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ROBERT S. STRAUSS (STR)

Biography

Robert S. Strauss is Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, a position to which he was elected December 9, 1972.

Mr. Strauss became Democratic National Committeeman from Texas in 1968. In 1968 he served as Co-Chairman of the Humphrey-Muskie campaign in Texas (which was carried by the Democratic ticket.) In March, 1970, he was elected Treasurer of the Democratic National Committee at a time when the DNC had a debt of 9.3 million dollars and an operating deficit of $100,000 per month. He shifted the party's financing toward small contributors, including two national telethons which produced sufficient funds to reduce the party debt by more than $6 million. Mr. Strauss was Co-Chairman of the Arrangements Committee for the 1972 Democratic Convention, which involved providing the financing for that convention (a cost of approximately $2 million.)

Mr. Strauss was named Chairman of the National Committee to Re-elect a Democratic Congress for the 1972 elections, which provided substantial funds and assistance to Democratic candidates for the House and Senate where Democratic control was increased.

Robert Strauss was born in Lockhart, Texas, on October 19, 1918; he was raised in Stamford, Texas. He attended the University of Texas, receiving an LLB in 1941. After serving as a Special Agent of the FBI he entered private law practice in Dallas in 1945. He is now on leave from the firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld, which has offices in Dallas and Washington, D.C.

Mr. Strauss has served as chairman or member of the board of numerous businesses and civic organizations in Dallas, currently including such businesses as Valley View Bank and Strauss Broadcasting Company, and such organizations as the Presbyterian Hospital, the Jewish Welfare Federation, and the University of Texas Foundation.

He now also serves on various national political/governmental bodies such as the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Advisory Board and the Robert A. Taft Institute of Government.

He is married and the father of three children.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MARCH 11, 1977

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

The President today announced that he will nominate Robert S. Strauss to be Special Representative for Trade Negotiations, with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. Strauss is an attorney and the former chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

He was born October 19, 1918, in Lockhart, Texas and received an LL.B. degree from the University of Texas in 1941.

Since 1945 Strauss has been actively engaged in the practice of law in Dallas, Texas. He is a senior partner in the law firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld, with offices in Dallas and Washington, D.C.

He is chairman of the board of Strauss Broadcasting Company, Dallas, and chairman of the board of the Valley View State Bank, also in Dallas.

Strauss served as national committeeman from the State of Texas from 1968 to 1972. During the 1968 national election he served as co-chairman of the Humphrey-Muskie campaign in Texas. In March 1970 he was elected treasurer of the Democratic National Committee and served as chairman of its National Finance Council.

During the 1972 general elections, Strauss served as chairman of the National Committee to Re-elect a Democratic Congress. In December 1972 he was elected chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

He is married and the father of three children.

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conflict, when there was no enegry crisis, the United States began talking about the possibility of having to protect its oil imports by force of arms.

"You know that all gas and oil deposits are likely to run out in 30 to 50 years—Russia's may last close to 50 years—but in 30 years it is impossible to reorganize the world in terms of energy from coal," Alexandrov said.

"We must therefore build nuclear power reactors in all parts of the world, otherwise wars will one day be fought over the remnants of oil and gas deposits. And there will be wars, however peculiar this may sound, between the capitalist countries, because the Soviet Union will have concentrated on the production of nuclear power and be ahead of everybody else," the Soviet scientist declared.

Alexandrov suspects opponents of nuclear power fear it because they believe a nuclear power plant failure can lead to an atomic bomb explosion akin to that of Hiroshima.

"They have no real idea of the modern safety devices imposed on the risks involved," he said.

Alexandrov voiced strong criticism of the handling of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, claiming that from the beginning there were faults with the operating methods which accounted for the trouble: negligence regarding security measures taken by the plant management, inferior operating personnel and inadequate technical safeguards built into the plant against accidents.

He said that only specially trained engineers are allowed to operate Soviet nuclear plants, and that at the central control panel two men must always be on duty.

"I can't imagine the kind of (accident) in the Soviet Union, where pump valves remain closed when they were supposed to be open."

(Among other problems, a pump valve remained closed at Three Mile Island and prevented cooling of the reactor.)

Alexandrov added: "And yet, despite all that happened, there was no serious danger, and whatever danger might have existed, was exaggerated."

On the issue of storing radioactive waste, one aspect of the nuclear power problem that troubles the American public, he said he was certain this could be solved.

"There are many ways to go about it because there exist 'hermetic structures' in the outer layer of the earth which are safe storage places," Alexandrov said.

In a reference to the youthful character of the anti-nuclear movement in the United States, Alexandrov countered that he had three sons who were all in favor of it.

The Soviet scientist insists that nuclear energy production is safer than coal mining or production of chemicals.

"People in the vicinity of nuclear power plants are not exposed to greater radiation than that which comes from natural radiation sources. And a worker in a nuclear power plant does not absorb more radiation in a year than you get from one x-ray examination," he said.

"For all practical purposes, we in the Soviet Union have today the same technical know-how as the United States. The United States was ahead at the start, but her nuclear energy development has slowed down, while ours has accelerated," Alexandrov contended.

"All people with common sense should realize that by the end of the century the United States will be compelled to create new great nuclear production facilities, possibly nuclear fusion plants, otherwise she will find herself desperately short of energy. There is no other way to preserve the modern way of scientific development," Alexandrov said.

Inozemtsev, the Soviet economist, was asked whether the Soviet Union would begin shifting the economic emphasis from military to civilian production now that the SALT II agreement has been signed.

Without hesitation, he seized on the occasion to sound still another Soviet call for the U.S. Senate to ratify the agreement.

His reply: "We live in a very important period when decision as regards industrial production can move in either direction. The Vienna meeting opened the way for decisions to be taken in favor of civilian production, certainly.

"But the history of the last years tells us that progress in the field of armaments can be swift and that newer and newer types of weapons are being invented.

"The only way we can protect ourselves from surprises and a further escalation is through the SALT process, which now includes not only quantitative but also qualitative restrictions."

TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR ROBERT STRAUSS

(Mr. SCHEUER asked and was given permission to extend his remarks at this point in the RECORD and to include extraneous matter.)

Mr. SCHEUER. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the House approved by a margin of 395 to 7 the massive trade liberalization agreement that the United States signed in Geneva in April after 5 years of negotiation. This lopsided vote was this body's best way of paying tribute to a remarkable man, Ambassador Robert Strauss and to his virtuoso performance of negotiation, accommodation, and compromise of a myriad of conflicting and vying interests both at home and abroad. Ambassador Strauss negotiated with infinite patience and resourcefulness with a wide variety of regional interests, industry-by-industry, and trade group-by-trade group, and simultaneously negotiated an equally complex equation of delicate balances with a myriad of foreign economic interests around the globe. Indeed, he has perfected the skills of negotiation, accommodation, and compromise to the level of a new high art form.

Having completed this extraordinarily difficult juggling act with remarkable success he has now been asked to undertake the even more difficult task of representing the President in the Middle East, a region in which no President or administration within memory of living man has ever been able to produce the harmony, and the interface of competing national interests, essential both to the interests of that region or to the interests of the United States.

Elizabeth Drew of the New Yorker has written an excellent profile of Ambassador Strauss. I think my colleagues will find it valuable to read this thoughtful description of the complete diplomat undertaking this crucial assignment. I commend this article to my colleagues:

PROFILES

One day in late March, I went to see Robert S. Strauss, officially the United States' Special Representative for Trade Negotiations—he has the title, which he relishes, of Ambassador, and is in charge of our participation in the current trade negotiations among ninety-nine nations, and of guiding the result through Congress—but also the Administration's kibitzer, political adviser, fund-raiser, pinch-hitter on all sorts of matters, and conduit to all manner of people. In addition to all this, a few weeks after my visit he was named Ambassador-at-Large for the Middle East negotiations—a job he is to begin after Congress has acted on the trade bill. By the time I reach his office, which is a few blocks from the White House, at eleven o'clock, Strauss has already: talked to Hamilton Jordan, the President's chief political adviser, about Carter's recent trip to Texas, during which he attended a luncheon for some hundred and fifty people at Strauss's home in Dallas (Strauss also has a penthouse apartment at the Watergate), about a forthcoming decision to close certain military bases, and about the next of the biweekly Monday breakfasts that Strauss and Jordan attend with Vice-President Walter Mondale and Cyrus Vance, the Secretary of State; spoken with an assistant to Alfred Kahn, who is in charge of the Administration's wage-and-price program, about the current wage negotiations between the Teamsters union and the trucking companies (Strauss is the conduit between the Administration and Frank Fitzsimmons, the Teamsters' president); spoken with Henry Owen, who handles international economic matters for the National Security Council; spoken on the phone with Mike O'Callaghan, a former governor of Nevada, who is now executive vice-president of the Las Vegas *Sun*, and who called to thank Strauss for arranging an invitation for Hank Greenspun, the editor and publisher of the *Sun*, to the recent White House dinner honoring Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat; and worked out a difficult problem involving Senators Edward Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, and Robert Dole, Republican of Kansas, which threatened to hold up progress on the trade legislation.

"That's a pretty good morning," Strauss says. "I'll tell you something. I am going to pass a trade bill, and I'm going to make it so easy they won't know wha' hoppened." During our talk, he places a call to the office of Senator Harrison Williams, Democrat of New Jersey, and tells an aide to Williams that Fort Dix, in New Jersey, is going to be virtually shut down, that he tried to help but couldn't, and that he is giving Williams advance warning so he can be prepared. Then he talks on the phone to Cyrus Vance about a number of matters. One of them is Strauss's backing of the appointment as Ambassador to Mexico of Robert Krueger, a former Democratic congressman from Texas who lost an election to the Senate last year. He has been arguing that the appointment of Krueger, a moderate Democrat who has had support from the oil industry, would be good politics for the President in Texas. Some of the career foreign-service officers are opposed, and Strauss has suggested, typically, that Texas might do the President more good in 1980 than the foreign service can.

Strauss, who is sixty, is, as always, dressed immaculately. He is wearing a dark-blue suit with pinstripes about an inch apart, and a blue shirt with "RSS" embroidered on the cuffs and with the spread collar that he favors. He has olive skin and almond-shaped somewhat soulfoul hazel eyes, and his hair, grayish white, sweeps back in waves. He speaks with a strong Texas accent, and his voice is nasal—he sometimes sounds as if he were honking at you rather than speaking to you—and can reach a squeak when he becomes agitated. Strauss talks fast, and a lot.

His particular problem with the trade negotiations and legislation at the moment is to get a bill through Congress extending the authority of the Treasury Department to waive what are known as "countervailing duties"—duties that are to be imposed on imports that have been subsidized by foreign governments. He needs to get the bill through Congress in the next few days, he explains to me, so that the negotiations with the European Communities, or E.C.—nine

European nations that form a customs union and negotiate on trade with one voice—which are a prerequisite to reaching a worldwide agreement in the multilateral trade negotiations, or M.T.N., can be wrapped up. Last year, the bill became hostage to some members of Congress seeking protection of certain interests. One of those members was Russell Long, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee—which handles, among other things, trade—whose concern was for his sugar-growing constituents in Louisiana. So this year Strauss was instrumental in getting the Administration to support legislation to raise prices for United States sugar producers. If the countervailing-duty bill does not pass, the European Communities might not sign the trade agreement, because it would mean that the United States would have to impose a duty on Danish butter cookies. And one of Strauss's negotiating counterparts, Finn Gundelach, is from Denmark. (Butter cookies have become the symbol of the countervailing-duty issue, but, in fact, if the bill does not pass, import duties may have to be imposed on a number of European exports.) These are among the thousands of equations that Strauss must keep in his head as he tries to work out the trade issue. His problem this morning is that Dole wanted to attach an amendment to the countervailing-duty bill, which has already been passed by the House, to repeal a tax reform passed in 1976. "That meant that the President would have had to veto my countervailing bill," Strauss explains to me. "So I said to Dole, 'Attach your amendment to something else.'" Dole decided to attach it to a minor tax bill that the House had passed, and Strauss promised Dole that that bill could be voted on before the countervailing-duty bill was brought up. But then Kennedy objected to that, because he wanted more time for debate on Dole's amendment, which he opposed. So each senator then had Strauss' countervailing-duty bill hostage. Strauss talked to Kennedy and to Dole and to Long and got an arrangement under which all parties were satisfied, and the bill is now expected to be taken up and passed by the Senate this afternoon. "We've had fifty things like that," Strauss says.

Strauss's office, which is large, is decorated in beige and gold velours and has print wing-back chairs, a French Provincial desk, a conference table, a flag, and a large globe; and on a table next to Strauss's desk there is a sign that says, in gold on maroon leather, "IT CAN BE DONE." Averell Harriman, who backed Strauss for his previous job, as chairman of the Democratic National Committee, gave him the sign. Strauss shows me some letters he has written in longhand. "I do something other people in government don't do," he says. "I write my own letters, in longhand. I get them out quicker that way, and people appreciate them more. I don't know anybody in the bureaucracy that writes in longhand." Pause. "I don't know anybody in the bureaucracy that writes."

He decides to check with one of Russell Long's aides, to be sure that all is in order on the countervailing-duty bill and that it will go through the Senate this afternoon. Strauss has taken the time to cultivate this particular staff member (the number of people he has taken the time to cultivate is staggering)—an exercise that yields him, among other things, information when he needs it. And he and Long are old friends (Long also lives at the Watergate) and are worthy of each other as bargainers. "There's always some staff jerk up there who thinks of something he wants to add at the last minute," Strauss says.

He reaches Long's aide, and asks him, "Did you talk to Russell?" There is a momentary silence, and then Strauss says, "Oh, for Christ's sake. Who thought of that goddam brilliant idea?" Clearly, someone wants to add something to his bill. He listens again. "Well, is there any controversy in this sonofabitch?" He continues, stressing his efforts, which have been successful so far, to keep either chamber from adding an amendment to his bill. That way, once the Senate passes the bill, it can become law. Strauss says to Long's aide, "We've just got to keep that bill clean. I can't stand that. I better talk to Russell. He's got to put that on something else. I've only got three or four days to move in. This would have to go back to the House, and then we're dead. It would free up some time for me. I'll get out of the government this afternoon. I'm going to have to talk to Long. Where is the sonofabitch now?"

While he waits for Long to come to the phone, he explains to me that the latest hitch is that Long wants to attach to the bill an amendment to extend child-support and day-care programs.

Now Strauss says into the phone, slowly and sorrowfully, "Russell, I can't take that ——— child-support thing. It'll have to go back over to the House, and this is my last shot before the April 2nd E.C. meeting." Silence. Then Strauss's voice rises, nearing its squeak. "Godalmighty, Russell, you're wearing me out. You ———, I'm putting myself in your hands. If that amendment goes through, I'm getting out of the government tomorrow, because that will louse it all up." Silence. "Trust me. Russell, let me tell you something. I've worked out problems with Dole; I've worked out problems with Kennedy; I've worked out problems with the Japanese. I just can't work out this one, too. There just isn't enough time." Now Strauss is getting truly agitated—or acting as if he were truly agitated—and he talks very fast. "Russell, if this thing goes through, the trade bill is through, and that's good for me—I'll be practicing law and making more money." Then he laughs, and says, "And the first thing I'll do is come down to Louisiana and get someone to run against you. Don't give me that 'little old noncontroversial amendment' stuff." Pause. Then, sorrowfully again, "But Russell, how'm I going to get the House to act on this? Let me tell you this, Russell, if we can't get this waiver by April 2nd, I'm dead. I'm not kidding. I've got to get it before the E.C. by April 2nd. Then we can get the trade bill through Congress by July 15th. I don't want to go down on crap like this. We've got Dole in place. Isn't there some other bill of yours we can put this on? I know it sounds simple to you. It doesn't sound simple to me." Now he squeaks, "I know I'm a tough ——— You're a tough ———. I've solved every problem. I've worked these guys on the Finance Committee to death for two years." He is silent while Long talks. Then: "Russell, don't get me against day care and child support. I'm for 'em. Russell, it isn't right to do this. I know I'm right. This is the first time I've said, 'This time I'm right and you're wrong.' I just can't have this. Now go and get another bill to attach that thing to." Pause. "All right."

And then Strauss hangs up, and says to me quietly, somewhat wrung out, "He'll go along."

Robert Strauss is a peculiarly Washington phenomenon, and even within the context of Washington he is a phenomenon. He arrived on the scene in 1970, at the age of fifty-one, as the treasurer of the Democratic National Committee and a protégé of John Connally (then a Democrat), became chairman of the Party in late 1972, and, through a combination of force of personality, a special set of talents, and circumstance, established himself as a major power in the city—and the nation. Strauss is not simply a "fixer" or "wheeler-dealer." He can fix and he can wheel-and-deal with the best (or worst) of them, but he is also a man who takes on big, awesome problems—like putting the Democratic Party together again, like negotiating a highly complex trade package—and stays with them and throws himself into working them out. He is not a miracle man, and he does not accomplish everything that he sets out to do, or as much as he would sometimes have people believe, but he does accomplish a great deal.

He was not notably successful in running what there was of the Administration's anti-inflation program, which he was asked to do, on top of his trade job, for a few months last year. His is a particular kind of power: it is not tangible, as a corporation chairman's or a military commander's or a President's might be, and it is not transferable. When the head of a Cabinet department or a White House official or a President assumes his job, he assumes a large amount of transferable power—to make of it what he can. Strauss's power is peculiar to Strauss and is his own creation. He parlays just about every situation into more than most others could make of it, charms more people, and works harder at it all than just about anybody around. He has a long memory, a special skill at negotiating among conflicting groups, and a very strong drive to show the world just what Bob Strauss—he often refers to himself that way—can do. He is an almost classic story, even a cliche, of the poor boy out of a small Texas town who made it big, first in Texas politics, business, and law, and then in the nation's capital. In the process, he has also made himself a controversial figure. There are people who are put off by his bluster, his bravado, his self-promotion; there are people who think that he consistently gets in over his head and that he will do almost anything to make a deal. Strauss is a self-promoter, and that is part of his effectiveness. He reads Washington very well: he understands that to be seen to have power in Washington is to have it, and to get more of it. Power is the ability to influence others' behavior; if people think someone has power, they act toward him as if he has, and therefore he is powerful. The more people who think that Bob Strauss can get things done, the more likely he is to be able to get them done. He has a very wide range of contacts, which causes him to have an even wider range of contacts, as word spreads that Bob Strauss is the man to be in contact with.

All of this is of value in an Administration that is not exactly filled with people who know how to get things done or who have a gift for reaching out. In a Johnson Administration, a Strauss would be an addition; in the Carter Administration, he may be crucial. But, whatever the Administration, such people are essential in Washington. Strauss' value is that he can deal with the numberless conflicting elements in a political transaction. He does not preoccupy himself with substance—he makes a big point of not appearing to do so. There are many people around who concern themselves with the substance of issues, but not all that many who can work them out. If the political process is to function, somewhere among the people of ideas and the people (in Congress, in the law firms, and in the lobbying organizations) whose sole role is to take home all the coonskins they can there must be a few who can piece things together. People who do this well do it through a complex combination of winning trust, threatening, rewarding, and conveying—accurately—an impression of power. It becomes firmly fixed in thousands of minds that these are people who know what they are doing, that they have a kind of competence that can be trusted.

Strauss's method of operation is characterized by native intelligence, a shrewd understanding of people, flexibility, a willingness to go by instinct, and humor. He disarms people and defuses situations with his humor. One White House aide who has at times been at odds with Strauss says, "It's

very hard to get mad at Strauss, and if you do it's hard to stay mad at him." Strauss himself has said to me of one political figure, "He can't get his hand on me as long as I keep kidding him." He also disarms people with put-downs and sheer effrontery. In the recent trade negotiations, at a particularly sticky moment he threw an arm around a presumably startled Nobuhiko Ushiba, his Japanese counterpart, and said, "Brother Ushiba, you're crazy as hell." After the Canadians, in a negotiation with Strauss, put forward their trade proposals, Strauss looked at them and said, "That's nice. Real nice. You have as much chance of getting that as I have of going to bed tonight with Farrah Fawcett-Majors." And he disarms through self-exaggeration: he turns his substantial ego and love of success, and even his clear need for applause, into a joke.

His network is probably as large as any around, and he works hard to keep it. One of his friends says, "His network is everywhere. It ranges from bookies to bank presidents." (Strauss is a devotee of the race track—he got to know Frank Fitzsimmons at the track at Del Mar, California, where Strauss and his wife, Helen, go each summer—and also of poker.) Hamilton Jordan said to me recently, "Strauss is all over the damn place. He's got contacts on the Hill, he's got contact in the states, he's got contacts in the business community, he's got contacts in the press. There's just nobody quite like him." Someone else who has observed Strauss for years says, "It's not just his contacts; he knows how to use his contacts." One of Strauss's friends said, after telling me of an instance in which Strauss got in touch with Attorney General Griffin Bell on behalf of a Washington lawyer, "He runs a lot of errands like that for friends, and then he can go back. So when he needs things he can go get them. He's been doing that all his life." Washington is a city of channels—front channels and back channels. The front channels are the normal processes and meetings by which things get done. The back channels consist of people getting in touch with other people who can put them in touch with other people or can relay a message. A great deal of Washington's business gets done in the back channels, and Strauss is often there. He seems to find time to make innumerable phone calls to "keep in touch;" he cultivates secretaries as well as senators; he will befriend a middle-level White House aide whom other important officials won't bother with. Every few months, he sends candy to the White House switchboard operators. There is a genuine warmth to him. He performs more acts of kindness—of the type that people aren't likely to forget—than most people far less busy than he. He also seems to know the value of having other people's gratitude. He is highly skilled at dealing with the press. And he appears to be the only person in Washington to have established a kidding relationship with Jimmy, and even Rosalynn, Carter.

When I asked people about his ubiquity, his involvement in so many matters, it was explained to me that this stems in large part from the way he approaches problems. He will listen for a while and then say, "I don't know much about the substance of this, but one thing I do know about is politics, and here's what I think will work politically." Sometimes, I'm told, he will say of someone else in a meeting, "So-and-So was just saying, 'Bob, you don't know about the substance of this, but the thing you do know about is politics,'" when So-and-So has said no such thing. Appearing to be uninterested in substance can provide a certain safety—keeping one from getting caught in details—and also a credential for coming at questions politically. And Strauss is not bashful about injecting himself into all kinds of situations. His advice having been valuable a certain percentage of the time, his contacts being known to be of a certain range, he is likely to be listened to. Some say that he will be flexible within the confines of the problem he is dealing with but there are limits to how far he will go. One man has observed him closely, and who does have a moral base, says, "He's one of these guys who like through their gruff exterior to imply they're manipulative and unprincipled. But I think he has principles—he just wouldn't attribute them to values. He always explains that it's the political thing to do—he covers his decent values with that sort of language." Barbara Mikulski, a Democratic representative from Baltimore who was part of the Democratic Party's reform movement and headed a reform commission while Strauss was Party chairman, says of his chairmanship of the Party, "I thought he was absolutely fantastic. I consider him to be my political mentor. One of the things you learn when you work with Strauss is how you broker conflict, which is the essence of government. He doesn't look for A's or F's—whether it's the Democratic Party of the M.T.N. He's an absolute genius negotiator. I've found him very straight, very straightforward. He's factual, and if that doesn't work he charms, and if that doesn't work he arm-twists." Strauss uses an expression about himself that is instructive: he says, "I'm a closer." One man who has seen him in negotiations says, "He almost cultivates an air of superficiality, remains above the battle, until the crucial moment, and then he comes in and closes the deal." One man in the State Department—which is traditionally suspicious of trade negotiators—says, "He's able to seize the political issue quickly. He can say, 'Here's who you have to talk to and here's how you have to put it to him.' He's a master. He's the only person who could get the M.T.N. through Congress—the only one." And when the Administration wanted someone to take over the continuation of the Middle East negotiations after the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel was signed, it turned to Strauss.

A few days after my visit to Strauss, I accompany him to Boston, where—at the request of Kennedy—he is to addess a luncheon of the New England Council, Inc., an organization of businessmen from the six New England states. ("Teddy can deliver me pretty well where he wants to.") Strauss does a great deal of travelling, to attend political fund-raisers, to drum up support for his trade bill, to pay back favors, to earn new favors, and often combines several of these purposes in one trip.

As we rush from his office into his waiting car, I ask Strauss where, exactly, in Boston we are going. Last week, he was in New York and Columbus, Ohio; this week he was also in Chicago; next week he will be in Tucson.

"I don't know," Strauss replies. "It's all Indianapolis to me. Every other goddam day, one of these trips. Next week, East Lynne." He gets in the front seat, next to his driver, Nat Brannum, picks up the telephone beside him, and calls his wife. The Strausses are famously close. He talks of her quite often ("I was saying to Helen," "Helen and I were talking about . . ."), and she travels with him on most of his trips in the country and overseas. They have three children, with whom they are constantly in touch, and six grandchildren. The Strausses try to return to their Dallas home at least once a month. Helen Strauss is short, dark-haired, warm, and very intelligent, and seems to understand her husband quite well. The Strausses have a good time. On the way to the airport, Brannum makes a somewhat chancy turn, and Strauss says, "Nat, I don't want my obituary to say that he was hit on a half-green light. I want to go down in style." Brannum laughs. Next, Strauss calls Henry Owen at the White House. He says, "Tell them I'm as stretched out as I can be—I can't go any further. I'm losing some friends of mine and I'm fighting the Japanese as hard as I can. Just press on. Good. Goodbye." He tells me a story "When I first came into this government, I wrote a memorandum to the President and I didn't get an answer. Another day went by. After about five days, I said to someone over there, "What happened to my memo?' He said, 'We didn't think it should go to the President.' I said, 'Let me tell you something, you sonofabitch. Any time I send something to the President of the United States, you make goddam sure it goes in there. You can put on top of it 'This is crap' or 'Strauss is crazy,' but you get it in there, or I'll walk out of here or get you thrown out of here, or both.' Other people in the White House heard about that, and it helped."

In the airport, we encounter a political reporter, who asks Strauss where he is going. "New Hampshire," Strauss shoots back. "To see what's going on. I couldn't tell from reading your story." The reporter laughs.

On the plane, Strauss studies some material for the luncheon, and talks. "God, I'm tired," he says. "I must have thought a half hour in the shower this morning. I always think through my problems of the day in the shower—and I also lick my wounds." By seven o'clock each morning, Strauss has read the Washington Post, the New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal, and at some point in the day he also reads the Dallas Times Herald and the Los Angeles Times. Today, Strauss is particularly interested in how the papers played the story about a meeting he held with Japanese negotiators yesterday afternoon. At the meeting, Strauss broke off the negotiations with Japan on the question of government procurement of telecommunications equipment, complaining that Japan's offer to relax its restrictions on access to its market was "wholly inadequate." The issue was which equipment Nippon Telegraph & Telephone; a government-owned utility, might open to bidding from foreign countries. The Japanese offered to allow bidding on contracts for such things as steel telephone poles but not on those for any sophisticated equipment. ("Now, how many steel telephone poles do you think we'll sell in Japan, with their steel business," Strauss says. "What the hell good does that do us?") There is reason to believe that Strauss actually did not want the Japanese to be more forthcoming as yet—that he did not mind having an opportunity to criticize the Japanese, whose restrictive trade policies have become a political issue (one that John Connally, now running for the Republican nomination, is using against Carter), and that he saw breaking off the talks as a good move after he had got the countervailing-duty bill through Congress. He thought about how the story would play both in Japan and in the United States, and he assumed that the Japanese would want to talk about the matter again.

That sort of thing Strauss refers to as "instincts without evidence." One man who has observed Strauss as a trade negotiator has told me, "I've never seen him do anything that hasn't been thought through, even when it doesn't appear to be. Even when he's throwing a temper tantrum, he's thought through the effect and he's usually planned the next move—when he's going to call the other guy back in and smooth things over." Someone else involved in the trade negotiations says, "Strauss is a master of theater." I have been told by others that Strauss's standing is actually very high in Japan, that the government there believes he is the one to deal with—the one who can make the deals—and also believes he is a kingmaker in the United States.

Strauss tells me, "The reason my credibility has gotten so high in Japan—and it is—is, number one, I haven't lied to them and, number two, when they've negotiated responsibly I've gone and told that to the

Congress, and that's not a particularly politically popular thing to do." He explains the problem with the Japanese over telecommunications equipment and then he says, "Two years ago, I wouldn't have been able to deal with these things. I'm not an intellectual, but I learn fast."

I ask him what else he has been doing in the last day or so.

He tells me that he has been talking to someone in New York about playing a major role in Carter's reelection effort; talking to Hamilton Jordan about two or three matters, including the Mexican Embassy and "the kind of people we ought to use in the campaign next year;" talking to Alfred Kahn and his aide about the Teamsters negotiation.

Then he talks about his wife, and says, "Little ole Helen is a hell of a woman. She knows who she is and what she's about, and she knows who I am and what I'm about. I bore easily; my attention span is not great. Helen doesn't bore me."

Then he talks about his mission today. "My basic problem up in New England is that people don't really understand what trade means to them. It's such an easy subject to demagogue. It's so easy to say shut our doors to imports, and they don't realize what that would do to us, and how desperate they are to shop for the best products. They're all protectionist until they go out to shop. The first thing I did when I came on this job was to cut back on the imports of Japanese TVs. This fellow back in Dallas came up to me and said, 'By God, Bob, I knew when you came on this job you'd put the ——— thing in shape and you'd tell it like it is.' I said, 'You know what I really did over there?' He said, 'No.' I said, 'You got a TV set?' He said, 'Yeah, got two or three.' I said, 'How must you pay for them—about four hundred dollars?' He said, 'Yeah.' I said, 'I'll tell you what I really did. The Japanese government's been subsidizing that set, and it would otherwise cost five hundred dollars. I cut out that foolishness. I stopped those Japanese from cutting down on the cost of that TV set.' He said, 'Is that what you did?' Actually, he used a little rougher language. He said, 'I guess it's a little more complicated than I thought.' "

There are those in the United States government—professional bureaucrats who do not share Strauss's outlook or style—who give him the credit for keeping the international trade negotiations alive at all. He is dealing in a world that has become increasingly protectionist. The current round of trade negotiations was decided upon at a meeting of more than ninety countries in Tokyo, in 1973, under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)—the set of rules and arrangements adopted for the purpose of reducing trade barriers. (It is called the Tokyo Round; some people used to refer to it as the Nixon Round, but times have changed.) The countries pledged not only to cut tariffs but also to try to get at the increasing number of non-tariff barriers to trade—subsidies, quotas, government procurement policies, varying standards for applying tariffs, and so on. The current round amounts to the most ambitious trade negotiations in history.

But after the Tokyo meeting came the oil embargo of 1973-74, and a worldwide recession—and a change in the political atmosphere surrounding trade. The Tokyo Round became an exercise as much in staving off a wholesale retreat to protectionism as in freeing up trade. There was also Watergate and then there was the 1976 American election, and the trade talks were essentially moribund. Strauss likes to say that until 1977 the talks, which were taking place in Geneva, did little except "produce a bunch of fine skiers." A number of people say that it was the sheer force of Strauss's personality that got the talks going again.

On the plane to Boston, Strauss tells me, "The first thing I had to do was establish credibility, so that we could move these talks. The European Communists and the Japanese didn't think we could move—because of protectionism, a fragile world economy, the attitude in our Congress. The first thing I did was, I had several meetings with the E.C. and Japan and said that either we move forward or, protectionism was so strong, we'd move backward—that the status quo was not one of our options. Then I had to go and confince them that I was the one who could move them. I had a pretty good press ahead of me. One day in Europe, I told them a story: The first fellow who held my job was Christian Herter, a former Secretary of State, governor of Massachusetts— As a matter of fact, I'm glad I thought of that—I think I'll tell that story today. When John Kennedy was President, he called Herter in and said we need some people with a proper State Department background who might be able to fill this job. Herter said, 'Mr. President, you don't need a diplomat to fill this job. You need someone with a political background, someone who understands the Congress, who understands what the country's all about and makes it tick, and who particularly understands the political process on the Hill.' Kennedy said, 'I'll be damned, Christian. I hereby appoint you America's first trade representative.' I told that story over there. I said, 'President Carter has appointed such a man and I can make this thing move'—and we started talking. The next thing I did was make a decision that the Europeans were scared to death that someone was going to use this negotiation to destroy the Common Agricultural Policy—something they couldn't stand politically." The Common Agricultural Policy, or CAP, is the system by which the European Communities supports the agricultural prices of its members, and it includes trade restrictions. "I told them that we weren't going to try to destroy it, that we would protect it if they would let us get our nose under the tent. It was silly for us to bay at the moon and get nothing—a third of a loaf is better than none, and we were getting none. That's the way we were able to get concessions on tobacco, rice, poultry, and many others. At the same time, we didn't give up too much in the way of cheese." (Strauss is currently negotiating with members of Congress who represent dairy areas— the dairy industry is very strong politically in this country—an arrangement to allow a certain additional amount of cheese into this country.

In exchange for allowing more of some cheeses into the United States, the dairy industry has won a proviso that the price of imported cheese cannot undercut that of domestic cheese. (Strauss and members of Congress are now haggling over how this proviso will be enforced.) Strauss continues, "We have a very delicate market on cheese. The Europeans will take all the grain we can ship them, but they'll put it in the mouth of a cow and they'll make cheese. So the process had to stop. We're sending more grain than we have been sending, but there's no point in screaming 'Take it all' when we know it will end up as cheese." At bottom, American trade policy is a massive, complex political problem. Nothing is simple when it comes to trade; if one button on the console is pressed, twenty lights are likely to go on. Each bilateral arrangement involves other products, other countries, their domestic politics, our domestic politics. Strauss has had to proceed with all this in mind. He is, says one of his aides, "a walking political computer."

Now Strauss tells me, "I kid a lot, but I don't kid myself. I know what my strengths and my weaknesses are, and one of my strengths is people. You have to develop personal relationships, credibility. You do what you say you'll do." One's "word" is crucial in politics, and members of Congress have told me that Strauss keeps his word. "You have to remember that my background is rather broad. I have a bit of experience in business as well as law, in government as well as politics. My business touched on banking and real estate and communications." Strauss is, by any measure, a very wealthy man. "I understand a little bit about a lot of things. That's what I bring to the government. Some people have a better intellectual background. I have a lot of common sense. And I'm not timid. I have a lot of confidence in myself and my judgments. I come to decisions easily. I may not always be right, but I make them."

Strauss tells me that once the negotiations were under way he invited a number of senators and congressmen to Geneva to receive briefings on them. "It paid off," he says. "When you can get them over there, and the buzzers aren't going for votes, and they don't have meetings to attend, and reporters aren't calling them up for interviews, they get a chance to see what the problem is and what we're doing. I make at least five calls to the Hill a day. It's a habit. Also, we take any partisanship out of it. We treat a Republican call and a Democratic call the same. It doesn't take long for word to get around about that. Then I started inviting senators and congressmen and their staffs to the White House Mess for briefings. I paid for it myself. No one had ever brought the staffs in. We gave them some briefings on what the trade bill would mean for their states and districts. The first thing you know, you have some action going." He befriended his European counterparts—even staged a post-Thanksgiving dinner for them in his Washington apartment. "When the countervailing-duty bill failed last year, it created an international crisis," Strauss says. "I jumped in a Concorde, got to Paris, and jumped in a plane and went to six capitals in two days. Meanwhile, I talked to London along the road. I was trying to show that we cared, that we'd do what we could."

At the Boston airport, Strauss is met by Robert Griffin, his special assistant. The presence of Griffin on Strauss's staff is indicative of how Strauss functions. Griffin is the deputy administrator of the General Services Administration whom Jay Solomon, then the administrator, fired in July of last year, thus enraging House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, whose protégé Griffin had been. This put the White House in a fix. Whereupon Strauss offered to give Griffin a high-ranking, well-paid job on his staff. A number of people in Washington laughed, but Strauss had, in one stroke, relieved the White House of a problem, ingratiated himself with O'Neill, and added someone to his staff who could be useful to him.

At a reception at the Copley Plaza Hotel, where the luncheon is to be held, Strauss, as they say, "works the room," and it is clear that the people here want to get his ear. He greets John Gikas, who runs a laundry business in New Hampshire and Canada. Gikas has been described to me by a friend of Strauss's as "one of those guys who if Strauss whistles they come with checks." The friend said, "They're the guys who kept Strauss going in the Democratic Party in terms of money. Whenever he's raising money, he can always count on John Gikas." I asked this friend how many such people Strauss had around. He laughed, and replied, "Scores. There are a few more now than there were five years ago, obviously." Strauss still involves himself in raising money for candidates and for the Party, and few whom he calls upon could be unaware of his importance, or of his potential for making decisions, or arguing for decisions, that involve their interests. As he introduces me to Gikas, Strauss says, "Right after I went to the Democratic Committee as chairman, I wrote a letter to about eight hundred,

a thousand people and said, 'This thing is a mess—a bunch of fools, pot smokers, have been running it. I'm going to give it a ten-month shot to see what I can do. This is the year '73, and if you'll send seventy-three dollars a month for ten months, I'll send you a progress report to tell you how it's going.' One of the first checks that came in was from John. John raised more than ten thousand dollars. He's never said no. I try never to call him unless I need him."

Several New England congressmen are here, as well as a number of businessmen. Strauss spots Representative James Shannon, Democrat of Massachusetts and member of the Ways and Means Committee's Trade Subcommittee and says to him, "I want to move the trade bill by the August recess, and I want you to help me. I want to come up to the Hill and see the New England Caucus." (Many think that Strauss's intention, or stated intention, of getting the trade bill through Congress by this summer is optimistic.) John Wasserlein, a division manager of Boise Cascade, introduces himself to Strauss. Strauss says, "I want Boise Cascade off their ———. I don't want you for the trade bill passively. I want you for it actively. You write to me, Bob Strauss, the White House. I'm glad you came up." Strauss, holding a glass of white wine in his left hand, continues to circulate. A man comes up to him and complains that he has offered to help the President's reelection effort in New Hampshire and hasn't heard from anyone. Strauss, who knows all too well, replies, "I know. These things happen.

They slip between the cracks. We'll get back to you. The President needs and deserves your support. They're good boys, but occasionally they don't follow through. But we do in our office. We'll be in touch." Strauss, obviously enjoying the attention, jokes, "I might come up here and run for office. Against Shannon or Kennedy. Kennedy up any time soon? I might come up and run against him." People laugh appreciatively. Strauss asks some of the people what is going to happen in New Hampshire in 1980.

A man comes up to Strauss and introduces himself as representing Wang Laboratories, in Lowell, Massachusetts. Strauss asks him, "What does Wang Laboratories do?" The man tells him that it is in the computer-processing business and that about forty-five per cent of its business is outside the United States. "Then you have a big stake in this trade bill," Strauss says. The man complains about what he describes as a tax problem, and starts to go into a complicated explanation. Strauss stops him. "That's not a tax problem," he says. "It's a customs-evaluation problem. You've got a real problem: you just don't know how to explain it. We're going to deal with it. You're right to be concerned, and we're taking care of it in a very constructive way." He talks to Rob Trowbridge, the publisher of Yankee Magazine and the New England Business Magazine. Strauss tells him, "The people of your region have a big stake in this trade bill, and only a few people understand it. They only hear from those who oppose. The great trouble in America is that only those who are opposed write in. With your subscribers, you can do a lot of good." Another man reminds Strauss that they met at Kennedy's home one Sunday afternoon, when Kennedy was meeting with about ninety Japanese. Strauss says, smiling, "Kennedy delivered me. He was selling Massachusetts pretty effectively. I was trying to sell the country. I don't know how to spell Massachusetts. I know you're a significant state." Pause. "Not a major one, but a significant one."

Kennedy comes into the reception. Strauss fingers Kennedy's shirt collar and, referring to one of Kennedy's brothers-in-law, says, "You wearing Steve Smith's shirt?" He tells me that this is an old joke between them. Kennedy laughs, and says to Strauss, "You got some good news for us?"

Strauss replies, "I'm going to survive."

Kennedy laughs again, and says, "What about Massachusetts? You've looked after Texas beef and oranges in Japan."

Strauss says, "I know what you're trying to preach, you sonofabitch." Then he grows serious for a moment and talks about the problem that was worked out recently with Kennedy and with Dole so that the countervailing-duty bill could be got through Congress. Kennedy says that he understood Strauss' problem and was satisfied with the solution. "You're a good man," Strauss says to Kennedy.

Kennedy bows slightly, smiles, and says, in mock humility, "Thanks, Bob."

New England is just one area that Strauss keeps in his brain-computer, but it is an important one, as it has been for some time in the matter of trade. Also in that brain-computer is the fact that New Hampshire and Massachusetts hold Presidential primaries that are among the earliest. The area's particular trade concerns have to do with textiles, footwear, high-speed electronics, and even clothespins, and Strauss has taken steps to see that these concerns are handled. What he is trying to do is to "pre-cook" the trade bill so that the members of Congress will be satisfied with it when it comes before them. He hopes to have the trade talks wound up shortly, to submit the trade package to Congress by May, and to get it passed by this summer. (In accordance with special rules for the trade bill, it is subject only to an up-or-down vote, and cannot be amended. An amending process could, of course, set off a logrolling jamboree such as has seldom been beheld.) To this end, Strauss and his staff have been meeting with members of the Ways and Means and the Finance Committee (in closed sessions) and with other members of Congress, to hear their complaints and suggestions. And, also to this end, Strauss has been making deals. The most complicated deal, having to do with textiles, involved, in effect, quintilateral negotiations, with the textile industry, labor, foreign governments, the executive branch, and Congress. The industry and its associated labor groups wanted, of course, a cutback in the amount of textiles imported into this country—and that industry is well represented in Congress, having plants in virtually every state, and constitutes the largest industrial lobby on the subject of trade. Last year, on Strauss's recommendation, the President vetoed a bill passed by Congress to remove textiles altogether from the M.T.N. (The Kennedy Administration, in order to get its trade bill through Congress in 1962, also made a deal with the textile industry.) But Strauss's theory was that he must neutralize the industry, and that the way to do that was to slow the growth of textile imports. The State and Treasury Departments, which (unlike the Commerce and Labor Departments) usually take positions in favor of liberalized trade, and also some of the President's economic advisers were unhappy with the way Strauss was proceeding. Strauss negotiated over a period of several weeks with leaders of major textile firms and unions, and, on the basis of outcries from this or that participant (outcries that some observers believe he anticipated), renegotiated—balancing off the political questions, international questions, employment questions, inflation questions. Eventually, the State Department swallowed hard and accepted the arrangement Strauss worked out, as essential for the larger purposes of trade. (Treasury was never reconciled. Relations between Strauss and Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal are not good—a situation that has its origins in differences of style, of philosophy, and of policy, and in simple rivalry.) Strauss and Treasury are also at odds over proposals, backed by Strauss, to speed up the procedures for imposing countervailing duties.

Strauss is currently working on tightening existing restrictions on shoe imports, which affect not only New England but also such states as Georgia and Tennessee. There was the Administration's support for legislation to protect the sugar industry. Only sparing cuts have been made by the United States on imports of steel, and that industry is also protected through other pricing arrangements. Strauss's office recommended temporary import relief—which can be provided under the existing trade law—for the clothespin industry, which is concentrated in New England but is also situated in certain other areas of the United States. The clothespin industry is labor-intensive and does not require sophisticated technology or much capital investment; therefore, a number of developing countries—in particular, China—are going into the clothespin business and threatening American companies. Strauss also recommended that import restrictions be placed on "metal fasteners"—nuts and bolts and the like—which are made in plants in, among other places, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and New York. One official has told me that this was done not so much because the metal-fastener industry is important politically as because Strauss wanted to demonstrate that the President would use the current trade laws to protect American industry.

A number of people around Washington argue that Strauss has given away the store; that he is paying too much to get a bill, any bill, that is called a trade bill. Others argue that the prices he has been paying are probably necessary. One State Department official says, "I feel uncomfortable about textiles, but Strauss is closer to the Hill than I am. Whenever I feel critical of something he's done, I look at it this way: Strauss is getting through a bill that is essentially, though not totally, a liberalization effort. Some of the deals that are made to get the bill through can be seen as protectionist, but the bill will improve the system—and in a period of incredibly strong protectionist pressure, here and everywhere." One man involved in trade policy says, "It's the classic problem with trade: sometimes you have to take one step backward to get two steps forward over all; sometimes you have to abandon ideals with respect to a particular sector where your political problems are great, so as to preserve the fragile consensus needed to move trade forward." The effects of what Strauss has been doing are hard to judge. One can look at this particular arrangement or that and find reason for discomfort about it, but he is working with so many pieces at once that any single move on the checkerboard tells you little. And the full implications of the M.T.N. agreement, should an agreement finally be approved, will probably not be known for at least a decade. It is also argued that if there were not a revision of the rules of trade, which is a major part of the current negotiations, the whole system could collapse.

Another thing Strauss has been doing is hearing out what trade concessions members may want for industries they represent and seeing what he can do. For example, Eastman Kodak is said to be pleased that Strauss, at the behest of Barber Conable, a Republican from upstate New York, got an easing of Japanese tariff restrictions on color film.

He did get the Japanese to open their markets a bit to beef and to citrus crops. He moved quickly to mollify small business and minorities after the news broke that his staff had negotiated agreements which might have impinged on special arrangements for their bidding on United States government contracts. When Strauss was informed by a member of the White House staff that this could cause a political problem, he quickly went back to the Europeans and told them he had to have the decision reversed, and fast. (He paid for this by making another concession to the Europeans.) He thereupon got credit for having undone this terrible thing

that his own office had done in the first place.

After Kennedy has introduced Strauss at the luncheon ("He has the reputation of being the top designated hitter of this Administration. I have found him accessible; I have found him willing to listen to legitimate concerns"), praised the arrangements that Strauss has made on footwear and textiles ("very sensitive to our needs"), warned him that New Englanders "are going to read very carefully the small print" of the trade agreement, and demanded to know what Strauss is going to do to increase exports, Strauss goes to the rostrum, puts on halfglasses, and begins in a subdued manner. He thanks Kennedy for his "generous" comments. He says, "I appreciate them and as a matter of fact I believe them." Then he tells a story—he tells it often: "Helen and I came home a few weeks ago after I'd given a long speech. It was good, if I say so myself. I said, 'Helen, let's have a drink,' and then we had another one and another one, and after the third one I said, 'You know, Helen, there aren't but a handful of great leaders in this country today.' And she said, 'I know you're right, and I believe there is one less than you're thinking right now.'" The audience laughs. Then Strauss tells the story he told me on the plane about President Kennedy's appointment of Christian Herter. He says, "This job does require someone who knows Congress, who knows the people in this country." He says, "It's nice to have been a bit of a lawyer and a businessman and been a bit of a success at each"—Strauss wants them to understand that he knows about the real world—"and someone who has been a bit of a politician, without taking cheap shots. Because trade is a bipartisan effort." He says that President Carter deserves "tremendous, tremendous credit" for what he has done to push the trade talks along. Strauss is always careful to praise the President: for one thing, he appears to genuinely believe that those who serve the President should give him the credit—he often makes this point in Cabinet meetings—and, for another, the fact that he does praise the President publicly does not hurt his standing with the President and his closest aides. They believe that, as one of the President's top aides put it to me "Strauss would do anything for Carter."

Now, speaking from "talking points" that have been prepared for him, he tells this audience of New England businessmen that one out of seven manufacturing jobs in the country depends on our ability to export, that one out of three acres produces for exports. He tells the businessmen that worldwide trade is worth about a trillion dollars a year and that "one hundred and twenty billion belongs to us—and we ought to raise that figure." He says, "The trade deficit we have now is a terribly debilitating thing for this country; it weakens the value of the dollar, it increases inflation, it weakens world economies." Then he does something else that is typical: he tries to establish the fact that he is not promising excessively. He says, "The trade deficit accumulated over twenty years and it can't be cured with a magic wand. Anyone who tells you that Bob Strauss is going to solve this overnight is kidding you." Then he talks about the government's various efforts to increase exports. "In the meantime, what's Bob Strauss doing?" he asks. And he answers, "He's trying to do those things; he's looking into those things; he's talking to President Carter; and mainly he's negotiating in what's called the Tokyo Round." Then he explains what the Tokyo Round is, and explains that the efforts to revise the trade codes are far more important than the efforts to cut tariffs ("a tempest in a teapot"). The United States is expected to cut tariffs by an average of about thirty to thirty-five per cent. He explains the non-tariff barriers to trade in very simple terms, and he explains the importance to New England of what he is doing. "The Northeast has some six hundred and fifty thousand textile jobs. We got the textiles business not in good shape—we got it in exquisite shape. Shoes. We've got a lot of work to do on shoes. We've almost doubled our shoe exports in the last two years, and that's pretty good." He talks about what he is doing to try to increase the purchase of American electronics equipment by foreign governments ("We'll open up twenty billion dollars in contracts") and he talks about his meeting yesterday with the Japanese. "We had trouble with the Japanese yesterday. We called off the negotiations. Why did we do it? We don't like to be tough with people. It's a lot easier to tell people to go to hell than to get them there. But on the telecommunications area we gave up. Those are things that are very important to you." He gets a laugh with a reference to the outlook for sales of steel telephone poles in Japan. Then he urges the businessmen to write to their Congressmen in support of his trade bill. "You all write and tell them how unfair it would be to vote against Bob Strauss." He continues, again trying to indicate that he is not a man who oversells, "Loss of jobs? Sure there is a loss of jobs. It's a very serious problem. One of the ways we solve that is to improve our exports. . . . Will it cure all our problems?

"Of course not. Will it solve our balance-of-payments problems? Of course not. It's the first chapter in a long, long book called trade." And he says he needs their support, "given the strong protectionist climate." He ends with a little pep talk, saying that "we have a great habit in this country of looking at what's wrong with the President, with the Congress, with your city government," but that "we need a little more look at what's right in this country." He says, "We have a job to do in this country, my friends. We've been lazy and we've been indolent," and he quotes Walter Lippmann on the necessity for sacrifice, and he calls for sacrifice, without which, he says, paraphrasing Lippmann, "there is nothing, but nothing, for America any longer." When he has concluded, he is presented with a New England Council tie, and he remarks, "I hope it looks better than Kennedy's tie." Kennedy and the audience laugh.

After Strauss holds a brief press conference, we are in a car on the way to the airport to return to Washington. He comments that the luncheon crowd seemed attentive. He says, "It wasn't a very hot crowd, but they were attentive. I always listen to the cough level. There wasn't a cough in the crowd. I wish I'd had time to warm them up more. I didn't get enough time. They were running twenty-three minutes behind—they lost fifteen minutes in the serving. I watch that like a hawk." Strauss is nervous about making the plane, which is scheduled to depart at two-fifty. "I got to be at the White House at five o'clock." We're now in a traffic jam. Griffin, who is returning to Washington with us, assures the driver, Joe Lawless, that we can make it. Strauss says, "Good thing we had Paul Revere instead of you and old Joe. We'd all be British today." As we approach the airport, Griffin points out that we are near it now, and can actually see it. Strauss says slowly, "Those things between here and there are cars."

On the plane, Strauss becomes reflective for a moment. "You can go just so far being just a 'flippant politician.' It's almost a cover, being a politician—it serves you in good stead. I get by with a lot of murder playing a nonsubstantive person, who doesn't care about the issues. The heart of the matter is, I know more about the substance than most of the people I work with."

I ask Strauss to tell me some of his views on what makes for effectiveness in Washington.

He replies. "It's amazing how people go to the Hill with a problem—whether it's a piece of legislation they're for or whether it's a piece of legislation they're against. They go on their issue, cold. What I always do is to figure out what the bottom line is: How do you come up with a profit for the guy you're going to? You have to figure out what does he want, how does what you want help his constituents. It's damn rare you get something on the Hill without their getting something in return. The guy's got to see that it helps his constituents—or, at least, that it's a draw, that it doesn't hurt his constituents. His bottom line is how does it affect his constituents. I keep seeing people take things up there in a capsule—isolated from what's good or bad for a congressman, how does it play in his district, how does it play to his prejudices. We all have prejudices, preconceived notions. I know darn well that, as much as a congressman or a senator may like Bob Strauss personally, if I go up there with something detrimental to his district or his state I've got a problem. So I always try to show, number one, how minor the minus is—and it's never minor enough—and, number two, what are the offsetting gains for his area. Whenever I found a region that had to give up something on trade, we quickly looked up what we could come up with for it that would be a plus. If you look at this package when it gets up to the Hill, that's what it's going to have in it." He talks about a particular political problem he is having now on something called the "wine-gallon" issue, which has to do with the duties that are levied on imported liquors. In this instance, Strauss made a concession to the Europeans, and a large segment of the American liquor industry is upset. "Now, why did we give up on the wine-gallon issue?" he says. "The Europeans really wanted it and they were willing to pay." (The major concession was on agricultural products.) Strauss continues, "The bourbon industry will be hurt, so I'm trying to find a tax advantage for them. We've got the Heublein industries in Connecticut and the bourbon industry in Kentucky that are upset. Probably the tobacco industry in Kentucky is going to gain as much as any by this package. The package, first of all, has to be fair to those areas and, second, has to enable the people from those areas to support us."

Strauss eats the snack that is served on the plane, and says, "I don't eat before I speak. They say, 'Aren't you going to eat, Mr. Strauss?' I tell them I don't eat before I speak because it makes the blood rush to my head. They say, 'It makes the blood rush to your head?' I say, 'Yeah.' Now, how many people know much about that issue? It always works. I bet there are a hundred people before you speak makes the blood rush to your head.' It's better than hurting their feelings."

Strauss tells me about a group of economists, lawyers, lobbyists, and former congressmen which he has assembled to help him lobby for the trade bill. Among its members are Strauss's great friends Lloyd Hackler, president of the American Retail Federation and former aide to Senator Lloyd Bentsen, Democrat of Texas, and Robert Keefe, who has long worked in Democratic politics and is now a "government-affairs consultant;" Washington lawyers such as Berl Bernhard, Harry McPherson, and Thomas Boggs (son of the late Majority Leader of the House); former Representatives Wilbur Mills, who was, of course, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and Joe Waggoner, a conservative from Louisiana who served on the Ways and Means Committee; William Timmons, who worked in the White House in the Nixon and Ford Administrations and is a Washington lobbyist; Charls Walker, the lobbyist; and Robert McNeill, who is an official of a group representing multinational corporations. Typically, soon after Strauss formed the committee he leaked it to a Washington columnist, thus establishing for all to know that Strauss had assembled a powerful

group to help him on the trade bill. He says to me now, "There never has been a group put together with the political sophistication and clout that that group has. It's gotten to be almost a prestige symbol to be in that group. People are bombarding us to get in." He continues, "Not many people know all those people well enough to ask them to help. I like the idea that I know them. It's a people thing. That's why Washington is my kind of town—it's a people town. The law is not a people profession. It's a tremendous asset to be able to make people comfortable with you. That's what I'm good at—the people thing. What I plan to do with that group is get them informed enough—this is a very complicated issue—so that they can talk to people on the Hill and so that every senator and every congressman has someone he can talk to on the trade package, in May, June, July, someone who can answer his questions, so he can vote for it. It's a tough vote. I don't want them to walk the plank for me. I want them to vote for it because they see it in their interest—and in the national interest."

Strauss continues, "Another thing that's important in Washington—everything that goes on in the streets of Washington comes in to us, comes in to me, comes in to Vera." Vera Murray is Strauss's executive assistant, and she served in the same capacity when Strauss was the chairman of the Democratic National Committee. When Straus got to the D.N.C., in March, 1970, Vera Murray was a relief receptionist; now she is an important person in Washington.

People know that if they can get a message to her it is as good as getting one to Strauss, and that she has her own channels of information and a great deal of wisdom. Between them, Strauss and Vera Murray talk to governors and ex-governors, senators and ex-senators, state party chairmen and ex-state party chairmen, to congressmen and reporters and congressional staff members and lobbyists and Washington lawyers. If some lieutenant governor he met years ago needs a hotel room for Mardi Gras, Strauss will get it. When it is announced that the President is going to make a speech, Strauss will get at least a dozen calls from people in Congress, from governors, saying that they hear the President is going to say such-and-such and don't let him do this or that. Strauss says, "I'm in a position to be a second-guesser. I take the complaints. I really run the complaint department. Unfortunately, I have no authority to give refunds."

Now Strauss tells me, "Very few people have as many agents out as we do. Bob Keefe knows more about what's going on in Washington than the next three people. Same thing with Lloyd Hackler. They're just like appendages. They bring in information that So-and-So is mad about this issue, and that they're going to try to move this piece of legislation or take on the President that way, or who's going to run against who; squabbles that take place within a state delegation. All this gets out in the streets in Washington, and it flows within a very carefully defined group of people, and pretty quickly it comes across my desk." There is reciprocity in Strauss's relationships, just as there is in so many in Washington. When Hackler's Retail Federation holds its annual meeting in Washington in early May, Strauss will host the dinner. Keefe's clients include some in Japan and a number in the United States, and it cannot hurt him to be known as Strauss's great friend. And not only has Strauss made himself a good source for the press but he has made some members of the press a good source for him. He places great value on knowing what goes on in "the streets" in Washington. When the Carter Administration was foundering after some months, Strauss talked about how the people in the White House should talk more to people who were "in the streets." Early in 1978, at his Watergate apartment, he held a meeting of White House aides—Hamilton Jordan and Jody Powell, the President's press secretary, and other political aides—and such people as Hackler, Keefe, McPherson, and Bernhard. "It was a funny meeting," one of the participants (from "the streets") told me. "Some people there were talking as if Lyndon Johnson were President and some were talking in terms of Jimmy Carter as President, so there were a lot of cross-cultural problems.

The idea was to get across to the Administration group that they ought to put more political thinking into what they were doing: one, to get across that they should, and, two, how to do it. I think we got further on the first point than on the second." One idea that came out of that meeting was that White House aides should hold the biweekly meetings they now do with people from "the streets"—lawyers, such as Robert Barnett and McPherson; and Hackler and Keefe. When I ask him about this, Strauss says, "I talk to all the participants, but I don't participate."

One of Strauss's friends says, "He's always telling the White House people to think about where they won the last election, and check whether they will have that base and what they can do politically and governmentally to protect that base and, hopefully, add to it."

Hamilton Jordan said to me, "He brings to bear the perspective of the traditional Democrats and people on the Hill. That's something we need." I'm told that Strauss bridges the world between the traditional party elements and the White House by giving the White House such advice and then saying, "Hell, you beat all those bastards, but you need them involved." Strauss will also pass along to the White House information he has picked up himself, or through his agents. Jordan says, "He goes to a dinner party and hears something, and he'll pass it on. He goes to the Hill and hears that the President did something well or something stupid, and he'll pass it on."

Jody Powell says, "He'll call you up and just chat, and make a suggestion or observation along the way. I find him persuasive but not heavy-handed. He's not going to insist on something. He realizes he comes at things from a different way of looking at them than we do. But he doesn't pretend he's playing a different sort of game. That's what makes him so appealing. When he's making a political argument, he doesn't cloak it with some rationalization. He knows more about a lot of the Democratic Party groups; he has a personal relation with a lot of them and is instinctively concerned with their interests." Powell says that Strauss will tell him that a certain reporter feels this way or that. "He'll say, 'I hear this reporter is extremely close to that politician—you'd better keep that in mind.' He knows what web of relationships, biases, and quirks that influences the way business gets done around Washington—and that we were in no position to know about, because we hadn't been around to see them."

Another man in the White House says, "Strauss will not be reticent about telling anyone around here when he thinks they've done something dumb, and we always take it well, because it usually is dumb and he always does it with humor."

After a certain Carter appointee, of whom Strauss had disapproved in the first place, denounced the President publicly, Strauss called Hamilton Jordan and said he thought that Jordan, Strauss, and the President ought to get together. Jordan asked him why. Straus said, "Now that X has been appointed to the Y and has denounced the President, I think he should get a really big job." Strauss, who had taken pains to reestablish the Democratic Party's ties to businessmen after the 1972 election, brought important people into the White House for meetings, and that was good for the President—and good for Strauss. Strauss will warn people at the White House of impending trouble. It was he, I have been told by Powell, who got through to them that they had to deal with Billy Carter's seemingly anti-Semitic behavior earlier this year. And thus there appeared in the newspapers stories saying that the President had told Robert Strauss that he was "terribly concerned with the whole situation of Billy." The stories went on to say that the President had said, "You know, Bob, I just totally disassociated my self from his comments."

White House officials call Strauss in to help them get votes on a piece of legislation that is causing them difficulty. I ask him on the plane what he did, for example, to help get Senate approval last year for the Panama Canal treaties—which the White House succeeding in getting by a very narrow margin.

"I got votes," he replies. "It had nothing to do with the issue. I just cold-bloodedly got votes."

I ask how.

"By using all the skill I had, pulling out all the due bills I had. Yessir, I got votes. Just like on the energy bill, I got votes, a lot of votes. I always described the energy bill as a C-minus bill all the time I was trying to get votes on it, and I was right. That's all it was. But that was all we could get."

People in the White House say that Strauss was particularly effective with the various groups that were brought into the White House to be lobbied on the energy bill, though some White House aides would have preferred that he not describe it as a C-minus bill. Strauss called in some members of his network to help out the Panama Canal vote. He lobbied Democratic governors. He knew that Senator Henry Bellmon, a Republican of Oklahoma, owed Lloyd Bentsen a favor, and he made use of that sort of intelligence. (Bellmon voted in favor of the Panama Canal treaties.) Strauss was among those who did things to try to help Paul Hatfield, a Democrat who had recently been appointed to a Senate seat from Montana, in his effort to win the nomination for that seat, in order to get his vote for the treaties. Hatfield lost but he supported the treaties. Strauss did fail to "deliver" the vote of Wendell Ford, Democrat of Kentucky, whom he is particularly close to. Strauss is said by his friends to have helped in the handling of Senate Minority Leader Howard Baker and to have soothed Majority Leader Robert Byrd when he grew unhappy with the White House in the course of the Panama Canal effort, and he helped secure the vote of Russell Long for the treaties.

Someone who observed much of this says "He would say, 'O.K., here's a guy you've got trouble with. What can you do?' Strauss could deal with business interests, could generate their concern about keeping the Canal open. He could point out to the grain people and the oil people that Panama meant a lot to them, that they needed that shipping route. He talked to businesses that invest in Latin America."

All of this is not to say that Strauss and the Carter White House have a blissful relationship. Strauss can be quite critical of members of the White House staff, particularly of what he sees as their political naïveté—and they must know this—and some of them resent his penchant for taking credit. He will occasionally let it be known that Carter sometimes makes it difficult to drum up support for him. When Carter was shuttling around the Middle East in March Strauss told a group of reporters—on the record—at a breakfast, "I think he'd better come right back and sit down and figure out how to make something cost less." Occasionally when Strauss does some interesting chore for the White House, he will let it be known—ostensibly in the most confidenti

manner ("Here's a real cute story. Now, I don't want you to print this")—until it makes its way into print. Some are amused at the way he sometimes exaggerates his role. Some will point out that, while he will make an argument within the White House circles about which way things should go, he will be alert to which way they are going. One man in the White House, who definitely likes Strauss, and who takes a relaxed view of all this, said to me recently, with amusement, "Strauss has three predictable flaws: one, he's never kept a secret beyond the first edition of the Washington Post as far as anyone can tell; two, he'll give a background briefing when he's not clear on the facts and it takes a day to tidy up; three, he'll always arrive where the victory is—if he hears there's a success coming up, he'll be the first to arrive and claim credit for it. But it's a good deal for us. He knows how to put things together. He's a good bargainer around here. And he's got more contacts than anyone." It was Strauss's contacts in the steel industry that helped the Administration get a settlement of the coal strike last year. The settlement was inflationary, and disturbed some of the Administration's economists, but a White House man has told me that the White House wanted the settlement and that Strauss is not to be blamed for its cost. Nevertheless, one Administration official suggests that if the President does everything Strauss suggests that he do in order to get reëlected, the result may be so inflationary that Carter will be defeated.

The fact that Strauss has a good relationship at all with the Carter White House is remarkable, considering where the various parties began. Jimmy Carter certainly was not Robert Strauss's choice to be the Party's candidate in 1976, and Carter and the people around him knew that. Strauss's first allegiance was to Henry Jackson—and Carter—and the people around him knew that, too—who had helped make him chairman of the Party, and then to Hubert Humphrey and Lloyd Bentsen and almost anyone but Jimmy Carter. Strauss did represent those elements of the Party that Carter was running against. Strauss had selected Carter to run the Party's congressional effort in 1974—which Carter, for his own reasons, had wanted to do—and later, when Carter began to do well in the early primary period, Strauss wondered what he had wrought. Early in 1976, he was involved in getting expression of distaste for Carter from Democratic governors, who were meeting in Washington and among whom Carter, the former governor of Georgia, was quite unpopular, but essentially he was neutral in deed. For some time in 1976, Strauss apparently believed—he told a number of people—that the Democrats would hold a brokered Convention, that the nomination would be settled in a room. He talked about how that room would have in it representatives of all segments of the Democratic Party. This dispelled the idea of a "smoke-filled room" and encouraged a number of people, who were led to believe they would be in that room, to cooperate with Strauss.

Then things changed. After the Pennsylvania primary, in late April, when it was clear that Jackson was out of the picture and it seemed clear that Carter would be the nominee, Strauss discouraged Hubert Humphrey from entering the race for the nomination. In several conversations with both Humphrey and Humphrey's wife on the eve of his decision, Strauss argued that Humphrey would be seen as a "spoiler," that he could not get nominated, and that his entry at that point would hurt him, hurt Carter, and hurt the Party. Strauss had decided that he wanted his legacy to the Party to be a unified Convention—as compared with the fractious one held in Miami four years earlier. From that point on, he did a number of things to help Carter. After Humphrey announced that he would not enter the New Jersey primary—the last one he could enter—Strauss had people called who were holding blocks of uncommitted delegates, to urge them ot get in line behind Carter. And he revelled in the fact that he produced a harmonious Convention.

He was delighted that Carter's acceptance speech began at ten-thirty-eight and eleven seconds; he had been determined that his Convention's nominee would go on as close to ten-thirty as possible. In 1972, George McGovern gave his acceptance speech shortly before three in the morning. Vice-President Mondale recalls that Strauss came into the room where he was waiting to give his own acceptance speech, and said, "Fritz, I'm going to tell you something that's going to shock you. Nobody's going to listen to you out there. That might upset you, but those TV cameras are going to be on you, and the TV audience won't know nobody is listening to you, so you get all excited and just pour it on."

Though some in the Carter entourage were opposed to the idea, Carter asked Strauss to remain as chairman for the course of the campaign. (Ordinarily, a nominee selects a new chairman.) Hamilton Jordan explained to people at the time that it was a marriage of convenience—that Strauss knew people they didn't know, and things they didn't know and didn't have time to learn. But Strauss was not at the center of the Carter Presidential campaign, and from time to time he let reporters know that he thought the Carter people were not doing a very good job. After the campaign, Strauss was not offered a job in the Administration, and he made a big point of saying that he did not want one, which convinced a numer of people that he did. He returned to the practice of law, in the Washington office of his Dallas law firm (the office had been opened in 1971 with two lawyers and now has a total of sixty-two lawyers), and, by all accounts, quickly became bored. The new Carter Administration ran into a problem in filling the job of special trade representative—various candidates were unacceptable to one important group or another—until it hit on the idea of appointing Strauss, which it did in March of 1977. Strauss has spoken of how he had to be talked into taking the job, but there is evidence that he was interested and ready. Once he became a part of the Administration, he became more and more a part of it. I recently asked Jody Powell how Strauss had ended up being on the inside. He replied, "By sort of having something that we needed and being there when we needed it."

One the plane back to Washington from Boston, I ask Strauss why he ran for the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee, which promised to be a difficult job at best.

"I don't know," he replies. "I suppose I was offended by the way I was treated at the '72 Convention. You got to remember I raised all the money to put that thing on; I made it possible to put that thing on. All of a sudden, I woke up and I had no role. I got treated like a step child. That was a little contrary to anything that had happened to me in my whole life. Helen was offended, too." According to others, he was simply shunted aside by the people around George McGovern, who became the Party nominee, and by the people around Lawrence O'Brien, who was then the Party chairman. Strauss continues, "I remember when we flew out of there I said, 'Helen, I'll never be as vulnerable again. I've learned a lot. I'm going to take that thing over and show those ——— a thing or two.' I was mad, and I wanted to get even. Even more than I wanted to put the Democratic Party back together again, I wanted to show those ———. That may not have been the best motivation, but that was it. The next Convention I went to was in New York in '76, and I assure you I wasn't vulnerable."

After the 1972 Convention, Strauss volunteered to help the Senate and House Democratic campaign committees; he raised a good deal of money for them, and took Carl Albert, then the Speaker of the House, and Mike Mansfield, then the Senate Majority Leader, all over the country for appearances. The congressional leaders were worried about the outlook for their party that fall. As a result of his work, Strauss created congressional support for his effort to become chairman of the Party and also for his activities as chairman.

In our conversation on the plane, Strauss continues, "After the Convention, I still might have backed out of running for the chairmanship. I was doing the Democratic congressional-reelection thing; I was getting some mentions as chairman, and I was encouraging that. And then they started planting some stories about this 'right-wing ———' who wanted to take over the Party. I remember having dinner with Helen and Vera, and I say, 'The only way to get out of this is to win our way out,' and Helen said, 'Here we go again,' and we won our way out." Bob Keefe and some others ran the Strauss-for-chairman campaign out of Henry Jackson's office. (Keefe later served as an assistant to Strauss at the D.N.C.) Jackson was part of a group that came out of the '72 Convention determined that after the election, which McGovern was expected to lose, they would put the Party back together. Others in the group were labor leaders, governors, and other people who had backed Humphrey or Edmund Muskie. Strauss was also part of the group, and though apparently he did not begin as Jackson's candidate, the group finally settled on him as the man most eager for the job and most likely to be able to win it.

Strauss remembers getting a phone call from Averell Harriman offering his help. "Then Tip O'Neill came out for me and Mike Mansfield came out for me, and all of a sudden the 'right-wing Texan' had a liberal constituency."

Strauss's triumph of winning the chairmanship in December of 1972 was a narrow one, but then Strauss, being Strauss, made the most of it—more of it than most other people would have been able to. First, characteristically, he made a number of moves to show that despite his narrow victory he was in charge. Through carefully calibrated appointments to the Party's Executive Committee, he appeased elements of the liberal wing which had opposed his selection. Over the next four years, the great majority of the votes in the Executive Committee, which included representatives of all elements of the Party, from very liberal reformers to conservative labor anti-reformers, were unanimous. One person who observed Strauss during that period recalls, "Everyone got taken care of; everyone had a stake in the compromises. It's a great skill. Strauss never dealt with a discrete matter—he'd always deal with a package. He'd say, 'You want A? I'll go with you on A, but you have to support me on B and C. It's a deal? O.K., it's a deal. Next case, Judge.'" One time that this technique failed was at the Party's first midterm conference, in Kansas City in 1974, when the Black Caucus refused to buy his deal on new rules on affirmative action. Finally, after the conference threatened to come apart—a prospect that upset Strauss very much—and the proceedings hard to be recessed for a while, Strauss, with important help from some of the governors, got it worked out. Some Party reformers say that Strauss turned out to be an ideal chairman for them, because he was so anxious to establish his credentials with them and so desperate for "unity." And he was flexible. The reformers say that if they screamed loud enough Strauss would move in their direction just to shut them up. Like as not, if he saw himself losing a battle he would manage to end up with the winners. One of the reformers says, "We were

almost always on opposite sides. He never rubbed it in if he won, and if he lost he immediately adopted the winning position and went on from there. Sometimes he would jump to the other side with the greatest alacrity I ever saw. I admired him a great deal." In the end, the rules were not changed so substantially from those that obtained at the '72 Convention as to upset the reformers but were changed enough to pacify labor and other Party regulars.

Some say that the Party was ready to be united after the bruising period between 1968, when it divided over the war, and 1972. But the divisions of that period carried over—divisions over who was where on the war when, divisions over the symbols, and sometimes the realities, of the reform rules. Strauss played off the reformers against the opponents of reform (who had helped put him in office and at times considered him a traitor), and accomplished what he had his heart set on accomplishing: he delivered a united party to the nominee in 1976. One person who went through those battles says, "He had no beliefs, at least within the world in which he was negotiating. He was utterly pragmatic." Another says, "I don't know if he has an ideology." It is also true that it took a certain kind of person to deal with the illusions, the postures, the symbols, and the mythology—that there are all sorts of people who cannot deal with such things. Someone caught up in symbols—or ideology—could not do it. It took a certain kind of negotiator. When I asked Barbara Mikulski about some people's assertion that Strauss has no beliefs, she said, "I don't accept that. I think he always operates from a very firm base of what he wants to achieve. In terms of the Democratic Party, it was to rebuild a coalition and elect a Democratic President. If he had to do a lot of ballet dancing to keep us happy, so be it. If he thought we were screwing that up, he'd resist. I'm a firm believer in openness, affirmative action, process, and all that, but process is not an end in itself. There are some people who would still be caucusing in Iowa. He thought it was more important to elect a Democratic President than to please any particular constituency. That was his value. It's the same thing with trade. There are those of us who are concerned about steel, or about textiles. He's trying to get the best deal for the United States of America. For him, it is not a game. He relishes the game and the wheeling and dealing, like a lot of us do, but deep down he's got a sense of what's best for the country and for the Party. When you take him out of his fancy suits, he's an old-fashioned Democrat."

When we reach the airport terminal in Washington, Nat Brannum, Strauss's driver, is holding the receiver of a pay telephone and hands it to Strauss. "They don't wait a minute, do they?" Strauss says. It is his office, with some messages.

As soon as he gets in his car, he places a phone call to Robert Byrd. "Hi, how *you*, Robert?" Strauss says. "I missed you yesterday. How'd you do with Ushiba? I hit him hard. He was supposed to give you a little more coal. Did he give you more coal?" This presumably means that Strauss was pressing Nobuhiko Ushiba, the Japanese trade negotiator, to agree to import more coal from the United States; coal is, of course, mined in Byrd's state, West Virginia. Strauss continues, "I want to talk to you Monday or Tuesday. We've got the Foreign Minister coming in. The problem is that those concerns are buying cheaper coal in Australia. That's what makes it difficult for you, Bob. Did he offer you just a little more coal this year than last year? That's what he said he'd do. I told him it wouldn't be enough to satisfy you. I want to keep it outside the trade talks, and there's a way to do it. I know how. We'll talk about it. All right, my friend."

He hangs up, and says, "That's the next one. They're going to create problems for me. They'll get the coal states mad and next the steel states." He urges Brannum to hurry, so that he can get to his office and then the White House.

Some time later, Strauss and I have dinner in Washington. (Helen Strauss is in Texas for a wedding.) As we enter the restaurant, where Strauss dines frequently, the maitre d' starts joking with Strauss, and after a few minutes Strauss cracks, "Show me a table, will you? If I'd wanted humor, I'd have gone to the Catskills." Strauss tells me that when he went to the race track recently, with Brannum, about four people came up and introduced themselves to him. He tells me that the fourth one said, "This must drive you crazy," and that he gave the old reply, "Yes, but about a third as crazy as when they stop coming up." Strauss has talked frequently about how he planned to leave the government after he got the trade bill through, and it seems that, as usual, there were several purposes in saying what he did: to try to convince others that there was no job he coveted, and that he was independent; to try to convince himself that he really wanted to leave. Just about everyone who knows him well thinks that he would be miserable if he were very far removed from the excitement, and that what he would like most is a new challenge. Strauss has said he told the President that he planned to leave and that he could help Carter more with his reelection from the outside.

Which is not to say that he was not helping from the inside. Or that he really wanted to leave. Strauss orders a vodka Martini—he also had one, as he usually does, before he went out—and tells me that he spoke with Vice-President Mondale earlier this evening. "It was about a political problem we had in a certain state concerning an appointment," he says. "Mondale can play that role, too. Mondale and I don't have to talk to each other forever; Mondale and I talk in shorthand. I'm a Texas conservative and he's a Minnesota liberal, but on matters like this we agree completely. And it's nice to have a man like Arnie Miller, who's in charge of personnel at the White House, that I can call and say, 'I've got this problem. Can you help me?' Miller's smart enough to know when a problem's coming up and get it treated. Political problems aren't cured, the way people think they are; they're treated and contained until you can get back and cure them over a period of time. A lot of people make the mistake of trying to cure a political problem right away. If you appoint someone that the governor or senator from his state despises, you don't cure it; you treat it and contain it for a few minutes, and you cure it over a period of months and years."

I ask Strauss how he keeps in his head all the political data that he draws upon.

"I don't keep track of it all," he replies. "I don't know what I-know. I have a pretty good encyclopedia of America, but I couldn't recite it. If you mention a town to me, I know who the mayor or the sheriff or the commissioner is, and whether he is reliable or unreliable. If you ask me to write what I know, I could maybe fill a page. But if you ask me a hundred questions, I could tell you the answers. I could tell you who matters where and what he's like. When you mention Gary, Indiana, or Newark, New Jersey, I've got a recall on it. I haven't paid any attention to Ohio politics in over two years—haven't thought about it—but when I spoke at a state dinner in Columbus recently I was shocked at how quickly it all came back. I was amazed at how many people I knew. Something may come up and I may say, 'Let's do something for So-and-So.' I may say to Vera, 'Vera, the next state dinner, let's try to get So-and-So invited.' Or someone might not get some appointment, and I might say, 'When something else comes up, that's something So-and-So might get appointed to.' Or Bob Keefe or Loyd Hackler might say So-and-So is hurt, and then I'll call Eleanor"—Eleanor Connors, Hamilton Jordan's executive assistant—"and say, 'Why don't you have Hamilton call?' Or Eleanor may call Vera and say, 'Why doesn't Strauss call So-and-So?' Hamilton and Eleanor and Vera and I are four people who work together very closely."

Strauss also spends a great deal of time talking to Stuart Eizenstat, the President's assistant for domestic affairs. Strauss is aware that Eizenstat is likely to have a strong impact on the President's substantive decisions on domestic policy, and also that Eizenstat, like Strauss and like Mondale, believes that the President must work to maintain a base among the constituent groups of the Democratic Party. Strauss says, "Stu and I talk about everything from taxes to energy to sugar. We talk about everything—everything. Try to keep in mind that there's a tremendous amount of stuff that comes over my transom that maybe ought to be brought to his attention. Stu is the best I've ever known for his age and weight. If I say that to him, I also say, 'And you're pretty young, and you don't weigh much, Stu.'" Strauss makes a point of praising others; he knows that, as he says, it "gets around" that he's doing so. He continues, "Stu Eizenstat and his staff now understand that sugar is politics, not sugar—that it's steeped in politics, that it affects the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and it affects the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee." Both Russell Long and Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, who is the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, represent states where sugar is grown. "In a town like this, you have to find out what *their* business is, what they want out of the way—not what you want out of the way. Then you piggy-back your business on top of theirs. Just remember that Frank Church is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Administration has a lot on his committee's plate and Frank Church is up for reelection in 1980 and his interest is in seeing that his constituents' interests are properly represented. You have two very powerful chairmen interested in sugar, and properly interested, I might say. They represent their constituents very well."

I ask him about the period in which he was in charge of the anti-inflation program.

There is a long silence, and then he shakes his head sorrowfully. It clearly is not something he chooses to remember or talk about. Not only was he strained just about to his limits—he looked ashen during much of that period—but also it was not one of his triumphs (a failure in which he has company). Finally, he tells me about how the President in April of last year asked him, while he was in Europe working on the trade negotiations, to take on the inflation problem until the Administration could get a program in place. There was no program at the time, and the President apparently thought that it would be reassuring to businessmen if he announced that Strauss was in charge of fighting inflation. Now Strauss says, "I travelled the country with little more than a smile and a shoeshine. I didn't have a program." Alfred Kahn, who was put in charge of the new wage-and-price program last October, has said sympathetically, "His program was to pick up the phone and swear—and he was very good at it." Strauss continues, "We did pretty good."

We didn't solve inflation, obviously, but we did alert the country. Finally, they got a program and they got Alfred Kahn in there. He's the kind of fellow they need. I felt guilty about talking him into it. The President didn't ask me to work on the inflation thing but for a few months. I was in

there as a holding action until the President got a program and a person."

The conversation turns to Strauss's position in Washington.

"I have power in this town for four reasons," he says. "One, there are people on the Hill who I'll go out of my way to help and they'll go out of their way to help me. Two, I have power in this town because I have the kind of relationships I have with the Bob Keefes and the Lloyd Hacklers and the Harry McPhersons. There, I have power in this town because I have a base in Texas. People in government and politics forget—you got to keep your base. If you lose that base, every son of a gun thinks he can knock you over. You can get blown away. I keep my base in Texas. I got my friends there, I like them and they like me. Four, I have power in this town because people think I'm close to the President. They think I see him all the time. I don't see him that much, but people think I do, and that gives me power. People think I'm closer to the President than I am. They think I talk to him every two, three days. It's not my fault that people think that." But Strauss doesn't strain to dispel any such impression.

Strauss may in fact be as close to the President as anyone who has not been around Carter for many years can be, and that is in part because he has proved his loyalty, and in part because it is recognized that he brings a certain practical wisdom to the White House, and in part because the President, who does not have many friends and does not give the impression that he enjoys the company of many people other than his wife, enjoys Strauss. The President has an earthy streak that Strauss appeals to. A joking relationship has developed between them: Carter once gave Strauss a blown-up picture of Strauss's mother-in-law, and Strauss, at a Cabinet meeting, once presented Carter with a blown-up picture of Carter with a fly on his nose; subsequently, Carter presented Strauss with what purported to be a credit card of a place in Europe with a shady reputation, and suggested that Strauss must have lost it during his travels there. Strauss even kids Rosalynn Carter—about her figure (which is good) and about her husband, and one cannot imagine anyone else with the nerve to do this. Or the wisdom: Strauss understands that these people are virtually trapped in their public roles, and need some humor and human contact in their lives. By giving them that sort of contact he gives them pleasure—and makes himself welcome.

The President is said to seem pleased when Strauss comes into a room. The Carters very rarely go out socially, but the world knew that in the first year Carter was in office they and their daughter, Amy, went to the Strausses' Watergate apartment for a dinner of barbecued shrimp. Strauss persuaded the President to go for dinner one night last year with him, Byrd, and O'Neill at Paul Young's, a restaurant where a number of political people hang out. (O'Neill didn't show up; he was under the impression that the dinner was scheduled for the following night.) One White House aid says, "Strauss is the only one who could get Carter to do that." After the recent lunch that Carter attended at Strauss's home in Dallas, a White House aide remarked to Strauss, in the presence of a number of White House aides, that it was a good thing he didn't have yet another home to arrange a Presidential visit to. Strauss replied, at once, "Listen, you squirt, Carter's only the third most popular President I've had in my home."

Strauss gets people's number—figures out what is important to them, to their lives. His interest seems genuine enough, and probably is—there is a real humanity and compassion about the man—and it leaves people with a good feeling about Bob Strauss. In a city where so many personal transactions are impersonal, where there is a good deal of abrasion in daily life, where so many people are simply manipulative, Strauss is both manipulative and kind; he establishes human contact.

After talking about something else for a while, Strauss suddenly says, "When you start as low as I did, you don't realize where you've come to."

I ask him to tell me more about that.

He grows reflective, and says, "You play your hand; that's what I always say."

He tells me that he was born in Lockhart, a small town in south Texas, and that when he was eight his family moved to Stamford, in west Texas. He goes on, "My father was a musician—a pianist—and he spoke three or four languages. As a matter of fact, he played every instrument there was. He was a cultivated man—impoverished and cultivated both. He would have been a successful musician; he wasn't a successful businessman. He ended up with a little drygoods store in a town of two, three thousand people in west Texas. My mother was strong and had drive and ran the business and made a good living for us. My father liked books and music. My mother got up and worked in the store all day and came home and fixed supper at night." He continues, "After I got through high school, I went to the University of Texas."

I ask him what happened to him there.

He replies, "Not many things happened to me at the University of Texas. I discovered I was Jewish, which meant that you were ostracized from certain things. That wasn't the case in the town where I grew up, because it was so small. I'd have been elected president of the Baptist Young People's Union if the local Baptist minister hadn't thought it was a bum idea because I didn't belong to the church.

"Later on, I also discovered I could compete with people, which is a very important discovery. I really learned I could compete when I got in the F.B.I. It's a very important thing to learn you can compete. After college and before I joined the F.B.I., I went to law school. My mother thought the way for me to get out of that store was to be a lawyer. She always thought I could have a public career, and she thought the law was the way to get at it. She was determined that I do that. She dreamed dreams for her son, the way every mother does. She knew you had to bottom your dreams on something, and she thought the law was something to bottom them on." Strauss has one brother, who is a succesful banker in Dallas and is leading an effort to make Dallas the site of the 1980 Democratic Convention. "The truth of the matter is, everybody in my law-school class applied for the F.B.I. In those days, the F.B.I. got the cream out of the universities. That was just before the Second World War—June of 1941. It was a way of not getting drafted. There were people with much better records than I had, but the interviews were important, and I interviewed well. I didn't do very well in the F.B.I.—I wasn't a very spectacular fellow. I was all over the country—in Iowa, Ohio, Washington, Texas. I was lazy, a bit shiftless, but I had enough confidence, or whatever it took, to get along. I was about a C-plus—that's an overstatement. After I left the F.B.I., after four years, I became successful. The truth of the matter is, I've been successful. I love the fact that I'm rich. I've earned it, honorably. I built a good law firm. I built a good bank. I had a measure of success in other economic matters. I started in politics by handing out circulars for politicians when I was nineteen, in college, and ended up being chairman of the Party." (One of the first politicians Strauss handed out circulars for was Lyndon Johnson, who was conducting his first campaign for Congress.)

Something else that happened to Strauss at the University of Texas was that he met John Connally, and later, as Connally rose in Texas politics, so did Strauss. When Connally became governor, Strauss was appointed to the state banking board, on which he served for six years, and then he became national committeeman from the state, and was on his way, playing his hand. Strauss continues, "The Party had an almost nine-and-a-half-million-dollar debt when I took over as treasurer and a debt of less than three million when I left that job, and I cut that debt down further when I was chairman. Helen and I have worked hard, and we've been successful. God damn, I do have a lot of fun. I'm one lucky sonofabitch."

We talk about the fact that Strauss will attend some fund-raisers in Washington next week. He attends about six to eight a week when fund-raisers are in season. I have been told by others that the knowledge that Strauss will be present at such affairs helps draw the lobbyists and lawyers who have access to campaign contributions and seek access to power. By turning up, Strauss earns the gratitude of the politician who is seeking to raise money. (On occasion, he holds a fundraiser himself, at his Watergate apartment. He held one last year for Robert Krueger—to which the President came—and he is planning to hold one soon for a Democratic senator who is up for reelection in 1980.) "The things you earn on the Hill are not free, you know," he says. "You earn them. The reason I can get some things done up there isn't because of my personality; it's because I worry about their business. A personality will carry you only so far. You have to deliver. If you can show the average person in Congress how he can vote right—no way in the world an average member of the House and Senate can know what the issue is all the time, they're so torn apart—they'll go with you. No way in the world they can know what the issue is. If you can show them where the national interest is, they want to be on that side. If it's going to cost them reelection, they shouldn't vote that way. Nobody does anything just to do it for me. I've had some awfully good friends turn me down on things I've asked for. Maybe somebody else could go up there and get a lot more votes by making an intellectual presentation of the case. But if I have any unique ability it's that I know how to present a case in a way that makes it possible for members to vote the way I want them to, and is a way that they would want to vote. Most of those guys don't expect you to get them to Heaven on a tough issue; they just want you to keep them from going to Hell. If you can show them how to vote the right way and stay alive, that's all they want. That's what people don't understand: they'll make the right vote if you show them how to do it without getting defeated. They correctly say, 'If I get defeated on this issue, I won't be around to vote on other issues.' The truth of the matter is that every Cabinet officer is up there on what he thinks is the most important issue, and the senator or congressman is looking at ten other issues. Just because I think my trade issue is the most important issue in the world doesn't mean that it is. It's a watershed vote to me. It's not to a congressman, and he's not going to make it and he shouldn't make it if it's going to cost him his job.

"If SALT is important, and I think it is, if hospital-cost containment is important, and I think it is, and if the trade bill is important, and I think it is, then a President is entitled to take certain steps to keep enough political muscle to do these other things. The press doesn't write about that. They say he did these things as political acts, and that's where they're right, but they don't go on to say he did it for the larger goals. That's where the press is wrong, and that's where the Administration has failed—in explaining the over-all political context,

that they did certain things for the good of the country. You'd say, 'You did this for clothespins and this for textiles,' and you're goddam right. The way you get the canoe to shore is you feed the sharks a little this and a little that until you get to shore."

At three o'clock on a Tuesday afternoon in early April, Strauss is talking to a group of about sixty California bankers in the family movie theatre in the East Wing of the White House. He stands at the front of the room, which has pale-green walls and pale-green drapes; the bankers are seated in rows of chairs. Already today, he has addressed representatives of the Kansas Farm Bureau (at 7:30 a.m.), testified before the Senate Small Business Committee's Subcommittee on Government Procurement, spoken to a luncheon of the National Democratic Club (which is made up largely of congressional Democrats and lobbyists), had his picture taken with a congressman from Louisiana, and attended a session of the Ways and Means Committee's Trade Subcommittee on the M.T.N. Before Strauss began to speak, he told me that he was very tired, that he had a lot on his mind, that he had had a long talk with the President yesterday after a Cabinet meeting, and that the trade negotiations in Europe were near—multilateral negotiations to be concluded shortly, and he had been up most of the night talking to negotiators in Europe, and thinking and worrying.

Now Strauss points out to the bankers that he has followed Mondale and Kahn in appearing before them: "You see, we're improving the quality as we go along." The bankers laugh. He tells them, "I'm just in the final hours, maybe minutes, as to whether they're going to accept our package in Europe. They're asking for changes. We've been negotiating back and forth and back and forth, and there comes a time when you make a deal or you don't. Sometimes in this country, we reach too far to make a deal. I can tell you we're not going to reach too far. You don't get something without giving something. I'm no genius, and neither are you." He is talking sombrely and seems preoccupied and he rambles, but he remembers that his purpose here is to persuade these bankers that his trade package is a good one. He talks about his "excellent staff." He says, establishing his credentials once again, "I bring some different skills: I've been a bit of a businessman, a bit of a banker; I've been a lawyer, a politician. I've been dealing with the Congress and I've been having a hell of a time."

The group laughs, and Strauss changes his tone. "The narrowness of the Congress has to do with you fellows—you complain all the time and put those poor devils under terrible pressure." And then he seems to realize how far he has gone, and he says, "I'm going to talk straight to you, whether you like it or not. I'm tired. I worked until three last night and sneezed from three to four, for some reason. I'm rambling a bit because I've a lot on my mind." He tells them the Christian Herter story and says, "Having lived with the Congress and having lived with the international community and having lived with the business community and the farming community, I have some experience. What are we really about? Well, we're really trying to write for the first time a set of rules to guide the game of trade." And he explains the new codes that the negotiators are writing. He mentions citrus ("from your state") and says that the negotiators are trying to write a new code covering subsidies, so that California crops "don't have to compete with an orange or an almond that comes into a country from a third country and has been subsidized." He talks about the new government procurement rules. "I'm catching hell because we're opening a little bit of our markets up, but in return we're getting the opportunity to bid on twenty billion dollars' worth of foreign-government purchases. We have a thirty-billion-dollar trade deficit in this country. Now, that shouldn't be. This country has the know-how. This country has the technological capacity. We've been lazy. My gosh, I'll bet there are one thousand two hundred and fifty Japanese people in New York today knocking on doors and selling products, and they can speak English as good as you. And I'll bet there aren't but thirty Americans over there in Japan and there aren't but two of them who can speak Japanese."

He tells them about his schedule today and then he says, "Hell, if you want to be in style, take a kick at the President—it's cheap, it's easy, but it's a ——— outrage. Is President Carter perfect? Nyuh. He's made mistakes and he's going to make more mistakes. The trade package is going to be good. One reason it's going to be good is that I'm negotiating it." The group laughs. Strauss continues, "Another reason it's going to be good is that Carter's fought for it and he's taken political scars for it." He talks a bit more about the trade bill, and then he says, "The problem is people on the Hill only hear from the naysayers. Is the trade bill A-plus? No. It's B-plus. But if it doesn't get support it's going down the drain, and it's your own ——— fault. There is enough political influence in this room right now to contact every member of the California delegation and tell them to be for this. If you care enough to come here, you ought to get off your duffs. If you don't care enough to do that, then you're not worth a tinker's damn. I'm tired of businessmen who do nothing but complain." Now he's getting worked up. "There are people who complain about the President and about everything." Pause. Silence. "And, I'll tell you, they also complain about bankers." The bankers laugh and applaud.

Strauss concludes, and then takes a few questions. The first is about what he thinks of California Governor Jerry Brown's Presidential prospects in 1980. Strauss explains that he had a very cordial relationship with Brown in the course of 1976, and then he says, "I think he's going to run. I think he's going to be defeated. That's all she wrote." Through his answers to questions, he explains that the European government he is negotiating with have political problems, too. He says, "We needed a wheat agreement, but I couldn't get the right kind of bottom on that agreement, so I left it on the table. Sometimes it's harder not to take a deal than to take it." He tells the bankers about the problems with the Japanese and telecommunications equipment, and uses his line again about the steel telephone poles.

As he is talking, a telephone in the room rings, and Strauss remarks to an aide, "If that's for me, I'll take it." The group laughs. But it is for him, and Strauss gets on a white phone in the front of the room, saying to the audience, "Y'all make a little noise while I take this." He ducks behind a curtain and talks on the phone. After a few minutes, he comes back out with the phone still in his hands and turns to the bankers and, trying to get rid of them, waves goodbye and says, "Thanks a lot, good to see you," and they take the hint and leave the room. Now Strauss shouts into the phone, "If it blows today, we're in big trouble. You get it, Stevie—you make those ——— stay and make a deal." "Stevie" is Viscount Etienne Davignon, who is in charge of the E.C.'s industrial policy; he is talking to Strauss from Luxembourg. After Strauss hangs up, he says to me, "They're still negotiating. Somebody always chokes in these things."

We return to Strauss's office. Strauss talks to some staff members about where the negotiations stand; returns a call to Frank Moore, the White House assistant for congressional liaison; makes plans to attend the Kentucky Derby in May; calls Theodore Brophy, the chairman of the board of General Telephone & Electronics (from whom he received a letter today commending him for his position in the negotiations with the Japanese on telecommunications equipment. Strauss tells him, "You made my day," and after he completes the call he tells Vera Murray, "He's going to come see me." He meets with Lee Kling, a St. Louis banker, who attended the meeting at the White House and was finance chairman of the Democratic National Committee when Strauss was chairman, and is now involved in fund-raising for Democrats. He meets with some staff members about a problem on the wine-gallon issue which came up in his meeting with the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee this afternoon.

All the while, Vera Murray, a remarkably calm woman, is taking calls (they are screened by two other aides before they get to her) from people who have urgent messages for Strauss about the wine-gallon issue, about Presidential politics, about the trade bill; who want appointments with Strauss; who want to arrange a White House tour for someone. She places a call to a congressman whose help Strauss is seeking on the wine-gallon issue, and sees to it that a certain memo gets delivered to the White House. An aide gives her a memo for Strauss about cheese, so that Strauss can talk to Gaylord Nelson about the matter sometime before the Finance Committee meets tomorrow Strauss is still working on the Krueger question; now it has been decided that the present Ambassador to Mexico will remain there, and Strauss is pushing Krueger for a position that is to be created—Ambassador-at-Large for U.S.-Mexican relations.

Vera Murray tells me that Strauss—she refers to him as "Strauss"—has already spoken to about forty people on the phone today. She says that he gets from seventy-five to a hundred "legitimate" calls a day, that he tries to return every call before he leaves the office, and that if he cannot he takes the remaining message slips with him and makes the calls from his car or his home. She says that he insists that calls be returned within a day and that mail be answered in three days.

Now it is nearly six o'clock, andS trauss talks on the phone to an old friend from Texas, which relaxes him. Strauss is to be at the first of two receptions by six, so that he can be at the second one, at the Averell Harrimans', by six-forty-five. As he leaves the office, he receives a message that Wilbur Mills has talked to some people in the domestic liquor industry about the wine-gallon issue. He tells Vera Murray that he wants to talk to Mills in the morning, and he says to me, "The point is that Wilbur talked to them. He knows more about trade by accident than most people in this town ever learn." He is told that a certain congressman wants to talk to him. He considers whether he should return the call this afternoon and decides, given his state of fatigue, that he will not. "I might say something I shouldn't," he says. "I try not to make decisions at the end of the day."

In the car on the way to the first reception, he places a call to James McIntyre, the director of the Office of Management and Budget. He gets on the phone and says, "Jim McIntyre, please, this is Ambassador Strauss." There is a brief silence, and then Strauss brightens and says, "I'm fine, darlin', how are you?" And then he says to Brannum, "Nat, we mustn't forget to send these Easter flowers to the White House switchboard people." And then he talks briefly to McIntyre.

The first reception, in the Chandelier Room of the Sheraton-Carlton Hotel, is for Senator Donald Stewart, Democrat of Ala-

bama, who won election last November to fill out the last two years of a Senate term, and who is now trying to pay off his campaign debt. Often politicians run up campaign debts and then try to raise money to pay them off; the winners have an easier time raising the money than the losers do. When Strauss enters the room, a waiter, who recognizes him, asks, "Can I get you a drink, Mr. Ambassador?" Strauss replies, "You damn sure can," and he orders a vodka Martini. This fund-raiser, which costs five hundred dollars per person, is being attended, according to one of Senator Stewart's staff members, essentially by representatives of groups that have business in Alabama—steel, trucking, dairy, insurance, agriculture, rural electric—and about fifty people are expected to show up. Strauss greets Stewart and after talking to him briefly he says, "Let's go meet your guests. If you and I stand here lobbying each other, we're wasting our time." Strauss tells a man who is wearing a diamond stickpin and is a lobbyist for sugar interests, "The Administration is hitched. If they get unhitched, you let me know."

A representative of the International Paper Company tells Strauss that his company has a letter supporting the trade bill ready to send to every member of Congress. The man says, "It's pretty strong."

Strauss says, "Good. Let's make it stronger."

The paper industry is not entirely pleased with the trade package thus far; Strauss was able to get concessions from the Japanese but less satisfactory ones from the Europeans. The man offers to go get the letter, saying that this will take a few minutes, and Strauss looks at his watch and says, "Why don't you get it? Let's get some work done." He talks to someone about energy. He jokes to someone else, "I imagine if you looked around this room you could find a lobbyist or two." The International Paper man comes back with the letter. It refers to the support by the company's chairman, J. Stanford Smith, for the M.T.N. agreement. Strauss reads it, gets out a pen, plunks the letter down on a buffet table, between a platter of cold hors d'oeuvres variés and a chafing dish filled with squares of quiche, and writes, "Bob Strauss has negotiated firmly, tenaciously, and aggressively for the United States. He didn't get everything he wanted or we wanted but he has negotiated a set of agreements that are in the best interest of our nation. We urge your support of the Trade Agreement when it reaches the Congress." He gives the letter back to the man, saying, "That kind of language in there makes it more direct."

He says, to another man, "How's the beef business—you robbin' sonsofbitches, those prices you're charging us consumers." And then he asks, "The beef people going to be all right on this trade thing?"

The man replies, "We can't promise our support until we see the full package."

Strauss says, "I understand that. We have to encourage people to keep their herds up. There isn't enough beef in the world." Then he talks to the sugar lobbyist again, and says, "We have a position. You people have to get together. If you push for more, you'll get nothing. You act like a bunch of damn fools. The Administration has a reasonable package and it's going to stay hitched. The President won't move. You're going to make it difficult for Russell Long, and he's trying to help you." Strauss is using this opportunity to get a message to the sugar industry.

It's now six-thirty-seven, and Strauss says his goodbyes and leaves the reception. He got a lot accomplished in a short time. Brannum drives us to the Watergate to pick up Helen Strauss, and from there we go to the Harrimans', in Georgetown. On the way, Helen Strauss kids Strauss about his speech to the National Democratic Club luncheon today—which she attended—and makes some objective remarks about it. Then she laughs, and says how sick she is of hearing the story about how she once told him there was one fewer great man than he was thinking. Strauss tells her that they are going to the Middle East on the day after Easter, because the President has asked him to lead a trade mission of government, business, and labor people to Egypt and Israel, and to "get to know Begin and Sadat a little better."

The reception at the Harrimans' is to encourage support for the annual fund-raising dinner for congressional campaigns, to be held in May; Strauss has talked Pamela Harriman into being cochairman of the dinner. He has also helped persuade Senator Wendell Ford and Representative James Corman, of California, to head the Senate and House Democratic campaign committees. And now a number of senators up for reelection and a few members of the House leadership and several Washington lawyers and lobbyists are gathered at the Harrimans' home. Strauss mingles for a while, and shortly after seven he is called to the phone. After a brief time, he returns and, smiling and speaking slowly, tells his wife and a few others, "The Council of Ministers just approved a trade package in Luxembourg."

Then, after several people have made formal remarks to the gathering, it is Strauss's turn, and holding a drink, he says, "This is my second Martini and I'm tired and I'm going to take my time." He tells them that a friend of his once said, "Bob Strauss has spent a lifetime taking money from the rich and votes from the poor and assuring both he's protecting them from each other." He tells them, "I think that what you do the Senate makes a difference in the quality of life in this country. I don't agree with everything that happens in the House and the Senate. I sometimes disagree philosophically. But I really think it does make a difference."

Strauss is clearly exhausted, but after his speech he mingles a little longer, working all the while. A man who represents the insurance industry introduces himself to Strauss. Strauss tells him, "I need help with the Connecticut liquor people." His brain-computer has said insurance-Connecticut-Heublein. A reporter asks him how he squares the increased price of tickets to the Democratic congressional dinner—they cost five hundred dollars last year and will cost a thousand dollars this year—with the Administration's fight against inflation, and Strauss, as he sometimes does, especially when he is tired, answers an unwanted question with bluster: "I don't know anything about it. I've been working my ass off and here we are in this nice home and you're asking me a stupid question like that." After going on for a while, Strauss—not one to leave anyone angry with him if he can help it—tries to jolly the reporter, and then he says, "We've both learned something tonight. I've learned that I'd better hold my temper better, and you've learned not to ask a question like that. I'm very sorry. I'm tired." And without another word he walks away.

Now all that Strauss wants to do is go home. As he and his wife head for the door, he is cornered by a man who proceeds to tell him about how he had always wanted to meet "Dick Nixon" and how he finally met Dick Nixon last weekend and spent an hour with him and how he and Dick Nixon had such a good conversation. Strauss, now leaning against a wall for support, his eyes closing with fatigue, says, "It figures."

Finally, Strauss leaves the reception and returns to the Wategate, where he will have scrambled eggs with his wife, return some more phone calls, and try to get some sleep.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CHARLES H. WILSON of California (at the request of Mr. WRIGHT), for July 13 and 16, on account of official business.

Mr. RODINO (at the request of Mr. WRIGHT), for today, on account of illness in the family.

Mr. RITTER (at the request of Mr. RHODES), for today, on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. CORCORAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. KEMP, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FAZIO) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WEAVER, for 10 minutes, today.

Mr. ANNUNZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GONZALEZ, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. NELSON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DODD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. AUCOIN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CAVANAUGH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FLORIO, for 60 minutes, on July 16, 1979.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. SCHEUER, and to include extraneous matter notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost $3,957.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. CORCORAN) and to include extraneous material):

Mr. PAUL in three instances.

Mr. BADHAM.

Mr. EVANS of Delaware.

Mr. ROTH in two instances.

Mr. LEWIS in four instances.

Mr. DERWINSKI.

Mr. BURGENER in two instances.

Mr. HOLLENBECK.

Mr. ARCHER.

Mr. DICKINSON in two instances.

Mr. COLLINS of Texas in two instances.

Mr. MICHEL in two instances.

Mr. GRASSLEY in two instances.

Mr. RAILSBACK.

Mr. WYDLER.

Mr. SHUSTER.

Mr. BETHUNE.

Mr. BOB WILSON in two instances.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FAZIO) and to include extraneous material:)

Mr. BOLAND.

Mr. MAZZOLI in two instances.

Mr. MOAKLEY.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. LELAND.

Mr. ALBOSTA.