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Objects: La Salle Stenotype Machine

House Schedule: Part One

Joe Strickland explains the effect the House's legislative schedule had on his work schedule.
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Everything that we do, everything that the reporters do is tied to the House schedule, right? So the House schedule changes with each Congress, depending on who's in charge and how they manage their time. But I always used to say it was like jumping from stone to stone in a brook to try to keep from getting wet because you work, work, work, work, work, work, work, and then there's a break or a district work period. And then you work, work, work, work, work and then there's a district—so you have to just keep in mind there's a district work period coming, and things are going to stop for a while. The typical day, the House usually would come in midday at the beginning of the week. There are certain things they do at the beginning of a day, which are sort of like special orders and, and one minutes, and five minutes, and things like that. So you kind of know what to expect. Then they go into business, what we call business. And usually you can get a clue as to what time the House is going to adjourn, but you never really know what time the House is going to adjourn. And then the House comes in again the next morning, say 9:00, 10:00, whatever. And depending on what legislation is on the floor sort of dictates what the schedule's going to be like. Appropriations can go and go and go and go and go. If there's a big bill, like a, any kind of big legislation, or, or divisive legislation, the debate can just go and go and go. But you know, there's a rule. You know, they go to the Rules Committee. And the Rules Committee says we're going to have this many hours of debate with this much on your side and this much on your side. So you kind of know that ahead of time. But you never are quite sure whether they're going to go to the bitter, bitter end tonight, or whether they're going to come in tomorrow and finish it. And then usually the end of the week is short, shorter, you know, truncated maybe because the Members like to get back to their districts for the work period. Or for the weekend even.