

Mike Michaelson
Superintendent, Radio-TV Gallery, U.S. House of Representatives

Events: 1954 Shooting

“It Wasn’t My Time to Go”

Mike Michaelson describes how an average day at work suddenly turned chaotic.
Interview recorded May 14, 2009

MICHAELSON: Of course, in 1954—I was only there a few years—I was sitting in the gallery, and that’s when the shooting took place. That was the highlight of my career. And I was right in the line of fire. For some strange reason, it wasn’t my time to go. I moved my seat down toward the press gallery, which was buffered by a wall, a marble—a small, marble separation. And I could hear better because the Speaker’s dais was below me to the right, and I could hear better. I had problems hearing in those days, too.

JOHNSON: So you were taking notes on the proceedings?

MICHAELSON: Taking notes on the proceedings. And as soon as I moved my seat, within 15 seconds, these people—I’d looked at them, I’d turned around like this, sitting, taking notes. I saw these people, and I really watched people come in—the door was right over here—and I watched them take seats, and there were a few people in the gallery.