about 1966, Mo decided that he was not going to support the Johnson position anymore. I didn't believe him, I stayed there. But during the time that we were both supporting it, we were invited to go to the Sunday Evening Forum in Tucson, and I guess it's still in operation. It's been there for years and years and years. And we debated two liberal members of the University of Arizona, of the faculty. And Mo and I were shoulder-to-shoulder, helping Lyndon to win (laughs). And I understood what he felt we had to do, because he was going to make a credible run for the presidency, why, later on he had to do it.

PS: Were you surprised in the fall of 1967 when he made that speech?--Mo made a speech in which he broke with President Johnson. (JR: Yes.) That was actually done at the same Sunday Evening Forum series in Tucson.

JR: Was it, later?

PS: Yes, in the fall of 1967. Were you surprised when Mo publicly broke with the president?

JR: Yes, I was.

PS: We were talking earlier about some of the wonderful Reg Manning cartoons that you have in your study. There's a wonderful Reg Manning cartoon that appeared in the Phoenix paper the day after Mo made his speech. It had Mo and on the corner of the desk was Stewart, who was secretary of Interior, trying to explain to the White House what was going on. But Reg Manning reflected [this] very, very interestingly. Were you surprised when Mo went public? You said you had had conversations about this before?

JR: Well, we had lots of conversations when we were preparing for the Sunday Evening Forum in Tucson.

PS: The earlier one, yes.

JR: Yes. And yes, he didn't let me know that he was going to do that, but there was no particular reason why he should. As I say, I think he just was preparing himself for some

sort of a run for the presidency and he felt that he was on the wrong tide.

PS: You had mentioned in your book, I believe, one of the things, in thinking back about things that happened earlier, you had mentioned concern about the Gulf Of Tonkin Resolution (JR: Yes.), something that you voted for, that most of Congress did--there was some opposition, but it was a pretty overwhelming vote in support.

JR: Oh yes, single digit.

PS: Could you talk a little bit about your second thoughts about the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution?

JR: Well, the second thoughts occurred after I read the second page. I hate to admit this, but it happened to a lot of people: The language in that second chapter of that bill was so loose that under that, the president had carte blanche to do about anything he wanted to do in Southeast Asia--and he did! I don't believe that very many of us thought that we would end up with 525,000 soldiers in Vietnam. You know, Dwight Eisenhower, who was sort of my patron saint, as you can imagine, was importuned by the French to help them out in Dien Bien Phu. He agreed to send some material and I think some people to help them figure out what to do with it. But he said, "I will never get American troops involved in a war in Asia." He was very firm on that. But when Jack Kennedy came in, Jack almost immediately started sending more material and more people to help them figure out what to do with it, to the South Vietnamese. This is after Dien Ben Phu, after the French had left. So that's when the Vietnam thing really started, because when Ike left, we had about 600 and some people there, and Kennedy brought it up to about 16,000. Well, after Kennedy was killed, actually Johnson went "pshew," like that.

There's an interesting thing--I don't know whether it's something that you really want, but nevertheless, I made a trip, really around the world, with the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. At that time, the money that was going into Vietnam was appropriated as foreign aid. So when we got to India, I kept saying to the chairman, old Otto Passman, bless his heart, "We've got to go to Saigon." He said, "No, it's not on the schedule. John, it's not on the schedule." So Chester Bowles, who was our ambassador to India, had been a member of the House, and I said, "Chester, this is ridiculous. We're appropriating billions of dollars over there, and we're in the area, and we're not gonna go there!" He said, "Well, what do you want to do?" I said, "I think if nobody else is going, I will go." And he said, "I think you should." So he made arrangements for me to just leave and go to Vietnam, and I did.

PS: What year would this have been, Mr. Rhodes?

JR: This was in 196-.... Well, when was Kennedy assassinated? It was 1964?

PS: So after President Kennedy's death?

JR: Yes, it was after Kennedy, because that's what I want to tell you. I did, I went by

myself, and I was met by the lowest ranking officer in the embassy. He wasn't even sure what I was doing there, or whether he was glad I was there or not. I knew a little French, and so I was reading the paper the next day, and it said that there was to be a memorial service for President Kennedy, and that the ambassador, who was General Max Taylor, would be going. So I called this character and said, "I want to go with General Taylor to this funeral service." He said, "Oh, that's impossible." I said, "Look, I've been pretty nice to you. Now, you'd better tell General Taylor that I'm going with him, or I'm going to have your ears!" I was sort of laughing, but not really. Well, he did, and Max Taylor didn't even know I was there until . . . I was the best-kept secret. (laughter) We had known each other for a long time, so he said, "Sure!" So we went, and it was an amazing ceremony--all Buddhist, of course. We took off our shoes and went--there was a Quonset hut type outside the structure, a huge one, and we were there with these Buddhist priests in their saffron robes, chanting. It was something I will never forget. And in the middle of it was a huge picture of Jack Kennedy. They were obviously doing a nice thing for him, or about him, and we were the guests of honor. Interesting.

PS: Jumping back a little bit, one of the long-standing political problems in the state has been the Navajo-Hopi land dispute, which has been going on for close to a century now. It has involved many different members of the Arizona congressional delegation. Senator Goldwater has been intimately involved because of his interests in Native Americans. Could you describe your involvement at all in Navajo-Hopi?

JR: I was never involved, and I didn't want to be involved, because they had hated each other forever and a day, and I don't see any way to solve that dispute unless they solve it themselves. Certainly I didn't want to have any part in trying to put the solution on them that neither of them wanted. So I just--it wasn't in my district, so I just laid off of it.

PS: You served in the House under a number of different presidents.

JR: Not under. We don't serve under a president.

PS: You served with.

JR: We served with presidents, not under presidents.

PS: I stand corrected.

JR: All right.

PS: When you first went to Congress in 1952, with President Eisenhower...

JR: President Truman, for twenty days.

PS: For twenty days, that's right. But shortly after, President Eisenhower began, the first part of two terms. I'm looking, I guess, for short-term responses, or just memories, thoughts, of President Eisenhower, his style of operation, how you dealt with him. I

know he was a person who was important to you.

JR: Yes, he was. And you know, Eisenhower was never really appreciated, by the media or by other people, because I think he took one look at the situation and decided what the country needed after the Korean War was stability, and he was very good at that. In fact, one of his strong points--and this probably came from the service, the Army--was picking people around him who really were capable people. One of the ones I mentioned most prominently is Bryce Harlowe. Bryce was a very smart man and very capable. So Ike also was able to--because I think during the war he learned to know Lyndon Johnson and Sam Rayburn, so their friendship antedated the presidency. Well, the fact that he was able to get so much done by a Democratic Congress had strictly to do with his personal acquaintanceships and friendships of those two men. I will never forget--this was a foreign aid appropriations bill, and it was always very controversial. This was in the middle of about the third day of a conference between the House and the Senate, and it was just deadlocked like this over one or two points. I left to go to the men's room, and when I got out the door, there was Lyndon Johnson. He was not a conferee, he was majority leader of the Senate. He was talking to Bryce Harlowe, and I heard him saying, "All right, Bryce, what can you live with?" And so I went to the men's room and I came back. By that time, Lyndon Johnson had gone into the conference room, and they had the whole thing worked out. That was just the way Harlowe had wanted it (laughs). But that was, I think, a fairly good example of the effectiveness of the Eisenhower approach. The Republicans didn't like him, because, after all, we wanted to be in the majority, they didn't like it. And Ike was not a politician. He didn't want to be, and he wasn't. A lot of us said, "Well, you know, he's a great president, but when Nixon is president, if he ever is, we will really have a Republican president, and we're gonna make this into a country with a Republican majority." Well (chuckles), you know the rest.

PS: I think President Eisenhower is still looked on affectionately by people. I grew up in a household that was half Democratic and half Republican.

JR: That must have been interesting!

PS: Always was. Dinnertime debates were always educating. I think I'm probably a better person for it. But President Eisenhower, I think you're trying to say, was a leader, as opposed to being just a politician. Not that the terms can't be together.

JR: No, it's not a pejorative situation.

PS: Right.

JR: He knew what the time was, and he knew what the country needed. They needed stability, they needed progress, and he just did what was necessary to get 'em.

PS: Then we have President Kennedy elected in the fall of 1960, takes office in January 1961. Stewart joins the administration as secretary of Interior. President Kennedy obviously did not serve his whole term out, for reasons that we know. Any thoughts or

reminiscences about the style and operation of President Kennedy, which was very different than President Eisenhower?

JR: Yes, it was. I have to admit that I was not a great admirer of President Kennedy, and yet, in some ways, I did admire him. After his death, as I've told you, I was in Vietnam, and then I have been in other countries, and the amazing thing to me was the real sincere sadness at the loss of Jack Kennedy. It looked to me like the whole western world was saying, "This is the guy who can really do things for all of us. We'll have peace," and so on and so forth. Unfortunately, it wasn't workin' that way, and it never did, but nevertheless, they still had this real sense of loss when he died. I've got to say it's sort of like my feeling about Ronald Reagan. I think one of the worst things that happened to this country was the idea of the supply side economics, which caused the national debt to go skyrocketing up into the atmosphere. But looking at the other side of it, a lot of that money was spent on defense and building up our capabilities, and literally chasing the Russians over the cliff, as far as the economy was concerned. And I've never known whether they planned it that way or not, but that's the way it worked out. The man at the head would get the blame if it hadn't worked, and he gets the credit since it did.

So going back to Jack Kennedy, I really had a feeling of sadness about his death. It wasn't that I really admired his ... program. I thought it was so far to the left it wasn't anything that I wanted. And actually, of course, it became the Great Society. All the Great Society was, was a reprise of the Kennedy legislative program.

PS: Mr. Rhodes, I want to ask you about the presidential race that never happened. And this would have been, had President Kennedy not been assassinated, a very strong possibility that in 1964 he would have run against Senator Goldwater. Goldwater talked a lot about this in his book. Senator Goldwater, in his book, reflects very warm feelings toward John Kennedy. They apparently were close friends, because they'd served in the Senate together. Senator Goldwater indicates he felt it would have been an interesting campaign, a very clear choice between two different styles of thought. Any thoughts on your part about that campaign that never happened?

JR: Well, just what you said. And Barry really did feel that he could beat Jack Kennedy, because he sensed that the country was moving rapidly toward conservatism. As you mentioned, the cleavage between Kennedy and Goldwater would become very apparent. And conversely, after the Kennedy assassination, Goldwater did not, and I don't think he ever did, feel that he had a chance to beat Johnson. Several reasons: one was that Goldwater would have really won the South against Kennedy, because of the cleavage, and couldn't against Johnson. Johnson had the name of being a conservative with the conservatives, and a liberal with the liberals, and he felt there probably wasn't any way he could defeat him. He, at one time, really didn't know whether he wanted to go ahead with that race or not. There was a meeting in his apartment, and it was to decide whether he should enter the New Hampshire primary or not. He finally decided to do it, because we all said, "If you back out now, it's tantamount to giving the election to Lyndon Johnson on a silver platter." And he said, "I know you're right." So he went ahead and did it, did his best, a good soldier. I think he knew that he wasn't gonna win, he'd have to

leave the Senate, which he didn't want to do. But anyway, that's the way it happened.

PS: Senator Goldwater lost the election, as we know--Lyndon Johnson becomes president. Any thoughts on President Johnson? We talked about President Eisenhower, we talked about President Kennedy. Any thoughts on your part on the style of Lyndon Johnson as a politician? I mean, he's been called a politician's politician.

JR: He sure was. (chuckles) Lyndon wanted to control, there was no doubt about it. Let me illustrate by a little vignette. I was asked to do a piece on the Nixon administration by Boston College. The Thomas P. O'Neill Chair was doing it, and so I agreed to do it. After it was over, a cute little girl in the back said, "Mr. Rhodes, what do you think President Johnson would have done with those tapes?" I said, "Well, I really never thought of that, but I'll tell you what I think he would have done. I think Lyndon would have called the government printing office and have them make a thousand engraved invitations to the world's largest barbecue, and when it was done, he would send one to each member of the Washington press corps and each member of the House and Senate. On a given date, they would appear on the South Lawn, and when they were all assembled, President Johnson would go out, and he would say to his military aid, "Wheel out the tapes." And when they did, he would say, "Dump 'em here. Where is the gasoline? Where is the match? (whoosh!) Now, where are the hot dogs?" (laughter) And I really think that's exactly what he would have done. He knew how to get his way.

PS: President Johnson makes a decision not to run again, which at the time I remember caught the country a bit by surprise. Richard Nixon comes back into the picture and runs against Senator Humphrey, in what turned out to be a fairly close election.

JR: Yes, it was very close.

PS: And as I recollect, Senator Humphrey closing the gap toward the end.

JR: One more week, and it might have been different.

PS: One of the things that you said--and I'll ask this question as part of a lead-in to this--one of the things that you'd mentioned in the book was one of the most difficult things you ever had to do, was coming out of the Watergate and having to go talk with President Nixon. Could you talk a little bit about that? sort of in the context of your thoughts and feelings about President Nixon's role as a president, his leadership abilities.

JR: Well, this paper that I mentioned that I prepared for Boston College, I dictated it, and when it was transcribed, I read it, and I really thought that I was being very tough on President Nixon. I wasn't. I was sort of chronicling the things that he had tried to do and couldn't do because of the Democratic majority, and the things which he did. I came to the conclusion myself, after reading my paper, that I had said that this man was a very effective president. And in my opinion, he was. His problem was personal. He had this paranoia which caused him to insist on the wagons being circled at almost any time. "It's us against them," and so on and so forth. I think that is what caused the whole Watergate

thing. He really had a thing about leaks from the White House, and we all did. We'd have a meeting of the Republican leadership, in the cabinet room, and the next day Jack Anderson would have a column about what was said, and quoting verbatim. He quoted me several times, exactly the way I said it. Of course that really upset.... Well, I think that's when John Mitchell sold the president the idea of putting the plumbers--that was the beginning of the end. He put this group of plumbers together who were kind of weird people to begin with, and Mitchell or whoever was in control, lost control of them. And then Nixon made a terrible mistake of saying, "Well, after all, they're one of ours, so we'll just have to defend them." If he had said, "I am absolutely embarrassed. I apologize to the American people for this silly thing that was done to the Democratic National Committee, and I want you to know that the people who were responsible are going to be found and punished." And like Al Gore says, "I'm not proud I did it, I'm never gonna do it again." If he had done that, he would have served out his term. The people would have said, "Well, it really was pretty stupid, but that part was not an impeachable offense." It wasn't. But anyway, that was the downfall of the Nixon administration--his own paranoia about leaks, to begin with, and then the idea of "they're my people and I'll do whatever is necessary to defend them, and you stonewall, and you stonewall." And it all added up.

PS: Built on top of each other?

JR: Absolutely. And of course the real smoking gun was that tape where he told Bob Haldeman to call the CIA and have them call off the Watergate investigation. Told them to have the FBI call off the Watergate investigation, on the basis of national security. That was the, as I used to say, if you were a professor in a law school and you wanted to put a question on the final about obstruction of justice, the question would probably look a lot like the tape.

PS: That must have been personally a sad day for you, when you had the meeting with Nixon. Personally, it must have been a very sad....

JR: It was a sad day. We had campaigned together and done all sorts of I had great respect for his capabilities. He was probably as good a geo-politician as anybody I ever knew. In fact, people used to say that Nixon was fortunate to have Kissinger. I said, "Yes, that's true. But you know, Kissinger was fortunate to have Nixon, too." And they were a great team.

PS: President Nixon leaves office, and a long-term colleague of yours, Gerry Ford, becomes president. And you had served, I don't remember the exact number of years, but you certainly had been in the House together for some time, prior to the time....

JR: I think he'd been there for four years when I got there.

PS: Your thoughts on Gerry Ford's performance as president during the time period he was there?

JR: Well, Gerry did a great job to begin with. His mission had to be to restore

confidence in the presidency, and he did a reasonably good job of that. His main mistake was, in my opinion, pardoning Nixon when he did. He could have waited. And this is a political statement, but I feel he really should have waited until after the election of 1974, the congressional election. If he had, and had asked some of us--Hugh Scott, me, and others, and maybe a few Democrats--I think probably Sam Irwin would have done something about it--to start saying, "You know, do you really want the fr president to be in the stocks like a common criminal? Do you really think that it's important for the country that this Watergate thing be continued? Or should it be over with?" And I think by the middle of the next year, maybe the first part of the next year, that he would have had the country at least saying, "Well, maybe it would be all right to kind of forget this thing and get it out of the way." But the people of this country don't like to be surprised. And the way he did it, it was really a big surprise. He didn't consult anybody as far as I know--at least nobody on Capitol Hill. I had a terrible situation. I had been with him in Philadelphia at the 150th anniversary of convening the first Continental Congress. I guess the two hundredth anniversary. We were sitting side by side, and I said, "I've got a three-some, I need a four-some. Would you come along?" He said, "I'd sure like to, but I have to make an announcement, so I think I'd better concentrate on that." I said, "Am I going to like it?" And he gave me that sober Gerry Ford look. "I really hope so, John." So anyway, I played Burning Tree, I finished the nine holes, and a call said, "Call the White House immediately." I called the White House and they told me about the pardon, and you can imagine what I did on that second nine! I paid my debts and left and drove home, and as I turned the corner, there I noticed on my front lawn, NBC, CBS, ABC, all lined up, waiting for me. They said, "Did you know this?" And I said, "No, but I'm not surprised." I was. So I said, "I think he felt it was time to get this behind us and let the country go ahead." So that was about it.

PS: And cost him the election.

JR: Cost him the election.

PS: Cost Gerry Ford reelection.

JR: And cost us thirty seats in the House.

PS: We're almost up to 1976, and then I want to break for a second. Were you surprised in late 1974 when Mo Udall announced that he was going to seek the presidential nomination of the Democratic Party for 1976? Did that kind of surprise you when Mo made that announcement?

JR: No, not really.

PS: Had he talked with you about it at all?

JR: He didn't have to. I mean, it was pretty obvious what he was doing, and in fact, we had talked about it. As I mentioned, sort of, "Mo, when you're president, give us the key to the White House," or something like that. No, I knew what he had in mind.

PS: You mentioned in your book--I can't remember the exact quote--that you secretly sort of were rooting a little bit for Mo behind....

JR: Yes, because I didn't like Jimmy Carter. And I saw no reason to really change my mind about that later on. It isn't that I didn't like him, I just didn't think that he was presidential material.

PS: Mo finished, as we know, second to Jimmy Carter in eleven or twelve different primaries.

JR: If he had won that Michigan primary, he would have been nominated.

PS: A few votes, one way or the other, a few of those primaries, Mo probably would have been the Democratic nominee. I suspect that Mo, as the Democratic nominee--as Jimmy Carter did--would probably have beaten Gerry Ford. What kind of president do you think--very speculative now, because Mo never had that chance--but based on your serving together for a long time, and his abilities as you saw them, what kind of president would Mo have made?

JR: I think Mo would have been a good president. I probably wouldn't have agreed with all things that he would do, but nevertheless, he had the capability to get people around him who were not only intelligent, but capable of action. I think that's the way he would have operated as president. I'm sure that he would have wanted to do a lot of things in the way of conservation and natural resources and so on and so forth. But Mo really wasn't an ideologue. A lot of people think that he was, but he really wasn't, in that he was what I would call--and this is almost a contradiction in terms, but I'll say it anyway--a pragmatic ideologue. There are certain things that he would like to do, but I think he was wise enough to know that the fourth dimension, and a very important dimension, is time. And things that you might do today would be wrong, but if you waited 'til tomorrow, they might be right. And I think he had a pretty good sense of timing.

PS: Mr. Rhodes, Mo's experience as a legislator--by the time the presidential campaign came around in 1976, Mo had served for fifteen years in Congress, and had this ability to bring consensus, bring people together, people of varying views, and often was able to come out with a compromise bill. Mo had an ability to do this on a number of different issues. My impression is, and do you think that would have stood him well as president? that ability to work on both sides of the aisle? (JR: Yes.) I've watched video tapes of debates between Mo and one of his long-standing antagonists on the Interior Committee, Don Young of Alaska--those two were as far apart as you could ever see, but yet there was still a civility that was present there between the two of them, even though....

JR: I think there was a lot of mutual respect, too.

PS: Even though they were way far apart. (JR: Yes.) Mo doesn't win. Mo goes back and continues his career in Congress. Jimmy Carter is elected president. Any thoughts

on Jimmy Carter's four years as president? His good points, bad points, abilities, as you've been talking along.

JR: Well, as I mentioned, I was not an admirer of Jimmy Carter, and I'm still not. He, unlike Mo, had people around him who shouldn't have been around anybody, in my opinion. Some of 'em were all right, but the ones that I remember the best were substandard, to say the least. Jimmy Carter didn't seem to have the capability to understand the economy, because as you will recall, we had an inflationary period where the prime rate went up to something like 20%, which I never could quite understand. Miller was the chairman of the Fed during most of that time, and why he let that happen, again, I will never understand. So I guess I've got to say that it was ineptitude. Ineptitude reigned supreme in the Carter administration.

PS: And Jimmy Carter loses his bid for reelection in 1980 to Ronald Reagan, whose presidential campaign, a lot of groundwork was laid for that with Barry Goldwater's run in 1964. I don't think there's any doubt about that. And Ronald Reagan served two terms.