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By Eugene V. Rostow

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ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

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INTERVIEWEE: EUGENE V. ROSTOW

INTERVIEWER: PAIGE E. MULHOLLAN

December 2, 1968

M: Just as a matter of identification to start with here, you're Eugene V. Rostow, presently Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs--since what date, sir?

R: Since the beginning of October 1966.

M: Before that time you'd served from time to time in government service along with your career in the Law School at Yale. Did you have any prior personal relationship with Mr. Johnson?

R: No, I didn't.

M: You hadn't had any occasion politically or in your work with the government to come in contact with him?

R: No, just the most casual kind of formal meetings.

M: Can you describe the circumstances of your appointment to this job? This is something about Mr. Johnson a lot has been made in some cases.

R: Well, I suppose I'm one of the few people who has been appointed to a job some months after the appointment had been signaled in the press.

M: You mean that didn't mean that you didn't get it after the press leaked it?

R: Evans and Novak predicted my appointment in the spring, I think it was, and I, therefore, concluded I was safe.

M: Did you know anything about it at that time?

R: No, I knew nothing about it at that time.

M: How was the news broached to you? In what manner did Mr. Johnson get in touch with you regarding the appointment?

R: The Secretary called me, and I came down and saw the Secretary first, and George Ball. Then I went over and saw the President, and he offered me the job.

M: Did he give you any direct charge or direct instructions as to what he expected you to do over here?

R: Yes, he was very clear about it. He indicated that he wanted me to work in a number of areas and to provide, really, as much intellectual input as I could--ideas, as well as operations, and to feel very free to propose new lines of policy. We were really picked as a team--Katzenbach and I together. He knew we were friends and could work together. He indicated that he expected Mr. Katzenbach to be working largely with Congress and the administration of the Department. He wanted me to produce ideas, work on European problems, NATO problems, and the economic problems of the Department. It was a very general indication of the scope of the job as he expected me to do it.

Of course, I had had some experience in the State Department, and I had the very strong feeling that the Under Secretaries should really be working for the Secretary and not directly for the President. I've tried to follow that rule very carefully.

M: Has Mr. Johnson followed that rule? Have you had very much direct contact with him since you've been over here?

R: Well, I've met with him often on many things in meetings at the White House, dealing with problems on which I was working--that is to say, in which I was the designated officer of the Department on problems like Indian food, or monetary problems, trade policy problems, or Middle Eastern problems, NATO problems. But I've not been on the direct line

with him.

M: He does honor the chain of command so to speak?

R: He does. He has been most scrupulous about it.

M: The newspaper stories of the midnight calls have not been true in your case then?

R: Not for me. Of course I have worked closely with my brother, and my brother will transmit messages, but usually always about operational things, or about special projects on which he has wanted me to work--speeches, writing projects, that sort of thing.

M: You anticipated one of my questions then. Has the fact that your brother has been in the White House created any unusual problems for you here?

R: No, it has been very pleasant, and I'm sure it has been very pleasant for him. It has been easy and relaxed.

M: So your relations with the White House staff have been uniformly good in--?

R: Oh, yes. I worked with Walt, and I worked of course with Francis Bator and Ed Fried on economic problems, and with Califano and others--Cater and De Vier Pierson on this telecommunications project.

M: Now, that's when the domestic staff gets involved in certain aspects of State Department business?

R: Surely.

M: And you deal with them as well as with the National Security advisory people?

R: That's right. You see, I'm chairman of a task force on telecommunications policy, which has involved me a great deal with Cater and De Vier Pierson.

M: Does the White House staff, in situations like that, operate effectively as aides to the Department operating officers?

R: Oh, yes.

M: No problems of communication there?

R: No, they're very helpful.

M: You feel like your things get through to the President when you need them through.

R: Yes, when I need them. Generally speaking, you know, we try to solve the problems without involving him when we can.

M: One of the common criticisms of the State Department which appears time and again in these books which have come out on the Department recently is the problem of administration which both of the Under Secretaries are involved in, I assume, to a certain extent. The claim is frequently made that the morale here has been extremely low. Do you think that's accurate?

R: Well, first let me say I don't want to wash my hands of it, but the administration of the Department has to be in the hands of the Under Secretary--that is, Mr. Katzenbach. You can't really divide it. He has been handling that whole network of relationships. My job has been to work on a series of problems and projects which are more or less assigned to me by the Secretary where the seventh floor has to be involved. I followed them through. Mostly they're continuing things like troops levels in Europe and all of the arrangements with the Germans and the Allies about offset and the reorganization of NATO--things like that. So I work with the interested bureaus on these projects. But I won't, and haven't tried to take an active interest in staffing the bureaus or

shuffling them around or changing. I'll talk with Mr. Katzenbach and the Secretary about personnel changes, but they've not been my central focus and responsibility. You can't have a divided responsibility in that area.

As for the morale in the Department, it's a subject that has interested me a great deal: the problem of adequate incentives for the bright young man and making sure that the promotional system recognizes talent and so on. I would say that's basically a problem of coordination on the seventh floor, and the amount of drive and direction we can put into it. It's a difficult problem I have a lot of ideas about it. I don't think that morale is as bad as sometimes painted, but it's a hard Department to manage unless you have someone who's devoting almost full time to it, which we don't really.

I've been rather impressed with the various proposals of past commissions that we have a senior officer who would devote himself almost entirely to making sure that the square pegs are in square holes, and round pegs are in round holes; and protecting and encouraging officers, pressing for the right promotions, and so on; and making sure that people aren't pushed off to one side or lost. It's a big management job, and we've never really tackled it in my time.

M: Is one of the big problems--I think you mentioned that you'd been connected with economic projects and problems--the fact that the traditional Foreign Service officers tend to look with perhaps a little bit of disdain on economic specialities or administrative specialities or any specialty other than that which is considered traditional?

R: The classical political--?

M: Right.

R: Well, actually we have an extremely strong economics bureau under Mr. Solomon.

M: I've talked to Mr. Solomon too.

R: [It's] one of the best bureaus in the building and one of the best run and most active, so there has been no problem of morale there or feeling neglected. And they have very good relations with the others. I don't really think that's true. By-and-large I think the rest of the Department recognizes the importance of the economic officers now and takes them very seriously indeed.

M: What about the problem that you run into regarding other agencies outside the State Department? Do you get involved in this with Defense and CIA and Commerce--

R: And Treasury and Agriculture. I've worked with all those departments a great deal--Interior, even, on the water project; HEW on health. We haven't had much friction or difficulty there. It has been a very active relationship. I think the relationships with the Defense Department on the whole, and I've had to manage three or four or five exercises of that kind, have been good. I don't mean to say we always agreed. It's a built-in problem in government, but if you have any experience with it and don't take it too seriously, it can be managed.

M: The charge that's frequently heard that the Defense Department and/or the CIA or others is taking over the management of American foreign policy is inflated?

R: Oh yes. That's a lot of nonsense.

M: Things like this have to be set straight. Things that are simple to you may not be so simple to people thirty years from now or even in a shorter

time.

R: I don't mean to say they don't have ideas about foreign policy, but basically when we take a strong view we almost always prevail.

M: As is the theoretical manner in which it should be done. You mentioned that one of the rather general charges that Mr. Johnson gave you was to perhaps add some intellectual input over here in this particular position. You've also been a leading justifier, particularly to the intellectual community, of the Johnson foreign policies, which is a whole subject. Since you've been out amongst them, why do you think that such a great number of respectable academicians and politicians have simply remained unconvinced by your arguments and the Johnson Administration arguments?

R: Well, I think here you're dealing with an absolutely fundamental problem for us and for every country, which is to accept reality when reality conflicts with the historical experience of the country and the collective memory of the country. The French and the British have terrific problems in this regard. The Germans and the Japanese have very severe problems. The British and the French have to get reconciled to a world in which they're no longer great powers. The scale of things simply means that they're small powers. Countries of fifty million can't pull the levers anymore. And this is a trying and psychologically difficult experience for them. The Germans and the Japanese, of course, have very heavy memories of past sin, of the excesses of militarism. Underneath they're very much afraid of developing strong military capabilities for fear they won't be able to control them.

And for us the problem is that what we have to do now in the world is totally different from what we regard as normal for the United States.

Our notion of the United States in the world is fixed by the experience of the nation between 1789 and 1914-1917, the idea of Washington's farewell address and so on. Isolationism is very hard to live down. We've had four or five rounds of it--with Wilson, and with Truman, and the '30's, and now this round about Viet Nam. I think by and large the majority of the country accepts our foreign policy with common sense, not very happily, but accepts it as inevitable. I think everybody understands what George Aiken said the other day, "We've inherited the responsibilities but not the privileges of the British Empire."

M: Aikin said several very penetrating things like that.

R: I think everybody sort of knows that's true, but a large number of intellectuals are fighting this thing, as a good many other people are. Now part of it of course is also--what shall we say--the kind of the prestige of the left-wing orientation that you find in many forms. I remember once talking to Andre Siegfried, the great French political scientist, who said that the most fundamental mistake that has been made in the twentieth century was made when they allowed the Communists sit at the extreme left of the Chamber of Deputies. They didn't belong on the left. They belonged on the extreme right. But the left has prestige in France, and it does in all countries--progressive, modern, forward-looking, and so forth. So the fact that we've been in this prolonged confrontation with the Soviet Union, Cuba, with other countries that purport to be leftist countries, has meant an unease in public opinion.

After all, Henry Wallace ran for President in 1948 against the Marshall Plan. It was even before NATO was invented. The notion is awfully hard to take in the circles that regard themselves as a little left

unless they're pretty sophisticated. So I think this is an aspect of American life, as it is of all life, that we're simply going to have to live through and talk out and think through. But I think that's basically the reason why there's so much resistance.

I remember very well when I first started to teach at Yale, I was about twenty-five--twenty-six years old, something like that, and it was 1938. The debate was going on about whether we were actively concerned with the rise of Hitler, the formation of the Axis. Was that a threat to our security? The atmosphere in the universities then was just exactly what it is now about Viet Nam. The most talkative and active people were isolationists.

M: The Oxford Union syndrome.

R: Yes, the Oxford Union syndrome, and lots more. Chester Bowles and Jerome Frank and all sorts of people were very active isolationists.

M: The modern critics, though, would universally deny a charge that they were isolationists.

R: Well, they can deny it, but they are. They're the same people who are for pulling the troops back from Europe and avoiding commitments and being against foreign aid because it gets us entangled in foreign affairs. After all, Fulbright says the main contribution the United States should make to world order is the example of a model society at home.

M: That's the William Borah isolationist ideal, of course. But a lot of these people, Joe Clark of Pennsylvania and others--Aiken--in the past have supported continued presence in Europe; have supported the Marshall Plan; NATO.

R: They're all for pulling the troops back from Europe now.

M: Most of them are on that issue?

R: Yes. And you see that's a very tricky and very difficult issue, because it comes down in the end to the credibility of the nuclear deterrent. We have to keep the troops there in order to be able to have some options other than the nuclear option. That's why a French diplomat told me six months or so ago, "Who can believe in mail order war!" And who wants to expose the President to the risk of another crisis in Central Europe where we have no troops, no alternatives but the button? No one will believe in the button. We would probably never use the button. The whole thing loses credibility and destroys the President's capacity to manage a crisis. If we took the fleet out of the Mediterranean, presumably we could still threaten nuclear warfare if things got too rough, but who would believe it?

M: That's the reason for the flexible response strategy currently.

R: Sure.

M: These critics--

R: No, I'm persuaded it is isolationism and nothing but isolationism. I guess I was one of the first around here to start yammering along that line. I think it is the right line, and it does shock people. It's designed to shock people--to make them think in fundamental terms.

M: To examine their own position perhaps..

R: Yes.

M: What about the critics' charge that, over the years of the Johnson Administration, the State Department has become a solid phalanx of one point of view, which is feeding the President a side which doesn't really even offer him the alternatives? Would you characterize that as accurate?

R: No, that isn't accurate at all.

M: How is dissent maintained or permitted within the Department councils?

R: Well, I encourage it. I urge people not to get an homogenized and agreed position, but to send me three or four memoranda. I'll have meetings in here in which I encourage them all to express differing views, and try to get the youngsters up who have written the first draft, you know, that comes out. I know from having been there myself that it's awfully important if you've been working on something to get up into the meeting where the problem is discussed. You feel better, and you've participated, and you've fought for your point of view. I think that can be done and is done. The Secretary is extremely interested in diverse opinions. He's always probing for them. So is the President.

The President, of course, is quite remarkable that way. I've never been in meetings with other Presidents, but various people--I remember Chet Bowles and I went over one day. It was on an Indian food problem and he happened to be here, and he said he'd never heard such freedom of discussion in the presence of a President. I've always been very impressed from the first day I met the President by the way in which he menages to encourage people to talk and have everybody at the table speak up and speak very freely. He doesn't intimidate or coerce discussions--quite the contrary.

M: What are the limits of that dissent then--within the Department, I mean?

R: Well, the limit simply is that the President and the Secretary make a decision, and that's the policy. But no one--the people--of course, it's absolutely inadmissible that they go around town and leak, but they do, of course. Sometimes you have people who want to get a public reputation

for having taken a contrary position, especially if the position is rough. I think that's very unfair to the Secretary and to the President, but it's done--especially by people with a lot of ambition, who are eager for their own images and that sort of thing. But I found it a very open atmosphere both here and, especially, in the Cabinet Room of the White House.

M: It seems so frequently from the outside that people who become identified with the contrary policy, even though they may not contribute to its leakage, are all gone-- [George] Ball, Hilsman, Goodwin and one by one, those who have been identified on the so-called dove side have been moved out. That's not a conscious policy on the part of the Department?

R: Well, it varies. Nobody moved George out. George decided to leave--George Ball. He's very loyal to the President, and he came back and did this chore up in New York for him, and has done many other things, you know--the trip to Korea and so on.

Hilsman was another story. Hilsman was fired. I wasn't here at the time, but I heard about it both from George Ball, and from the Secretary.

Goodwin--I don't know much about his departure. I think that was probably a voluntary thing, too--part of the natural process of events.

But there's been a wide diversity of policy. On the famous question of Viet Nam bombing, there were lots of different views, both here and in the Defense Department.

M: So there has not been any homogenization, as you called it awhile ago, of viewpoint going to the President?

R: Not a bit. But there has to be a decision, and the President makes it.

M: I'd like to go into some of your special projects that you've worked on

where you know the President's views particularly. I guess, at least in recent months, probably the one that has dominated your time the most is this satellite telecommunications problem?

R: There I haven't talked to the President. I haven't talked to him at all on the subject.

M: You mean your original instructions have been your only instructions?

R: That's all.

M: How has that developed--the details of that, if you can capsule them through your time here?

R: Well, it has been a big, big chore with an awful lot of research studies to direct--first set up and frame, and then see through; and then get specific subjects discussed by the group and negotiate our positions; and , of course, relations with the industry and with the various conflicting parties. It has been a hot time, a very exciting piece of bureaucracy and in-fighting and everything else. We're just at about the final stages of it now, and it will have to go back to the President. But I've been trying to get it done without bothering him. He has got other, more important things to fret about.

M: When he gave you the job, what did he tell you to do--anything specific other than just take it over?

R: No, I never even saw him about it. The call came through and I was assigned to do it. We helped write the Presidential message of August '67 which set up the enterprise. I worked closely with Cater and DeVier Pierson on it, who were his staff people. But I've run it until now. The question is can I--I said to someone this morning, "I've now got to have a Caesarian birth to get it out of here."

M: How have the relations been in this with the COMSAT Corporation? This, of course is another--abbreviation--

R: Cordial. We worked out a set of proposals which don't fully meet their concerns. On the other hand, they know that our proposals, if implemented, will give them an enormous set of new chores and assignments. Of course, I've also been in charge here of setting up the negotiating positions for the conference--the new INTELSAT Conference next year. So that has just been a--Well, I said to someone, "It's really like a prolonged meeting of the Yale law faculty."

M: I've been to some of those faculty meetings myself. I know what you mean. You think then that the way the Johnson Administration finally agreed to set up the COMSAT Corporation is a way that makes it conducive to working with federal agencies.

R: Well, that was set up during the Kennedy Administration.

M: The end of the Kennedy Administration, right.

R: Yes, we worked with them very closely.

M: And if it comes down to a basic disagreement the government side is adequately weighted in the councils?

R: I think so.

M: What about Europe generally which I think is one of your geographic areas.

R: Well, that and the Middle East. Let me make two or three comments first about the President and foreign policy, because I don't find in any of the things I read--and I don't try to read all the Johnsoniana by any means. But the President in handling foreign policy, there are two or three things about him that are not generally remarked.

In the first place, he takes the longest views of anybody in

Washington on any problem. Dean Rusk, who is very, very careful and very correct, once remarked that you could never get President Kennedy to think beyond what he had to do at nine o'clock tomorrow morning, whereas with Johnson it's always, "Well, where are we going to be ten years from now?" And, "If we move in this direction, would this foreclose my successor from any options?" [At] the first meetings I had with him when we first came onboard here at the end of September, I guess, or the beginning of October of '66, he took all the new boys to Camp David, and the old boys. We spent a weekend there going over a lot of business and getting acquainted. There were long discussions at that time about NPT. I weighed in in all ignorance on this thing, and there was a two-hour discussion about NPT with McNamara and Rusk and me and Walt and Arthur Goldberg. Finally, the President summed it up, he said, "I'm not going to get into the details of drafting, but there are two principles here. One, there can't be any transfer of nuclear weapons. The statutes forbid it. American public opinion forbids it. It's just impossible even to contemplate. The second is, I'm not going to eliminate the possibility of an Atlantic solution--of an Alliance solution. I don't want one now, and we may not want one in the future, but that possibility has to be preserved because it may be necessary to keep the Germans locked in and for many other reasons." He ended the discussion on an articulation of these two basic principles.

The second thing I'd say about him is that he's extremely detached and stoic. Now you may have noticed that there has never been any attempt to stir up patriotic feeling about the Viet Nam war--no parades, no bond drives, nothing. The reason for that is he has always been much

more afraid of the hawk sentiment than the dove sentiment. There's too much power in American national feeling. If he got it aroused, he was afraid that it couldn't be contained with a limited war. You'd be charging in against China or drawing Russia in. So under the most extreme provocation, he has preferred to take the punishment himself than to take that risk.

Now the ultimate form of it emerged this year with the tax bill. One Senator after another was pressing us to wrap the flag around the tax bill. We have to do this for the boys in Viet Nam." "We're fighting a war. We must have more taxes." He would not do it! We had to go and fight that damned tax bill through on the grounds that it would contribute to monetary stability, and preserve the monetary system. It was a fascinating thing. No, he wouldn't do it! You know how difficult it was, to have gotten it through, I felt a great deal of sympathy for the poor Congressmen facing an uncertain future. The election, they all knew, was very shaky because of backlash and Wallace and all of this stuff, to say nothing of other things: Viet Nam; and changing districts--all the redistricting going on around the country. There wasn't a Congressman in creation who felt secure about his own district. Yet they did it; and they did it simply as an act of patriotism. But he wouldn't wrap the flag around it for one second, and he was under very intense pressure to do so from all kinds of Senators and Congressmen.

So that's a second characteristic I'd say that's general in my observation of the President for which he's not given any public recognition at all. He takes this long view, and he does what he thinks is best for the country, and then he absorbs the criticism.

And the third is that he is extraordinarily sensitive and adept at diplomatic conversations.

M: You mean interpersonal with foreign dignitaries?

R: Dignitaries. It's often said, that oh, well, that's not his specialty, and he's more interested in domestic affairs. It's not true. He's thoroughly briefed, in total command of the subject, and his conduct of these conversations is simply uncanny--beautifully phrased. I remember once in the middle of the Middle Eastern crisis just before the fighting broke out, we had Eban here. I got a phone call one day. I remember the day vividly. It was the 23rd of May--from our Ambassador in Tel Aviv.

M: This is 1967?

R: Yes, 1967. And our Ambassador called up--I hadn't even met him, he hadn't been back--and I could tell from the tone of his voice that he was pretty desperate. He said, "I don't think I can hold this much longer without a new idea."

Well, we'd been talking with the British about a new idea, which was a naval escort through the Strait of Tiran. Within half-an-hour, I'd gotten off some flash cables to him, and he was able to hold the Israelis off, and Eban came over to discuss this thing. And it wound up after two days of talks--He saw the President. I was there. The conversation was in the living quarters of the White House; and the President made an absolutely dazzling presentation, very "This is the problem; I'll have to have some Congressional consultation. This is what we want to do, but it will take some time for it."

Then Eban asked him a question: "In other words, Mr. President, you authorize me to tell the Prime Minister that you are determined--"

He got it absolutely right; and the President said, "Yes." Then afterwards, he took Eban to the elevator. He came back, and he said: "I failed. They're going to go." And he knew.

M: This was on May 23rd?

R: Yes. And we said, "Oh, no Iban--We could tell--" the President was very, very jumpy all through the next period. He wanted to get this thing into motion; and we were held up by naval planning. The Defense Department people were planning it as if they were going to open up the second front in Normandy. The British and the Dutch were at me, "Come on, let's go." And they went into the tank and they were working out all kinds of war games. Of course, the plan was superseded by events.

M: That's contrary, as you said, to many of the Johnsoniana portraits.

R: His conversations with foreign representatives are simply superb. There was just one the other day when Birrenbach was over here representing Kiesinger in preparation for the NATO meeting. It was a masterpiece of presentations of what the problems are and how they can be dealt with.

So I'd make those three general comments about the President--his conduct of business. Of course, I was prepared for the fact that he works very hard and knows the business of government, but some of these things are quite extraordinary.

The first thing I did when I came here, I said I wasn't going to work on anything for a month or so to try to get the feel of the place and read up on things, but there was one problem I had to plunge in right away, which was the troops in Durope issue. We had Mansfield's resolution calling for the return of the troops. The Erhardt government had just fallen just as I go in, and there had been a hell of a fight with

the Germans about paying for the troop presence. I plunged in on that. We had, ultimately, a difference in view between us and the Defense Department--we had a lot of meetings here in this room, and I wrote memoranda for submisstion to the President finally. We went through several meetings with him.

Then, of course, he had to handle not only the foreigners but the Senate and the Congressional leaders, briefing them and carrying this thing forward. And the charge that he's not interested in Europe and that he has been absorbed in Asia is just nonsense. On all of our projects he has always been available and devoted an enormous amount of time and attention add effort on his own part to carry them through.

M: He mastered the details even of an issue like the troop withdrawal and the payments, which is a fairly complicated one.

R: Well, of course, he's extremely able. It was no problem for him to master the details. He knows all that. But [to] the conduct of it and the handling of it, he devoted an enormous amount of time and effort; and he was absolutely like iron on withdrawing the troops. He wouldn't touch a troop if he could help it. He knew what was involved in terms of the tensions with the Russians. So that in all of the things I've worked on I've been enormously impressed with his grasp of the foreign policy implications of the problem and his strength and fortitude in dealing with them.

The only time I've seen him mad--everybody writes about his famous anger; I've only seen it once--we were sitting around in the Situation Room of the White House after a long meeting. It must have been in May or June of '67--must have been in May of '67, as a matter of fact. An admiral in the Sixth Fleet had said something in the presence of newspapermen which got into the

papers, saying, "Oh, hell, we can take care of everything. We can bomb--." And at the end of a long meeting in which we disposed of a lot of business he said, "Now, I want to tell you fellows something. This admiral has made this statement. If the Johnson Administration goes down next year--an interesting remark in May '67--I want it to go down on my words and my policies and not on what some Goddamned admiral says."

M: I can imagine that--and kind of prophetic, too, in that sense. In Europe, you mentioned in passing awhile ago, one of the most frequently reported--at least, must be misreported because of the story to the contrary--is in regard to the problem generally designated as the MLF one--the European solution to the nuclear thing. Can you straignten that out?

R: No, you'll have to get that from my brother and others. That was buried before I came here. The MLF is not a subject I'm an expert on. It was buried before I got here.

M: So Mr. Johnson's warning at the Camp David meeting that there might have to be a European solution--

R: An Atlantic solution--alliance solution.

M: Atlantic solution has never--

R: Not yet, but it's still there, and we're very much interested in it. I think in the end it's going to have to come simply because of the economics of the thing--and the risks. In the NPT negotiations, we've been very careful to keep the European option open. That is, if a Europe is formed, then that Europe could become a nuclear power by virtue of the doctrine of succession--that is, by succession to the French and the British nuclear potentialities.

M: So the NPT did not doom forever and all time any MLF-type solution at

some future time?

R: No, or a more fundamental one. But it didn't and it couldn't and it won't. This the President made very, very clear--either a European plan or an Atlantic one.

M: That's the British ANL variant of MLF type. What about Europe and NATO after Czechoslovakia? Has Mr. Johnson ever indicated any basic views regarding the effect of this?

R: Oh, sure. He has been extremely active and participated in the planning of the NATO meeting which we just held, and tried to use the occasion as a way of getting the Europeans to take more responsibility and a more active part so that we could do our full share. As he explained, the political problem here is such that the American people are leery of bearing an excess burden. They're very sensitive to that. But if the Europeans raise the ante, we'll do our part. And we are. He played a decisive role in that strategy, holding us back, and keeping the meeting off for awhile, and building up the pressure on the Europeans, talking it out with them to see the problem. This talk I referred to a few minutes ago with Birrenbach was on this question. Kiesinger sent over his friend Birrenbach to talk to the President about it--to talk to all of us about it.

M: And this is, so far as we can now tell, going to result in maintaining the alliance in what particular stance? In the stance, let's say, that was though for it maybe three to five years ago, or the more recent--?

R: Well, there are three things I'd comment in this regard. In the first place, the significant aspect of that meeting is not so much that we build up our own defenses as that we've issued a warning against action

in Yugoslavia, Austria, areas outside of NATO. In other words, as I put it in a recent speech I made down in Arkansas, for twenty years we've worked on the proposition that we weren't going to interfere in eastern Europe. But the premise of that policy was reciprocity--that they wouldn't interfere in our parts of the world.

You can't run this system on a one-way basis. There has to be reciprocity. That means the Middle East as well as eastern Europe. So NATO, at this last meeting, has taken a very, very significant step in this deterrent strategy, which I proposed around here and pushed very hard; that we issue signals to the Russians saying, "Look here, don't take any risks!" And you remember the President made a public warning in San Antonio about an invasion of Romania, "don't unleash the dogs of war."

M: Did he do that on the advice of the Department--of you specifically?

R: Yes. And he made a speech on September 10, 1968, here in Washington before the B'nai B'rith--a speech that I had a considerable part in writing--in which he said the use of force in eastern Europe would--Oh, I've forgotten how it was phrased. The idea was that it would unleash forces whose outcome nobody could predict or control. So he has used the occasion to try to get them to accept the logic of the Truman Doctrine and of non-interference on our side of the line.

The second thing is, of course, that we've developed through NATO--through what's called the Harmel exercise in NATO on which I worked for a long time--is to generate wholly new political impulses, you see, in the alliance--a decision to take political initiatives.

M: And those are more than rhetorical?

R: Oh, yes, I hope so. Actually my own connection with all of that is quite amusing because at that Camp David meeting he said, "Well, there's this European speech. What does Gene think about it? He's supposed to be working on Europe." Well, I hadn't seen it. So I read it overnight and said I didn't like it. He said, "Well, all right, rewrite it!" So I rewrote it--wrote a new speech really--in which this whole Atlantic political initiatives in the alliance were put in. So I wrote my own instructions there.

Then I went out and worked for a year or more in NATO to get this report approved. The first fruits of that report was the public proposal at the June '68 meeting of NATO at Reykjavik for balanced and mutual force reductions in Europe. The President said in this recent September speech that in such discussions no topic would be barred. Well, that's a very significant sentence because it means the nuclear question. And we've been pressing the Russians. This is indeed the doctrine that any American government would support; and that the way for them to test that is to try it. But, of course, what Czechoslovakia means is they don't dare have balanced and mutual force reductions, which would mean taking themselves out of Eastern Europe and exposing Eastern Europe, as they know very well, to the magnetic pull of the West.

But the President has been intensely interested in all of this. And so we've seen the transformation, at least of the foundations, of the Alliance. You push and pull and lead. I think we could use this doctrine effectively both in Europe and in the Middle East and hopefully in Africa and in the Persian Gulf area, where all kinds of risks exist which we will have to meet. It's much better, of course, if we meet them on a

NATO-wide basis or an Alliance basis than if we try to do it alone.

M: What about the nature of our commitments? How is it possible for us to warn Russia, for example, against the invasion of Yugoslavia which is outside the NATO commitment in any formal way at least? Is this a credible warning as far as Russia is concerned?

R: Well, I think so. I think the warning so far as Yugoslavia is concerned is probably more credible than Romania, although they can never tell. I think here you simply say, "Yes, there's no commitment. On the other hand, there's an obvious strategic interest--a great concern." And the British and the French and the Germans fully agree with us that a Russian take-over of Yugoslavia would be extremely dangerous to Italy, to the Mediterranean, and so on. So that it is credible in terms of national and security interests, as they very well understand.

Then it's much more in the form of a prediction. You say, "Look, this would have consequences nobody could control or predict." Well, that's true. If the Yugoslavs start to fight, what do the Poles do; what do the Czechs do. Does everybody start shooting at Russians, you know. Do you get a situation there which begins to dissolve? It's a nightmare situation! It's very dangerous, but if you convey it publicly and privately you can hope that it will have a deterrent effect. Of course, you talk it out with Congress if it comes closer to the point of trouble.

You can't tell what's going to happen now. We hear rumors that there are going to be Soviet maneuvers in Romania. All right! You have an obvious threat to Yugoslavia. It becomes heightened. Do you begin sending arms to Yugoslavia? Do you begin implacing troops in Italy? You know, all kinds of things can begin to happen to make it a credible

deterrent. It's a very unpleasant set of circumstances, but the President hasn't hesitated.

M: Has he had a general position that you can note in regard to the problem of the eastern European bloc generally? I don't mean building bridges to it. That's a fairly well known position, but the acceptance by the United States--or the lack of acceptance--of the status quo of Europe as it currently exists, i.e. this whole problem of Germany and so on.

R: Well, he has of course taken the view, which was expressed in that speech in October 7, 1966. The one I was referring to--

M: The one that you--

R: Yes, where I wrote my own mandate--that the only way to deal with this problem in the long run was through détente. You couldn't have détente in Europe without reunification of Germany, and you couldn't have reunification of Germany without détente. It's a paradox, but nonetheless its meaning is perfectly clear. You improve political relations. You get a withdrawal of forces. Then you allow reorientations to occur. I think this was much more for the President than a speech. I think he thoroughly understands it and believe in it.

But he sees the Czech events as a setback, and of course it may be. Certainly this generation in Russia--and maybe for a long time to come--simply feel they can't tolerate such a development which would be a threat to their own system. And they've attacked the policy of bridge-building as a device for eroding the Warsaw Pact. We're confronted with a dilemma. What do you do? Well, the only thing to do is to keep on sticking to it as a policy even if you can't make much progress, because the alternative is pretty grim.

M: Some of our allies, though, apparently would be willing to accept a more or less permanent European division as an acceptable alternative. Mr. Johnson has indicated no willingness to consider this as perhaps a new direction?

R: Well, it's de facto. We do. We're not going to liberate East Germany by force. That's another idea that I've put into the mill around here, which is that the Viet Nam war really represents what could happen in Germany. I've always used it with European audiences to good effect. Germany was promised unity through elections. Germany is a country divided against its will. Well, can you imagine using force to unify Germany! Sending in guerrillas and so on! The President is dead against any such idea, of course, and rightly so. So that we do accept, if you will, a division of Europe. The question is to begin to use force to enforce it. We're not about to invite Yugoslavia to join the NATO pact, I suppose.

M: Very doubtful particularly, in light of Tito's recent statement.

R: I've never heard it discussed anyway.

M: Before we go on to the Middle East, are there any other matters regarding European interests that Mr. Johnson has been specific about?

R: Yes. NPT, concern for the European interest in the nuclear problem, on which he has been very, very solicitous and careful in the consultations with Europe to take into account European interests in access to peaceful nuclear technology; and trade and monetary policy.

After all, it's an enormous part of our daily diplomatic business in the last two years--the Kennedy Round, the monetary negotiations, the SDR's, the Stockholm meeting, the gold meeting--all these things he has followed

closely. We've been up to him with final position papers. The financing of the troop presence in Europe. His whole response has been that these tasks--the balance of payments policies of last January first--have to be met through collaboration with Europeans and with the Japanese. I'm surprised to discover he, like a good many other Southern Democrats of the old school, is deeply devoted to freedom of trade.

M: That goes back a long ways.

R: Yes. Some of these fellows like Hale Boggs are very strong on this. The President said just before we were preparing the position on the balance of payments trips--you remember when Katzenbach and I went around on our various travels--he said: "Of all the troubles we can have next year" (this was the end of '67), and that was a comprehensive category, "the one I want least is a trade war and a return to protectionism. That would be terrible." So we went out, and we worked out various solutions--compromise solutions--which protected us against quotas and that sort of thing. And, of course, he announced that he'd veto any quota bill. So he has taken an active and very sustained interest in these questions--the economic questions, both trade and monetary--and seen them, not only in terms of economic policies but as part of a political strategy maintaining the unity of the Western world and preventing the division of the Western world into regional blocs.

M: What about instances where a domestic need, such as the need to improve the balance of payments situation, came right up against some interest here to the Alliance or security need? Who got the decision in that case?

R: The security need every time. We kept the troops in Europe. It's damned near a miracle that with seven hundred and fifty thousand men

engaged in the Pacific, we still have three hundred thousand troops in Europe. He has just been like a rock on that.

M: Was the settlement an effective one that Germany worked out to the offset payment settlement, or was it a political settlement?

R: It worked.

M: Well, it can work either way. Did it work politically, or did it work economically as well?

R: Well, it worked economically. It has worked so far pretty well politically, but it doesn't have much future politically. That is, we broadened the base. The original idea was that the Germans would buy military materiel up to the amounts needed. That blew up, and that's what led to the fall of the Erhardt government. Then we worked out another formula that we would broaden the concept and we'd say, "Well, the Germans would buy what they want." Well, we started by saying, "First, troop disposition should be based on security grounds and not financial grounds." Then we said, "The Germans should buy what they want and need. They should only buy from the United States if it's the best place to buy." And then there's going to be a balance, because you're dealing here with huge amounts--eight-nine hundred million a year. We'll take care of that balance through methods of monetary cooperation, which meant a gold pledge on the part of the Germans and the purchase of bonds--four-and-a-half year bonds. Well, those met our balance of payments needs. But of course there was a continuing obligation of the United States. So we've been working with them to try to get longer term solutions that would involve a transfer of costs to them.

M: This was the solution that Mr. McCloy worked out?

R: McCloy worked out.

M: Why does the President go to a special representative in a case like that rather than utilizing the resources of the State Department?

R: Well, there, it was going to be a long drawn-out negotiation involving several months. McCloy was a man of very great prestige, especially in Germany--a man of great ability. He had been formerly High Commissioner there. But I think in the end the reason was deeper. It was that McCloy--. You see McNamara was trying to get rid of him, trying to fire him. McCloy was very strong, had very powerful views. And his presence here was going to fortify the State Department position against the position of the Defense Department and the prior position of the Treasury. I managed to talk it out with Fowler and got the Treasury into a more-or-less neutral position. So that the choice of McCloy was not simply window dressing, it was part of a policy of strengthening the hands of the people within the government who wanted to stay, and not have any change unless the Russians changed. So it was a very deep and well-conceived thing to try to fortify his own position within the government, because McNamara was pressing very hard for a massive cut. And McCloy had prestige in certain circles in Congress, too, you see.

M: Good domestic politics in this case, as well.

R: Yes. But it was a near thing three or four times.

M: It did drag out, as you say, over quite a considerable length of time.

R: I remember at one point there the attack was fierce and I said, "Now, Mr. President, all I can tell you is that--well, its' one thing as to whether we should have appointed him, but to withdraw him now would cause some shock in the country and in Germany. And secondly, I've been at meetings with him in New York where he's one of your staunchest de-

fenders on Viet Nam." That was kind of dirty pool, but it didn't hurt.

M: No, I'm sure it didn't. What about withdrawal? Would withdrawal really be that catastrophic in terms of the credibility of our stance in Europe? Is there really any belief that flexible response would actually be used militarily and without escalating into a deeper involvement?

R: Well, it's a very tricky set of problems, and there are lots of views on them. They're all tenable and plausible. I myself think, and so far the President has been very much of the view, that the risks are too great to be taken at this stage--Russian pressure in Europe and the Middle East. The Middle Eastern crisis is a European crisis. It's a way up to Europe from the South.

What would the effect be on the Germans? What would the effect be on the Europeans? "Yes, we have the protection of NATO; yes, we have the American nuclear umbrella, but do we really?" It comes back to the problem which de Gaulle articulates, and in which there's a great deal of truth "Is the United States going to risk New York and Washington for us?" Of course, we have. There have been the Berlin crises and so on. "Yes, but then of course--and this is the political reality--who's going to be President when the crunch comes? Is he going to be as tough as Truman or Johnson, or isn't he?"

Now, if you have American troops there--and this is the psychological part of it in the European mind--then the Russians know that whatever happens, we're going to be engaged in the beginning; and we know that it's a crisis that we can try to manage some way.

The other argument is that de Gaulle makes is that Europe is not going to take its full responsibility, not going to become a nuclear power

on its own, until we get out--until they have to. Well, that means you face a period of ten or fifteen years in which they may or may not move effectively. What will the Russians do in this period? Are they really going to allow the Europeans to become an independent nuclear power? It puts all kinds of political and psychological pressure on them.

And there's a number of forces within Europe. After all, what is our interest in Europe? It's not sentimental. We have two fundamental national interests in Europe. One is to keep this enormous aggregation of capital and skill and power out of Russian hands or Russian control. And the second is hopefully to build up Europe to join with us in all kinds of activities around the world--at least in the Mediterranean and Africa and the Persian Gulf. Now if we pull back, we take a prodigious risk on both these things, because Europe may simply pursue a neutralist line--make a deal with the Russians. It's much cheaper, an accommodation, and become neutral. They have powerful neutral feelings. It liberates them from the burden of arms expenditure. They can be like Finland.

M: Yes, but the size of our troop commitment there. The Harmel Exercise you mentioned, for example, formalized I guess what McNamara called a flexible response capability.

R: No. The Harmel Exercise was much more on the political side of NATO. It was a totally new set of commitments to take political initiatives and to consult about political policy.

M: It didn't have an article on strategy considerations?

R: Well, just simply there was a statement in it that unless and until the Russians come down, we shouldn't come down.

M: The point I was moving toward--I'm obviously in error there--is the real deterrent that we have the nuclear capability and not the absolute number of troops that happen to be involved?

R: Yes. But the trouble with the damned thing is that the nuclear deterrent doesn't deter. It loses all of its credibility if we're not there. That's the paradox of it.

I heard the Secretary one day. We were over at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the end of the McCloy negotiations. He gave them an absolutely brilliant twenty-minute exposition of the nature of the nuclear problem. He said, "What this is all about is nuclear deterrence. Nobody's going to believe--you might try to pick up the transcript of that sometime--"

M: Have they published it?

R: No, but I suppose they just have it.

"If we pull back, nobody's going to believe that we will use nuclear weapons, and we probably won't. Whereas if we're there in the first place, our presence itself is a deterrent because any movement is going to engage American troops. In the second place, we have to protect the nuclear weapons that are there. We can't leave the nuclear weapons there without American troops to protect them. And in the third place, you have to give the President more options than that if there's another uproar in East Germany or Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia or what have you." and, "Do you want to have no choice for the President but the nuclear response?"

It's an awful paradox, because here Europe has recovered and is rich and fully capable of doing lots of things it wasn't in 1949. But

European dependence on the American nuclear weapons is now greater than it was twenty years ago.

M: Why is that so?

R: Because we and the Russians have so far outstripped anything that Europe could imagine it could do. Well, I have a young assistant here who has been arguing with me violently for months, and just the other night again, that that isn't so; that the French force de frappe and presumably the British--they could take out ten or twelve cities, and that's enough.

But then you come down to an even tougher set of problems. Do we want to put ourselves in a position of delegating to the Europeans the option of starting a war that we would have to finish!

M: So even if their nuclear deterrent was militarily effective, it might not be a good idea for us to rely on it in this case.

R: That's right. After all, we had the Suez experience when Britain and France rushed into a military adventure that we didn't approve of. We may have been right or wrong about that, but nonetheless there it was, and a terrific chasm between us and Europe.

M: That's a good point to move to the Middle East. The Middle East probably gives the best example of how President Johnson operates in a crisis that's tightly confined in time--at least during the Seven Days War.

R: But that's all wrong. This crisis has gone on--.

M: You mean afterwards?

R: Before and afterwards. The crisis is just as hot now as it was then. The Six Day War was just an explosion--a lightning flash here. The

tension and the risk and so on is a continuous thing, and it can explode at any time. The President is intensely interested in it. He feels in many ways it's a more dangerous crisis than Viet Nam, because it can involve a confrontation with the Russians, not the Chinese. And he has managed it deliberately without drama. In many ways it's like the Cuban missile crisis, only it goes on all the time. Now, he doesn't dramatize it because he keeps working to get the Russians to pull back and reach an agreement or an accommodation that will take the temperature down.

But it's a very interesting problem in foreign policy making in a democracy. How much do you tell? How much do you tell of the risk? Well, it's all told. It's told in low key--his own speeches, our speeches. All the public statements we've made about it are perfectly accurate. There's no question of concealing anything from the American people. On the other hand you don't dramatize it. It isn't like the Cuban missile crisis where the whole world was conscious of being at the edge of nuclear war. Here again, I think it's part of the President's strategic thinking and his attempt to always keep the long view--that if we get by and keep it quite and push and press, that sooner or later maybe the Russians will agree to take down the temperature.

M: How closely did he personally get involved in a situation, say, like latter May of '67 and then through the seven days and thereafter?

R: Oh, immensely! We were over there all the time with him. He reads a lot of the cables now. There are relatively frequent meetings to review it. He follows it very, very closely. On some of the key diplomatic moves and so on, we send them over for him to read. He'll often change

the text and rewrite it. No, he follows it very closely. He has seen a great many of the visitors, of course, and discussed these problems with them. He watches the arms balance and the Soviet presence. We do all kinds of things on general instructions in the U.N. and elsewhere, but he's on top of it all the time; and Walt's on it, you see.

M: I heard a history professor at Georgetown named Sherabi (?) on television not long ago who maintained a position that Johnson's Administration had been considerably and consciously pro-Israeli to the extent that the Arab bloc had been driven largely to a pro-Soviet stance. How does the Department feel about that?

R: Well, it just isn't so. We take a pro-U.S. position really. We agree with the Israelis about certain things, and we agree with the Arabs about certain things. But again, it's something--. The consequence of the event and of Nasser's refusal to make peace has greatly increased the strength of the radical forces throughout the Middle East, and has weakened lots of Arab governments with whom we're very friendly. We go to great lengths to keep in touch with them, keep them informed, have them know what we're doing behind the scenes to move this process toward peace. Our only hope is that in the end we'll get peace under our resolution and under our auspices, which ought to restore our position in the Middle East.

But there's no doubt the Russians have moved into Egypt and moved into Syria and Iraq and some other places--Algeria--with great strength. It's a matter of immense concern. But so far Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iran, of course, are all very firm. But it's very risky and difficult position. What we've done--our basic

policy and the policy from which all the rest stems--is that we insist that there be peace now, not a restoration of the armistice. That's a position with which Israel agrees. But we say that this has to be because the continuation of that war has become a burden to world peace because of the Soviet involvement.

M: But we did tolerate a change of the status quo not comprehended by the Tri-Partite Declaration of 1950, which favored Israel. When we talk about peace, does that leave us in the position of maybe not treating our friends like we'd treat our enemies under different circumstances?

R: No. Because the Tri-Partite Declaration--. In the first place, the war itself came about because Nasser broke an agreement with us about the Strait of Tiran. Dulles negotiated the withdrawal of the Israeli troops in '57. There was a clear understanding that the Strait of Tiran would not be closed to Israel shipping. It was clear that if Nasser used force to close the Strait that Israel would be justified under Article 51 in striking back.

M: Article 51 of the U.N. Charter?

R: Yes. Now, we say we support the territorial integrity and political independence of all the States of the region. That's the Tri-Partite Declaration of 1950, and it's a policy we've reiterated many times since, and we've invoked in behalf of Egypt and in behalf of Lebanon and in behalf of Libya and in behalf of Saudi Arabia, and so on.

Now the armistice agreements contemplate change in the boundary lines, by agreement of the parties when they move from armistice to peace. We favor keeping those changes minimal, and the President has spoken publicly about this--that in the transition from armistice to peace there can be agreed changes in

the boundary lines so that our position is perfectly consistent with the territorial integrity declaration. We would expect Israel to withdraw to new boundary lines which would form permanent ones, but would not be necessarily the same as the armistice lines.

Now, the only real change that's imminent in the situation is change with regard to Jordan. Now, we've never recognized the legality of the Jordanian presence in the west bank or in Jerusalem.

M: Even in 1950 you mean?

R: That's right. In 1955. When our Ambassador in Ammon went to the west bank, he took down his flag. When he went to Jerusalem, he didn't fly the flag. And whatever else happened in June '67--who fired the first shot as between Israel and Egypt--there's no doubt that Jordan went into the war on its own volition. I conveyed messages on the Monday the fighting broke out from the Israelis to the Jordanians, saying, "Don't get into this, and we won't touch you." So that the whole west bank problem and the Jerusalem problem didn't have to exist. It was Hussein's decision, not Israel's.

Now, we've come out finally and said we don't want Jerusalem to be reconstituted with walls and barbed wire. We've said that Jerusalem should not be annexed to Israel, either. The Arab propaganda is pretty effective, but that's what it is. It's propaganda. And I don't know--it's a pathetic problem trying to get the Arabs to do anything and take responsibility and move, especially Nasser--he's just been blocking this thing.

M: Is that one of the problems?

R: That's the only problem.

M: Is there an individual Arab who can do this? Does Nasser have enough

power to do it?

R: Well, he has got all the prestige in creation. He's the only fellow probably who could. Hussein may be able to do it. But Nasser hasn't been willing to take a single step. He has been our problem from day one.

M: What about the imminent sale now apparently of the Phantom jets to Isreal? Has the President been involved directly personally in that?

R: Directly and personally. It's a question of judging two things: One, the tension of arms supply--Soviet arms supply to Egypt; when does it become dangerous? And the other is the negotiating process with Jarring. And at what point is it well to remind the Arabs that there is no alternative but peace! They mustn't entertain any illusions about that. The phrase he used in a recent speech, "We're not going to allow the arms supply to become an incentive for war!" The Egyptians are just loaded to the gunwhales with airplanes and artillery and everything else. It's a miserable situation.

M: How much influence does domestic politics play in a decision like this to sell the airplanes?

R: Well, minimal I'd say with the President. He's watching the Russians. He's playing chess with the Russians, and trying to nudge Nasser--to keep Nasser from getting delusions of grandeur. I would say it's a minimal thing. The Arabs say of course it's of great concern, but it isn't. After all, Eisenhower carried out his policy. He could have been elected until he was a hundred, I suppose.

M: It struck me at the time of the June war how many Viet Nam doves turned out to be Middle Eastern hawks. Someone I'm sure has commented on that

in the Administration. How do you explain that paradox, or seeming paradox?

R: Well, because for most people foreign policy is a sentimental thing. They like Country A, and they dislike Country B. They don't see it in terms of interest and the balance of power and so on. Lots of them were very enthusiastic about Israel.

The President always says the basis problem--and he articulated this in his remarks one in Honolulu--there's a race feeling about Viet Nam. He said that Fulbright sat there and said to him, "They're just not our kind of people." Well, he's very much aware that eighty-percent of the people in the world are colored; and that we simply can't imagine living in safety if we and the Europeans huddle together under a cloud of nuclear weapons, and let the rest of the world go to hell. There isn't going to be any safety in such a picture. So he knows the world is round, and he's very, very conscious of it. And this is another form of isolationism. Of course, there was enthusiasm about Israel. "We're for Israel, brave little Israel, and who cares about Viet Nam. They're very corrupt!" But those men are not seeing the problem in terms of national interest.

Now in terms of interest, we have enormous stakes in the Middle East. And even King Faisal--. After all the object of the Russians is to topple all the moderate regimes through the use of this Nasserite mob pressure which you can mobilize by arousing them against Israel. I have been as much worried about Libya as about Israel in this whole period. Libya is just rich as can be, unbelievable oil there.

M: And moderate or at least reasonably so.

R: Yes. And a very weak society and a very small population right next door

to Egypt. And they've simply been kept off by the fact that we and the British have bases there.

M: What's going to happen to that base though?

R: It's going to stay. The Libyans don't want it to go. They're negotiating a way. They'll negotiate for the next fifteen years.

M: Meanwhile, the base stays.

R: Yes. And we'll Libyanize it. We'll have the Libyan Air Force trained there, and so will the British. But that's a very dangerous situation.

M: Have there been Nasser pressures in that direction as well as the other directions?

R: Yes.

M: But Bourguiba has been able to--I mean, King Idris.

R: Well, it has been done by the threat of our presence, and latterly by bribery. The Arabs are just paying Nasser blackmail there, you see. With the Suez Canal closed, Libya, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia kick in money.

M: And that's adequate so far?

R: So far.

M: What about the field of disarmament? Has that been one of your special problems?

R: No, I worked on NPT in relation to Europe, but I haven't worked on the missile talks.

M: So your connection with the President in this regard has not been on a direct basis, as in other matters?

R: No.

M: What about the problem of reaching the negotiating stage for Viet Nam?

R: Well, I've been in and out of that. I was involved in four or five of

those diplomatic adventures early in the game. I haven't been in on this last cycle since March 31st. There, of course, the President watched it and pursued every opportunity. But they were fakes of course.

M: The so-called peace feelers that the critics make much of are, in your opinion, not serious?

R: Well, we treated them seriously. We pursued them vigorously. We were later told by the Russians that they were fakes--all fakes.

M: All of them?

R: All of them.

M: You mean they made a general inclusion of all of them?

R: Yes.

M: An interesting disclosure, particularly in the light of some of the details that people like Kraslow (?), Loury (?), and Ashwell Baggs can go into. But Marigold and all of the rest of them are--

R: I worked on Marigold.

M: And it was not a serious initiative?

R: That's what the Russians tell us.

M: Do you have an appointment that you have to go to? What do you think about a return engagement here? I'll turn the machine off.

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