

NEWS FROM:

C-SPAN AMERICA'S NETWORK

Suite 155 • 400 N. Capitol Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

Release: IMMEDIATE
November 21, 1985

Contact: Susan Swain
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(202) 737-3220

RETIRING LEGISLATORS INTERVIEWED BY C-SPAN
VIEWS ON THE RIGORS, CHALLENGES OF WASHINGTON DETAILED

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Mr. Hartnett, 44, is returning to South Carolina to run for lieutenant governor.

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Sen. Eagleton stressed that campaign financing reform will be a top priority for his final months in the Senate.

Mr. Eagleton, an 18-year senate veteran, told C-SPAN that "The shear rigors of political life have worn me out." The 56-year old Eagleton said he was anxious to start a teaching career at Washington University of St. Louis.

During the interview, Sen. Eagleton also discussed his years during the Nixon administration, touching upon his co-sponsorship of the War Powers Resolution and his perspective of the Resolution, a decade later.

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SELECTED QUOTES FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH:

REP. THOMAS HARNETT (R-SC)

(Air date: 11/28/85)

"I guess you might say that I came here full of idealism, but I guess the real word should be naiveté. I came here not conscious of the fact that one person could do little, if anything."

"Our system of government is probably the greatest in the whole world... but it's our political system that needs such a real overhaul. To start with, to come to Congress you have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars...then once you're here, the attitude seems to be 'Well, that's my seat, I have to hold onto my seat. I have to do anything, short of dishonesty, to hold onto that seat.' The primary concern becomes their own survival. I've been a big advocate of limited number of terms for Members of Congress and the Senate...it becomes a self-preserving type [of] thing and I think that's bad. I think that you ought to serve six years or eight years and that [should] be the maximum and then go home."

"I think the biggest reason I can tell you why I'm going home is that nobody really cares up here - I shouldn't say nobody - very few really care about the right thing being done, it's more the political thing to be done. Maybe in their own eyes they assume that it is the right thing, the political thing. We all have our own little parochial interest."

"We [as Members] don't want to be known as one who votes against those types of people we've divided into little minorities, consequently, we'd never vote against food stamps, you'd never vote against Social Security... medicare, medicaid, defense. Everything is almost untouchable and there is little, if anything, we can do. It's not our system of government, but our political system under which we operate that makes one person very ineffective. It makes one person very insignificant and to be in the [House] minority on top of that, makes it even that much more difficult."

"I'm going back to state government because I really love state government, that's where my heart is. And I'm leaving the House of Representatives, I guess you might say, out of utter frustration and somewhat disappointment over the way I see many [Congressmen] vote and the way I see the system run."

"We really were founded as a citizen's government -- government of the people and by the people -- that is what I think our best way of operating would be now, if we had a citizen's congress. Where the Congress had the benefit of the input of men and women from all walks of life, from all over this great nation of ours

(--more--)

--come and serve for a while, contribute something and go back home. But now we have become a political system of professional politicians and I don't think that's good for the country. I think it's far better to have the citizen legislator and not the professional politician."

"Constituents at home think this a very glamorous job -- that we go out to cocktail parties in Washington society and that we're out every night. I eat more TV dinners out of aluminum trays probably more than your average person back home...I'm by myself, I do my own laundry, I clean my own bathroom...I do my own grocery shopping like everybody else does. There's not a lot of glamour to the job."

On the Armed Services Committee:

"On that committee, defense is the 'whipping boy' of almost all liberal (Armed Services) congressmen and Senators...and they've been the whipping boy the whole time I've been in Congress -- with the \$400 ashtray and the \$800 toilet seat -- it has been difficult. Primarily why I - from a personal, selfish standpoint - would have liked to have been on another committee...is that your whole view of the world is either olive drab or navy blue on the Armed Services Committee. You're concerned with ships and missiles. It would have been interesting to have [been on] maybe banking, maybe commerce, maybe foreign affairs [committees]..."

"One thing I wanted to do was be someone who was going to be well respected for my views and for my outspokenness, whether you agree with it [my opinion] or not... there's at least one person over there [on the Hill] who at least speaks his mind."

Decision to run for Lt. Governor:

"I think that I'd become so frustrated and so disappointed with the system up here that I was sort of down on government in general...and I was very frustrated and I didn't have...the 'fire in my gut' to really want to get in there and run [for governor]. And then to complicate that more, my good friend and colleague...Congressman Campbell [R-4th C.D.] announced that he wanted to run for governor....Our philosophies are the same and for he and I to have^{run} in a state where just a few years ago nobody wanted the Republican nomination - to take two Congressmen and pit them against each other in a race that would have produced no philisophical victory at all...it would have been like the Civil War. I think people would have asked 'Was it really worth it?' when it was over. 'Did we really accomplish anything?'... I just thought it would be best for me to either run for nothing or to run for a position where I could assist the Republican party. That seemed to me to be the office of Lt. Governor, so I announced that I would seek that office.

(--more--)

I think it will give me time to get back into statewide government to familiarize myself again with those issues that are important, really, to the state and not to the federal government. And [it will] give me a while to get that old fire back in my gut again. So that's really why I have announced for Lt. Governor rather than governor....it will give the Republican party now in South Carolina a great opportunity to take the statehouse. Now that the governor can succeed himself for one term....if Congressman Campbell and I were successful in winning, then we could restore good conservative government there [in S.C.] for a long time."

"If the Republican party or a conservative president can be elected in '88 and stay in for four to eight years, I think we would then pretty much have put liberal-type thinking into almost a dinosaurial-type [sic] category. I think it [liberal thinking] will pretty much be extinct. Now it may raise its ugly head again somewhere during the middle of the twenty-first century, but I think that...we've proven that the government just can't solve the [social] problems."

Advice to freshmen Congressmen: "To remember why he or she came, who sent them, and to never forget why they're here...[and maintain] that same enthusiasm they had during the campaign and that same adherence to principle and issues they had during that campaign."

"We sure would be a lot better off if we could all be remembered for how well we served and not how long we served."

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C-SPAN Interview

Susan

Guest: Sen. Thomas Eagleton (D-MO)

November 28, 1985

Sample

C-SPAN Moderator:

"After 30 years as an elected official, it'll be a total of 18 in the U.S. Senate, you're leaving. Why are you leaving?"

Eagleton

"I think 30 years in public life is long enough, at least it's long enough for me. Politics, campaigning and holding public office takes its toll on a human. It's a very intense profession. There are few relaxing moments in it. So 30 years of concentrated effort like that I think is enough for one human being. The total number of years is enough for me. Secondly, there are other things that I want to do. More specifically, teaching. I want to go back to my home city of St. Louis and be a professor at Washington University. And then I put third on the list, campaign spending. I did ^{want} not to go through the process of running around with a tin cup for campaign contributions. And that's what you have to do today to run for the U.S. Senate. You have to literally beg for about 2-3 years, not only in your own state, but you put on begging campaigns in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and God knows where else, in order to amass these huge war chests that are deemed to be necessary for a modern political campaign. It's the obligation that is incurred when you receive large amounts of funds from certain groups or individuals. You're dealing with individuals or groups who to put it bluntly, 'want a piece of you.' Soon, you've assigned so many pieces of you, that there isn't much left of your independent mind and soul. You're pre-bought. It seems to me that that is where we're headed in American and national politics. ...but anyway, I didn't want to go through that process once more. So, for all of those reasons, I thought enough was enough."

C-SPAN Moderator:

"You said when you were reelected in 1980, 'you felt like a dog.'"

Eagleton:

"Well, the '80 campaign had been a very tough one. It was a very close one, so that campaign took a physical toll on me. I felt more like a dog because I had lost my best friends in that '80 election. Indeed a whole host of what I deemed to be very 'enlightened and progressive individuals,' was replaced by and large by very, very conservative republicans which changed the cast and the character of the U.S. Senate quite greatly. So really, on election night when I got back to my

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(more)

Eagleton

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hotel room and I'd won, and had started then taking stock of who else had lost, I went to bed more of a sad individual than a happy individual although I personally had survived."

C-SPAN Moderator:

"Describe to us, some of the rigors of political life."

Eagleton:

"I think politics by its very nature, is a sort of 24-hour day, 7 days a week occupation. It is in no respect a 9-5 job with nice 2-day weekends off. Whatever spare time you have as a politician, you run out to your constituency and run around the state. It's an all-consuming, everlasting, never ending job. And if you add on the top of that, that you are as I described myself, sort of an 'intense individual,' it means that that's a very rugged combination that is continuous work and intensity of purpose. And not everyone is cut out for politics. I think I was and I'm glad I was in it, and I certainly have no regrets about my career and enjoyed having the opportunities I've had in public service. But I would not recommend it to every individual depending on his or her make-up. ...I would say my last campaign, the calendar years of 1979 and 1980 (you have to run for at least two years now, one year isn't good enough to seek reelection, it's at least two and in the minds of some three or four), those last two years, calendar '79 and '80, I found that some of the romance was going. Some of the bloom was off the rose, that things were becoming a bit more of a chore than they were something that was exciting and challenging. I think that was the tell tale period."

Eagleton: On a member's tenure in the Congress...

"I think there should be some finite limit. In fact, I even thought at one time three terms in the Senate (18 years), nine two-year terms (nearly 18 years) in the House of Representatives might be enough. I think there are some individuals who come to the Senate or House and think that they maybe ought to stay there unperturbatively I think that's a mistake. I think there ought to be a regularized turnover in these bodies, a regularized infusion of new blood. New blood means new vigor -- new vigor, new ideas, new concepts -- and I don't think that we ought to have squatter's rights on the seat in the Senate. I think that it's like a Shakespearean player -- there are great actors and great players that did one play too many. I think there are senators who've done the Senate one term too many.

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Eagleton

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C-SPAN Moderator:

"One of the other of your legislative accomplishments was an amendment halting bombing of Cambodia."

Eagleton:

"I'd rank that number one on the Eagleton hit list if I have a hit list. I think that had more lasting impact than any other I have done or could have done perhaps during my 18 years in the Senate."

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