

Oral Memoir
with
DONALD C. BLAISDELL

Divisional assistant, assistant division chief, associate division chief, U.S. Department of State, 1941-47; special assistant, Bureau of U.N. Affairs, 1947-51; U.S. representative for International Organization Affairs, Geneva, Switzerland, 1951-53.

October 29, 1973 and June 27, 1975
Laurel, Maryland
by Richard D. McKinzie, Harry S. Truman Library

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MCKINZIE: Professor Blaisdell, how did you happen to come into Government service? It's particularly interesting because you began your career in the academic world.

BLAISDELL: Well, I came into Government service in 1936 as an assistant to M. L. Wilson, who was at that time Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. So, my first four years in Government service were in the Department

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of Agriculture, and then I had a short period between '40 and '41 when I was employed by the Temporary National Economic Committee, which was a new-type joint committee of the two houses of Congress and the executive branch of the Government -- various Government departments -- as an economic analyst. And then from '41 to '51 I was in the State Department. From '51 to '53 I was in the Foreign Service as a Foreign Service reserve officer, and then in '53 I was separated from my position, which at that time was deputy chief of the State Department's permanent delegation at the International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland.

Well, that's a very brief summary of my career. It runs from 1936 to 1953, about 17 years, you see, of Government service.

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MCKINZIE: Could I ask you what prompted you to enter Government service in 1936, after you already had very distinguished teaching positions?

BLAISDELL: I will be glad to. I mentioned that I went to Washington as Mr. Wilson's assistant in the Department of Agriculture. I had met Mr. Wilson in Washington a year or so before when I was visiting. While I was in Washington I lived in the same house with Mr. Wilson and Rex [Rexford] Tugwell and one or two other New Dealers of those days, most of whom were in the Department of Agriculture. Frederick C. Howe was another one who lived in that house at that time. This was a group of New Dealers who had been called into Washington fairly early, and instead of

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having separate digs they pooled their resources and rented a house in Georgetown and lived there. They had a cook, and everybody was taken care of that way. I was lucky enough to be invited to live with them when I was in Washington in the summer of 1935 maybe for a month. I lived there with that group and I became well-acquainted with Mr. Wilson at the time.

At that time Mr. Wilson had not become Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. He was then head of what was called the Subsistence Homesteads Division in the Department of the Interior under Harold Ickes, who was Secretary of the Interior at the time.

I'll have to get into Mr. Wilson's philosophy I think to explain this connection between him and the Subsistence Homestead project. Mr. Wilson was an agricultural

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economist from the University of Montana in Bozeman who had done substantial work in the field of the economics of large-scale wheat farming. He went out there as a county agent in the dry farming area and his first assignment as a county agent was in one of those counties in southern Montana which later was divided up into four counties. So you can get some idea of the scale on which he was operating. As a matter of fact, he had made a trip to the Soviet Union

earlier to advise them on their large-scale wheat program there. They were developing winter wheat at that time for use in their northern areas. Mr. Wilson was familiar with winter wheat in Montana, and up into Canada, of course, it was the same situation.

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But, he came to FDR's attention in the summer of '32 at the time of the campaign by proposing to FDR what was later called the Domestic Allotment Program, a program for stabilizing farm income by guaranteeing prices on certain farm exports, e.g. wheat, of that part of the total crop consumed domestically. I think this has been documented. I know of at least one master's thesis or doctor's thesis has been done on this, on the contribution of M. L. Wilson to the domestic feature of the original AAA.

So, he became acquainted with Raymond Moley, who was one of the original braintrusts, and with Rexford Tugwell at the same time. As it happened, I had known both Moley and Tugwell at Columbia because

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I had taught at Columbia. I got my degree there in 1929, and I taught from 1928 to 1930 in Columbia College. Raymond Moley at that time was a professor of government at Barnard College, and Rex Tugwell was a professor of economics in Columbia. Rex Tugwell had an office on the floor in Hamilton Hall immediately below mine, and I used to call on him and he used to ask me to come in from time to time. He was in the economics department and I was in the government department, and even in those days inter-penetration of government and economics was very much involved in the teaching that was going on at Columbia. The two departments of government and economics along with the two departments of philosophy and history were involved in what we called

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the contemporary civilization program, that was a general survey course including all four disciplines and not involved in any one. All of us had to participate in the teaching of it. I had to teach philosophy and history and economics as well as government and the people in the other departments had to teach government as well, and this is the way we tried to work it.

Well, Rex Tugwell and his group was involved in this contemporary civilization program.

MCKINZIE: It's now fashionable to call it an interdisciplinary approach.

BLAISDELL: Yes, that's right. That was the way it was called. Anyhow, I knew them, I can't

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say I knew them well, but I went to Washington in 1935 and lived in the same house with Rex Tugwell and one or two others, including my brother Tom.

When I went to Washington in 1936 I already had known Rex Tugwell, and M. L. Wilson was very much promoted with FDR by Rex Tugwell. Rex Tugwell at that time was Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. He later became Under Secretary of Agriculture when M. L. Wilson was simultaneously Assistant Secretary and when I was with Mr. Wilson.

This is a long way around to get to the connection between working at a job in industry and having a subsistence homestead at someplace where you could raise a few vegetables and have a cow and have an acre of

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land, with a horse maybe, in order to combine your wages as an industrial employee with a subsistence from your own crop. Mr. Wilson, as I came to know later, went back to the old Mormon idea which was so important in the Mormon settlements Of the inter-mountain area in the West where the Mormon towns always had enough land on each of the lots so the settler could have a cow or could raise a garden and could get his subsistence that way rather than being completely dependent on any other job that he might have had.

I didn't think Mr. Wilson ever put it in exactly those direct terms, but I can see this was the philosophical background out of which the idea of the subsistence homesteads came. And this was authorized in, I forget what legislation it was, but

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I think it was one of the original Public Works authorizations and appropriations and it was put in the Department of the Interior, and Mr. Wilson came to Washington to head that up, I may be incorrect in that, but in any event he was head of the program.

MCKINZIE: Did you, as a man who just had met M. L. Wilson, subscribe to this idea of independence insofar as the industrial worker was concerned, the idea of raising part of his own food?

BLAISDELL: Yes, I think that I could say that this did appeal to me as something to try out. I had no idea, nobody had any idea, whether it was a viable way of dealing with unemployment or of providing for additional real income to the industrial worker in

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normal times, so-called. But anyhow it did appeal to me, and this I think was one of the things that made me receptive to his idea that I come to Washington as his assistant, you see. This was in 1936. I had taught at Williams College from 1930 to 1934 and I went to the University of Wisconsin in 1935 as a visiting professor there. And then I got a grant of money from what was then called the Elmhurst Fund to start this job which later eventuated in the TNEC monograph, *Economic Power and Political Pressures*, Monograph 26 of the TNEC series. I started my research there at the University of Wisconsin in 1935 and '36. And then in the summer of '36 I

went to Washington as M. L. Wilson's assistant, and I was there for four years, almost exactly, from '36 to 1940.

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MCKINZIE: Had you anticipated being there that long when you went, because it did amount in a sense to a rather large career decision, didn't it?

BLAISDELL: That's right. Well, I was so pleased to be involved in the New Deal in any way, and particularly in the office of the Secretary of Agriculture where M. L. Wilson was Assistant Secretary that I jumped at the chance, because this seemed to me as a professor of political science an unusual opportunity to get into the actual operations of government, particularly in an area and at a time when innovations were being tried in many, many fields -- this subsistence homestead idea, the whole idea of the AAA and all the other New Deal features.

Mr. Wilson was a very attractive and

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pleasing personality and he was a very unassuming man, but a very widely read man, and an authority on Abraham Lincoln. His middle name, incidentally, was Milburn Lincoln Wilson. He had been named Lincoln by his parents, apparently, because of their great admiration and then this prompted Mr. Wilson to become an authority on Lincoln, and this is one of the things that I absorbed from M. L. Wilson when I was working with him all the time. A very pleasing personality, as I say, but to some people too deliberate. You could never tell what was going on in Mr. Wilson's mind because he rarely just ad libbed. He rarely volunteered anything unless in answer to a question or when he was exchanging ideas with somebody whom he knew was

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sympathetic with those ideas. He just didn't spark things off spontaneously.

Well, as Assistant to Mr. Wilson, I did a great variety of things. He was a great believer in this idea of what he called economic democracy, recognizing and putting in the hand of the individual some control over his own destiny so far as his employment was concerned. I think this is another thing that was involved in the subsistence homestead idea. Here was a kind of activity, economic activity, where the man was his own boss, so to speak, and he made all these decisions. They weren't dependent on somebody else for a decision. Anyhow, this idea of economic democracy was not original with M. L. Wilson either in industry or in agriculture.

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MCKINZIE: It has pretty much gone by the boards, as it turns out.

BLAISDELL: Yes, more the pity. But in those days this was a very active thing and he tried to promote this from his position as Assistant Secretary and then Under Secretary of Agriculture.

When Rex Tugwell left the under-secretaryship to become governor of Puerto Rico, Mr. Wilson was moved in to the under-secretaryship and I just went along with him for that period. He did this in a great variety of ways. He promoted the writing and circulation among the extension people of a series of pamphlets on public issues as a means of educating people to a better understanding of the conditions in which they were working and doing their job, you see. He promoted a series of lectures in the Department of Agriculture

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graduate school, which was a program of adult education which was well established even at that time, but which Mr. Wilson added greatly to. And he got experts in public administration and history and various other fields to come to Washington to lecture to the graduate school there. He promoted conferences with anybody who would listen to him, particularly bureau chiefs who had to listen to him (if they were under his supervision). He would bring in these ideas that he had about economic democracy. I was involved in that very much with him. I won't say he relied on me, but I did a whole lot of the donkey work for preparation of these things and some of the early writing and things of that kind -- I helped him out on that.

We went on many field trips together.

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He was responsible for a number of the bureaus in the department, particularly the Forest Service, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, and Animal Industry. There were many of these bureaus that he was responsible for as Assistant Secretary and then Under Secretary. I could remember the tension that used to prevail in the Department when Secretary Wallace was away and Mr. Wilson as the responsible officer in Washington signed the crop report. The crop report was an estimate by the Department of the production of grains and cereals for the forthcoming year, and this was very important for all farmers and all dealers. This was fast-breaking news and it was timed right down to the last second, so that at 4 o'clock on a Friday afternoon when Mr. Wilson signed

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the crop report all the newspaper reporters would get the copy and then dash to their telephones, you see, to get it into the wire services. Well, this was just one of the little dramatic things.

Another one was that when Henry Wallace would hold a press conference as Secretary of Agriculture, he invited M. L. Wilson and me and others to come in as observers, not to take part, but as observers. This too was also a very interesting procedure.

MCKINZIE: Did you have any sense of the relationship between M. L. Wilson and Secretary Wallace?

BLAISDELL: Oh, yes, very definitely. They were really very sympathetic people. Henry Wallace had a great admiration for M. L. Wilson and

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this was reciprocated. Henry Wallace, I think, made his reputation as a plant breeder or geneticist, as much as anything, if not more than anything else. Mr. Wilson was not a plant breeder or a geneticist at all, but he had great respect for Mr. Wallace's scientific proclivities. And Mr. Wallace, on the other hand, had great respect for Mr. Wilson's economic ideas as they worked out in the domestic allotment plan and the AAA and things of that kind.

MCKINZIE: How does one go from those very basic and domestic concerns to involvement with the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies? What is the transition, how did that come about?

BLAISDELL: Yes, well, let's see, back in 1935 I guess it was, I had written a pamphlet

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called "The Farmer's Stake in World Peace." This was for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which at that time was headed by James T. Shotwell, a professor of history at Columbia University. I had done this largely because a man with whom I have been associated ever since, Clark M. Eichelberger, was trying to promote the same kind of adult education among the farmers and the rural people and in the Midwest generally, that Mr. Wilson was trying to promote among the constituency of the Department of Agriculture.

So, when I came into the Department of Agriculture I had just written this pamphlet. As a matter of fact, it had gone into its second printing the first year I was in the Department of Agriculture. So, one of my parallel activities in those

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years from 1936 on -- and this carries on right to the present time as a matter of fact -- was my association with Clark Eichelberger and the various organizational activities that he was involved in one way or another to get the United States to accept what he thought was its fair share of maintaining the peace. This he saw through some kind of a world-wide organization, comparable to the League of Nations from the First World War and, of course, anticipating the United Nations after World War II. One of the organizational efforts that he made was in 1939, just at the time of the outbreak of war, setting up the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. It was known at that time as the William Allen White Committee. He was an Emporia, Kansas editor and a well-known Republican figure, and Mr. Eichelberger and

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one or two others who were involved in this were able to persuade Mr. White to become the titular head of it; that's what it was because he never was a very active person organizationally, or anything of that kind. He lent his name to it and his prestige; and I was involved in that in Washington.

The short space of time after I left the Department of Agriculture in 1940 in June, until I went with the Department of State in late December 1941, all of that time I spent in my activities for the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. A Washington office was established. Livingston Hartler and I ran it. We tried to get out a weekly bulletin for the various chapters. The big job we did was in the Lend-Lease Act in 1941, being a sort of information office for the various local chapters over the country

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on the progress of the lend-lease act and various other things, the relationship between the United States and Britain particularly, but the other allies as well.

MCKINZIE: You must have had a good feel for the temper of the American people by the time of Pearl Harbor?

BLAISDELL: That's right. By that time, December 1941, I was in the Department of State, although not in the division I spent most of my time with. I first went into the Department of State in June of '41 as an assistant to Lynn Edminster, who at that time was one of the assistants of Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, and who had been with the Tariff Commission as an economist before that.

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The Lend-Lease Act had been passed in March of '41. In setting up an office to administer it, the Department of State was drawn in by the White House and the person designated by the White House to play some kind of a role in the determination of the needs of foreign countries for American supplies and ammunitions was Oscar Cox, a lawyer in the Treasury Department. The munitions end of this, of course, was handled almost entirely by the War Department. But on civilian supplies and raw materials, the State Department was involved. Mr. Edminster's office was designated by the Secretary of State to be the focal point in those early days for working out the proper procedures and the proper angles of the assistance that the United States could lend to the other countries, particularly Britain at that time.

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This involved me, because Mr. Edminster brought me in to be his liaison with Oscar Cox on all of the interdepartmental committees that were centralized under Oscar Cox. This is one of the cases where they used an innocuous name to veil a very important significant, strategic operation. They called it the Office of Lend-lease Reports; this was like the Manhattan Project a little later on. The idea was to use a completely innocuous title to cover up something of much greater significance. Oscar Cox headed up the Office of Lend-lease Reports. His office was the contact between all the purchasing agents of the British Government and the other governments in this country for supplies under the lend-lease program.

MCKINZIE: Did you apply, or were you contacted

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to come in as a result of your work with the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies?

BLAISDELL: I don't think that figured very largely, I just don't know, although I had known Lynn Edminster earlier, when I was in the Department of Agriculture. He and I and others sat on interdepartmental programs that had been set up under the reciprocal trade agreements program in 1933. One of the procedures was the setting up of these various interdepartmental committees to hold hearings on the effect of tariff reductions on domestic industry and domestic activities. Edminster and I had sat together on a number of those committees so he knew of me that way. He probably knew, at the same time, that I had been identified with the Committee to Defend America.

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I didn't get into the news very often, once or twice I did. I remember a meeting had been scheduled at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington at which somebody was to debate with Norman Thomas on whether, and if so how much more, aid we ought to give to Britain at this stage in the war. This was in 1940 or early '41 -- before the Lend-Lease Act was passed. Anyhow, at the last moment the man whom they had gotten to debate Norman Thomas couldn't come so they ran me in to debate Norman Thomas on this subject and, well, I felt that high, because Norman Thomas is a formidable debater. He was a very fine public speaker, of course, and a very fine looking man on the platform, a tremendous platform manner. Here I was trying to uphold the idea that we ought to give more aid to Britain and he was saying in America's interest we ought not to give any more aid to Britain, you see.

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I did get into the newspapers because of that debate, but I came off very poorly, a very poor second.

Well, through this, Edminster and others in the State Department may have known of my former work. I'm sure they did, because Clark Eichelberger was known in the State Department. He was known by the Secretary of State. He was known by various of the assistants that Cordell Hull had in his immediate office.

MCKINZIE: Are you speaking of Leo Pasvolsky?

BLAISDELL: Leo Pasvolsky, particularly, yes. So, in answer to your question, I would guess that Edminster and the others probably did know that I was involved in the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies and that was one of the reasons that they were

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willing to have me come in, if not anxious to have me come into the Department.

In any event, I found myself in a rather interesting position as Edminster's deputy and liaison with Oscar Cox and his Office of Lend-Lease Reports. As I said earlier, that was the focal point with the people whom the British were sending over here, not on the military end but on the civilian end for all the supplies and equipment that the British needed in their war effort, you see.

So, I found myself involved in a mushrooming bureaucratic operation where we were devising forms and applications and estimating needs and things of this kind in order to pass on these requests that were being submitted.

This got to be such a job, as a matter

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of fact, that the Secretary set up a division in the State Department to handle it, the Division of Defense Materials. Tom [Thomas K.] Finletter from New York, who later became Secretary of the Air Force under Harry Truman, was the head of this Division of Defense Materials. I was transferred from Edminster's office to the Division of Defense Materials as an assistant bureau chief at that time.

Acheson, who was Assistant Secretary at that time, brought Finletter down from New York, he brought Charles Bunn from the University of Wisconsin down on this operation. This was the beginning of this recruitment of a lot of people from academia and from the law offices and civilian activities into the State Department and then other branches of the Government for this civilian effort. Early on,

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before we got into the war at the time of Pearl Harbor, I was in the Division of Defense Materials, but not very long, Pasvolsky was then recruiting his Division of Political Studies and his Division of Economic Studies, and there was a third division that was being set up there that was going to deal with all of these colonial areas, or dependent areas I think the euphemism was. Anyhow, my work had been noticed by one of Pasvolsky's assistants, Harley Notter, who was scheduled to be the chief of this Division of Political Studies. Harley Notter was from Stanford University, or had done his work out at Stanford University, earned his degree there. When Pasvolsky brought him into the Department I just don't know, but it wasn't very long before this time I'm speaking of. Anyhow, he asked me to come

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in, to be transferred from Defense Materials to the Division of Political Studies and I was transferred in January of '42, I think. I was still in Edminster's office at the time of Pearl Harbor. I can remember his coming in the day after Pearl Harbor and he had been talking with some of the people in the Secretary's office about the extent of destruction at the attack, and his saying that it was so much worse than had been let out publicly at the time. But of course, immediately after they just didn't know how extensive the destruction was, all these ships that had been sunk

at their moorings there at Pearl Harbor. Anyhow, I remember that very distinctly the morning afterwards. It was a Monday morning, the 7th of December of '41 was a Sunday, and the 8th the next day was a Monday morning and when we came

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in to work -- I remember this very, very vividly.

Well, it was January, I think, of '42 that I was transferred over to the Division of Political Studies. I don't know what they called me, I was an economic analyst with TNEC. The Civil Service descriptions I had to become familiar with because later on I became Assistant Chief and Acting Chief of this Division of Political Studies, you see. But at this time I wasn't.

MCKINZIE: But at this time this new work you were involved in was not aired very much publicly, was it?

BLAISDELL: No, it wasn't. I don't know when it became publicly known. You're familiar, of course, with Harley Notter's work on

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postwar planning. Anyhow he's got all of these dates and details in that. I just can't say when it became generally known. I can remember this, Harley Notter was a very soft-spoken person. It wasn't until 1945 that I began to have my hearing difficulty, but even before then I had difficulty hearing Harley Notter and Leo Pasvolsky when I was sitting with them in a meeting. I don't know how wide-spread this was among the bureaucracy in Washington, but anything that had to do with the war was spoken of in subdued terms, very low, you didn't raise your voice, you didn't speak clearly, you sort of mumbled in your beard, with the result that anybody like me who was beginning to have a hearing problem, found it to be a very great handicap. Later on my hearing

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became very much worse, but that's another story.

Harley Notter asked me if I wouldn't come over to the Division of Political Studies and I was delighted with this prospect because this got me into the area that I had done my doctor's degree work in, public law and government, and because of my work with the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. My general orientation was in international organization and international relations at that time, along with American Government.

So, I was delighted to accept this offer to go into the Division of Political Studies. I didn't know what they wanted me to do and I don't think they did because they were feeling their way along. This

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thing had just been approved by Cordell Hull and FDR, because Hull and Pasvolsky had been in a huddle with FDR on the setting up of this postwar planning operation. At Hull's suggestion, I think, FDR agreed to putting Pasvolsky in charge of the whole thing. He was a special assistant to Hull at the time and had Hull's confidence and this gave him a position in the Department and among the other departments that meant that he could exercise some influence in the way this planning was developing from the beginning.

MCKINZIE: May I ask you how you felt at that time about the prospects for the future, because if you look at the people who came in it was quite an amazing group. Clark Eichelberger was there, Clarence Streit was brought in as a consultant from

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time to time. Eleanor Dulles was involved in some of the economic things and you can go down the list of a really spectacular group of minds.

BLAISDELL: That's right.

MCKINZIE: At that time did you really think that there was a possibility, after the war, assuming that the right side won, that there could be some different kind of international setup, one which might modify some ideas about sovereignty or involved more integration of economics? How optimistic could one get in 1942 about what was going to happen when the fighting was over? Did you allow yourself that kind of optimism?

BLAISDELL: Well, these were very glum, grim days in early '42 obviously, and that's when we

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started this operation. I think that I can say that so far as I was concerned, I felt that there was an even chance that we could set up an international organization, not obviously identical to the League of Nations, but some kind of a league rather than a world government to deal with this question of international security which would make it possible for the peaceful settlement of disputes, rather than resort to a war to settle disputes.

I can't say that I had really studied this very closely. I never studied diplomatic history particularly, as a field of history. I was more interested in comparative government than I was in history or diplomatic history as a field of specialization. This was one of my major emphases at Columbia when I did my work there. My graduate work was

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comparative European governments, you see, along with international organization and international relations. I had my major in international law and relations and my minor was in European governments, so this was the orientation that I had at that time.

Looking back on it, you mentioned Clarence Streit as a consultant at this time. I can remember being rather favorably impressed with Clarence Streit and with Ely Culbertson, who was another one. I don't think he was ever brought in as a consultant to the Department, I may be wrong about that, but anyhow, his idea, worked out from the mind of a bridge player, was considered by the Division of Political Studies when we were looking at all of these ideas which were being sent out by individuals, by groups, by organizations, by

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governments for organizing the postwar world.

Ely Culbertson's idea -- I remember studying that at some length at some time, and the logical consistency of it impressed me. I mean this is the result of a bridge player's mind. He has to know where all the cards are and you can give a weight to every card, and this is what Culbertson did. He used this ability that he had -- he put it over into a field, of course, which was totally different from playing bridge -- but nevertheless it had a certain appeal because of its logical consistency. I think many of the people who were adherents of the idea of world organization like Streit were appealed to.

Many of the people who were brought

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in to Pasvolsky's groups I had known of, many of them I hadn't known of. I had known of Pasvolsky because of his connection with the Brookings Institution. I hadn't known of Harley Notter; I hadn't known of David Harris, who was another one of the people whom Pasvolsky brought in, he was also from Stanford, and he headed up the Division of Historical Studies which was a parallel division with Political Studies; and I hadn't known Ben Gerig -- well, I had known of him -- he was an old friend of Clark Eichelberger from the League of Nations days and Ben Gerig was one of the Americans in the League Secretariat for a short time, but I had known of him.

Well, there were a lot of criticism. I'm sure you're aware of the criticism that was leveled at the Department, at FDR and

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Cordell Hull for setting up this postwar planning group. People just couldn't figure how in the middle of the war, where everything was going against us, we could be planning the postwar period. When it became known after the Dumbarton Oaks conversations that we were thinking of something along the line of the League of Nations, well, this was just another evidence that we had lost our senses, that we just hadn't any idea of the real world. There were not changes of anything in the postwar world. Well, Drew Pearson and various people like that, were very critical, the predecessors of Jack Anderson today.

MCKINZIE: What was your perception of the way that it was being received at the White House? I read some of those plans proposing schemes for reconstruction of areas after the war.

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What kind of feeling did you have about the White House belief in your work, or was there any?

BLAISDELL: Well, I think that so far as the proposals which became the UN Charter are concerned, I think my feeling was at the time, and I think this was fairly generally shared, that Leo Pasvolsky was pretty much writing his own ticket, that Hull was philosophically disposed to this whole idea, but that he wasn't particularly interested in it. International cooperation was a shibboleth of Cordell Hull I think. I don't think he really understood, or was very much interested in what this really involved, in terms of American sovereignty or American independence, and I think FDR was so absorbed with winning the war that he was

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glad to have somebody give attention to this postwar period, but as long as it was under Cordell Hull, and then after Hull left it was Ed Stettinius, well, that was all right. He was going to have dealings with Stalin, he was going to have to deal with Churchill, he was dealing with them, all the time in the middle of the war on war problems. And he knew that there was going to be problems that he was going to have to deal with them in the postwar period, But in those early days, I think the idea of international cooperation was one of these things that was just sort of accepted uncritically. I think there was a whole school of historical persuasion that if we had been in the League of Nations that the League would have worked. It wouldn't have fizzled out as it did in 1939, so that this idea of another world organization,

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not a world government as Streit was talking about where we would, so to speak, give up sovereignty or sub-sovereignty, which is a paradox, or it's a contradiction in terms, I think. Anyway, there was quite a lot going for it in those days, but it wasn't very critical. It wasn't very serious.

MCKINZIE: Might I interrupt with a question? There are some people who say the political people, the political planners, did not talk enough to the economic planners -- that you had on the one hand the people who were concerned about setting up the structure for something which eventually became the United Nations, based very much on the model of the League, and that you had on the other hand the economic integrationists very much like Will Clayton who took over as Assistant

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Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, and that the people who were setting up the political dimensions of the UN didn't have much dialogue with the economic people. Is that a fair criticism?

BLAISDELL: I really can't answer that; if I were to answer it I would say that it's true to a point. Pasvolsky was an economist before he was an international and political planner. He got into international political planning because of his friendship and the confidence that Cordell Hull had in him, and the fact that he was a very persuasive debater, particularly in small groups. He was a very articulate person. He rarely if ever was at loss for a word or a phrase to present his ideas in the most favorable light. He always gave me the impression that

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anything he said was a sort of a sharing of a secret that he had from Cordell Hull, or from FDR, or someone even more remotely connected with the White House or the top planners on the thing, that Pasvolsky was privy to this and he was sharing with us in a sort of gentlemanly, rather charitable way what we might need in our business, but not necessarily we'd need in our business. Let me just reminisce a little more.

I forget when it was, it was in '43 I would guess, but the State Department, the War Department and the Navy Department set up a State, War and Navy Coordinating Committee. This was called "swink," SWNCC, and I was designated as the executive secretary of SWNCC, This brought me into contact with the War and the Navy Departments as well as the State Department, the political people and

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other people in the State Department that I hadn't been in touch with before. This was, to use this not very descriptive term at a "higher level" than the work that I was doing in the Division of Political Affairs.

As I remember the composition of SWNCC was at the Assistant Secretary level -- Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Assistant Secretary of State or their deputies. It might mean a deputy assistant, or it might be somebody that would be named deputy for that purpose, and here I was the executive secretary of this thing. At these meetings they were talking about things that we were doing in the Division of Political and Historical Studies because they were talking about military government and the setting up of government in captured and

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liberated territories. This was the whole purpose of the operation. Phil Mosley was in the Division of Historical Studies in the State Department but he also even then was being drawn into the postwar planning on the disposition of territories, and he wrote many of the papers on that. This was heady stuff for me. This is where I first came to know the group in the War Department, the War Plans Division and the general staff that became so famous later on -- Dean Rusk particularly. Dean Rusk was not in this group immediately, because he was in the China-Burma-India theater at that time, but there were 3 or 4 or a half a dozen other military and naval

officers in the War Department and in the Navy Department whom I was thrown in touch with at that time that I had continuous contact with later on, right up through the San

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Francisco Conference, and into the period after the UN was set up in New York and in London and Paris, because this was a group from what later became the DOD, the Department of Defense in 1947. The War Department and the Navy Department and the Air Force through the Army -- through the War Department in those days -- were involved in our "grand strategy" under the United Nations as it was supposed to be worked out by the military staff committee of the UN Charter. And the Military Staff Committee I think was one of the things that Leo Pasvolsky thought was an innovation.

In international organization there had been no corresponding committee in the League of Nations to plan international security and the contributions of the various members, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, to this enforcement of international decisions and the organization of security to

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prevent the outbreak of hostilities, you see.

MCKINZIE: Did you have the feeling that the people from the War Department who attended understood the implications of all of that, of what they were talking about?

BLAISDELL: Better than those of us in the State Department, I think they did. I really think they did, I'm not saying that this meant that they were more devoted to that idea and seeing it worked out than we were, but I think they understood the implications from a security point of view, an international and national security point of view better than we in the State Department did.

MCKINZIE: Did you find them obstructionist?

BLIASDELL: On the contrary, they were very helpful. I'm perfectly willing to say it,

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because I'm downgrading myself in saying it, I think they were better prepared from the point of view of education and experience to deal in this matter than we were at the State Department. I have a great respect for those people. I can give you the names of three or four or half a dozen of them. As I say, Dean Rusk was the outstanding person because I worked with him in the Department afterwards, you see. But there were three or four others there that were just as keen as whips. They could have occupied posts in the State Department just as well as they could corresponding posts in the Navy Department or the War Department. From the point of view of their experience and their knowledgeability and their understanding of international forces and the things that the United States was going to

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have to deal with in the postwar world, people of superior mentality, a very interesting group that was gotten together. Now I don't know who it was in the War Department that did that. This was when George Marshall was chief of staff and when he or his people had to make the choices for the plans division for the postwar period, or even for the war period. These people were dealing with Operation Overlord at the time that they were dealing with us in the State Department about postwar planning. I found this out in London when I was there in the summer of '45 after VE Day and before VJ Day, when I was there with Ed Stettinius and then later with Adlai Stevenson representing the United States at the sessions of the executive committee of the preparatory commission of the United Nations, which operated from the end of the San Francisco

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Conference until the beginning of the first assembly in January '46.

MCKINZIE: The same people who were meeting with you were at the same time meeting in preparation for Operation Overlord?

BLAISDELL: Yes, maybe put this way it overstates the case, but these people that I was dealing with in SWNCC were drawn from the same division or organizational entity or unit in the War and Navy Departments as the generals of the War Department general staff, you see. In the general staff, the plans division was the crux of the whole war planning efforts under Marshall as chief of staff and through Leahy in the White House and FDR as the Commander in Chief.

Perhaps I'm magnifying unduly my own importance in the scheme of things. Looking back

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on it I fear this may be the case. However, at the time the inner logic of the postwar planning operation really left us no alternative. You see, the Division of International Security Affairs, one of the three postwar planning divisions, had been assigned by the powers that be the responsibility of drafting the United States' positions and postwar treaty language for the structure for maintaining postwar international peace and security through the United Nations, a wartime alliance. I was a technical expert in this division, later as assistant division chief and sometime acting division chief. The studies we were preparing embodied the ideas of the United States on the structure of the postwar intergovernmental organization having the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. These were major parts of what would later

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become the United States Proposals to the Dumbarton Oaks discussions (1944), the Yalta Conference and the San Francisco Conference (1945) and ultimately the Charter of the United Nations. In contrast to those parts of the Charter covering the pacific settlement of disputes (Chapter VI) we were dealing with disputes and situations that might involve the use of military

force -- action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression (Chapter VII). We were theorizing all the time, of course. But in our theorizing we needed the ideas, concepts, and perceptions of the professionally trained soldiers in the plans division of the General Staff of the War Department.

MCKINZIE: Did you or anyone from the War or Navy Department have a real fear at that time of

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some sort of difficulty with any one of the major powers in the postwar period? That is to say, had anybody anticipated a problem with the Soviet Union or with China or with Great Britain as being a kind of natural postwar antagonist? I mean, how you plan depends upon whom you're planning for, in a sense.

BLAISDELL: Yes, I think I had some of those fears. I won't say that they were anywhere near as great as some of my colleagues. We changed the name of the Division of Political Studies and set up a new Division of International Security Affairs, this was also under Leo Pasvolsky. I was made an assistant chief of that division; for a time Joe Johnston was away, or before he came in, I was acting chief. This was at the time when we would try to deliver lend-lease

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ammunition and munitions, supplies, to the Soviet Union,

The fact that I had been in the Office of Lend-Lease Reports, or rather was the State Department liaison with the Office of Lend-Lease Reports, meant that I knew these people who were operating the lend-lease program under Oscar Cox, right up through the war, and I would see these people from time to time. I can remember the names of one or two of them, but they were of general officer rank, you see, in the Army, and Admiral rank in the Navy. They gave us top people when they put this whole thing together. And I can remember from talking to them just casually, them saying, "We're going to have to fight the Soviet Union." This was when they wanted to bomb Central Europe from British bases or from the Azores

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and land in the Soviet Union without having to make a round trip. I mean they could carry enough fuel for a one-way trip, provided they could get landing rights from the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union wouldn't let them do it.

And this was in the interest of the Soviet Union. At least as we saw it, but not as they saw it. If the Soviet Union allowed us landing rights there for our bombers this would mean that we would have something to throw back at them later on as evidence of cooperation which they did not want to bring forward, you see. Now this was the way it was being interpreted by my colleagues and opposite numbers in the War Department and the Navy Department.

Later on, I was in New York assigned to the U.S. representative office there to the UN and I was in daily touch with the people

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seconded from the War Department and Navy Department for work on the Military Staff Committee.

Going down in the elevator one day with General Ridgeway we got to talking about this (this was after the war of course, this would be in '47 I guess) "Which would you rather fight, the Nazis or the Soviets?"

And he said, "I'd rather fight the Soviets because I don't think the Nazis are the threat to the United States that the Soviets will be."

MCKINZIE: But even in SWNCC, in those early meetings where you were trying to work out some basis for a proposal, there was some uneasiness or some feeling that there might be postwar difficulties? That's what I'm trying to get at.

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BLAISDELL: Yes, I think so, I think there was that. And it came out in a very real way, because (I may be wrong), but my memory of the contribution of SWNCC was -- I forget the number of this document but there was their particular document that we worked on and which was finally approved and became the Bible for the organization of the postwar organization of the captured and liberated territories. And this, of course, was where the Navy and the Army were going to have to do the administration. The military government, or in the case of liberated territories like Austria they were going to have to set up a new government, and this got all involved, you see, in this battlefield confusion between the Soviets and the Allies. The Soviets coming from the East and the Allies from the West and meeting in Central Europe there, in Germany and in the Rhineland and in Austria. How were

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we going to get along with the Soviets, where we in SWNCC proposed the setting up of an inter-allied, including the Soviet, you see, military administration?

MCKINZIE: Let me play the devil's advocate on another topic but on the subject of postwar planning. It might be possible to argue that the people who were in the Division of Political Studies had a kind of vision of what it would be like after the war, that if you could at least use Will Clayton's exposition of that, there was going to be a period of about 2 years in which reconstruction would take place, and at the end of those two years, because of reduction of trade barriers and refinements in the international monetary exchange system, there would be a kind of upward spiral of international trade and world prosperity, culminating in integration of economies

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as economies had never been integrated before. And it is possible to argue that that was the postwar vision, and that the whole thing was badly botched. Where?

BLAISDELL: Well, I only realized later on the place of Will Clayton in this kind of thinking for the postwar period. I did come to know that Will Clayton was one of the signers of the original declaration of Atlantic Unity. And he was one of the key people in setting up that whole thing and in supporting it financially, and in staffing it and seeing that it was an ongoing affair. I have a friend who has been the executive director of that from the beginning, the Declaration of Atlantic Unity, Walden Moore. And Will Clayton was one, as I say, of the original sponsors of it.

This reflected Will Clayton's general

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ideas, I think, that there was a basis of unity in the Atlantic powers which would be recognized and built upon more immediately than any additional or parallel basis that might be on a larger, global scale. In other words, we would have in the North Atlantic basin a regional approach to international cooperation which could be built on later through the United Nations, or in a variation of the United Nations.

Now, this was one of the alternatives because there were people who thought that regionalism was the answer to these questions rather than universalism. The United Nations represented universalism. While it did, ultimately, give a bow to regionalism in Chapter VIII of the Charter, this was going to be a subsidiary or a secondary form of organization to the world wide global form represented in the United Nations.

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MCKINZIE: May I interject here and ask you if you are aware of the criticism sometimes made that the United States really wanted a universalist approach, except for itself -- in the case of the Western Hemisphere where it did pursue a policy of regionalism.

BLAISDELL: Yes, we had to. In early 1945 just before the San Francisco Conference (there was a conference in Mexico City) to iron this thing out, this whole western hemispheric regionalism to make it so that it could be accommodated in the embryonic United Nations Charter.

MCKINZIE: Would you care to say anything more about how this idea that there was this kind of hope, or expectation, that recovery would occur within a couple of years? It didn't, of course, occur within a couple of years, and might I ask you to analyze why it didn't, what

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was wrong, was the perception of the extent of destruction inappropriate, why wasn't there recovery within two years? Why weren't European nations willing to reduce their trade barriers as Clayton would have them do it. In short, there was something wrong with either the vision or the implementation of vision at the end of the war, and I'd be very interested in your analysis of what happened.

BLAISDELL: I think our planners (maybe this is the economic planners, or the monetary planners), just failed to realize the extent of destruction and the extent to which Western Europe would be dependent on the United States for capital goods.

In other words, I don't know whether it would have been organizationally possible, or whether there was any agency in the United

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States Government, even in wartime, that could have been harmonized with the thinking of the Division of Political Studies to bring in this economic and financial element.

Now, ostensibly this was being done through Leo Pasvolsky as special assistant to the Secretary of State, who himself was an economist. Through him all of the postwar economic and social planning had to be filtered, at least within the State Department. But in fact Leo was only one of a large number of people who were involved, people like Treasury secretary Morgenthau of the old-line departments, with operating as well as planning responsibilities, and like Donald Nelson of the War Production Board and Leslie Groves in the Manhattan District Project with operational responsibilities only. Parenthetically, my brother Tom, who was in

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WPB at the time, reminded me of the intense competition for raw materials within the government at this time, citing from his experience one of the really basic decisions, should priority be given to the development of the bomb or to the crying need for shipping? As one examines Leo's assignment, and remembering that we in PS and ES were working under him, and tries to reconstruct mentally the wartime organization of the United States government for prosecuting the war and for postwar planning, and not forgetting the struggle over reconversion of the American economy after the war, he may get some idea of the intense competition among people and the wartime bureaucracy and ideas as to postwar reconstruction in Europe.

At the risk of sounding doctrinaire my criticism is -- if it is a criticism -- that the

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Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Leahy, didn't have a staff in the White House that could really plan grand strategy in the sense that Edward Meade Earl uses that term. Meade, incidentally in compiling this work *Makers of Modern Strategy*, Earl gives a definition of grand strategy, and it's in that sense that I use this term. Grand strategy, not only in the conventional military sense but in the overall political military sense that is total war. The chief

of staff to FDR, Admiral Leahy, did not have in the White House a staff who could be looking at the thing in terms of grand strategy including postwar reconstruction, Leahy didn't have any staff, It was enough for him to absorb the heat from the service departments which otherwise would have been directed to the Commander-in-Chief. Obviously he had to have

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a staff to do it. Harry Hopkins was his alter ego on a great many of these things, and this was because of a close, very personal relationship that they had and the fact that Harry Hopkins had been a superb administrator at WPA back in the prewar days, a person who could get things done. This is what FDR wanted, or the kind of person he needed in running a war.

But, just talking off the top of my head, and I've studied this later on, when I offered courses in my work at City College and later other places in "making of defense policy," the fact that there was no general staff of the United States for the Commander-in-Chief, for the President as Commander-in-Chief, and we combined in our head of State the chief executive and the Commander-in-Chief, which means that if you're going

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to have a general staff for the chief executive you have to have an executive office of the President, which is what we have now. This is the general staff for the chief executive, just as the way the War Department had a general staff with its plans division and its operations division and everything else, intelligence and the thing that Somervell was at during the war, Procurement, and all those things. Well, if there was any weakness in our postwar organization, looking back on it with the benefit of hindsight now and what's happened since, I would say that here was a weakness. But FDR thought that he was taking care of this in Harry Hopkins and in Leahy, in setting up the Foreign Economic Administration with Milo Perkins, who was an assistant of Henry Wallace back in the

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Agriculture days.

I can think of two simple reasons why organization for ground strategy was never achieved -- one, we never had to mobilize more than about fifty percent of our manpower and resources, and two, FDR's manner of operations. He preferred ad hoc and flexible administrative arrangements to an organization that embodied all the features of good administrative procedures.

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Second Oral Memoir with Donald C. Blaisdell, Laurel, Maryland, June 27, 1975, By Richard D. McKinzie, Harry S. Truman Library.

MCKINZIE: Professor Blaisdell, in 1946 and '47 you attended many of the meetings in Lake Success?

BLAISDELL: That's right. I was still in the Division of Political Studies in 1946 and then in 1947 they changed the organizational pattern of the Department. This was when [Edward R., Jr.] Stettinius came in as Secretary. They set up the Bureau of United Nations Affairs at that time, and that bureau was composed of three divisions -- of Political Studies, Economic Studies, and Dependent Area Affairs. I was in the Division of Political Studies, and then was transferred to the Division of International Security Affairs, and I was in that. I had

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been made an assistant chief in that division.

I was still based in Washington, but I spent a good deal of time in New York because the headquarters of the U.N. had been transferred to Lake Success in '46 and in '47 they were still at Lake Success. The Assembly met in the old Convention Hall of the 1939 World's Fair and the Security Council in various places there, Hunter College, at one time, in the Bronx.

Well, my job was a sort of a combination of preparing positions and papers for the United States at the meetings of the United Nations organs, particularly in the field of International Security Affairs, and then going up to New York and helping the delegation up there negotiating these positions. So, I had two hats. One was in

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Washington and one was in New York. I was an adviser to the delegation in New York, which was even at that time a permanent mission.

At the instigation of the Department of State and the White House, the Congress enacted in 1945 the United Nations Participation Act, which provided for representation of the United States at the various organs of the U.N. It also provided for a U.S. mission to the United Nations, and this was established in New York and it's been there ever since, of course.

More particularly, my work had to do with the Military Staff Committee and the Security Council and those parts of the Charter, particularly Article 43, which envisaged military -- naval and air forces -- made available to the United Nations by the members for seeing that Security Council decisions in the field of security were carried

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out and enforced; enforcement action, so-called.

The Military Staff Committee was provided for by the Charter and it was made up of representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council, namely the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, and China. The Military Staff Committee got underway so far as its meetings were concerned, right at the beginning. I was involved in that very heavily.

The State Department worked with the National Military Establishment. The positions of the United States in the Military Staff Committee were a combination of military and political considerations and it soon became clear that we had one idea, a concept of the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace

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and security through the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee, and the Soviet Union had a diametrically opposite concept of what the United Nations should do in this respect. It was a foreshadowing of the Cold War, this clear split in the Military Staff Committee with the Soviet Union on one side and the other four members on the other. It was not that the other four members saw eye to eye, but it was always a pretty clear split between them and the Soviet Union. It was primarily over this question of what kind and how many military, naval and air forces ought to be made available to the U.N.; where they would be based; how they would be commanded; how they would be supplied; how they would be paid; all of these questions -- logistical and others that come in the maintenance of a military force.

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Pretty early in the game it became clear that we weren't going to get anywhere on that,

I wrote an article for what was then called *Documents and State Papers* (Volume I, Number 3, June 1948, *Documents and State Papers*, U.S. Department of State).

I wrote an article on "Arms for the United Nations, Debate in the Security Council." And I had another paper on this, "Coordination of American Security Policy at the United Nations," *International Organization* Vol. II, No. 3, September, 1948, pp. 469-77. I tried to set out the different positions of the members of the Military Staff Committee on this whole thing. My impression is this -- that the Secretary of State, as the principal adviser of the President, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Department of Defense, and the

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Secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force probably knew what they were doing; but I have a feeling that there were some reservations -- maybe not reservations, but some limited perceptions of what the role of the United Nations was in this matter of maintaining international peace and security.

The theory of the Charter was pretty clear. It was based on an assumption, implicit in the Charter, that the five permanent members of the Security Council would see eye-to-eye on political and security matters, and that if one of those five permanent members did not see eye-to-eye with the other four, he would not necessarily exercise his veto to stymie planning and any action that might be anticipated. But he would abstain, he would sit in a corner, so to speak, and let the

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rest of them go ahead and do it. But, of course, that theory just did not work out. I mean, this was a completely naive assumption. I think at the time there were some justifications for holding that the theory could be made to work out. FDR and his advisors were always talking about the imperative, the necessity of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States in the postwar period. Whether or not everybody at lower echelons accepted this, nevertheless they went along with it, and there was some feeling that maybe it was justified, Well, of course, it wasn't.

This is why I say that the split in the Military Staff Committee which came about very early in the game -- in 1946, '47 and '48 -- anticipated the Cold War. It really indicated that it was going to be on a much

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wider scale than in the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations.

MCKINZIE: Did you feel that the U.S. military gave constructive help and that the U.S. military was not trying to guard its own prerogatives, so to speak? Was it willing itself to go along with what could have been a workable force?

BLAISDELL: Well, I think my feeling is that the United States had a mental picture of what international security in the world was going to be, postwar, and we were ahead on that basis. This meant that the United States was going to have the biggest navy in the world. We were going to have the atomic bomb. We were going to have a small professional army, with the necessary air force for making it usable any place in the

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world. This was a continuation of the strategy that we had followed in World War II where we were able to ultimately put our military forces any place in the world that we felt they needed to be for the security of the United States. I think we extended that into the postwar period and what we suggested the military forces of the United Nations should be, was a reflection of that, an extension of that.

This is where we came in conflict with the Soviet Union. They didn't want that. They didn't want the United States able to put its military and air force anyplace in the world. There were certain areas that they felt were areas that ought to be under Soviet control. Well, one area in which the thing came to a head was that concerning the trust territory of the Pacific Islands--which included all of those islands in the Southwest Pacific which had been used as staging areas for our attack on Japan and the Japanese supply lines of World War II.

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All of those were made a strategic trust territory under the United States. But the interesting thing is that the Soviet Union did not use its veto when that trust agreement came before the Security Council. It could have used its veto, withheld its approval, but it was made clear by the United States that whether or not the Security Council agreed to this the United States was going to go ahead and administer those territories.

In other words, we took a "high" position on that; that it was essential for the security of the United States and we were just going to stay there, were going to use those islands as we saw fit. This was separate from the negotiations in the Military Staff Committee. However, one can see that if you're going to look for staging areas

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anyplace in the world from which United Nations forces could operate, this got pretty deeply into the whole strategic philosophy of the United States itself.

MCKINZIE: Didn't the atomic bomb enter into these discussions?

BLAISDELL: Yes, it was in the background all the time. Simultaneously with these negotiations in the Military Staff Committee, the so-called [Bernard M.] Baruch Committee was holding its negotiations on international control of atomic energy. This was going on in New York, too.

I was not involved very closely in that although I was on the margin. I was supposed to be attached to Mr. Baruch's office as an expert on procedure. I did that for some time, I worked with him and the American delegation

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in those negotiations, but those things were held pretty tight in the State Department. We didn't have very much to do with them.

MCKINZIE: Did you yourself have any feelings that if these negotiations on the Military Staff Committee didn't work out that it would leave the United Nations somewhat impotent? Or was that going to be that way anyhow since there was not cooperation between the major five powers?

BLAISDELL: Well, I think one can say that by 1948 the position was pretty clear, we were not going to have any cooperation from the Soviet Union in the Military Staff Committee, at least cooperation as we understood it. Therefore, that was dead. Article 43 was a dead letter; and it's been a dead

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letter ever since. There's been a lot of talk about it and the Military Staff Committee still meets regularly, and they go through the motions, but it's just a farce.

MCKINZIE: At any time did you think there might be some hope?

BLAISDELL: Yes, I did, I think the political people in the State Department thought we were ingenuous to have an idea of that kind; that we could get that degree of cooperation with the Soviet Union which is implicit in the idea that arms for the United Nations would actually become a reality.

I remember chatting with people in the Division of Eastern European Affairs about it in '46 and '47. They just were scornful of

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our ideas, They said, in effect, "You're just whistling in a wind. I mean this is never going to come to pass, why don't you accept the situation:" But we had our walking papers, our directions; we had to go ahead. We had been following this thing, in my own case from 1942 on, when I first went into the Department. It was just one of those things where there was a pretty clear philosophical split in the Department between the Bureau of United Nations Affairs (and then later the Office of United Nations Affairs) and the geographic divisions in the Department,

MCKINZIE: Who would you consider to be the highest ranking advocate of your position?

BLAISDELL: Why, I don't think it ever got beyond Joe Johnson, who was my chief in the Division

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of International Security Affairs. And there's an interesting question: Was there anybody in the Pentagon from 1947 on, or even before, who really felt that this was a viable way of proceeding?

I just can't say. I know that we have very cordial relationships with the group in the Pentagon, the War Department General Staff's Plans Division (where Dean Rusk was before he became -- before he came over to the Department and then went back to the Pentagon and then came over to the Department again as Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs). We had very close cooperation with them and I think one could say that, on the surface at least, they were in harmony with our ideas about giving the United Nations some enforcement facilities.

Just one more point on this Military Staff

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Committee. I was called into the Secretary's office, when George Marshall was Secretary of State, by Carlisle Humelsine, who was his chief of staff when he was in the War Department, and then he came over to the State Department as head of the Secretariat in the State Department. I was supposed to go to the Secretary's office and brief him on this proposal of the United States for supplying military, naval and air forces to the United Nations. I had one chap who was working with me, an older man, Henry Abbott, whom I had gotten into the State Department. He

was a submarine commander in World War I with the rank of captain, He had been a devotee of military and naval history and a very able chap that way, Well, the two of us tried to brief George Marshall. Now if you can think of a more bizarre thing to

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do than that...

He was well aware of the issue. It wasn't the first time I had come in contact with George Marshall. In 1948 I was the principal executive officer of the American delegation to the Assembly. I had literally sat under George Marshall there for days at a time, because it was my job to make up an agenda for the delegation meetings and see that the debate was adequate to the position recommended, that it was considered from all, points of view -- not only the technical points, but the political point of view -- and then to await his decision on what the next step was, Well, I had learned to have a great admiration for George Marshall. As I say, this was a period of maybe ten or twelve weeks and delegation meetings were almost a daily occurrence.

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I remember the story that my friend, sitting right there, told me a couple of weeks ago relating to George Marshall and told to him by John McCloy, Jack McCloy, who was an Assistant Secretary in the War Department at the time. He said that whenever George Marshall came into a room you could feel a presence that was unrivaled. Nobody could hold a candle to the aura of influence, respectability, competence, expertise, political sagacity, tact, acumen -- all of these things that went to make up the man -- as would George Marshall. I agree with that, As I sat under him, literally, for twelve weeks there in Paris in the fall of 1948.

MCKINZIE: After the failure of the Military Staff Committee to come up with a solution, did you

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get involved in the business of partition of Palestine and the ultimate failure of that?

BLAISDELL: Yes, I was involved in that, though not very closely. I was neither a political officer in the sense that the State Department uses that term, namely an expert on the relations with a particular country or a group of countries in a geographical area, nor was I in a position of responsibility so far as the delegation was concerned. I was what they called a technician, I think. It was my job to learn about these things and if they ever came to the point of being recommended as a U.S. position in the United Nations to be familiar and cognizant with the procedural sides of getting a position accepted. Now, this meant working with the political people, obviously, but the so-called "substance"

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of the thing was outside my purview.

MCKINZIE: Did you find that you were dealing with very different kinds of people when you got involved with the Palestine question than you were when you were dealing with the Military Staff?

BLAISDELL: I have thought about this a lot and I've read a good deal. I've read Harry Truman's *Memoirs* on this. I was pretty close to Philip Jessup who represented the United States in the Assembly at the time of the establishment of Israel in May, 1948 -- when the British gave up their responsibilities under the mandate, and the United Nations botched the opportunity to get their hands on Palestine, leaving a vacuum there which the Israelis filled with the establishment of Israel, and the defense of Israel from that moment on.

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I was in Tunisia in January and February of this year, My wife's nephew is the American ambassador in Tunis now, Talcott Seelye. He is an Arabist, which is to say he is fluent in Arabic and has served in Amman and in Jedda and in Beirut and now Tunisia, He's made a study of that whole area, I picked up a book in his library by Philip Jessup which deals with this question of the handling of the Palestine question by the United Nations in 1947-'48. I knew that Phil Jessup was working on this, because he consulted me on one or two points that he thought I might be able to throw some light on, which I did. He cites me in his treatment of this matter. But I think the thing that came out in that exposition was the inadequacy of the State Department, as it was organized at that time, in dealing with a very highly emotional,

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highly charged political matter. The Department functioned inadequately regarding the recognition of Israel, in the face of a Commander-in-Chief and President in the White House, who had a low opinion of many of the people in the State Department and who was under terrific pressure to throw the United States wholeheartedly back of Israel right from the beginning with the recognition. Phil Jessup's story of it just corroborates my memory of it, which was that we in New York in the Assembly and in the delegation were left literally with our hands -- I won't say tied -- but with nothing in our hands to work with. We never had a position which would stay put for more than a few minutes or a few hours, or a few days at the outside. Something would come from Washington, something would come from some other government, something would happen on the ground which

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would negate our position from then on and just nullify it. We in New York felt helpless.

MCKZNZIE: One of the criticisms of the delegation is that the delegation was subject to the entreaties of lobbyists who were, if one believes some of the accounts, permeating every social gathering and even some of the Cabinet meetings.

BLAISDELL: Oh, that's true, no doubt of that. There was a tremendous amount of lobbying that went on when this thing was still pending. Let me put it this way: with no matter how much lobbying, with Harry Truman in the White House, and Harry Truman being the man he was, and acting on that well-known plaque that he had on his desk, "The Buck Stops Here," there was nothing more that we could have expected.

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I mean, this is what we should have anticipated, but which we didn't.

I think, looking back on it, that we had an inflated view of the importance of the State Department and of our professional position in foreign policy in a situation like this kind than was justified. If you'd had a weak President who let the Secretary of State make policy from day to day and never sent him a telegram or said, "You do it your way," that would have been one thing, but they didn't have a President like that. You had a very different man, a strong President with a growing confidence in his own ability to make these decisions. He was just finishing out his unexpired FDR term and hadn't been reelected yet. But by that time Harry Truman had developed tremendous

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self-confidence in the way he was able to handle these things. He wasn't going to be pushed around by the State Department or any experts, so-called over there. I think this was the situation.

MCKINZIE: Professor Blaisdell, did you think it was a mistake on President Truman's part at the time? There were people in the State Department arguing that U.S. strategic interests were going to be jeopardized. There was going to be a problem with the Arabs over oil, there was a good possibility of increased Soviet influence in the area and maybe even loss of the strategic crossroads of the Eurasian Continent and there were some very strong arguments.

Do you recall your own feelings about that?

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BLAISDELL: Well, I think I reflected my position. I was certainly a low echelon, or at the most an intermediate echelon officer in the Department at that time. People at the head of the delegation like Warren Austin and Phil Jessup, who were representing us in the Assembly at the time, felt completely out of touch with the State Department and with the White House on this matter. I think I reflected that. I had a worm's eye view of it. In other words, I was looking at it from the point of view of one on the ground at Lake Success, and that was a very circumscribed view. I can remember talking to some of these lobbyists, the Jewish High Committee I believe it was. I can remember a number of them working night and day. As I say, I was a low level person so I didn't get an awful lot of this pressure, but people like Phil

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Jessup were getting it all the time, and Warren Austin were getting it all the time. I'm afraid that a person in my position doesn't see these things in the big sense. We get our noses right down into the small part of the problem and we find that we can't look out to the horizon. I wish we could, and maybe we should, but it's very difficult to do it. I felt that same thing in Paris in 1948, later that same year, where the Palestine situation came up again as you know with the assassination of Bernadotte and the problem raised by that.

I think there's something here that's a personal matter too. I mean by that, that if a person's unable to lift his eyes to the horizon and see the broader political and strategic implications of a thing like this, this reflects his background and his training and his education up to that moment and his

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personality, his personal characteristics, whatever they are. If he sees it in those broader terms it puts him, maybe, in a position beyond the border line of what he should be dealing with as an officer. Other people should be handling those things. I remember Truman's story on James Forrestal in his *Memoirs*. Forrestal wrote him a memorandum bringing these things to him, the position of Arab oil and the Soviet Union. I won't say that Harry Truman was contemptuous of this, but that he felt that Forrestal was sort of acting out of turn, that he as President and Commander-in-Chief were the person to take these things into consideration. As part of the whole picture, whereas Forrestal was presuming to put pressure on the President and the Commander-in-Chief on matters that weren't within his purview.

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MCKINZIE: In this same period, there was a good deal of dispute in the United Nations over Indian matters.

BLAISDELL: I had sort of a marginal involvement in it. It wasn't even as much as on Palestine. We had our experts in the delegation on the so-called Kashmir matter between India and Pakistan. They took care of that. The preparation of any proposed delegation position would reflect the State Department, in turn, reflecting the White House, on this thing. We would get periodically instructions from the Department reflecting the Department and the White House. Sometimes these were not very clear; sometimes we had to sort them out and find out what weight to give to them. The people who dealt with those with other delegations were the so-called "experts" on that matter. I was not an expert on that matter.

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so I didn't have any primary responsibility for it. This all took place under the chief of the delegation, of course. And, anticipating, I think I came into the Kashmir thing at a much later date when I was in Geneva in 1952, when Frank Graham was the UN commissioner on the mediation.

Frank Graham came through Geneva because he liked to use Geneva as a sort of a neutral ground for both India and Pakistan in talking about this thing. He would go to India and talk with both sides separately and then he'd come back to Geneva, and then he'd go back to India, and if there were anything that he thought promising he would try to get the permanent delegates in Geneva to deal with this, you see, which was not within their competence, but if their governments allowed it and wanted it, obviously it was a perfect place to do it.

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That's one of the values of the permanent delegation there in Geneva you could use it for things on the margin of United Nations matters and it was neutral ground as I say.

MCKINZIE: It had validity precisely because it was neutral ground?

BLAISDELL: That's right. And there was a regional office of the U.N. in Geneva, of course, and the permanent delegation of the United States, along with those of 22 other countries, at that time, was useful if they wanted to make use of us, and this went for anything. And this was expanded tremendously, in 1955, when President Eisenhower came to Geneva for his summit there in Geneva. That was two years after I left but you can see that -- and even now, of course -- they're making more and more

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use of it, But in those days in '51 to '53 when I was there, it was the unusual thing to use Geneva as a negotiating ground or even a ground for sounding out other governments about their positions as Frank Graham did on the Kashmir thing,

MCKINZIE: Could you talk about the Paris sessions in 1948?

BLAISDELL: It was in the fall of 1948. I had been brought into the Bureau of United Nations Affairs which had been set up under Dean Rusk. He took charge of United Nations Affairs in a way that nobody who preceded him was able to do. He was a person who had become used to dealing with matters in the large, He was in the China-Burma-India theater during the war, and then he came back to the Pentagon and was in this Plans Division of the War Department General Staff. He had

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been a professor of government at Mills College in Oakland, California before he went into the Army by way of the National Guard in the 1940s, He was a Rhodes scholar, of course, and he'd had the unusual experience of being a representative of the United States. If I remember correctly he told me that he took the surrender from a detachment of Japanese in the China-Burma-India theater in 1945 at V-J Day.

He was out here (Professor Blaisdell's home) on one Sunday, I remember, with his family. We were walking down in the stream bed below the road toward the river. This was before the

reservoir was built and that property belonged to us. He said, "This reminds me of some of the terrain we went over in the CBI theater." He told me that he took the surrender from some Japanese unit or

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units there in the CBI theater. He was a person who was well aware of the strategic and political, as well as the other factors, involved in the United Nations matters. He briefed himself and got on top of that job very, very quickly. I was in his office as his assistant and all the preparation for that meeting was centralized in his office under me. On his recommendation I became the principal executive officer of the delegation at that time. This meant that the summer of 1948 was spent in the preparation of American positions on all of the things that were on the agenda, you see.

MCKINZIE: How did you go about that?

BLAISDELL: We would get the agenda from the United Nations of course, from the Secretary General. Many of the items had been before previous sessions of the Assembly; American positions

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had been well-known and so we had a lot of historical materials to go back to. This had to be updated and we used the political people and the experts on the subject matter in the Bureau of United Nations Affairs for doing that. We would have inter-bureau committees that would deal with these things and somebody would be designated to prepare a draft paper on a position and then this would be prepared and it would come back to this committee, and then it would go up through a hierarchy of ever higher committees until it got to the Secretary or the Secretary's office. Then it would come back to the Bureau of United Nations Affairs, either approved or approved with amendments, or with a request to redo the thing.

Here was another thing that I learned about from George Marshall. Dean Rusk had

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been a staff officer and I learned a lot from him on what a staff officer should be and what staff work was. When George Marshall became Secretary of State he set up a secretariat and he brought over Carlisle Humelsine, as I said, to head it up. This, in a sense, was his immediate "cabinet" to do for him as Secretary of State what his chief of staff did for him in the War Department, as a personal aide, not the chief of the general staff as an institution. This office, under Carlisle Humelsine, was doing what the staff officer would do and his aide would see that all of these things that were done that should be done. And I can remember him saying that such and such was a good staff officer because he saw that all the staff work that should be done was done, before it came up to him as Secretary of State.

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Now, in a way, this was a different concept of organizing and operating the State Department from anything that preceded it because this brought the military line of command into the thing in a way that it never had before. It was a civilian department obviously. We'd never had a man who had been chief of staff or general of the Army as Secretary of State. We had never had an organizational unit corresponding to the secretariat to see that all staff work was done before it came to the Secretary. Even the matter of the way that particular positions were presented to the Secretary for a decision this was completely reorganized and revolutionized when Marshall became Secretary, The way the thing came to him as Secretary for his decision had been disseminated throughout the Department and directions given that no matter should come to the Secretary's office except

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according to this form -- with all of the necessary initials and staff work and coordinated positions already negotiated within the Department. So, when we got ready to make a position for the U.S. in the General Assembly here was George Marshall's secretariat and his office operating for that operation just as it would have been if he had been chief of the general staff of the Army.

It was highly organized. It was assured that anything that went to the Secretary had had all of the Department people involved consulted with beforehand.

Now, there is a question of how this thing was negotiated with other departments of the government, because there were other departments involved in United Nations matters. I don't think this thing ever was really

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very well worked out. No Cabinet department other than the Department of Defense had any staff organization comparable to what George Marshall introduced into the State Department. Every Cabinet officer has his own concept of how his department ought to be organized and how his own office ought to be organized, internally, and with respect with other departments, and with respect to the President.

The Treasury, the Commerce Department, the Labor Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Interior, all of these departments in one way or another, I won't say on all matters, but a number of matters would have to be brought into the planning.

I think the Defense Department had an advantage in this from the experience that they had had with the State Department in

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the days immediately after World War II and during World War II, where they were in negotiation with the State Department on postwar matters, and they were used to this. I mean it

was a familiar thing to them, just as it was for the State Department. But the other departments hadn't had this experience in dealing with this kind of thing in this way. And I think they all felt that maybe the Department of Defense had a sort of an inside track, to their disadvantage.

The United States' delegation with some exceptions went to Paris in September 1948 on the SS *America*. George Marshall wasn't there, but Mrs. Roosevelt was there and most of the delegation were present on that ship. That was a working voyage, We had our position papers with us and we had to go over them and prepare ourselves and still

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had some things to do with them.

Paris in 1948 was a city just coming out of wartime restrictions. Just one little personal incident. Milk was still rationed in Paris in 1948, and yet I found that one could get all the yogurt he wanted, because there was no rationing on yogurt. Our headquarters were in the Hotel de Jena which had been the Gestapo headquarters under the German occupation during the war. The French Government made that hotel -- it was really an apartment house -- made it available to the American delegation. Everything had been taken out after the liberation -- all the furniture and everything else -- so it all had to be completely refurnished for office use. It was pretty difficult getting any systematic organization down there, but we did it.

We were fairly lucky in that way because

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we were fairly close to the Palais de Chaillot where all the meetings were being held -- the Security Council meetings along with a regular session of the General Assembly. There were special sessions of the Security Council held at the same time, because this was the time the Berlin blockade was on and there were negotiations. Philip Jessup was our representative in those debates.

My job was principal executive officer. I had to find out whether there would be a delegation meeting the following day. I had to make up the agenda from what had been done at the last delegation meeting and what had transpired in the Assembly session and committees in the meantime; what had happened in other parts of Paris with the other delegation, so that there was an agenda in front of the head of the delegation, George Marshall,

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every morning when we came in at 8:30. We had our delegation meeting at 8:30 and we had to be at the Palais de Chaillot at 10 o'clock for committee meetings and things of that kind.

I was living at the time in two places. The delegation headquarters were at the Hotel Crillon, right on the Place de la Concorde, but my wife and daughter were with me in Paris and I got

them accommodations at a little hotel up beyond the Elysées. So, one night I'd be at the Crillon and the next night I'd be up at the Hotel Avenida.

I suppose two out of three nights I was at the Crillon, but the third night I'd be at the Hotel Avenida. Anyhow, it sort of made it hectic for me because I had to be at the Crillon because that was the delegation headquarters were. That's

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where Mrs. Roosevelt was, where all of the principal members of the delegation Senator [Warren] Austin, George Marshall, when he was there. He wasn't there all of the time.

When he was not there, John Foster Dulles was the head of the delegation. He expected to be the next Secretary of State. That photograph [pointing] was taken the day after the 1948 election when the General Assembly was just about to debate the Declaration of Human Rights, and that's Frederick Osborn there in the middle with George Marshall and myself, and this was before the session started, before the meeting started. There was a great deal of confusion, of course, because there were still bulletins coming in from the United States about the outcome of the election. Everybody was eager to know what the outcome was, obviously. It seemed

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that Harry Truman had been reelected, but it wasn't sure. George Marshall was telling a story there. It seems that a bulletin had just come in, in which [Thomas] Dewey had conceded and Truman was reelected. This had been brought to John Foster Dulles and Dulles was in the dumps, of course, with this news because it meant his secretaryship was vanishing. And this had gotten to the group of us here, and George Marshall was saying, "Well, I'm in a different position from all the rest of you people." He said, "If Harry Truman hadn't been reelected, I'd still have my job as General of the Army." And so he was chuckling over that. Well, that was just one little incident.

MCKINZIE: You mentioned that the Declaration of Human Rights was coming up for discussion and

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that was accompanied by a U.N. convention on genocide which created some difficulty for the United States.

BLAISDELL: The United States never signed the Genocide Convention. There's a long constitutional dissertation that one could give on the reason, but it all got involved in this question of Federal versus States' rights over private rights. Could the Genocide Convention, on any obligations that the United States might undertake under that convention, deprive an American citizen of any rights that he was guaranteed by the United States Constitution, or by a State constitution or by the decisions of the courts thereafter. Senator [John] Bricker from Ohio

and the American Bar Association felt that there was an area here which was in limbo. It hadn't been clarified.

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There'd never been a Genocide Convention before. The United States had never signed an international convention of such far-reaching scope as the Genocide Convention and later the Human Rights Convention. Therefore, these questions were still pending. In the interest of protecting the rights of the United States and of American citizens, wouldn't it be better to make it certain that there was no question about this, that certain of these rights would be protected and would not be invaded by the convention itself? This was all involved with the question of discrimination on grounds of race. Many people were very much afraid that we would be surrendering the governmental authority and individual rights in that field to an international convention and to whatever enforcement arrangements were prepared for that.

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At this same session of the Assembly, the Human Rights Declaration was adopted by the Assembly. There was a rather interesting episode in that connection, That came later on in the Assembly session. As a matter of fact, I think it was the last night of the last day; the 12th of December, 1948, when the Human Rights Declaration came up before the Assembly for adoption, I was sitting with Durward Sandifer and Mrs. Roosevelt in the delegation seats at that time. Mrs. Roosevelt made the statement on behalf of the United States urging adoption of the Human Rights Declaration and it was adopted. I think there were 46 votes for, no votes against, and three abstentions, One of the abstentions was Saudi Arabia, because it was alleged that there was still slavery permitted in Saudi Arabia at the time, and

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the Saudi Arabian Government, in any event, didn't want to even adopt a declaration, let alone the convention and Genocide Convention. Well, that came out later in a film on Mrs. Roosevelt, which Mrs. Blaisdell and I went to see in New York not knowing that this film clip was going to be included. This was a documentary on Mrs. Roosevelt. It was about 1963 or '64, because it was after the -- or during the Kennedy period. I suddenly found myself on the screen with Mrs. Roosevelt and Durward Sandifer and I was so surprised. My wife just spoke out loud and said, "Why, there is you."

MCKINZIE: In Paris in 1948 what did you have to do, if anything, with the negotiations on Berlin?

BLAISDELL: I had nothing to do with that. The Security Council held one or two special meetings

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in connection with that. The impasse between the United States and the Soviet Union was still talk at that time. It wasn't until later that the Soviet position gave a little bit. I had very little to do with it. It was pretty much in the hands of Phil Jessup and of the geographic desks (which would mean the Eastern European desk and the Soviet Union), and Dean Rusk as the Bureau of United Nations Affairs representative, and also principal adviser of the delegation. Of course, George Marshall was there, at least for part of it. Parenthetically, how that impasse was resolved came out in an article in *The New Yorker Magazine* some time later in 1953 or '54 how Stalin in one of his speeches sent a message indicating a willingness to negotiate, how someone in the USG, whether in the Department, CIA, or where I don't know, but someone detected

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Stalin's public statement as the chance to negotiate the end of the Berlin blockade; how Philip Jessup approached Jacob Malik in the delegates' lounge at the U.N. to determine whether the message was being read correctly, and, on ascertaining that it was, was authorized and did negotiate the end of the blockade. Marshall came back to this country before the session ended. Warren Austin took his place and when Austin was unable to function, John Foster Dulles became acting head of the delegation. I didn't have near the close relationships with Dulles that I had with Marshall or with Austin.

MCKINZIE: Just a difference in style?

BLAISDELL: Yes, a difference in style. Well, John Foster Dulles was a lawyer, a member of a very prominent New York law firm. He

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had been a member of the United States delegation to the Assembly previously, He had been a Senator from New York for a short period of time, and he was a man of -- well, I won't say arrogance -- but he was a very self-confident person. We used to say as John Foster Dulles went around with his yellow legal pad, "There goes the State Department," because he didn't use the State Department very much, He was a lone wolf, and of course, this was encouraged by Eisenhower when he was President because this was the way he wanted him to work.

MCKINZIE: This was the way he preferred to conduct the affairs of the delegation in 1948?

BLAISDELL: Yes, that's right, Made it difficult for us who were trying to keep track of what was going on, of course.

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MCKINZIE: We haven't really talked about the United Nations and the issue of reconstruction and development aid. In the course of these events from 1945 to this Paris meeting in 1948, were you involved in any of those State Department discussions about whether or not this aid should be unilateral or whether it should be through the auspices of the U.N.

BLAISDELL: Not the Marshall plan as such, but when the so-called technical assistance program came along...

Harry Truman made his Inaugural Address in January '49, and it was in that message to Congress that he made his four points, the fourth point of which was technical assistance. He said in so many words that to the extent possible that international organizations should be used in the disbursing of this technical assistance.

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To my knowledge there was no Bureau of United Nations Affairs or State Department involvement in the preparation of Point IV. That meant that once Truman had delivered his State of the Union message everybody wanted to know what Point IV was and what the White House background of it was. I was then Dean Rusk's assistant in the State Department, Bureau of United Nations Affairs, and that message had hardly been given but people were on the telephone asking me, since this involved the United Nations, or could involve the United Nations, what I could tell them about it. I had to admit that I knew nothing about it.

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MCKINZIE: "People" being your colleagues, or other delegations?

BLAISDELL: My colleagues in the State Department, people from other branches of the Government, people of the Secretary's office, oh, anybody in Washington who knew that I was in a position in the Bureau of United Nations Affairs where I ought to know something about this. Well, I just had to say, "I'll have to find out and call you back," which is what I tried to do.

The story I got was this, and it's a rather interesting story, The way I got it was this. It seems that some of Truman's speechwriters had been asked by him to prepare the Inaugural Address. I wouldn't know which one of these speechwriters, but he had two or three there. They brought in several drafts.

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Harry Truman didn't like any of them, He sent them all back and said, "Bring in something with some sex appeal in it." They were unable to come up with anything, so he sent out a memorandum to all of his Cabinet members saying, "Have you got any suggestions for things that ought to go into my Inaugural Address?" There was a chap over in the Interior Department -- I think Cap [Julius A.] Krug was Secretary of the Interior at the time -- a chap by the name of [Arthur A.] Goldschmidt. I don't know what his job was, but he was in the Secretary's office I believe as an assistant of some kind. And the Secretary sent this man down to him and various others in the Department saying, "If you've got any good ideas, send them back up."

So, Goldschmidt had an idea, and he sent it back up and it came over to the White House

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and Harry Truman liked it very much, and he put it into his State of the Union message as Point IV of the four points of our international position, practically as Goldschmidt recommended it. Now, that's the story that I get.

MCKINZIE: What did you do, just call around and say, "Where did this 'Point IV' come from and what does it mean?"

BLAISDELL: Yes. You'd be asked this question at lunch time or whenever you saw any of your friends in another department or...

MCKINZIE: What about going to the Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs, was that possible?

BLAISDELL: That would be the logical place to go, but that was the last place to go I think in the circumstances. I don't think the Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs had any knowledge of this at all. I think I'm right when I say that the Bureau of United Nations Affairs had

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no knowledge of it.

I do know this, that one of the divisions in the Bureau of United Nations Affairs was the Division of Economic and Social Studies, and Walter Kotchnig was the head of that division. Walter Kotchnig was a very knowledgeable person about this kind of thing. He had a wide acquaintance in other departments in Washington and among the people in the non-governmental organizations who were always around the State Department and other departments in Washington. It wouldn't surprise me if Walter Kotchnig knew something about this at the time. It wouldn't surprise me if he had heard of this story that I just related to you, because if I'm not mistaken Tex Goldschmidt had worked in the United Nations secretariat before he had this job in Washington in the Office

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of the Secretary of the Interior. And he was in the economic section there and, as you know, there was a long perennial debate in the economic and social committee of the General Assembly and then the Economic and Social Council over this question of technical assistance. The idea was that the industrialized nations, with all of their technical know-how and expertise should make this available in some way to the less developed countries so they could develop more rapidly. As I say, this had been debated in the United Nations for some time.

Tex Goldschmidt, I believe, was in New York at the time and was familiar with these debates. He was in tune with the feelings of so many of the governments of the less developed countries, India for example, and with the non-governmental organizations

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which felt that the less developed countries had a very good point, that here was a way that they could accelerate their economic development and become developed more rapidly than otherwise, and that it would be a relatively inexpensive program, because what they were talking about was what would be transferred, the ways to be debated and worked out from the great mass, the great reservoir of technical knowledge and know-how that we in the United States and other industrialized countries had.

Well, it looked like a simple thing to begin with but it turned out to be a very, very difficult thing.

MCKINZIE: Did you have any feeling that this is something that the United Nations should be doing to a larger degree than the United

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States should be doing? You had seen the failure of the military staff talks. The military component of the U.N. had been eroded away and the U.N. was weakened by that result. And then, it was anticipated in the beginning, at least in San Francisco, that the United Nations would have some economic functions as well. Here was the opportunity for the United Nations to be very active in the economic field, and yet the United States was acting unilaterally.

Now, my question is simply, did that bother you at the time? Or did it bother anyone in the delegation? I'm sure it bothered some other people in various councils of the United Nations,

BLAISDELL: Well, I was not an economist, so I didn't purport to know about international

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finance and about international trade in the context of rapidly accelerating numbers of sovereign states that had been colonial and dependent territories heretofore, and which were all going to take the model of one or more of these industrialized countries of the West as their model for developing themselves into a more prominent, more influential, more satisfying position internationally. I don't know how one can foresee this kind of a problem.

I did a little book that came out two years ago on technology being the key to better environment. I came up with the idea that there ought to be some kind of a technological assessment concept institutionalized in the United States Government for trying to anticipate the effects of technology on society generally.

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I don't think there was anything like that ever thought of in the United Nations or in the Charter at the time. I don't think it had been very widely accepted even now on the public level. I mean the multinational corporations do this, but from their own point of view, not from the wider point

of view of the effects of technology or a new invention, or application of a new invention, to the wider area of society as a whole.

This is really what we were talking about when we talked about technical assistance. When we adopted the Charter, with Chapter 11 on trusteeship and in non-self-governing territories, which anticipated a large increase ultimately in the number of members of the international community, new sovereign states -- a hundred and thirty-eight members now with the United Nations as against 51

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in 1945 -- what were the effects of the tremendous technological development that came about during the war? Jet propulsion, proximity fuse, all of these things that the OSRD had been developing in the United States for wartime use -- what were the affects of those going to be on peacetime development, economic developments? This is all related to this question of technical assistance, because what we're talking about is the dissemination in proper institutional channels of discovery and invention on a worldwide basis. And, we're raising the corollary question, the parallel question: do we have enough knowledge, can we anticipate what the affects of these things are going to be a year hence, five years hence, ten years, 25 years, a generation hence, upon the world. This is really the problem that the developing countries are

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dealing with when they ask for technical assistance. They are saying in effect that we're perfectly willing to take a chance, that all of the science-based technology, which has gone into the development of the United States for 200 years, is good for us from now on, plus anything that may be developed in the United States from here on out, and can be made available to us in terms of technical assistance in the future.

MCKINZIE: You might pick up after the meeting of the '48 General Assembly.

BLAISDELL: Well, I'm just trying to think of what I might say in addition to what I've already said. The Hotel. de Jena where the delegation had its headquarters was one indication of the grim life in Paris, three years after liberation. It was a high-class

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apartment house before the war and then during the German occupation it was the Gestapo headquarters. When we were there the French Government had just made it barely livable. One had to bring in desks and office furniture and equipment and all of those things that you need for carrying on delegation business,

The delegation itself had its headquarters at the Hotel de Crillon, but the meetings of the delegation were held in the Hotel de Jena. I wouldn't call it a makeshift operation, but it was nothing like the sumptuous delegation headquarters that one usually imagines for a delegation of the United States at a meeting like that.

We had delegation meetings almost every day. We didn't have them on Saturday and Sunday ordinarily. Sometimes we would have

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them on Saturday if there were meetings, or if there was reason for it. As has become customary in General Assembly sessions, there's always a terrific rush of business at the end. You get about half way through and find that you've barely started, and then the committees began to pick up and the pace begins to increase and that was pretty much the case in Paris in 1948 as well. There was a sense of tension in Paris at that time, because of the Berlin blockade and the way the United States was bringing in supplies through West Berlin by the airlift. And with General Marshall, the Secretary of State, and the election of 1948, it seems to me there were very critical elections both in France and Italy in that fall and that there was a great fear that the Communists would make very marked gains. Well, it was a pretty

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tense period.

Mrs. Roosevelt had her birthday in Paris. I forget what birthday it was, but I can remember that it was a surprise party which some of the delegation gave to her. She represented the United States on the Third Committee of the Assembly, which was the Social Committee, and she also represented the United States on the Human Rights Commission, which was an autonomous commission set up under the Economic and Social Council. This was at the stage in the work of the Third Committee and the Economic Rights Commission when they had just completed the work on the draft Declaration of Human Rights; the draft declaration was on the agenda of the Assembly for adoption. This is where Mrs. Roosevelt was involved -- in both the commission

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meetings and the plenary meetings. During the commission meetings there was a great deal of interest in this, of course, not only because of Mrs. Roosevelt's connection with the draft in process, but also because the draft declaration was the first product of the Human Rights Commission, so to speak. They'd been working on it since 1945 and this was the first of the several documents which were envisaged as the program of the Human Rights Commission at the beginning.

Well, to go back to Mrs. Roosevelt and her birthday party, She was kept late at the plenary meeting the afternoon that her birthday party had been planned.

We had all gathered in Mrs. Roosevelt's room, but there was no Mrs. Roosevelt there and she didn't come, and she didn't come, and she didn't come. Finally about 7 o'clock in

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the evening she did turn up for her birthday party which had been scheduled for about 5 or 5:30. It was a complete surprise to her. This was held in her private suite in the Hotel de Crillon, so it was a very intimate thing, very pleasant social occasion. One saw Mrs. Roosevelt in her informal moments. She was a very approachable person anyhow, as most people know, and this was just a little moment of geniality in an otherwise pretty tense atmosphere of Paris at that time. I recall that with a good deal of pleasure.

MCKINZIE: Did you have any feeling about Mrs. Roosevelt's influence in determining policy? Did you categorize her as a person who accepted that which had been worked out by the Department, or did she have some input into those things?

BLAISDELL: Some of my colleagues Durward Sandifer

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and James Green worked more closely with her than I did. But I saw enough of the delegation proceedings and of Mrs. Roosevelt and others in the delegation to be able to say that she was very definitely a major force in the formulation of policy. She was known, of course, as a person of very marked opinions and was a very forthright person, one who never pulled any punches when it was a question of standing on her principles. In delegation meetings, and in the commission meetings and the plenary sessions of the Assembly, she was a major figure, there's no question of it. She was so widely known, universally known, of course, that all of the representatives from other governments who were there interested to see her and be there when she was expressing her views and the Government's views.

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The actual adoption of the Declaration of Human Rights by the Assembly occurred on the last day of the Assembly session. I seem to have the date in mind of December 12, 1948. I was very much involved, because as the principal executive officer it was my job to see all of the records of the delegation were properly taken care of and properly shipped back to Washington.

MCKINZIE: Did you have to stay on longer than the rest of the delegation to take care of that?

BLAISDELL: Well, this was what it turned to be, yes. Also because of the lateness of the session, some people who had planned to go elsewhere in Europe and the British Isles found that their plans had to be changed. Dean Rusk, for example, who was a principal adviser of the delegation at that particular session and who was my chief in the State Department, had planned to return to Oxford. He

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had been a Rhodes Scholar, and he hadn't seen his old tutor, apparently, for many years. He had planned to make a visit to Oxford so that he could bring a little consignment of supplies and food to his old tutor who had been under wartime rations in England throughout the war. Dean Rusk, however, found that he had to get back to Washington so he asked me if I would take these

things from Paris to Oxford with me. I happened to be going to Oxford anyhow. My wife and daughter had preceded me there. We were spending some time with friends of ours who lived in Oxford.

He was an Air Vice Marshal in the RAF, and we had come to know him in Washington; Air Vice Marshal McNese Foster. He had been on the Combined Assignment Board, chaired by Harry Hopkins during the war. That was the agency for the dividing up of the

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available munitions and supplies. Anyhow, he had been helping to represent the U.K. on this Joint Munitions Assignment Board, and was very close to Harry Hopkins in this whole thing, I've talked with him about the way it worked. Anyhow, in later years of the war, he had been with the Chinese Nationalist Government in Chungking where he had headed up a British survey mission, aviation mission, in connection with the supply of materials and aircraft to the Nationalist Chinese.

They were living in Oxford, and we were going to spend a few days with them after the Assembly, but I had to wait until, the last box was nailed shut and the last file was taken care of. Everybody else had gone on. That was a pretty rough trip when I finally got away from Paris with Dean Rusk's knapsack full of canned goods for his old tutor,

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plus my own luggage, and an exhausting session of the Assembly -- from the middle of September until the 12th of December, a full three months, which is a pretty long session. I got there all right and I was able to make the delivery of Dean Rusk's things for his old tutor, It was very nice.

Between the return from Europe in late 1948, and my departure for Geneva in June of 1951, about two years and a half, I was in the State Department Bureau of United Nations Affairs as Dean Rusk's assistant. For the first six months after my return from Europe I was visiting professor of international relations at the University of Illinois. A friend of mine, Clarence Berdahl had been in the OSS during the war, not on the operations

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end, but on the research end. He was of Norwegian extraction, and he had been in London. He was also in the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on International Organization at San Francisco. He was a professor at the University of Illinois and invited me to go there as a visiting professor, which I was very glad to do; but subject to permission to leave my job in the State Department.

There was some question about this. I remember Dean Rusk, later on, when I returned to Washington, saying that if this thing hadn't already been set up he never would have let me go.

In other words, there were reasons for me to be in Washington. I often wondered what the reason was, I may have a clue, but I'm not sure.

I had the expressed desire to be assigned

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to the National War College. The National War College was operating at that time and they always took one or two people from the State Department in each class, and I was eager for that additional training. I thought I was quite well prepared for it, having done the work I did in the Department and in connection with the Pentagon. I made application to Dean Rusk and he wrote a very strong letter of recommendation. I was disappointed because it was turned down on grounds of age. Apparently, there was an age limit for people at that time and this was the grounds on which they based their decision. And I've often wondered whether, if I had been on the ground, instead of off in the Midwest when this whole thing was pending whether there might have been a different decision.

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I had a very enjoyable period at Urbana, Illinois, at the University. One reason was that this was the period of Adlai Stevenson's tenure as Governor of Illinois. He had been elected in 1948 with the largest majority of any Governor. I had worked closely with him in San Francisco and also in Paris in 1945 at the time of the meetings of the Executive Committee of the Preparatory Commission for the United Nations. I remember getting in touch with Adlai by telephone and letting him know that I was there with my wife and daughter. I heard nothing from him until about the middle of May when I suddenly got a telephone call from Adlai saying, "Here it is at the end of your school year and we haven't seen you. So," he said, "can't you come over and spend the weekend with us this weekend?"

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Well, it happened that my wife had speaking engagements, I was busy, our daughter was in the University high school there, and this was a very busy time of year; but naturally when you get an invitation from a Governor you don't let these things stand in the way, Well, it was a very enjoyable visit we had, with Adlai who was very cordial. He was staying in the Governor's mansion in Springfield. This is where Abraham Lincoln lived. It was a momentous moment when we pulled up and Adlai was there to greet us. And then we made the discovery that Adlai didn't have any official -- let me put it this way -- he and his wife were already estranged at that moment; later there was a divorce, but Adlai's sister-in-law, his wife's sister, was his official hostess at that time. Her husband turned out to have been an acquaintance

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of my wife in Istanbul when he was on the staff of Admiral Bristol of the United States High Commissioner in Istanbul at the end of World War I. So, this was one of those curious coincidences you run across every now and then. But, as I say, it was a very enjoyable time and I

always appreciated Adlai's remembering us. This is characteristic of him. He may not have been a very good politician in some ways, but he had a very good memory for faces, and for individual characteristics which would impress themselves on him.

I was only at the University of Illinois for one semester, the second semester from February to June. Then I took a holiday from June. until the middle of July or thereabouts and we returned to Washington about the middle or the end of the summer, and from then on until 1951 I carried on in my job as assistant in the Bureau of United Nations Affairs. It

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was the usual daily budget of items. Let me give you a rundown about the way the United States went about preparing its positions and policies for the Assembly of the United Nations.

This always took place in September, for a regular session. Six months before that the Bureau of United Nations Affairs would go to its files and would take out the agenda for the last session of the Assembly. The various members of the United Nations, including the United States, would by that time have indicated new items to go on the agenda, or new positions to take on old items. And there were many perennial items which came up year after year in one way or another. Position papers would be assigned to various individuals within the divisions. This would

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be done mostly by the director of the Bureau, Dean Rusk, Through the summer, and as our position became clarified and as events, and other things, shaped the position, the position of the United States would become semi-crystallized. We would work up a delegation book which would contain all the supporting papers for the positions on the various items of the agenda.

In addition to this, it was the job of the Bureau and its various divisions to prepare a draft of a speech for the Secretary of State, or for the President, or for the head of the delegation at the forthcoming session of the Assembly. This meant that everybody in the Bureau was involved in one way or another in preparation of this speech.

One year we prepared a draft of a speech

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for the President that was a pretty hard-line draft. The feeling was that at this stage in our relations with the Soviet Union and the others, but particularly the U.S.S.R, there should be no indication of any softening of the U.S. position. Once the draft was made and it had come to the Director of the Bureau, Dean Rusk, he would then call in a number of people from the other bureaus in the Department and from the Secretary's office itself, to read this and to go over it and to get ideas as to how this was shaping up in view of various other factors which obviously have to be considered in the preparation of a draft. One of these people who was invited to come in was Chip Bohlen. Bohlen read the draft of this speech and made a comment that stuck with me ever since. That was that it's all very well to try to make your point and get

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your point of view adopted over the opposite point of view, even if it's the Soviet Union, but he said, "Let's never forget that we're going to have to live with some of these things for a long time, and that you never want to take too hard a position, so that if things change you will have some leeway for negotiation." This I thought was a very significant, and a very pertinent observation to be made at this particular time.

Well, this was the kind of thing that was coming up all the time, We did an awful lot of drafting, drafting of speeches, drafting of positions, drafting of points to be taken into account,

MCKINZIE: The administration and coordination of that must have been a, very large job.

BLAISDELL: Yes, it was a big job. I remember going

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on the *America* in 1948, Willard Thorp, who was then an Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, was on the ship and in the delegation. I remember what he said about what made a good State Department officer. It was something to this effect: all of a man's education and everything should be pointed up so that he could write a good memorandum in one page -- one page -- no matter what the subject.

This kind of thinking about it was the essence of what General Marshall used to call "completed staff work." You would have to get all of your recommendations, all of your supporting evidence, all of the body of your position, so that it could be boiled down to a one-page memorandum, because that's all the time that the responsible official would have to read that thing. And then, if he had

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questions about it, he would turn to the supporting documents of which there was often a collection an inch thick right under the one-page memorandum, But recalling those two things together -- what General Marshall pounded in all the time, "completed staff work," and what Willard Thorp said about what made a good State Department officer, his ability to draft a memorandum, get everything in one page -- I thought that this summed up pretty well what a budding Foreign Service officer and others might have in mind when they were trying to prepare themselves for a State Department position. I think both of those things are absolutely essential. One without the other means it's not complete; you've got to have both of them together in order to be a good staff officer.

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The Bureau of the United Nations Affairs would prepare a delegation book, which would be prepared in sufficient number so that each member of the delegation, and each alternate member

to the Assembly, appointed by the President, of course, would have one of these books, and this contained all of the position papers on all the items on the agenda, which had been prepared by the Secretary General of the U.N. and communicated to all the members. One of the big jobs was to see that your position did not get too rigid in the six months period before the Assembly, so that when things changed, as they always did, or usually did, would it be possible to change your position if this was desirable without doing too much damage to your basic foundation. This required a good deal of feedback, I guess was what you'd call it these days. In other words,

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there would be a certain amount of information which would be acquired in the process of developing a position which should get back to the person who drafted the position in the first place, or to the team that worked on the position in the first place. This should be worked into the new position, if and when a new position was asked for or desired. But this constant feedback would have to be done periodically, because every week and every day, sometimes, brought a new situation which would have to be reflected in the new position. The problem, therefore, was to make your statement precise enough so that it was clear to everybody and, yet, you wanted it to have some negotiating leeway. This of course is where a good political officer can make his weight felt; not only in the drafting, but also in the reading and the interpretations of these things. As one serves on a

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delegation or in the staff for a period of time and gets to know other people in other delegations, you get to know how they work, and whether there's any possible liaison at an echelon below the top echelon for cross-fertilization between delegations. That is often very helpful.

This was a continuous process, this was one thing. Your position should be clear and at the same time it should be unambiguous, but it should have a sufficient amount of ambiguous language so that more than one meaning could be read into it, if this was desired. This means that a person acquires a skill in drafting this kind of thing that the layman is often unaware of. It means that nuances and techniques are available to the skilled draftsman which aren't available to the layman, because they are the tools

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of his trade. He's familiar with them he knows how to use them and when to use them. The layman, the common man is just operating at a different level in his mental operations.

I found this to be extremely interesting and sometimes very frustrating, because the extent to which one was able to use his skills of this kind depended not only on his own talents, but on the receptiveness of his colleagues to his ideas, and vice versa, but primarily on the receptivity of the man at the top, the Secretary of State or the President, or the person in the White House who would advise the President on things like this -- his speech writers, his experts in various fields, the people to whom he would turn, or White House staff would turn in other departments who had an interest in this thing. So, it's one of these things where you're

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operating, not actively, but potentially at several different levels at the same time, I find that this is a very difficult thing to do.

MCKINZIE: Did the people at the top tend to make it more specific or less specific?

BLAISDELL: I think they would try to make it less specific. In other words, the more specific it would be, the less leeway there would be for negotiation. The more general it could be made without losing accuracy, the more leeway there was for give and take, within the government and with other governments. One of the big jobs in preparing the positions of the United States at any international conference, U.N. or other, is the working out of a Government position as distinct from a State Department position.

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It's infinitely harder to work out one for the United States Government. And as the Government gets more complex and complicated, of course, this gets to be more and more and more difficult.

MCKINZIE: What were these meetings like in September where the books were presented to the delegation?

BLAISDELL: Ideally, the delegation and the alternates, and their staff people, their assistants, would take these things and do their homework and read through the new positions and all the supporting material, which of course, is voluminous. There is lots of it, and it gets more and more voluminous as you get into an actual meeting of one of the commissions or the plenary sessions in the Assembly, because you have all of the Assembly documentation

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to add to all of your own delegation's documentation.

This is one thing where Mrs. Roosevelt, for example, was very good. She was very serious and very conscientious in working on this thing.

Going over on the *America* in 1948 we used to have delegation meetings. This operation of briefing the delegation through the books and orally was one of the things that the technical people had to do. One had to be prepared to amplify or to expound or discourse on a position as it appeared in the delegation book. I was about to say, whether or not he'd had anything to do with the preparation of it. Sometimes that happened. Usually, of course, it was possible to get somebody who had been with it from the beginning to do that job. But this is analogous to the role of a staff officer

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in a military briefing, If the staff officer who does this for the top brass doesn't know himself what the background of a particular thing is, he must know the person who does know, so he can call on him to do that. This was one of my jobs at the 1948 session, the job of the principal executive officer, to know who these people were and the fields that they were qualified to do this for the delegates themselves, and where they could be located on the spur of the moment.

MCKINZIE: These delegates are presented with what appears to be a fait accompli. They are presented with a U.S. Government position.

Now, do you recall in any of your experience any time when the delegation itself said, "We think," or, "I think this position should be changed, or could it be changed"?

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BLAISDELL: I think this happened quite frequently. Delegations to the Assembly are made up of five delegates and five alternates. So there are ten people nominated by the President and appointed to the delegation for a particular Assembly, Each one of these ten people has very definite views of his own. He may or may not agree with, or accept without debate, the position which has been prepared for him. The composition of the delegation usually means that there's somebody who will take a different view from the view represented in the prepared position, This is due to the way the delegation is composed. In the early days of, the U.N., when the principles were being debated on which a delegation should be composed, there were a lot of things that were brought forward as reasons for doing it this way and that way. I can't recall all of them.

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Should you have a Jew on the delegation? Should you have a Black, a woman, a veteran on the delegation? Should you have bipartisan representatives on the delegation? Should both houses of Congress be represented on the delegation? Should other departments in the Government be represented in the delegation? What other extra-governmental portions of the population -- what others should be represented on the delegation? Well, you can see that there are a dozen or more criteria here to be used in deciding how a delegation should be composed. I think I'm right in saying that back in 1945 and '46 when this was first elaborated, it was agreed that both political parties should be represented on the delegation. The majority and the minority party in Congress should be represented; not necessarily both houses (this was handled by giving representation to the Senate one year, and the House the

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alternate year, so that every other year each house would be represented in the composition of the delegation).

Minority representation, representation of women -- there weren't any hard and fast rules here, I think, but it was tacitly acknowledged that it would be wise to have some minority, ethnic minority representation, if not every year, then every other year, so that you could spread it over

a large number of ethnic groups over a period of years. The same thing with women, although there were more reasons I think for including a woman, either as a delegate or an alternate delegate, every year than in the case of the ethnic consideration.

Well, when you've had a woman like Mrs. Roosevelt, who obviously had an acknowledged claim to a position as long as she was living and as long as she wanted to, this was a special

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consideration, obviously. But these were some of the things that had to be taken into account when you were making up a delegation.

If you have representation of both parties, Republican and Democratic, it's bound to mean that one of these people from the House or from the Senate is going to take an opposite position, probably; or a critical position of that represented in the delegation book.

One reason for putting congressional representation on every delegation was to educate Congress. This, I think, was a very important consideration, because the universe of a member of Congress is one thing; the universe of a bureaucrat in the State Department or in another branch of the Government is quite different. The universe of one of these minority representations is again quite

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different. But what I'm trying to say is that any Congressman or Senator will always look at these items that come to the agenda of the General Assembly quite differently from the way anybody else does -- by virtue of his position in the Congress.

It's a desirable thing, therefore, to make it as easy for a Congressman to accept a position that he would have a question about, as it is for the State Department to get its position accepted by the Congress. In this process the more you could educate the Congressmen, the better. And this is a principal reason for including both parties in the representation,

There's an interesting background of this. It goes back, how long, 50 years almost. The United States was unable to join the League of Nations at the end of World War I

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because of Republican hostility to the League of Nations covenant in the Senate -- typified by Henry Cabot Lodge. When the question of an international organization comparable to the League came up during World War II, one of the early considerations was to make the preparation of the United States participation in this organization a bipartisan matter, so that come a drafting conference, come the submission of any document to the Senate, come the action of the Senate on any document that might come before it, there would have been a long period of preparation where both parties would have been involved. In other words, each party would have had the feeling that it had a part in bringing the thing to the point where it had

reached, that they hadn't been left out, that they hadn't been ignored, that they hadn't been just overlooked

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for whatever reason. This goes back to the idea of a bipartisan foreign policy, obviously. Our position in the U.N. is one part; whether or not we became a member the U.N. is a basic part of the bipartisan effort. The way the United Nations Charter was drafted, so far as the United States is concerned, was founded on the idea that both Republicans and Democrats would be in on it from the beginning. When Cordell Hull and FDR set up the nucleus of what became the Bureau of United Nations Affairs later on in the State Department, when they were in touch with both houses of Congress on the preparation of United States participation in an international organization, this bipartisan matter was accepted from the beginning. This is why you had Senator [Arthur] Vandenberg included along with Tom Connally representing the Senate, and this is particularly

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important, of course, because of the Senate's position with reference to the ratification of treaties, When the United Nations Conference on International Organization was held, the American delegation did contain both Republicans and Democrats, Vandenberg and Connally, and [Charles] Eaton, a Republican from New Jersey in the House, and Sol Bloom, a Democrat from New York in the House. So both houses of Congress and both parties in both houses were represented on the delegation at San Francisco.

When the document came before the Senate in 1945 there was a Democratic majority, but, because of the way the Republicans had been brought in from the beginning, the Senate gave its consent to the ratification by a vote of 89 to 2 I think it was, That represented the extent of the bipartisan collaboration in the preparation of the document.

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In 1946 the Democrats lost the majority in the Senate and Vandenberg became chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Well, it turned out that this was a very good thing, because now that he was in the majority position instead of a minority as he had been earlier, and because Vandenberg had undergone this change of heart from an isolationist to an internationalist position in his own thinking, the United States' position in the U.N. was strengthened by virtue of this fact. Otherwise, it would have been very much weakened.

It's all related to this question of how you compose a delegation to the General Assembly And it goes back historically to this earlier period and to the period during the war when the whole question of bipartisanship came into the matter of American participation in the new organization.

MCKINZIE: As a result of this structure and having

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these people from diverse backgrounds on the delegation, did this ever result in those position books being changed?

BLAISDELL: It's a little difficult for me to say. I was not involved in the actual preparation of the books as books. I would see position papers on individual matters, and individual agenda items, I would work on some of them myself. But I never was what you would say really familiar with all of them. But to answer your question, I would say that sometimes there was some change that came about in them. This resulted from the very close relationship with the representation from the Senate and from the House in earlier sessions of the Assembly. The educational process was working, therefore, as one started to prepare for the forthcoming session of the Assembly he would have the benefit of his experience in the last session and previous

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sessions, One knew the earlier positions of the people in both houses of the Congress who had been on the delegation and who had worked with people in the State Department and others, in the working out and in the presentation and maintenance of former positions. So we rarely, if ever, found ourselves in a position where the State Department had locked the United States into an unalterable position without any leeway for variations in points of view from members of Congress or anywhere else.

One could almost say that, subject to external events -- which of course, is a constant factor in this kind of thing all the time -- the better the staff work, the fewer changes would have to be made in order to accommodate two varying points of view.

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MCKINZIE: How did the external events in Korea affect your work?

BLAISDELL: It didn't get into the Assembly, but of course, it got into the Security Council. This was haggled in the State Department then where I was.

We had invited Lois Jessup and Phil Jessup out here and they had accepted on that particular Sunday in June 1950. They had to call up and say that Phil was involved in these meetings that Harry Truman had called with the Secretary of State to advise him on what the United States should do in this situation. So the reunion that we had planned with the Jessups didn't come off, It had an indirect effect on me, personally, and my position in the State Department rather than direct effect. It was indirect because I was not personally

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involved in any of these meetings at Blair House. But Dean Rusk was. And I would go into my office the next day and Dean Rusk would have a sheaf of stuff to work on which had come out of that meeting, you see. He would talk to me and turn some of these things over to me. I would say

that these issues were not the major considerations, because the major considerations were being dealt with at the highest echelon right from the beginning. So far as the United Nations were concerned it was Dean Rusk and Phil Jessup who were advising the President on this in the first place.

MCKINZIE: Now this was, of course, at the time of the outbreak, but later it did become a matter for the General Assembly -- especially over the question of crossing the 38th parallel.

BLAISDELL: I can't recall my work in detail, and

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I think this indicates that, as I've just indicated, from the beginning these problems were handled at a higher echelon than the staff people in the Bureau of United Nations Affairs. That is to say, this would be a matter for the Secretary's office, and the Assistant Secretary, and the bureau chiefs from the beginning, and only as they felt necessary to call on their staff would I come into it. On the matter of the crossing of the 38th parallel and the question of active pursuit: these are large matters of grand strategy, when I got into my academic role again, following 1955, I could speculate, I could expound, and I could spit out a lot of personal ideas about grand strategy and this particular situation -- together with the documentation and the firsthand information that I had, such as it was, which did enrich my exposition before a class.

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But it was people like Harry Truman and the Secretary of State and Dean Rusk and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense who were involved in that, and his own personal advisers, whoever they were, in the White House,

MCKINZIE: Did you know Ernest Gross?

BLAISDELL: Yes, I did. Ernest Gross had been in the Army in the position of military government, I believe, before he came into the State Department in 1946 or '47 as an Assistant Secretary, I used to see a good deal of him when he first came in and then later on.

I have two most vivid memories of Ernest Gross. One is the quick way that he assimilated all of the information and data and positions with respect to the international control of

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atomic energy. When he became an Assistant Secretary, whatever the year was, he was involved in that by delegation from the Secretary. I rarely saw a man who was quicker in assimilating a very complicated position than Ernie Gross. He did that very well, very quickly, and he became a force to be reckoned with in the fixing of American positions throughout that whole period.

The other thing was an alternate delegate in 1948 at the Paris Assembly, in the matter of the candidates for judges of the International Court of Justice whom the United States would vote for

in the Assembly. The election procedure is rather complicated, but the Charter of the United Nations and the statute of the International Court of Justice provides that members of the International Court of Justice shall be elected by the Security Council and the Assembly of the

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United Nations voting simultaneously on nominations made by the old permanent court of arbitration at The Hague, which goes back to 1911 or thereabouts.

Well, in the Assembly of 1948 we had to elect two or three judges. Their terms are for nine years, I believe, and there is a third elected every year by the Assembly and the Security Council. So the United States had to decide which of the nominees that had come up through this nominating process we would vote for.

Well, I was supposed to be au courant on this, and to a certain extent I was. But this is a political matter even though we're electing judges, and this means that you have to give and take with respect to other delegations. You're going to support a candidate if they will support somebody that you want,

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And while this process was going on I was in touch with the changes in preferences that the United States were making, but I wasn't prepared for the one that Ernie Gross told me going to lunch one day after a delegation meeting,

In the delegation meeting it had been decided to continue our support for Mr. X, I don't know who it was, I forget the name of the individual. I was in the same taxi with Ernie Gross when we were going to lunch, and we were talking about this and I mentioned this and he said, "Well, that's been completely changed and we're not supporting him anymore." Ernie had been dealing with other members of the delegation and with other delegations about the vote of the United States, It had been decided quite informally and without action by the delegation

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to shift our support from one candidate to another, and I didn't know anything about it. Well, it was sort of embarrassing to me. You have to be willing and able to take that kind of thing, and not let it get under your skin when you're in the position I was.

I have just been redrafting the first page of an autobiographical sketch and I came up with what I thought was a rather good turn of phrase, During my period in Government both in the Department of Agriculture and in the State Department in the Foreign Service, I was a "middle level government employee on the fringes of authority."

It wasn't the fringes of power, I don't like the use of this word "power" in this connection, Power has connotations of military power and industrial power, and manpower. This is grand strategy when you're talking in

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those terms. The State Department, and a State Department officer, may be, or may be on the edges of, or may be working with, somebody who has authority. But the President in our governmental, structure is really the only one who has power in the military sense, as Commander in Chief, and Chief Executive and head of the Government and head of State, he is the one who is in a position to exercise power.

Now he has authority in addition to that, and he uses authority all the time; but for the rest of us it's authority that we may have by delegation or by virtue of some position that we have or by statute, or by custom or tradition, So that's why I use "authority" here rather than "power." It's an important distinction, I think.

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MCKINZIE: I'd like to ask a question in regard to the flexibility within agencies. It has been argued that agencies have a life cycle: they have in their youth a great deal of exuberance, and lack of structure, and then come into a period of maturity where everything begins to get orderly, and then they have a period in which it is very difficult for them to break out of the traditions that they have established. This Bureau had existed for four or five years. You had been a part of it. Did you notice rigidification with age?

BLAISDELL: Well, generally speaking, I would accept that exposition with the bureaucratic

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life cycle. I think that's true, and I think this is very important. I've expanded on this myself in various connections, both in my writings and in my classwork, particularly in my graduate courses at the City University in New York. I used to be fascinated by this, not only from a theoretical point of view but from a practical point of view. Let me say this: starting in 1942 with the establishment of the Division of Political Studies, the Division of Economic Studies and the - Division of Dependent Area Affairs, right on up to the present time, but particularly through the period that I was familiar with up till 1953, the United States was feeling its way as a member of the international community, in a formal,

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organized sense.

We had never been a member of the League of Nations, we had always cherished our aloofness from Europe and from the world so far as entangling alliances are concerned. It wasn't until 1945 in the Charter of the United Nations and in 1945 in the Inter-American Convention of that year, and then in 1949 when we became a member of NATO, that we took on any formal political and military commitments with respect to other countries in the world. This was a new area for the United States to embark in. We had to feel our way. During the time that I was in the State

Department from 1942 to 1945 when Stettinius was succeeded as Secretary of State by [James E.] Byrnes. There were four different reorganizations of the State Department. I interpreted this to mean that these were

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successive attempts to organize ourselves in the State Department so that we could best fulfill our obligations as a member of the international community in a formal sense -- as a member of the United Nations, as a member of NATO, as a member of the Inter-American regional system, I think this has gone on ever since. I think this is a constant factor in bureaucracy and in governmental structure, particularly in modern times. There is a primary necessity of ability to adapt the organism to rapidly changing external factors, external situations, so that one need never feel that he's out of touch with what's going on out there. At the same time, he's organized himself well enough and efficiently enough internally (I'm talking about within the United States Government now, not only the State

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Department, but all of the other Cabinet departments as well as the regulatory agencies and others, and particularly the Department of Defense), so that he can react properly and efficiently to changes outside.

Now this is the de facto situation that all organization and system, I think, ought to be geared to, This is what we ought to accept as a working principle, that we don't go off into the blue on some hypothetical principle that says that this will be the best way to do it from a theoretical point of view. We're faced with a situation, we know that that situation, with all its standard factors, has an infinite number of variables, which is always changing, if not in number, at least in relation to each other; so we have to be prepared to adapt ourselves and our policies to these changes.

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Now I think the Bureau of United Nations Affairs in the State Department should be part of that overall process, I think for the first ten years anyhow, probably longer, it was part of that process and we were fairly successful in doing it. I think the way the United States reacted to the crossing of the 38th parallel in Korea indicates that even in those days, 1950, we were able to do this. But that, in turn, presupposes in the White House, a man who is sufficiently flexible in his own picture of events and of the outside world, and knows the situation within his government well enough so that he can react quickly to a situation without having to stumble over himself and over his staff and over his people, and lose precious time. Now it takes a great man to do that without loss of time, without loss of position, without loss of his

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very subtle personal relationship with his staff, and his whole governmental structure, without loss of confidence and trust in everybody involved in this thing -- and that is a lot of people. It takes a great man to do that, and I think Harry Truman had it. I think FDR had it, at least up until

his last year. He was probably losing that delicate touch for a year before he died in 1945, maybe not quite that long, but anyhow, for some months. But this is the subtlety of authority. Whether or not your organization introduces rigidities or permits flexibility is a test of how well your budget and management people can get along with the substantive departments. Your Office of Management and Budget can make or break this thing, you know. The Bureau of the Budget was able to do it. They didn't have to have that reorganization that Nixon put in and set up -- the Management and Budget as well as the Budget

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office. The Bureau of the Budget by itself had sufficient position in the Government to do that, and I think it was a better position than the OMB has now. I think OMB now has entirely too much authority, But this again goes back to how much authority the President will allow it to have. If you have a strong executive and one who understands these things, he can do it. If you have somebody who is interested in other things, or can't do it, well, it's a loss.

MCKINZIE: But at that time your conclusion would be that there was flexibility.

BLAISDELL: Yes, I think so.

I want to pay tribute here to Dean Rusk in the same connection, because I mentioned Ernie Gross as a person who very easily got on top of complex situations. Dean Rusk had that same ability. It was uncanny the way he

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could come in, as he did, from the Department of Defense. It was uncanny the way that he could come into a situation that many of the rest of us would have been familiar with and studied with for months and years and he would get on top of it in a matter of hours.

MCKINZIE: Were there other developments of concern to you in the history of the Bureau of United Nations Affairs?

BLAISDELL: Well, I think I can say that I became disenchanted with what we used to call the international security aspects of the Charter, the ability of the United Nations and the United States through the United Nations to make the security provisions of the Charter materialize in terms of military forces being made available to the U.N. The Cold War and

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the inability to achieve a common position in the Military Staff Committee, and then the Security Council, just meant that this part of the Charter was pretty largely written off. I became disenchanted with it myself.

The fact that I was drawn into the economic and social aspects of American policy, and of the U.N., became more and more attractive to me as an area to work in, as an area to become

familiar with and to specialize in. So you could say that, oh, probably for a year, maybe longer, before I went to Geneva in 1951, I had already been leaving the security areas with respect to the United Nations and had gone over to the economic and social and human rights areas more. I think I was more and more disenchanted with American policy at this time too. I don't think I was a

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wholehearted believer in NATO in 1949, It seemed to me that this was a passive admission that the United Nations had failed to live up to its promise and its expectations, and with the United States taking the initiative that it did in establishing NATO, for whatever reasons, good, bad, or unjustifiable, it had that effect, both politically, domestically, and on the international scene, and personally on me.

I think this showed up in my work. I don't think I was as enthusiastic about this side of things as I used to be. Moreover, Dean Rusk had left the Bureau of United Nations Affairs when he became Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs. So, I lost the fun, and contact with him, and I was feeling that perhaps I should be succeeded by somebody who was more in sympathy with

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the way things were going at the time. The Korean war in 1950, in one way gave the United Nations a shot in the arm. But then we realized that it was just a happy accident that the United Nations was able to act through the Security Council. It was nothing you could rely on for the future. The Soviet Union was not going to absent itself voluntarily from the Security Council in the future, as they did at the crucial vote in June of 1950 which permitted the United Nations to take action then with respect to Korea, and meant that anything that the United Nations sanction, which was, of course, very important.

I can't say when it was, actually, that I began to hope for a reassignment. It came as rather a surprise. It was early in 1951 that I was approached by the then Director of the Bureau of United Nations Affairs, Jack

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Hickerson, with the idea that I go to Geneva representing the United States there at the regional office of the U.N. and the intergovernmental organizations that had their headquarters in Geneva. I accepted that assignment right away, without any question. I was ready for it, I was glad to get out of the Department I think. I thought that Geneva would be a good place to be; and I was, one might say, glad of the opportunity to work in a different situation.

I keep referring to the "universe" within which I operate. And I use that term to apply to other people and to other things, because I think it's descriptive. It's one of these things like the orbit of the atoms in the atomic nucleus. In a sense, it's a personal universe, but yet, at the same time, it impinges and reacts to and overlaps the

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personal universes of everybody else that you're working with or in the world. Your personal universe is unique; nobody else has an identical one. My personal universe in the State Department had different parameters as the term goes these days, than it did earlier. Or, to use another metaphor, it had different inhabitants (I'm not talking about the individuals in a personal sense, but as factors) than it had before. I couldn't go to Geneva as a State Department officer, because I was in the State Department as a professional officer. It meant that I had to be designated a Foreign Service Reserve officer, and I went as a Foreign Service Reserve officer, Class I.

This was in the period when Henry Wriston, the President of Brown University, had been brought in to make a study and recommendations of how to take care of all these people who had

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been brought into the Government, and particularly to the State Department and OSS and others, during the war, and didn't want to leave the Government service. So, he recommended what was called Wristonization, or lateral, transfer. Lateral transfer from a position in a professional service at a certain grade, to the Foreign Service, or the Foreign Service Reserve, at a corresponding grade in salary, without having to go through all the formal preliminaries. One could be made a Foreign Service Reserve officer by designation of the Secretary of State. He couldn't be a Foreign Service officer without designation by the President, and this required the advice and consent of the Senate. I was a Foreign Service Reserve officer when I went to Geneva in June, 1951, and I was there until June 1953.

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MCKINZIE: When you took that position, did you anticipate at that time that you might stay on in the State Department, have this experience in Geneva, come back, stay in the Foreign Service in one way or another?

BLAISDELL: I think it was in my mind, but there was always the likelihood that there'd be many a slip between the cup and the lip. I had been on the edge of being blanketed into the permanent Civil Service when I was in the Department of Agriculture. I was in an excepted position, and the Secretary's office there and from time to time Congress, would authorize blanketing in people in these excepted positions. On one or two occasions I thought I was already in. As a matter of fact, I had a physical examination on one or two occasions required for entrance into the permanent Civil Service, But, for one reason

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or another, it never came off. I had the same experience in Geneva, under this lateral transfer. It was possible under the laws and the regulations to transfer a person laterally from the Foreign Service Reserve to the Foreign Service. It would require appointment by the President, to be

sure, but this was usually possible -- though there is a certain procedure involved and there was an oral examination evolved too. But I was never able to make this.

Partly this was due to me, but partly it was due to other things too. When I left Washington for Geneva in 1951 there had been some talk that I should be appointed a Foreign Service officer, Class I, and counselor of Embassy in Bern, Switzerland. This was all tied up with the status and the nature of the delegation which the State Department maintained in Geneva.

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We had our regular diplomatic mission in Bern under an Ambassador, a chief of mission. But in 1951 there was a consulate general in Geneva, which was unusual, because usually a city the size of Geneva didn't rate a consulate general, it was a consulate at the best, but this was a consulate general. But there was also a body of officers, professional people, with a small supporting staff - - clerical, administrative and fiscal, clerical primarily -- which went to make up what was called the Permanent United States Delegation to the International Organizations at Geneva. When I was sent to Geneva I was made the deputy chief of that delegation. The chief of the delegation was the Ambassador in Bern, and I was the deputy chief in Geneva. We did not have a separate mission in Geneva. The Consulate General provided us with clerical

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services, with administrative services, with fiscal services, and yet those of us in this relatively small State Department delegation had diplomatic privileges, which the members of the Consulate General did not have.

Well, this made for friction. In addition it made for an untidy organizational structure. This was all tied up with the fact that the ambassador in Bern was a chief of mission, of which the permanent delegation in Geneva was part -- it was an untidy situation altogether.

I was to be made counselor in the mission in Bern, but also deputy chief of the mission in Geneva. This was talked of, and there was a lot of infighting in Washington over this thing. I don't think the geographical offices, particularly the Bureau of Western

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European Affairs wanted another mission in Western Europe, even under a deputy chief with a Foreign Service officer as head of it. They didn't want one holding the office of counselor because counselor in a mission, as you know, is usually the second or third highest ranking officer in the mission. Sometimes he is also the deputy chief of mission, which means that he is the second officer. Where there is a deputy chief of mission and there is a counselor, the counselor and the deputy chief of mission are usually of the same grade and in the Foreign Service, Class I. Well, you can see the problem.

I had the people in Washington who were pushing me for this job. There were people in Washington who didn't want me to get the job, The result was a standoff. I was in Geneva two years and never became

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counselor of Embassy. And I never became Foreign Service officer, Class I, either.

Now, this was not entirely due to the manipulation in people of Washington. I had the feeling that even though there was a change in administration in Washington. The Republicans under Eisenhower came in January '53, and we had some changes in the representation at Geneva, not the permanent delegation, but the people who came there. Most particularly Mrs. Roosevelt was replaced by Mary Lord, as our representative on the Human Rights Commission. It held its meetings from time to time in Geneva. So Mrs. Roosevelt no longer came to Geneva and Mrs. Lord did. This was an indication of the change of things that was taking place in Washington.

Mrs. Lord was a fine woman and a very

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able woman, and in many ways she upheld the position of the United States every bit as well as Eleanor Roosevelt. But, after all, there was only one Eleanor and nobody could take her place, and Mary Lord came into a very, very difficult position there, but she handled it very, very well. She was in a very awkward position, but she did it.

This was the time when the policy decision was pending in Washington about whether the United States would sign and ratify a human rights convention, pursuant to the Human Rights Declaration which had been adopted in 1948. Eleanor Roosevelt, who had participated in the drafting of the Human Rights Convention from the beginning and had taken the position tacitly assuming that the United States would sign such a convention, now was replaced by Mrs. Lord.

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The thing that Mrs. Lord had to do, on instructions from Washington, was to announce in the Human Rights Commission that the United States would not sign the Human Rights Convention. This was tied up with the Genocide Convention, and the so-called Bricker Amendment, which was very prominent in Washington at that time and had stirred up a lot of domestic differences. This was long before civil rights became the thing that it did later on, but the rumblings were beginning to be heard, even in those days, in '52 and '53 and thereabouts.

Well, Mrs. Lord had to make that unpleasant announcement. The other delegations took this as an indication that the United States was not going to be the tower of strength and the innovator and the pioneer in the field of human rights internationally, that everything

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that had gone on since 1945 had indicated it would. This was a very unpleasant position to have to take, but she did it very well, I will say that.

The United States was a member of the International Refugee Organization at the same time. This organization goes back to the end of the war and the problem of relief and rehabilitation. The State Department had kept the whip hand over the representation in the IRO as well as in the position of the United States with respect to refugees in Europe and elsewhere.

I was appointed an alternate delegate to the IRO.

The IRO was recognized as a temporary organization and the United States took a prominent part in negotiating with the other governments members of IRO for a succeeding organization to be called the Inter-Governmental

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Committee for European Migration, ICEM. Hugh Gibson was the director of IRO for the short space of time just before it was phased out and the ICEM came into being. Hugh Gibson was a diplomat of the old school. He was a young Foreign Service officer at the time of World War I. He came into prominence in the United States and Europe and at the time of the disarmament conference that the United States took part in on the edges of the League after World War I. Hugh Gibson suffered from a polio injury; he was an infantile paralysis victim as a child. And he's walked with a limp ever since. He carried this limp with him all his life, It was quite an obvious limp, and he tells this story on himself.

He represented the United States at disarmament meetings in Europe for many, many

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years in the twenties and the thirties. This job he had in Geneva in 1952 and '53 was his last job. He died not long after that. Somebody asked him why the President felt that he could represent the United States at a military and naval conference on disarmament when he had no experience in this. And he said, "Well, I don't know, but maybe the fact that I had a limp and looked as if I'd gotten it by pacing the deck on a warship might have had something to do with it."

He was a very fine man; I enjoyed him very much. We became very close friends, he was a widower I think, and he was lonely in Geneva.

The ICEM was the successor organization to the IRO. President Eisenhower had appointed to represent us in the council of the ICEM,

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a woman by the name of Dorothy Houghton, who had been quite prominent in Republican politics as a co-chairman of the Citizens for Eisenhower, both in 1952 and 1956. She had also been the president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. She had been appointed to the

job of refugee adviser in the State Department to the Secretary of State. As such she was sent to Geneva to represent the United States in the council of the ICEM.

Mrs. Houghton turned out to be a charming lady, and she and I and my wife became very fond of each other. I was able to help her out in Geneva. She came there just as wet behind the ears as anybody you could imagine, and yet she carried it off well. I'll hand it to her. George Warren had represented the United States in the IRO council meetings all these years. He was slotted to do pretty much the same thing, he thought, when the ICEM was set up.

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Then Mrs. Houghton was appointed and she was designated by the President to represent us in Geneva at the ICEM meeting. George came along and he sat in the meeting there, the opening meeting, because Mrs. Houghton had been delayed in getting down from Paris because the Embassy officer in Paris had failed to get her to the airport in time to catch her plane. She had to drive from Paris down to Geneva in order to get to this meeting, and she came in after the meeting had started. This was her first appearance, first appearance in an international forum, official international forum, her first appearance representing the State Department, the United States. It was a very awkward position for her, but naturally representing the United States and with the United States kicking in the amount of money that it did to get the ICEM started and to keep it

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going, everybody was waiting to see what she would say.

Well, as I say, she carried it off beautifully. She had poise; she had grace; she had diplomacy and tact; she was a striking looking woman; she carried it off with dignity and with just the finest performance I ever saw. But after the meeting my wife and I went up to her and said to her, "We're so glad to see you," and we wanted to hear all about her experiences because we knew she had had them.

And she grabbed my wife by the arm and said, "I want to see you more than anybody else; where's the lady's room?"

Well, she turned out to be a fine woman as I say, and we became great friends. She did a very good job on representing the United States on the ICEM. It was great to

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work with her; it was just a pleasure because she was so appreciative; she was more than adequate in her grasp of the situation, although she needed quite a lot of filling in and briefing on background and things of that kind.

She came just at the time that Mary Lord came to succeed Eleanor Roosevelt at the Commission on Human Rights, and these two prima donnas -- because they were prima donnas -- were in

Geneva at the same time. I was supposed to be helpful to both of them and see that they didn't get into each other's hair, and that nobody got into their hair. Well, I think I carried it off pretty well, even though I was a Democrat and Mrs. Lord and Mrs. Houghton were Republican. Well, I did pride myself that I was able to work with both of them, and did it well.

There was a very interesting little

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story that goes with this. In my position I like to do quite a lot of entertaining when people from the United States and from Washington came to Geneva, We wanted to give a dinner party for Mrs. Houghton. Mrs. Lord was there at the same time. My wife said, "We can't give a dinner party for Mrs. Houghton, without giving a dinner party for Mrs. Lord."

So she set up two dinner parties and Mrs. Lord and Mrs. Houghton naturally learned about each other's party, but they were on different nights, So Mrs. Lord came to Dorothy Houghton and said, "What is this, I thought our dinner party was on such and such a night?"

And she said, "No, it's on such and such a night."

And she said, "Well, do you think Mrs. Blaisdell has made a mistake?" And so they both came to Mrs. Blaisdell and said, "What

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is the date of our dinner party?"

And she said, "Well, Mrs. Houghton is on such and such a date, and Mrs. Lord is on another day." And she said, "You don't think I've have put two prima donnas at the same dinner party do you?"

Well, it was great. It was this kind of thing you see made the job interesting. There were other things of course.

Now, we did a very good job (and I'm saying we for the United States), in the IRO and in the ICEM. The IRO was phased out with a very successful record, and the ICEM did come in. They took over quite a few of the principal staff people from IRO so that there was no loss of continuity and programming and things of that kind. The money was never enough, but the United States continued to kick in the major share and so there was always enough money to keep the thing going. Hugh Gibson served for a short time, as

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I say, as the director. All in all, I think that was one of the things that the United States could feel most proud of -- the way we kept that thing going. The other countries represented on the ICEM appreciated the fact that the whole refugee operation was not allowed to fall flat, that it was

continued, that the ICEM took over many of the standards and criteria that the IRO had used in the selection of refugees and in the transport of refugees and the assignment of refugees to particular countries because these countries were getting more and more selective of the people that they wanted. Australia and Canada, for example, who were among those who took the largest relative portion of the remaining refugees in Europe, naturally didn't want "anybody." They wanted people who could be assimilated, and

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this is what happened.

We happened to be in Australia in 1965 and saw some of these people who had been transported out there under the IRO and ICEM. They referred to them out there as the new immigrants. They were quite different in their racial background and cultural background from the earlier people who had come in. It was largely due to the selection standards that these two organizations used. They were able to pick out people that would fit the local requirements that the Australian Government, and the Canadian Government set up.

The ICEM is still operating and that is how long ago, 1953 , and this is 1973 , that's a long time for this kind of an operation.

MCKINZIE: You mentioned the Senate Committee Subcommittee on Refugees.

BLAISDELL: Yes. Well, there were two congressional committees that I had to deal with in my period in Geneva. One was John Rooney's. He was the chairman of the State Department appropriations subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. The other was a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Refugees. They came to Geneva to look into the activities of the United States in Geneva and also because they wanted to buy some watches, and Geneva was a wonderful place to buy watches, of course.

Let me talk about the Senate subcommittee first. Mrs. Blaisdell and I gave a luncheon for Senator [Willis] Smith from North Carolina and his wife, Senator and Mrs. [Robert] Henrickson of New Jersey, Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin and Mrs. Wiley. They came to Geneva in 1952. If I remember correctly this is when the Republicans

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had a majority in the Senate, so that Alexander Wiley, a Republican, was the chairman of that subcommittee and he was in charge of that delegation.

The Democrats still had a majority in the House. So that when John Rooney came, he was a Democrat, he was chairman of that State Department appropriation subcommittee.

I think that Senate subcommittee on refugees under Wiley had mixed reasons for wanting to come to Geneva at that time. But, it did want to find out a little bit, I think, about what the United States was doing in Geneva, a perfectly legitimate motive for a Senate committee on refugees.

This was just the time, as I've just said, when the IRO was being phased out and the new ICEM was coming into being. This was naturally an operation that they were interested

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in, but there were two other factors that I think were "recognizable" -- not to put it stronger. One was that Alexander Wiley was a member of the Oxford movement, a Buchmanite, and they had their world headquarters at Caux just above Geneva in the mountains. They were having a world meeting and Wiley, who had lost his wife a year or so earlier, had married his secretary. They were newlyweds. As a matter of fact, I think they had been married maybe a month when they came out in the spring of 1952. She was a Buchmanite, and the report was that she had converted him to this way of thinking, and that the two of them were trying to persuade their colleagues on their subcommittee to become Buchmanites. I don't think they were ever successful, but I do remember both Hendrickson and Smith alluding to this in conversation.

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Well, they both had their feet on the ground and they probably had already taken Wiley's measure. He was not a very great heavyweight, you know; a nice enough chap, but a little uncouth and apparently a good enough politician, but one of these combinations of people.

Anyhow, the Wiley's did promote an excursion to Caux and included all the other members of the subcommittee with their wives. So they all went up there one day -- and it's not very far up there, you know, you can drive up there from Geneva maybe in an hour or two hours, a very pleasant place, very lovely. But this sort of colored the atmosphere of Geneva, while they were there when they were supposed to be looking into the refugee work.

The third thing was that Geneva was a wonderful shopping center. Everybody did it.

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The shopkeepers and the Americans there aided and abetted this tendency of Americans to shop in Geneva. My colleague in the consulate general had a sort of standard route that he took these people on, and people that he knew would give them good prices on watches and cameras and tape recorders and all of these things for which Geneva is famous. It sort of irritated me. I tried to soft peddle it as much as I could, but I couldn't do anything. As I say, Wiley was a nice enough person, but three things he did rubbed me the wrong way. One was that this committee was entertained by the High Commissioner for Refugees, Von Hoeven Goodhart, at a reception. We all came, including that Senate delegation. But Wiley couldn't keep his hands off his new wife, and it became very embarrassing for all of the rest of us in the American delegation.

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The second thing was that he started asking pointed questions about who paid for the luncheon that Mrs. Blaisdell and I gave for them at the au Pere du Lac, one of the restaurants in Geneva.

The regulations of the Department in this connection are relevant. The State Department makes available to its missions a certain amount of what's called representation money. This is money which can be spent under the authority of the chief or deputy chief of mission for enhancing the position of the United States with reference to foreign governments. So the rule is that if you entertain representatives of other governments than the United States, it's legitimate to use this money. But if you entertain only Americans -- from the Congress or from the Government -- this is not a legitimate use of representation money. This was rather

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a sore point, because the consulate general had no representation money, and we did. But we had to be very careful how we used it, obviously. So this luncheon that we gave was in honor of the Senate subcommittee and the other guests were Americans in Geneva, both official and unofficial. So, we were not able to use representation money and we paid for this out of our own pocket.

Toward the end of the luncheon Wiley asked in a loud voice, so that almost everybody could hear it, and this was a luncheon of 24 people or something like that, "I want to know who's paying for this lunch, This isn't being paid out of representation money I hope."

And my colleague Millard Kanestruck who happened to be sitting right next to him, intervened and said, "No, Mr. Senator, I happen

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to know that Mr. and Mrs. Blaisdell are paying for this out of their own pocket."

Well, the third thing was this. At one of our briefing sessions with this committee in the Consulate General, where I had my office, Wiley turned up from one of these shopping expeditions with about six wristwatches on his lower left forearm. He put his arm up on the desk like that and unbuttoned his shirt, and rolled down his shirt and coat sleeve and showed all these watches that he had acquired. Everybody looked at it, of course, He said, "I just want everybody to know that I've got lots of time on my hands."

MCKINZIE: What about Congressman Rooney? Dean Acheson was kind of contemptuous of Congressman Rooney.

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BLAISDELL: Well, Rooney was an SOB, there's no doubt about it, He was out to find things, to find people in the wrong, He was scheduled to come to Geneva in 1952 and he never came. At least he never came near me, and I was supposed to be prepared to brief him on the mission there.

In 1953 the Department sent a telegram that he would be coming with the subcommittee and he wanted the Consulate General of the mission to take care of him. Well, this was a directive to go

all out to satisfy Mr. Rooney. Among other things that we did in preparation for Mr. Rooney was to acquaint the director general of WHO, Brock Chisholm and his wife, whom we knew well, with the fact that Rooney was coming to town. I think Chisholm knew of that independently of us, because one of the assistant directors general

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of WHO was a certain Milton Segal. He was in charge of WHO's budget, and of course the United States kicked in the biggest part of the WHO budget as we did all of these intergovernmental organizations. And since this had to go through the Rooney Committee, Segal was kept informed by his personal intelligence service that Rooney was expected in Geneva and he acquainted Brock Chisholm.

Chisholm and his wife offered to give a reception for Rooney and his committee. They went to a lot of trouble and a lot of expense for this. They got a special caterer and they set a date and they got out an invitation list. Then just the day before Rooney was expected, Rooney got on the telephone and said that he didn't want any entertaining, that he wouldn't have any time to

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go to any entertainment. There wasn't anything for us to do except to get in touch with Brock Chisholm and his wife and say we were terribly sorry, but we have this word from Rooney that he doesn't want any entertaining, and so I'm afraid we're going to have to ask you to call it off; which was what they did. He did come. He came to Geneva; I didn't see him. I think he saw the Consul General, but not for more than a few minutes, and he left. I don't think he was in Geneva for more than a couple of hours.

There were a number of intergovernmental organizations with their headquarters in Geneva: International Labor Organization, ILO; World Health Organization, WHO; the WMO, World Meteorological Organization; the IRO, the International Refugee Organization, when they were in existence, and then the

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ICEM. The Inter-Parliamentary Union had its headquarters in Geneva. That wasn't an inter-governmental organization in the strict sense. It was representative of the parliaments and congresses of the member organizations, which was another brand. Then there were one or two others: the International Telecommunications Union, the ITU, was also there. Well, this made a half a dozen major intergovernmental organizations. WHO had its headquarters in the Palais des Nations, the regional headquarters of the U.N. and the old League of Nations Building. That was at first, until they built their new building, which was after we were there in 1953. ITU built a new building; WMO built a new building; the ILO had its own building.

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To each one of these intergovernmental organizations the United States would send a delegation, either annually if the Assembly met annually, or biennially if they met every other year. The International Labor Conference met every year, and this was a special group because the ILO is composed uniquely of representatives of labor and management as well as of governments, which meant that the American delegation had organized labor and organized management as well as governmental representatives on it. Each one of these American delegations would be designated by the President. They would come to Geneva for the period of the sessions of the assemblies of these organizations. They would bring their principal executive officers, and their budget officers and their substantive officers, as well as their delegation

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members. In the case of some of them, I think of the World Health Organization -- the executive council of the WHO would meet semi-annually and prepare the budget for the Assembly which would be read in the following session of the Assembly, We had to work with the American delegation on that. There would be people coming over from the Public Health Service and from the State Department and from HEW to take care of the budget. I would have to meet with them. This was twice a year in addition to the annual World Health Assembly; similarly the ILO.

In some cases this was quite a lot of work because the delegation itself would be quite large. The American delegation was usually made up of maybe eight or ten people -- four or five delegates and four or five alternates. There would be a number of substantive people in addition,

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so that there might be as many as twenty or twenty-five people, I was usually made a member of that delegation, ad hoc. Maybe there would be one State Department person who was a member of the delegation, from the Bureau of United Nations Affairs, and then other departments would be represented. So, as I say, it would be a delegation of maybe twenty to twenty-five people; quite a lot of work.

I didn't get into the substance. I did try to follow the debates. It was a fascinating thing because of the membership in the assemblies of these intergovernmental organizations, in some cases, was larger than that of the United States in the U.N. The divided countries became members of some of the other specialized agencies before they became members of the U.N. I'm thinking of East and West Germany, North and South Vietnam,

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and North and South Korea,

Anyhow, there were some fascinating debates in the World Health Assembly. Just let me allude to two of them.

One is on this matter of whether or not governments should make birth control devices available to the population. In other words, the whole question of population control came up in the WHO

assembly at an early date. This was back in the fifties. This was a very touchy subject, obviously, to all governments, but particularly to those governments like the Philippines and Latin America where there were large elements of Roman Catholics in the population. Well, in most cases the governments of countries with large Roman Catholic populations would be guided by the position of the papacy,

The United States, of course, even at that

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time, was very touchy on this. Planned Parenthood in the United States and Margaret Sanger had been teaching this doctrine for a long time. But it hadn't permeated yet to the elements of government to the point where the government would take it up as an issue of importance. We did our best to keep the thing off the agenda for a long time. We saw eye to eye with many of the other governments on this. Some of them were more farseeing and more progressive than the United States, including some of the western European governments and Canada too. In Canada it was a nip and tuck thing what with the French Canadians opposing the British loyalists. I was there for only two assemblies, but in both of these assemblies the question of population control - they didn't use that term, they had a euphemism that they used - was

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debated hot and heavy, It meant the United States coming to a position and then representing it in the assembly.

MCKINZIE: Who represented the U.S.?

BLAISDELL: I remember one, Van Zyle Hyde, who was an Assistant Surgeon General in the Public Health Service. Another man by the name of Brady, who was in the International Health Section of the Public Health Service. This was before HEW came into being, so it was still the Public Health Service as an autonomous agency,

MCKINZIE: These people that you've mentioned were the people who had to come up with these positions?

BLAISDELL: That's right, And this was all being taken care of by the State Department back home in Washington. There was a Division of

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International Conferences in the Bureau of United Nations Affairs which took care of the mechanics of seeing that delegations were appointed, that they were properly authorized and documented, that all of their travel and all of their procedural problems were taken care of. They didn't deal with the substance. The substance was the responsibility of other divisions and other agencies in the Government -- the Public Health Service obviously in the case of WHO assembly. Howard Calderwood was the State Department expert on Public Health and WHO and

he was always a member of the delegation. He would come over also for the budget session of the executive committee of WHO. I remember one of the better known American novelists was a member.

There was one other thing I do want to

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mention here, because it became very embarrassing for me and I think it was the only thing on which I disagreed with the Government on. I was sorry that I had to represent the United States in connection with it, and I was glad I left when I did, because it was a nasty thing at the time and it became nastier.

You may remember back in the fifties '52 or '53, when the McCarran Act was passed and McCarran and McCarthy and McKeller and Wiley and Bricker -- mostly Republicans -- rode this hobby horse of theirs that the Communists were infiltrating the United States through the United Nations, and that they were using their membership in the U.N. to infiltrate Communists into the Secretariat of the United Nations, and that the State Department hadn't been zealous and resolute enough in checking on the credentials of Americans who were in

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the secretariat.

This was so important and it became so touchy and delicate a domestic problem that the State Department had to knuckle under. I don't know that they had any choice, I doubt it. But I received instructions from the Department to take up with the director general of each one of these intergovernmental organizations the desire of the United States to screen for integrity and political correctness all Americans in the secretariat and all Americans considered for employment by these intergovernmental organizations.

Well, as you can see, this was a nasty thing. This was in the McCarthy days; the Bricker Amendment was pending in the Senate with fifty-four members of the Senate as sponsors. You remember what that was: That the treaty-making power of the United States

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should extend to all matters under the Constitution and the laws as provided by the Constitution, but that no executive agreement should be entered into by the President unless the subject matter was within the purview of the treaty-making power of the United States. That was the substance of it. With 54 sponsors in the Senate it looked for a while there as if this were going to go into the Constitution. They missed getting 2/3 by a hair's breadth, getting 2/3 of the Congress. Well, this reflected the sensitivity and obscurantism, the turning inward of the United States, the isolationist tendency to turn our backs on international cooperation and relations with other countries. This nasty thing about the Communists in the U.N. and all of that was part of it. This was the atmosphere of the time, the

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ambience of the times, and it made my job over there in Geneva just a hell of a job.

I knew some of these people intimately. I spoke of Brock Chisholm. There was Dave Morse, Director General of ILO; the chap who was the secretary general of the meteorological organization, Swaboda by name, a Czech who was a delightful chap, and I knew him well. The man who was director general of the telecommunications union was not. He was glad to knife me and turn the knife, and he made it very unpleasant for me.

I wish that I could have just said that I won't carry out this instruction. I was already headed back to Washington by that time anyhow. Maybe I should have. I certainly felt strongly enough about this thing. There was just enough evidence, or what appeared to be evidence, to substantiate the claims.

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There had been this case of Judith Copeland, the Copeland case. We knew from the way the Soviets used their position in the Secretariat, and in the United Nations itself, that they were instrumental in nailing down for the Soviet Union one of the assistant directors general of the United Nations, and particularly the one on Security Council affairs, and filling that with a party member or somebody who really couldn't pass the test set up in the Charter for employment by the Secretariat. But there was nothing you could do. This was an open secret; everybody knew it. Maybe I should have done differently. Maybe I should have done what [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan did. Moynihan, when he was scheduled to leave India to come back to this country, got a telegram from the Department of State saying that it was necessary to advise the Indian

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Government that it was going to be impossible for the United States to turn over the infrastructure of the AID mission in New Delhi to the government, as had been planned. Moynihan is reported to have refused to deliver it, and sent a telegram back to the State Department, and said, "I can't deliver this message, because I've already acquainted Mrs. Ghandi with the intention of the United States to turn over its AID to the Indian Government, and if you insist, you'll have to get another Ambassador to tell her that."

Maybe I should have done this to the State Department when I got these instructions. Well, a little hindsight you know is always better.

MCKINZIE: Thank you, Professor Blaisdell.

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