

## **Joe Bartlett**

### **Pages on the House Floor**

Description of the responsibilities of Pages assigned to the House Floor during the 1940s and 1950s.

*Interview recorded May 17, 2006*

Most people, I think, know, that there's a Page calling system on the floor. It was all electronically. It's been upgraded. They have a much better system there, now. But it has a diagram of the floor. And when a bell or a sign would light up, you could tell the Page taking his little card that has the diagram, he could go directly to that seat, without any trouble. And that's your number one priority. At least it was when I was Chief Page. Your number one priority is to respond to the calls on the floor. And that would involve a lot of things. But that—the direct service to the Members of Congress, that was put above everything else. Concurrent with that, we would get phone calls coming into the cloakroom, wanting documents from the old document room, and things of that nature. That was the second priority. And we would dispatch them from that location. In our instance, it was the Northwest corner of the House Floor. We had two benches without cushions. And we would try to maintain a few boys on those benches. We'd sometimes have eight or 10 sitting there, waiting for their next assignment. But most of the time, we were lucky to have two or three there, waiting to take care of the House Floor, if it was a busy time of day, a busy legislative situation.