

Frank Mitchell

Typical Day as a Page and Description of the Republican Cloakroom

Memories of a busy Page schedule and of the Republican Cloakroom.

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Well, it started off pretty early, because you had to be at Page school at 6:30. So, for me, that was a bus ride and then we had class until about— I want to say 9:00, maybe 9:30. And then we would walk across campus to the Hill and pretty much go to work. Although work was fairly quiet at those hours, because the House usually didn't go into session until around noon. So we had a couple of hours to sit around, maybe grab an early lunch. Yeah, I know we grabbed an early lunch because between Maggie's cooking and the cloakroom staff that made meals, I gained quite a few pounds the first six months I was here. So then you would just make sure you had plenty of pens and pads in the booths to take the messages. Then at noon, the House would go into session. The Members would start coming in. Phones had been ringing previously, but not that much. Because they, the people that were calling, knew that the Members weren't there yet. But by noon, the phones— I mean we had 13 phones, as I recall, and half or more of them were almost always lit up. So it was a pretty busy time for the four Pages, and then we had two supervisors. So there were six of us that could be answering the phones at once, if need be. Members were constantly in and out of the cloakroom getting something to eat. There was an area where we had large chairs and large couches that they don't have anymore. But the Members would come in there and maybe take a nap. There might be a little meeting of the minds over some issue, some bill, some legislation. The cloakroom was a good place to get those kinds of things done. It was private. The eyes of the world couldn't peer in and see who you were talking to or hear what you were talking about.