

Oral History Interview
with
E. ALLAN LIGHTNER, JR.

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Washington, D.C.
October 26, 1973

by Richard D. McKinzie, Harry S. Truman Library

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MCKINZIE: Ambassador Lightner, our conversation is basically to supplement a series of lectures you gave at the Wright State University in 1970. I believe there are six of those lectures, and so much of what we talk about will be supplemental to points that have been made in those lectures. I wonder if you could provide some information quite separate from the lectures, and that is to talk at some length about how you came to join the Foreign Service, and more than that to talk a little bit about the influences on your thinking about foreign relations in your early life,

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both before you entered the Foreign Service, and then the most important ideas and people in your early career?

LIGHTNER: It's quite a task--tall order. Well, I went to Princeton-- I graduated in 1930 and I majored in history. I had no idea what I wanted to do after college. I had made a trip to Europe in the summer of 1929, an experience that gave me the travel bug in an extraordinary way. Along with this desire to see more of the world was my interest in history and in current events, which predated college. As editor of the Taft School newspaper, I remember writing editorials in 1924 and 1925 criticizing the United States for not being a member of the League of Nations. This kind of thinking originated in discussions in our current events club that was led by a history teacher who sparked my first real interest in foreign affairs.

MCKINZIE: Did they ever call you a frustrated Wilsonian at that point?

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LIGHTNER: Well, they might have. I was a great admirer of Raymond B. Fosdick, who had given a lecture at the school. He was head of an organization that was very strong on America's assuming its share of responsibility in the world, and hence was very much in favor of our being part of the League and working with other nations to try to avoid the international anarchy that preceded World War I.

Well, on that European trip I visited an uncle of mine who was on a sabbatical in Lausanne from Stanford. He'd been a trade commissioner in the Commerce Department years before, and I asked him about careers in Government that would take me abroad. I asked about the diplomatic

and the consular service in particular and he was very encouraging.

In any case, when I went back to college for my senior year I was definitely thinking about the field of international affairs. There was a great deal of idealism in my background. I wasn't interested in making money so much as in finding

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something that would make me feel that I was doing some good in the world. This outlook was based on a long family tradition. At the same time I was having problems in accepting some of the religious beliefs that I'd been brought up on. I accepted much of the philosophy and ethics basic to these beliefs, including the idea that it was important to be of service to others in order to lead a satisfactory life. This was why I didn't look into business opportunities at that time. However, I did look into the possibility of teaching abroad- -this is probably a little long-winded, isn't it?

MCKINZIE: No, no this is fine. Let me interrupt and ask if there was anybody- - any particular staff member or colleague at Princeton--that helped to fill out the view of Wilsonian idealism or whatever you could characterize your basic outlook at that time? At this particular point there was a man at Harvard, named Manley Hudson, who seemed to sort of grab their minds and do something

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like that at that time.

LIGHTNER: Yes, I remember. I believe he was in the Secretariat of the League of Nations at about the same time that Raymond Fosdick was there. But I think of him more in connection with the World Court.

MCKINZIE: Was there the equivalent for you at Princeton at that time?

LIGHTNER: Well, there were several in the history department, but in particular there were the two Professor Halls: Walter P. and C. R. Hall. Walter, better known as Buzzer, was an inspiring lecturer in European History. His series of lectures on the origins of World War I were an eye-opening introduction to the complexities of international relations. But the American history courses I took in 1928 and '29 under C. R. (Beppo) Hall, especially the period after the Civil War, influenced my outlook on the American scene in an indelible way. Professor Hall was a New Dealer

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before there was a New Deal.

MCKINZIE: Professor Hall's approach then was kind of equivalent to- -or a later-day version- - of the progressive view of 1914-1917 of Woodrow Wilson?

LIGHTNER: Yes. It was exactly that. We were studying such problems as the influence of the frontier, the industrial revolution, and where we stood at the turn of the century; the rise of the tycoons like the Rockefellers, the Goulds, the Vanderbilts, etc., labor problems, the Sherman antitrust law. In short, the consequences of a system of laissez faire. We read Upton Sinclair and others who were trying to make the public more socially conscious. This was fascinating stuff and I was exposed to all this before the stock market crash of 1929. My family was quite conservative but I had become a liberal as far as domestic problems were concerned. At least we had developed an awareness of many things that seemed to be wrong with American society, such

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as the distribution of wealth and that sort of thing.

MCKINZIE: You mean the group--whole class of '30?

LIGHTNER: Well, this was Princeton University don't forget, a pretty conservative place.

MCKINZIE: I know.

LIGHTNER: . . . and our small group of Beppo Hall's disciples by Princeton standards was a pretty radical element. We didn't go out and demonstrate against anything in the streets. We were just learners in the vineyard, having our eyes opened to certain conditions in the country. Actually my views on these questions haven't changed much. It wasn't too surprising that when I'd come home on home leave during the Roosevelt years I'd seldom meet a Princetonian who had a good word to say for Roosevelt; but I was sympathetic with the purposes of the New Deal from the beginning.

MCKINZIE: Well then what happened when you got a

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degree from Princeton in 1930, I believe it was, wasn't it?

LIGHTNER: Yes. In the spring of 1930 before graduation I inquired about the possibility of teaching abroad. I found out that there weren't any vacancies at the American University in Beirut, or at Roberts College, but there was an opening for a teacher at the American College in Cairo. I got in touch with them; sent in an application along with a required statement of my religious beliefs. I got a very nice letter back saying that they thought highly of me, but that my attitude and beliefs on religious matters were not positive enough and that perhaps I'd better not pursue the matter any further. I guess that was a fair enough decision from their point of view because I was too close to being a Unitarian to be acceptable to them.

MCKINZIE: So that wrecked, you feel...

LIGHTNER: That ended that. Then I heard that a retired Foreign Service officer named Dewitt

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Clinton Poole was joining the Princeton faculty the year after I graduated to head the new School of Public and International Affairs, which became the Woodrow Wilson School, you know.

MCKINZIE: Yes.

LIGHTNER: I went to hear him talk about his plans for the new school when he visited Princeton toward the end of my senior year. I sought him out afterwards to ask a couple of questions about the Foreign Service. I said I was thinking about trying to go into the Foreign Service, but that I couldn't afford to go to graduate school for a year to study for the exams. I said I had heard that there was a possibility of going into the service by joining as a clerk, without examination, working at a post abroad, studying on the side and taking the exams later at the same post. My question was whether this way of entering the Service through the back door would prejudice one's future career. The second question related to money. I assumed

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I could live on my salary although I realized the Service was comparatively underpaid. The diplomatic Service was long considered a rich man's club. I asked Mr. Poole whether he thought a person without independent means going into the Service in 1930 could swing it over the years. To my relief he answered both questions in an encouraging way. He felt Foreign Service officers in the future were bound to have ever increasing responsibilities, and that the U.S. Government would treat its diplomatic service more and more as professionals and pay them enough to do the job and to support their families. He also felt that there might be some advantage in the additional experience of starting to work right away. I went down to Washington shortly thereafter and applied for a job as clerk, telling them, of course, of my ambition to become a Foreign Service officer. Before leaving Washington I was told they would take me on as a Foreign Service clerk. I was very pleased. I was not at all sure I wanted a career in the

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Foreign Service but I certainly wanted to give it a try.

I returned to Princeton for graduation, expecting to have an appointment to some suitable post--why not Paris, or London, or Rome?--in two or three months. But on graduation day, while walking around the campus in cap and gown, classmate Jack Nelson asked me what I was doing in the next couple of months. When I told him that I had no special plans, he proposed that we each scrape together a hundred dollars or so, and then get a free ride on an oil tanker down to Maracaibo, Venezuela. His old man was an officer of the Gulf Oil Company, and Jack said we could go down there and stay around till our money ran out and then come back the same way. I thought this was great; that I'd get to see something of South America, and then I'd go on to my Foreign Service post later on. Well, while I was down in Maracaibo, staying at the Gulf Oil Company camp, the American Consul asked me to call at his office. When I did later

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that day he showed me a telegram from the State Department reading, "Get in touch with E. A. Lightner, Jr., at the Gulf Oil Company camp and offer him a job as a clerk in your office at \$1,800 a year."

Well, the depression had struck by this time and I did want a job; and I figured it would be no way to start a career by replying, "Thanks very much but I've seen Maracaibo and Venezuela, so I'm returning home and you can give me a more appropriate post in September." Anyway, the next day I accepted the job, cabled the news to my parents and asked them to send me a steamer trunk with some clothes, because I only had a suitcase with me. And there I was in Maracaibo - my first Foreign Service post.

MCKINZIE: In the strange way that the Department works do you think they just . .

LIGHTNER: They were saving transportation, that's for sure. They had got in touch with my father

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for some reason or other, and hearing where I was, decided to offer a job right there where there happened to be a vacancy. It turned out to be a fascinating year I must say.

MCKINZIE: Well you had a number of Latin American posts then before you went to Europe.

LIGHTNER: Well, having started with Spanish in Maracaibo and after passing the Foreign Service examinations, I asked to remain in Latin America. The exams at that time consisted of three days of intensive testing on a whole lot of subjects, including some I hadn't had courses in in college. I boned up for the exams after hours in my sweltering hotel room in Maracaibo. After squeaking by the written exams in December I came back to Washington (on an oil tanker) in May to take the orals. When Chief Byington told me I had passed, he asked where I'd like to be assigned and I suggested any one of the South American capitals. Asked to be more specific, I proposed Santiago, Chile.

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Some Latin American hands that I had run into had spoken particularly highly of that area. I was told there was an opening in Buenos Aires, but I replied that I had heard the cost of living was very high in Buenos Aires and I doubted I could afford it. Mr. Byington said, "Well, maybe you've got a point there; we'll let you go to Santiago." So I went to Santiago after Maracaibo.

MCKINZIE: Without dwelling on this unduly, looking back on that period of the thirties now in U.S. diplomacy in Latin America what is your view of the charge leveled by David Green and some other people, who are semi-revisionists, that U.S. diplomacy was paternalistic toward Latin America?

LIGHTNER: You're talking about our policy toward all of Latin America?

MCKINZIE: Yes. Particularly the larger countries like Chile.

LIGHTNER: Well, you know, it's a very seamy record.

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I was posted in Latin America from 1930-1937. I was in Chile in 1931 and 1932. Our policy was already changing in 1930 from the policy associated with Theodore Roosevelt, carrying the Big Stick, taking over the territory for the Panama Canal, and later sending the Marines down to Haiti, Nicaragua and so on, that period of blatant use of power and of dollar diplomacy. Many people tend to forget that this tough policy was on its way out before Franklin Roosevelt instituted his Good-Neighbor policy toward Latin America. He took over that name and exploited it, but the policy itself had been started several years before by [Henry] Stimson and Hoover. They had realized that the time had come for some drastic changes, and although they hadn't used the phrase "good-neighbor" they were beginning to act in that way.

Now this wasn't the end of the exploitation by American business of Latin America and other backward countries. It is a very difficult thing to

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talk about, because if you look at it from one point of view you make it sound all bad, all exploiting in the worst possible sense. But investment of foreign capital in backward countries creates jobs for people which improves living standards and educational opportunities. Often the foreign firms produce products for export, with the proceeds coming back into the country, as well as to the stockholders of the "exploiting" company. It's not an all-good or all-bad situation.

When I was in Chile I never felt that the American copper companies were bad for the country. I knew the miners' wages were low by American standards but I never felt it was an obligation of the foreign companies to lead a social revolution in the host country. I had a chance to study the copper industry there because I found it wasn't necessary for me to spend all my time desk bound in the consular section. This gave me the opportunity to research and write a basic report on the copper industry of Chile. I visited many

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of the mines, including those of the big Anaconda and Braden Copper Companies and...

MCKINZIE: Was Kennecott there?

LIGHTNER: Kennecott, oh, yes. They had bought the Braden Copper Company, which was the name used locally. Well, as I said, I didn't have the feeling in those days that the copper industry was doing Chile any harm. Chile was a two-product economy. They had copper and also nitrates.

This was before nitrates were synthetically manufactured. Chilean nitrates were mined, mainly in the desert region back of Antofagasta. Well, you know, without these industries, both of which depended upon foreign investments, foreign management and foreign know-how, there wouldn't have been anything of value produced in the country except for some farm products. Wages and working conditions were below American standards but normal to Chile, and the alternative to the mines in the thirties was unemployment with little if any unemployment compensation.

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Looking at the whole picture one can ask the question whether Chile or any other developing country wouldn't have been better off without attempting to industrialize or to invite foreign exploitation of resources. Is this kind of "progress" worth it? Over many years I've seen both sides of the problem in several developing countries, including Libya, when our AID program was phasing out. All I can say is that one gets more and more philosophical about these things as one tries to believe in the long term benefits of some of our programs when at the same time one notes a new set of problems that our programs have helped create. There are more questions than answers in this situation, which I suppose is true of any discussion of the effects of industrialization.

MCKINZIE: Okay. Well, I didn't want to embroil you in too long a discussion, but I was interested in your reflections on that. I wonder if you could talk about how you got out of the Latin American thing,

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and how you happened to be assigned to Riga of all places on the eve of the Second World War?

LIGHTNER: Well, I had been eight years in Latin America, in four countries, and more posts than that. I had to make a decision around this time, when it was time to leave Buenos Aires in December 1937, whether to become a Latin American specialist -- stay there pretty much the rest of my life--or not. I opted for a change to an area closer to where the action was. The chief of personnel was sympathetic; there was an opening in Riga and that's where I was assigned. I must say it was a contrast in every respect; it was also a fascinating place and a dramatic time to be arriving in the Baltic States (February 1938). (I should add that there was also a personal problem I had at that time which made it desirable for me to leave Buenos Aires, involving a young lady with whom I had become infatuated but could not marry under Roosevelt's policy forbidding marriages to non-Americans.)

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MCKINZIE: Did you meet Loy Henderson when you first arrived in Riga?

LIGHTNER: Oh, no, he was not in Riga then. He'd married a Latvian girl when he was in Riga in his early career. But he was running the Eastern European work of the Department when I came up from Buenos Aires. That was when I first ran into him. No, I never became a Russian expert, although when I went to Riga I had to decide whether to study Russian there. The

Latvians over the age of thirty were tri-lingual. They spoke Lettish, their native language, as well as Russian and German. I decided to study German. Several of my Foreign Service colleagues studied Russian in Riga and in nearby Tallinn taking advantage of good tutors and Russian-speaking friends. These included people like Eddie [Edward] Page, Norris Chipman, Fred Reinhardt . .

MCKINZIE: Elbridge Durbrow?

LIGHTNER: Well, I don't believe Durby was ever assigned

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to Riga. I have already mentioned that Loy Henderson served there but he was never an expert in the Russian language.

MCKINZIE: May I ask, even though you chose to study German instead of Russian, if Loy Henderson had any influence let's say on the way you sort of viewed things Russian? Charles Bohlen has said, and Elbridge Durbrow kind of underscores it- -that Henderson is probably the teacher of a whole generation of our Russian specialists. That his attitude had been sort of grafted on to their own. He was seminal in their own thinking. Would you attribute that role to Henderson?

LIGHTNER: Yes, but I'd qualify it somewhat. I mean Loy Henderson is a kind of a hero to several generations of Foreign Service officers who had anything to do with the Russian area, and I include myself in that, although my experience in the Soviet Union was limited to only one year. I was on my way home on home-leave when the

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Germans attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941 and I never returned.

Loy was quite a bit senior to the Kennan-Bohlen-Thompson-Durbrow-Page generation of our Russian experts. For many years he headed the Russian section of the State Department. He was the most influential official in Russian policymaking during the time this new generation of experts was coming along. I too believe he had great influence on the thinking of generations of Foreign Service officers in the Russian field and that they valued his judgment in later years as well. He was a great teacher, but I also note that the influence of a teacher is likely to be limited in later years and hardly likely to have a direct bearing on the decisions of mature officers who would rely on their own more recent experience and judgment. Certainly Kennan and Bohlen, and I guess Thompson as well, were not nearly as hard line in their later years as Loy Henderson has remained.

MCKINZIE: You don't think any one man had that much

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influence over other mature officers? I don't dispute that at all, but I recall that Chip Bohlen made a speech to the State Department Retired Officers Club last summer in which he said very laudatory things about Henderson, and about Henderson's principles of being tough. That those attitudes were transferred almost directly to what you say was the whole generation of diplomats.

LIGHTNER: Well, I suppose that's true in a way, but I wouldn't attribute that attitude so much to Loy or any other respected individual. Everyone I've known who served in the Embassy in Moscow developed an early appreciation of the necessity of being tough in dealing with Soviet officials. In my day when there were large numbers of what we called parlor pinks writing and talking idealistically, naively, about the great Russian experiment, we in the Embassy used to grumble, "If you would only come to the Soviet Union for a couple of months or weeks and see for yourself what it's like, you'd change your tune fast enough."

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MCKINZIE: Was there anything memorable about your stay in Moscow in 1940-41 after the legation in Riga had been closed? I gather it was a very small U.S. mission there. What would you call it, a sort of rear guard kind of thing?

LIGHTNER: You mean rear guard in the sense of...

MCKINZIE: The U.S. never really acquiesced in the absorption of the Baltic States. Rear guard in the sense of providing someone there to give a U.S. presence in Latvia and so on.

LIGHTNER: Wait a minute, we're not talking about our Latvian mission anymore; that had disappeared.

MCKINZIE: Right.

LIGHTNER: You're quite right. The United States has never recognized in a legal sense the Soviet takeover, but weren't you asking about the Embassy in Moscow?

MCKINZIE: Well, I understood that you went from Latvia to Moscow.

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LIGHTNER: Yes. But the entire staffs of the American legations in the three Baltic States were reassigned at that time. The assignments to Moscow had no political significance.

MCKINZIE: Oh, I see, but not particularly to represent .

LIGHTNER: Oh, no, no.

MCKINZIE: Okay.

LIGHTNER: From Riga Fred Reinhardt and I were transferred to Moscow. We were both

assigned to the consular section, where we had a lot of work trying to help the people who had some claim to American citizenship who were living in that part of Poland that had been taken over by the Red Army. For example, there were people who had been born in the United States and then they were taken to Poland a few months afterward. They were more Poles than anything else, but they had a claim to American citizenship. Well, after

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half of Poland had been overrun by the Russians in September 1939, courtesy of Adolph Hitler, many of these Poles with a claim to American citizenship tried to get in touch with the American Embassy in Moscow to see if they could get U.S. passports and go back to the United States. So we had lots of business with the Russian foreign office to try to make arrangements to get these people out.

This is where I first learned something about how to deal successfully with the Russians, because the Russians would never pay any attention to or even answer our notes or communications with respect to these individuals. Then we found that we had a possibility of doing some real horse-trading. You see, at this time the Russians were sending quite large groups of technicians to the United States for training in such industries as RCA Victor and Curtiss-Wright. We found that the only way we could get the Russians to give any kind of service to us in getting exit permits

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for these people with claims to American citizenship was to hold up the visas that the Russians wanted for their technicians going to the States. I remember there was a young Polish farm boy with an American birth certificate who had been sentenced to five years in jail for failing to register a shotgun. There were other cases where prison sentences up to ten years had been handed down for the most minor offenses. Most of our cases, however, were caused by Soviet refusals for no reason at all to grant travel permits to these people to come to Moscow to the American Embassy. The Embassy's diplomatic notes on their behalf went unanswered until we held up issuance of visas to the Russian technicians. The Foreign Office would inquire why we were holding up visas for twenty-five technicians who were waiting in Vladivostok or at a Black Sea port to leave for the United States. It was very urgent because they had to make certain connections in order to fulfill their contract. So we would inform the

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chief of the American section, "Well, we are extremely busy these days and just haven't been able to get around to it, but if you could possibly manage to answer our notes fifteen through thirty-five with respect to the Americans waiting to visit the Embassy, it might help us to get to the visa cases." The effect was magical and we used this ploy successfully again and again. I never forgot this lesson in the importance of holding some winning cards in any negotiations with the Soviets.

MCKINZIE: I see. Why did you leave Moscow for Stockholm? Was there any particular reason why you left the Soviet post?

LIGHTNER: Oh, well, in the spring of 1941 we packed up the confidential archives of the Embassy in fifteen huge mail sacks. Someone had to take these confidential archives out on the TransSiberian Railway, by boat to Tokyo, and then put them on a President Lines vessel to ship them back to the States. I was overdue for home leave,

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but I didn't want to go and take these things if there was any chance that the war might get hotter around there. In other words, if the Germans might attack, naturally I didn't want to miss anything like that. So the question was, what were the chances of a German attack? And the betting in the friendly Allied diplomatic corps around May 1941 was about sixty-forty that there would not be a German attack that summer. This was early June and already conditions between Russia and Germany and the Polish area were such that it was pretty late in the season for this kind of attack. The Germans and the Russians had made some trade accommodation around this time, which was the favorable side.

MCKINZIE: But why return the confidential archives of the Embassy? Was that a routine thing?

LIGHTNER: Well, we knew there was going to be a German attack on Russia at sometime.

MCKINZIE: Oh, I see.

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LIGHTNER: This was pretty clear.

MCKINZIE: The question was when it would be.

LIGHTNER: That's right. It seemed prudent in the spring of 1941 for the Embassy to do a little streamlining. I left for Vladivostok with the confidential archives on June 6. I was on the ship two weeks later between Vladivostok and Tsuruga, Japan, when word came over the radio that the Germans had attacked the Russians on the 21st of June. On the boat with me was John Scott and his wife and two kids, whom I'd known in Moscow. Actually our Ambassador [Laurence A.J Steinhardt was instrumental in making it possible for Scott's wife, who was a Russian girl, to leave with her husband. A short time before the Soviet Government had told Scott he must get out of the Soviet Union; they declared him persona non grata, because he'd filed several stories on a trip to Istanbul predicting that the Germans were going to attack the Soviet Union that summer. Steinhardt

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said he couldn't go unless the Russians would permit his wife and children to leave with him. We had been working unsuccessfully to get her permission to leave for several years, but this time the Ambassador's intercession worked. So we were on the boat- -hardly had left the Soviet Union- -when the thing that Scott had predicted and the reason for his being thrown out

occurred.

MCKINZIE: I see. So you rode in a sense shotgun on the confidential archives of the Embassy on the Trans-Siberian Railroad?

LIGHTNER: Yes.

MCKINZIE: It must have been about the last major shipment out then, wasn't it?

LIGHTNER: I'm not sure, but you may recall that a large number of the Embassy staff were sent back to the United States shortly after the hostilities began and I believe at that time shipments of Embassy property, including some archives that had

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not been burned, were made. This was also the time when the hard core of the Embassy moved with the Soviet Government out to Kuibyshev.

MCKINZIE: Why London in '44?

LIGHTNER: Why did I go?

MCKINZIE: Yes.

LIGHTNER: Well, after Moscow I had my home leave and was actually assigned to Rome, but then Pearl Harbor came along so I didn't go to Rome. I went to Stockholm instead. At that time it was a fascinating listening post, you know, like Lisbon, and Berne, and Istanbul. My duties at the American Legation had nothing to do with Swedish-American affairs, but were to follow what was going on in occupied Norway. I was in touch with the Norwegians in Stockholm, refugees like Willy Brandt, who at that time was a Norwegian citizen. When he left Germany early in the Nazi period he fled to Norway where he learned Norwegian

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and became active in the Norwegian Labor Party. Of course, he had to leave Norway when the Nazis came in, and along with a lot of other Norwegians, he took refuge in Stockholm, working with the Norwegian underground resistance back in Norway. There were many sources in Stockholm to help me keep track of what was going on in occupied Norway -- to a lesser extent in the Baltic States as well, and with the help of a fine group of people, mainly exiles from those countries, I was able to keep the Department informed. That was a very interesting experience for a few years.

But you asked why London? Well, it certainly wasn't because of any background in German affairs, which would have been helpful in my job there. My assignment was to be the Secretary of the U.S. delegation to the European Advisory Commission, which was being set up in London as a result of a decision of the Foreign Ministers meeting in Moscow in December 1943. At this

meeting the American, British, and Russian foreign ministers,

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in discussing the future of Germany, decided to set up this commission to recommend what to do with defeated Germany.

The work of the commission focused on the terms of surrender, also devising the machinery for the Allied control of Germany after it surrendered unconditionally. On the assumption there would be no German Government, the first need was to put something in its place, an Allied military regime presumably. A big question was whether or not you would partition Germany. In either case there would have to be at first zones of Allied occupation. These were some of the things that were worked out in the European Advisory Commission.

I had no particular expertise to contribute and therefore assumed I had been picked because of a suggestion by one of my old friends in the Central European Division, which was responsible for organizing the new Commission. [Henry P.] Leverich in particular had urged me to get into

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German affairs and this assignment certainly brought that about.

MCKINZIE: I wonder if I could ask you to chronicle what happened when you got there and began to work on the committee? Sort of how you got oriented, how the jobs took on, and then something about the activities?

LIGHTNER: The thing I remember most was getting used to the little blitz, and the air raid situation, just adjusting to life in wartime London. The closest I'd come to the war had been in Oslo in April and May 1940 when the airport of Oslo was bombed by the RAF. That was spectacular. The raids happened at night, always, and the display from the German searchlights and the tracer bullets going up was fantastic. Now in London there had been quite a lull in the air raids since the Big Blitz of 1940, the Battle of Britain, but in January and February 1944, shortly after I arrived, they had this "Little Blitz." This was before the V-1 (buzz bomb) and the V-2's, so in

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the Little Blitz they used conventional (prop) aircraft. At that time I had a room on the seventh floor of a big apartment house near the Marble Arch.

I knew about the intrepid British--how brave they had been all during the 1940 Blitz, and I decided that I was not going to be any less brave now when all hell would break loose around midnight, night after night. I couldn't tell which were the bombs coming down and which were the big antiaircraft shells that were going up. It was a fantastic noise and a huge fireworks of lights. The walls would shake and there was a terrific din. I was alone and my imagination got working and I'd think, "Gee, supposing I were to be maimed. How would I get help?" But then I

would pull the covers over my head and wait it out. After suffering through these raids every night for about a week I happened to ask somebody in the same apartment house about the air raid shelters and who used them. I was told, “Well,

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you know, we don’t use the shelters but we do go down to the second floor and sit in the corridor there. Nobody stays in their rooms; don’t be a fool.” So from that time on when the siren would sound I’d pull on a sweater and a pair of flannels over my pajamas .

MCKINZIE: And go down to the second floor.

LIGHTNER: That’s right; and there I’d stay until the “all clear,” sitting on the floor with a flashlight to read by.

What was it you asked before I got sidetracked?

MCKINZIE: What you did in the EAC?

LIGHTNER: Well, our delegation was a very small one. Our chief, John G. Winant, was the very busy American Ambassador to the Court of St. James. In addition to those duties, he had this new job of being the American representative on the European Advisory Commission, the EAC. The

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British had a full-time man, Sir William Strang, a senior Foreign Office official as their delegate. The Russian delegate was their Ambassador in London, F. T. Gusev. George Kennan was the full-time political adviser to Winant for the European Advisory Commission. I was his assistant and the secretary to the U.S. delegation. When Kennan was replaced by Dr. Philip Mosely in June, I continued as the Assistant Political Adviser.

We had a large military advisory staff under Brigadier General [Cornelius W.] Wickersham--we called him Wicky. He was an Army Reserve officer and New York lawyer. Most of his staff were also Reserve officers who were from the Army’s (G-5) Charlottesville School for Military Government. As is not surprising, since we had a general, we had to have a few colonels, some lieutenant colonels and majors, and on down to a few privates and WACs. Actually we didn’t have enough work to keep them all busy. We also had a couple of Navy types.

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Their nominal boss was Admiral [Harold R.] Stark, who was the senior Navy man in the London area, but he didn’t have too much to do with the EAC. There were also a few Air Force officers assigned to Wickersham’s staff.

The EAC had an initial organizing session in December 1943. Its first real meeting I remember

was on January 14, 1944. Our side was not at all prepared. I don't want to reiterate things that are much better told by my friend, the late Philip Mosely, in his interesting writings on the subject. He has graphically described what happened in Washington to backstop what Winant was doing in London to plan what to do with Germany after the war. But we at the London end certainly felt the effects of that extraordinary situation in Washington. Although the three governments had agreed to set up this European Advisory Commission to undertake this task, the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department in Washington was so completely against the whole proposition that they rather successfully managed

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to sabotage the operation. Their tactic was to slow everything down -- to drag their feet in order to hinder progress in resolving many of the very difficult things that had to be worked out.

MCKINZIE: Was this manifested by the military contingent in London in your relations with them?

LIGHTNER: No, not very much. This illustrates an interesting phenomenon that I observed many times during my career -- the difference between the field point of view and the headquarters point of view. I suppose it is natural for a person who has been working at a post abroad to see things from a different perspective when he returns to Washington to work on the same problems at that end of the line. And when the Washington people come out to the field it is usual for them in fairly short order to come around to the field point of view. Oftentimes all elements in an Embassy will be in agreement on a preferred course of action whereas their respective home agencies in Washington

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will see things differently. Of course there is no question where the decision is ultimately made or on the authority of Washington to oversee field operations to ensure that policy toward a given country takes into account broad, global considerations which might be less evident to representatives in the field. However, that was not the basis for the interagency disagreement in 1944 and 1945.

MCKINZIE: But so far as the U.S. Embassy was concerned in 1944 or early '45, Wickersham was not particularly dragging his feet?

LIGHTNER: Oh, he was gung ho for getting on with the job but you see he had no power. We did what we could do in London, but Washington seldom reacted to our proposals. For example we set about drafting a series of directives to the future military governors of Germany for EAC approval. Wickersham's staff participated and we seconded a certain amount of expertise in the form of professors and other

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civilians in uniform who were stationed or on detail in London. They were invaluable in assisting

in preparing directives in such fields as agriculture, mining, industry, finance, trade, shipping, reparations, elections, education, religion, police, communications, motion pictures and the like. We considered it important to give as many agreed directives as possible to the Allied commanders (military governors) in their zones of occupation because we were proceeding on the basis that before too long there would be one Germany, not a divided Germany, emerging from the rubble.

MCKINZIE: But the nature of that Germany had at that point not been decided and certainly was not . .

LIGHTNER: Well, I'm getting a little ahead of the story by mentioning the directives, which we worked on after the main work was done on the agreements on zones and on the so-called control machinery. So you see we did have the benefit of the philosophy embodied in those basic agreements. Hence, knowing

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that the objectives of restoring a central government would be difficult enough, it seemed prudent to assist the Allied Control Council in Berlin to provide uniform policies for each zone by providing the ACC with these directives which we hoped would be approved by all three governments after going through the EAC. As it turned out without those directives there was very little guidance for the zone commanders because the ACC didn't come up with anything substantial.

In retrospect I must admit that the whole idea of producing agreed policy directives as a means of getting unified treatment of Germany was probably a pipe dream. I think the Russians were determined at an early stage to ensure that their zone developed into a Communist type-Communist-governed state. So even if we had had all these agreements on doing things in a more democratic way, I doubt whether in practice it would have made much difference. But we never tried it out, because lack of Washington approval

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made it impossible to even start negotiating the draft directives in the EAC.

The reason for this extraordinary failure to backstop the EAC delegation, as I understand it, goes back to the War Department's opposition to the idea of deciding before the war's end how Germany was to be occupied and governed. The zoning--they didn't want to discuss that matter because they believed that Germany would probably be occupied by the Russians all the way up to the Rhine. In that case they assumed the Russians would tear up any earlier agreement such as the one that was finally worked out. Well, that could have been true. It is a little ironic that as it turned out it was the Allied forces, not the Red Army, that had advanced beyond their assigned occupation zones. We had to withdraw our troops from a considerable area of Eastern Germany and turn it over to the Russians in order to conform with the agreement that we had signed much earlier.

MCKINZIE: I understand that recently you prepared a

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response to some written questions about the Advisory Commission. I wonder if we could read some of those into this record at this point since we are right in the middle of all that.

I understand that these questions were prepared by a student of British history, and originally he had asked why the Advisory Commission did not proceed with greater expedition, and why there was so little agreement on matters of restitution, on matters of reparation, and on economic disarmament. As I understand, you prepared a statement in response to the question why there was no rapid agreement on any of these things. And then he later supplemented that with specific questions, and I wonder if we could get your response to the original broad question?

LIGHTNER: Yes. He quotes Lord Strang (Sir William Strang became Lord Strang sometime after the war), who was the British representative on the European Advisory Commission, to the effect that the EAC worked slowly, but realistically. I agree with Lord Strang's

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general observation about the work of the EAC. It was under a great handicap, and the slow speed of this work was a result of many different factors. On the American side there was the reluctance of the War Department to support this effort and also President Roosevelt could not make up his mind what to do with defeated Germany. As early as the Quebec Conference he had bought Secretary [Henry J.] Morgenthau's ideas: The Morgenthau Plan--to do everything possible to prevent the Germans from regaining the strength ever again to wage war, by requiring them to exist on an agrarian economy. Then gradually the President pulled back from that extreme position. Yet those ideas permeated much of American thinking, especially in the War Department, right up to the time of Secretary [James F.] Byrnes' important Stuttgart speech in 1946. They were reflected in the basic directive for the occupation of Germany, which was a kind of Bible for all that was done during the early days of the occupation, the paper known as JSC-1067. They also affected Roosevelt's

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thinking on the question of whether to split up Germany. On this issue he seems to have changed his mind several times. Apparently at Yalta there was Big Three agreement for partition. Yet that decision, if it was a decision, was never conveyed to the American delegation to the EAC, which proceeded blithely along on the assumption, which certainly had always been the State Department position, that Germany was to be left intact within its 1937 borders. Nor did we know at the time that the Big Three, having agreed to consider partition, asked Winant and Gusev and Sir Anthony Eden to act as a committee in London to study how this partition decision would affect what they were doing in the EAC. Evidently the principals lost interest in this matter because they raised no objections to the terms of reference for the committee that had been drawn up by Sir William Strang. According to these terms the committee was to consider the basic issue of whether or not Germany should be partitioned, which is quite a bit

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different from the original instructions to see how they could put partition into effect through the EAC. For some reason the committee never became active and produced no recommendations of any kind. One difficulty was the fact that after Yalta the French were admitted to the deliberations of the European Advisory Commission, but Stalin had made it very clear that he did not want to have the French on this special committee to study partition. This made it a pretty hopeless situation for the London Committee, but the...

MCKINZIE: Were you aware at the time of that?

LIGHTNER: I wasn't, no. This was kept out of the EAC and maybe for that reason Winant felt he was acting in his capacity as Ambassador rather than as head of the EAC. Anyway no one on our delegation knew about this matter. In retrospect it probably didn't make any difference whether they wrote partition into the EAC documents or not, because as things worked out, Germany was partitioned.

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The whole philosophy behind the EAC plan for governing Germany and behind the Potsdam Agreement in August 1945 was non-partition. There were zones of occupation in one Germany. At Potsdam it was determined that Germany was to be governed as an economic unit. It was assumed that before long the Germans, under proper directions, would be permitted to form a new democratic government. The military occupation was not supposed to last very long. But it didn't work out that way. In spite of the many meetings of the Allied Control Council, it didn't succeed in governing Germany as a whole. The military governors in each of the four zones of occupation governed their own zones with few ACC directives. So in practice Germany was partitioned from the start.

Then, after 1948 you had the two Germanys -- east and west. I don't want to go into the whole thing, although the story is extraordinary. First you had the British and American zones deciding to act as a unit and then there was Tri-zonia--the three

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Western zones, out of which came the Federal Republic of Germany when it became clear that there was not to be a united Germany.

The Russians were mainly responsible for this but one tends to forget that in the early days of the occupation the French were also responsible for preventing the Potsdam Agreement from being carried out in terms of treating Germany as an economic whole. The French would frequently state their opposition in the ACC, and the Russians would just sit back and say nothing. One knew damn well they were even more strongly opposed than the French, but they were happy to let the French bear the brunt of the opposition.

LIGHTNER: Let's see. There is another subject in this letter that I was asked to comment on: that statement that "FDR's long insistence on having Northwest Germany in the American Occupation Zone held up the final agreement on the zones for months."

MCKINZIE: Yes.

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LIGHTNER: But I do not see this as of any particular significance, since he did capitulate to Churchill on this point before the German surrender. The important decision in regard to the zones, which was made by the EAC way back in early 1944, long before D-Day, was the line separating the east and the western zones. At that time neither side had any inkling where its armies would be at the time of the German surrender. It was a gamble and the line agreed upon seemed a very good deal at the time to both sides. Yet one has to admit that if there had been no such early agreement, the positions occupied by the troops at the end of the war would have been different, and a larger part of Germany would have been under western control. For example, if we hadn't agreed on the zones of occupation, we surely would have taken Berlin before the Russians got there. One of the main reasons our forces delayed going into Berlin was the realization we would have lost an awful lot of men, and why do that when Berlin was going to be a quadripartite city anyway, so General Eisenhower

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let the Russians take it. For the same reason our troops did not press deeper into East Germany.

It was not good what happened to Berlin in those first few weeks after the Russians had taken it. And they secured a psychological advantage that was reflected in many later actions. Also the succession of Berlin crises that followed might not have happened if we had pushed farther to the east. As it was, our troops were well inside what had been designed as the Soviet occupation zone and had to be pulled back to let the Soviet troops take over control. But again let's remember how the situation looked when the EAC was dealing with the problem early in 1944, when our military were still thinking that the Russians might be up to the Rhine at the war's end. That's why the east-west demarcation line as drawn seemed advantageous. Might-have-beens are always fascinating, but serious students of history have to try to reconstruct the situation as it was when the decisions were made.

The letter I'm commenting on referred to the long time it took the EAC to produce the basic

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agreement: the terms of surrender and the two papers on zones of occupation and control machinery. Every detail of these documents was sweated out in the EAC but instructions and approval had to come from Washington and Moscow (London was hardly a problem). Sometimes things were held up because the Soviets had no instructions but, as I have mentioned, the American delegation had great difficulty getting reactions out of Washington because of the deliberate policy of the Civil Affairs Division to drag its feet. This was done by delaying tactics

in the Washington interdepartmental policy coordinating mechanism for producing instructions and policy guidance to the EAC. Without War Department agreement in the Working Security Committee (WSC) action was stymied. The military point of view was that it was premature to plan for a situation where everything was so unforeseen, and it was better to leave it to the military, who would handle the situation at the time in the best way possible. One can understand this point of view but it is hard to understand why they held it so long, when the

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governments had agreed that this kind of advanced planning was to go forward. But the record is clear that that is what happened. Certainly we who were sitting in London lived through an incredibly frustrating experience, sending policy papers to Washington for approval or comment without getting any response, for weeks and months. We knew that our State Department colleagues were trying their best to get the Civil Affairs Division people to move, but with little success.

However, despite the slow progress, the military in the end were unable to hold up U.S. approval of the three basic papers. It took a longer time than would have been desirable to work those papers out, but they finally were agreed to--the terms of surrender, and the zones and control machinery agreements. However, SHAEF (General Eisenhower's headquarters) at the last minute ignored the agreed surrender terms when the Germans surrendered at Rheims on May 7, 1945, although the surrender document was issued later as a directive, so that

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was not so bad. But the Army was more successful in holding up agreement on a wide range of directives we hoped could be negotiated in the EAC which would have provided the zone commanders in Germany with uniform policy guidance. As I mentioned earlier we in London never knew how successful such negotiations would have been because the State Department, which welcomed our efforts, could not obtain the Army's approval in the WSC. It should be noted, however, that if we had been able to put them before the EAC, it's questionable to what extent the Russians would have gone along with a lot of the principles that were written into the draft directives.

MCKINZIE: So you are not then saying that U.S. foot dragging resulted in the failure, really, of...

LIGHTNER: No, I guess not. I'm really quite philosophic about this. And there's a parallel between this and the shamozzle over the decision on the partitioning of Germany. They didn't write partition

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into the surrender terms but in practice Germany was partitioned- - and how!

Of course, some of the big questions that were mentioned in the letter to me, such as reparations,

were taken up at Potsdam for tripartite definition and agreement. Most of the others that we tried to take up in the EAC without success were ultimately handled in one way or another in the Allied Control Council in Berlin. By that time each zone was being run under its own zone commander and the climate for quadripartite agreement diminished rapidly. But in all candor, there is no assurance that things would have worked out very differently in Germany even if each zone commander had been handed a sheaf of directives already agreed on in the EAC and approved by governments.

MCKINZIE: Okay. Then could we proceed to some specific questions? It was agreed there would be, during the Moscow Conference of October '43, ad hoc meetings of the Allied Foreign Ministers. Why were those

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meetings not held? This is the first question he asked.

LIGHTNER: I don't know that I can give you much of an answer. Jimmy [James W.] Riddleberger would be interesting to hear on this point, and even more so, Chip [Charles] Bohlen. I suspect it had something to do with the fact that the Chiefs of State were running the war, and they were not all that interested in turning over responsibilities to their Foreign Ministers. That was generally true of Roosevelt. When the war started, Cordell Hull supposedly went to FDR and said something like, "Well now you've got a war on your hands, Mr. President; so you and the military take over." Whether accurately quoted or not it is true that Hull seems to have made little effort to assert himself or his department.

MCKINZIE: He then proceeds to ask why were so few efforts made by any of the Allies, especially in '44, to establish subsidiary or parallel bodies

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so that the EAC would not be overwhelmed, and then consequently reduced to the status of a drafting committee. Then he proceeds to ask some more questions--"was it because the United States, U.K. and the USSR were not prepared to discuss a wide range of military, and economic, and non-German issues?" Or does it simply come down to a lack of talent and organization or confidence in the EAC as a prototype for a resolution to those kinds of problems?

LIGHTNER: Well, you've got to try to project yourself back to the atmosphere of 1944 and the wartime situation. There was only one objective and that was to win the war. It's easy to be critical of the Chiefs of State for failing to plan effectively for the future, but you've got to realize that their thoughts were concentrated on immediate goals. The EAC was not hailed as a prototype for anything. Most people had never heard of it. It was ignored by important elements in the Government, especially by the military for reasons that I mentioned before.

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It wasn't because there was a lack of talent and organizing ability. There was a lack of interest in

the highest circles, or as the writer of the letter puts it, "Governments were not prepared to discuss most of the postwar issues at that time." It was just about that simple.

MCKINZIE: "After February 1944 did any of the delegations to the EAC seriously press inside or outside that organization for discussions about the dismemberment of Germany?" That is the specific question addressed to you here.

LIGHTNER: Well, "the proposals for the zones of occupation for Germany were tabled in EAC very early in 1944, and the plan to run Germany through an Allied Control Council also gained acceptance at a fairly early date in that year. Both concepts were based on maintaining Germany as a whole; that is, no dismemberment."

I have already commented on this and I recommend again Mosely's vivid account of the incredible story of the way this issue was mishandled. It remains

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a mystery how heads of governments, who had secretly agreed to dismember Germany, could have exhibited so little interest in the subject as time went on. It was true that the experts in each foreign office were generally opposed to partition, but it is nonetheless remarkable that in the end the experts' view prevailed. In any case, the special high level London committee that was supposed to follow through on the matter, found there no longer was any interest higher up and they let it die on the vine. It was not referred to the EAC and hence not inserted in the surrender instrument or any of the other basic documents. (In order to be prepared in case of a last minute decision at a very high level to include a provision for partition, a second set of surrender documents was prepared containing a dismemberment clause. However, it was not used because no last minute instructions were received.) There is a certain irony in the fact that the EAC surrender document was not used as the surrender instrument,

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although the original version was issued later as a directive.

As for the specific question, there wasn't any discussion of dismemberment in the EAC that I can recall. I do not know what, if any, discussions took place in the special high-powered London committee established for that purpose, but it was not part of the EAC.

MCKINZIE: I wonder if you could comment on at least Ambassador Gusev of the Soviet Union, and generally on the subject of whether or not the personalities of the main negotiators made any difference in the outcome of the work of the advisory commission.

LIGHTNER: Okay. Well, I'll comment in the order in which you mentioned these matters. Gusev was a very difficult person to get to know. I really don't know anyone on the British or American side that had any particular rapport with him. He was like many Soviet officials, certainly of that time. I never knew or heard of any who had anything like

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the personality and the human qualities of Mr. [A. F.] Dobrynin, for example, or even of [Maxim] Litvinov. I mean, this was the time when the Soviet diplomats and officials that you'd meet abroad were really sourpusses. I don't think I ever saw Gusev smile. He always seemed to be acting as though he were afraid there was somebody behind watching him. These chaps never seemed to act like normal human beings. They were always formal and stilted. Gusev's outward manner whether on formal or informal occasions was invariably stolid and unsmiling, and all business. In negotiations he was very patient, generally uncompromising and negative.

What did this matter to our side? I don't know whether it would have made any difference if our Ambassador Winant had had informal, friendly personal relations with him. I doubt it, because he didn't have the power to change any position in his delegation. If we asked him to change a comma -- the slightest little thing--he made no bones about it; he had to get permission from his government. So

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it's very difficult to size up his capacities, and to know if he really was more than a rubber stamp.

As to the broader question about the influence of personalities in the EAC, I would have to say that the way this Commission worked there were few meaningful substantive discussions. Everything was for the record. The atmosphere was similar to those Conference of Foreign Ministers (CFM) meetings in London in September 1945 and in Paris in '46 and '47 that I attended. Sitting in the back row I listened to hours of boring talk. I'll never forget the Soviet Foreign Minister.

MCKINZIE: [V. M.] Molotov.

LIGHTNER: Yes. "Old Stone Bottom" Molotov, we used to call him. He would sit there for hours and outlast everybody else and say, "Nyet, nyet, nyet." He would never smile either. But he was sent there to say "No." Since he was reflecting top level Kremlin policy, I doubt if a warmer personality

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at the table would have made any substantive difference.

Getting back to the EAC, a paper would be filed and then the delegate who filed it would present it. There would be very little discussion until the delegates had their own government's reactions to the paper. Usually a committee would be appointed to consider the paper in a somewhat more informal way. However, the committees were not generally very effective in resolving substantive differences. They were better on technical chores, such as the preparation of final papers, reconciling the texts and agreeing on translations.

MCKINZIE: How did the American Government's delay in acting on EAC papers affect the actual meetings -- just postpone them or not have them?

LIGHTNER: Yes. There were long periods when we should have been having meetings when we couldn't meet, because somebody, usually the Americans or

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the Russians, were still awaiting instructions.

MCKINZIE: In reference to the problem of negotiating in the EAC meaningful, general and specific directives for the use of the Allied Control Council in Berlin, Winant informed Byrnes in July of 1945, after being critical of Washington's inability to decide on a single line of approach, that "The Soviet Delegation has at times worked hard and cooperatively to reach agreement on a limited number of subjects, but it has never shown the range of initiative of other delegations. Its ability to negotiate effectively has been restricted by rigid instructions, and by an apparent absence of instructions over several extended periods." In your view is this a fair overall assessment, and if so why wasn't Gusev given instructions? And to proceed from that the late Philip Mosely has felt that one of the major if not the only cause of the lack of agreement on policy directives covering a host of economic and other issues in 1944 was the Washington tangle, and Washington's failure

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to create something akin to the British post-hostilities planning staff. Is there any truth to that?

LIGHTNER: Well, I think that Winant's comments about the Soviet delegation are basically accurate. I've always assumed that the reason Gusev was not instructed to be more active in producing agreed directives for the use of the Control Council was because the Soviets were even then planning to govern their zone as they pleased. Hence the fewer agreed Allied directives, the better, from their point of view. At the same time I think it should be noted that the Soviets were spared a great deal of embarrassment in the EAC by the failure of the American delegation to obtain its Government's approval on the U.S. draft directives which we prepared in London, as well as the draft directives that had been proposed by the British. So I would go along with Mosely's account of the Washington situation and the attitude of the War Department. I think he tells it very well; that's

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the way it was as I recall. I saw it from the London end of course.

MCKINZIE: I wonder if we could go from this to a slightly larger subject. When Mosely was in London he made preparations to go to Potsdam for the meetings of the Big Three. Do you recall any feelings in the delegation in London that Truman's sudden accession to the Presidency was going to make any difference? Now that the last of the Big Three conferences was approaching - was there a feeling that it would be like the others when Roosevelt was there, or do you recall

now having a feeling that somehow everything was going to be different? As Mosely was preparing- -you were helping Mosely . .

LIGHTNER: Well, I'm not sure that I can recall how I felt about that point, but I can say that Truman was an unknown quantity then, and we had had very strong, experienced leadership throughout the whole wartime period. A lot of us on the State Department side were quite concerned during

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the war, and particularly toward the end of the war, about the adequacy of the thinking and planning of the Allies with respect to the postwar world order. I guess that we in the EAC were particularly concerned because we had seen how difficult it was for world powers, even allies, to come to a meeting of minds on crucial problems, So we were not very happy over the fact that the American leadership at the top right at that particular time was being taken over by a new inexperienced team. However, before the Potsdam Conference was over the focus of such concern shifted from the American side to the British.

MCKINZIE: The election change.

LIGHTNER: Yes, when [Winston] Churchill disappeared from the scene and [Clement] Attlee was just suddenly there in his place. But of course, Harry Truman already showed signs of statesmanship in the way he handled that situation in Potsdam, it seems to me, considering his lack of background in foreign relations. However, sitting there in

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London at the end of the war, we were more than a little disappointed in the way the British and American delegations agreed to rubber stamp the Russian plan- -already being carried out- - to kick out every ethnic German from Poland, Hungary and Romania. It seemed to me that even if this mass uprooting and exodus was inevitable, it was not necessary for us to acquiesce at Potsdam to what the Russians were already doing. There is nothing that Churchill and Harry Truman could have done to prevent the Russians from doing this, but that was no reason to go along with it. The only proviso that we got written in--I think this was Churchill's doing- -was to say that it should be done in an orderly and humane manner. Of course that didn't mean a thing in practice because no one could possibly have made this uprooting of millions of people either orderly or humane. We heard so many stories later on in Germany of the fantastic hardships of these people, the way they were kicked out- - losing all their possessions--in the terribly cold winter of '46-'47.

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I forget now the numbers of people that died en route to Western Germany.

MCKINZIE: Would it be putting words into your mouth to say that the Allied Control Council was doomed in a sense before it ever really got off the ground, because of the real failure of the

Advisory Commission? Is that putting words in your mouth to say that?

LIGHTNER: At various times while we have been talking here, I have taken the philosophical point of view that in practice it may not have made much difference what the EAC came up with because in the long run, even if better agreements had been reached, they probably wouldn't have been carried out. Now I find myself about to say the same thing again. The thing that was important was not what was agreed on paper, but what the powers perceived to be in their own national interest. Take Yalta- - the much-maligned Yalta Agreement of early 1945- -which has been criticized by many

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as having loused up the whole postwar situation. I don't see why FDR and Churchill should be criticized for getting Stalin to agree there would be free elections in eastern Europe, where the people of the formerly German-occupied countries would have a chance to decide their leadership and what kind of government they would have. The agreement on paper said all the right things, but this meant little in practice because those countries were contiguous to the Soviet Union and were occupied by the Red Army. It would be very naive to expect that the Soviets- -with their ideology- -would consider for a minute permitting the formation of anything but Communist-type governments in that area. There was nothing we could do to change those facts of life and therefore the persistent, heartbreaking efforts that Churchill, Roosevelt, [Harry] Hopkins and many other made to try to save Poland from being turned into a Communist state were bound to fail, and no different wording of Yalta documents would have changed anything.

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MCKINZIE: You perceived this, you think, at the time? You weren't surprised at all by the turn that events took, as you watched them unfold?

LIGHTNER: Of course I was surprised by many things, but I had strong convictions about Soviet objectives and methods. I had had a good indoctrination in the Baltic States, in Moscow and in following resistance activities in German-occupied countries in 1942 and '43. I did not know about the secret clause in the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement of August 23, 1939, for the partitioning of Poland and the Baltic States, but I saw it all happen. It was no great surprise later to learn that the German attack on Poland and the division of Poland between the Russians and the Germans were carried out in accordance with that agreement.

Having lived so closely with the Russian picture in the Baltic States from 1938 to 1940, I couldn't help but be skeptical all during the war of our government's efforts to portray the

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Soviet Union and the Kremlin leaders as good guys. This was based on the fact that Hitler was our common enemy; hence his enemies must be buddies. It was in our interest to supply the embattled USSR with lend-lease assistance and thus considered politically necessary to oversell the American public that the Russians had changed their spots. Stalin became Uncle Joe, a

benign sort of figure. This trend made me uneasy because from my experience I knew it was untrue and even during the war the story of the difficulties of working with the Russians even on military matters tended to confirm that they hadn't changed. My experience in the European Advisory Commission hardly encouraged confidence that the Soviets had developed goals more in keeping with those of the west. The concept of a central allied control body governing Germany through four zone commanders never seemed realistic to me. An alternative to zones was briefly considered, the "pepper and salt" plan whereby this village would be occupied by a

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Russian battalion, the next one by British troops and the next village by Americans and so on, to avoid having zones; but the military advisers all opposed this idea as impractical, which of course it was.

Another idea that didn't get off the ground in the EAC was to create a corridor between Berlin and Western Germany by land. Our military were not worried about maintaining access to Berlin and felt it was a military problem that was better handled outside of the EAC. It wasn't pressed because we had three million troops in Europe; it was going to be a short occupation. The concept was to denazify, demilitarize, break up the cartels, hold elections and turn things over to the Germans. It seemed logical to establish the Allied Control Council in Berlin, the traditional capital, but however you look at it, Berlin had become an island in the Soviet zone and its consequent vulnerability was the pretext and ostensible cause of most of the Berlin crises that followed.

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I didn't foresee what occurred in Germany in any precise way, but I didn't expect the Soviets to cooperate in the ACC or let the East Zone develop into anything but a Communist state. Certainly it is part of their ideology--to believe there's an inherent conflict which cannot be resolved between capitalism and socialism (communism) and to take every opportunity to expand the Communist orbit. That doesn't mean that I belong to the Durbrow school. I'm not a died-in-the-wool cold warrior at this stage. I believe, as I have right along, that in those areas where it is in the interest of the two great powers to get together, there can be a détente of sorts, as long as we don't lose sight of the fact that there is an inherent conflict in our goals.

I think the main thing that's changed is Soviet realization of their need for Western technology, their relations with China and the nuclear stalemate. Hence the Russians were not anxious to have major confrontations with the United States, and thus to

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risk a war with the United States. But they are ever watchful for opportunities to extend their power where they can get away with it. They are usually patient, and they are going ahead with the familiar zigs and zags; where they can move ahead they'll move ahead.

MCKINZIE: The implication of what you say is that it wouldn't have made any difference if the

Morgenthau plan had been fully implemented.

LIGHTNER: Oh, wait a minute. I don't think so, but I have to think about it. I don't believe we could have held the Germans down, and I don't know what would have happened if we had had the ability to force the dynamic German people to become a bunch of peasants.

MCKINZIE: Essentially that's what the Soviets continued to advocate long after the U.S. changed its policy.

LIGHTNER: Well, they haven't done that in Eastern Germany have they?

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MCKINZIE: No.

LIGHTNER: What have they got, the third largest industrial power in the continent or something? Pretty close.

MCKINZIE: That's of course true. But originally as I understand it, their big objection was that the U.S. was not sticking to its original commitment to keep Germany totally emasculated and that ...

LIGHTNER: Yes. This was at the time when they were still really exploiting Eastern Germany, the area that they controlled, and were very critical of the failure of the Western zones to dismantle the industry and to ship reparations to them.

MCKINZIE: Yes, that's a provocative question. Let me come back to a more real one, and that's your own concern and your own thinking about the Morgenthau plan, and what you were able to do. To whom were you able to communicate on what you thought the implications of the Morgenthau plan would be?

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LIGHTNER: Our main involvement in that was the constant clash between the Central European Affairs Division and the Division for German Economic Affairs in the State Department. It was a continual war led by Jimmy Riddleberger on our side and Charlie [Charles P.] Kindleberger, head of German Economic Affairs.

MCKINZIE: Could you talk about that particularly?

LIGHTNER: I'm a little rusty in recalling details. I know that many of those who favored the Morgenthau approach included several distinguished economists who went on to hold high positions in this Government and outside of Government. I guess many of them would not want to be reminded of some of their strongly held views of that time. I think I should first give some background on the State Department's role and organization for occupied Germany. The entity traditionally charged with handling German, Austrian and Czechoslovak affairs was the Central

European Division, which I

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joined in September 1945. Riddleberger was the chief. By the time I arrived on the scene a new division had been established under Kindleberger to handle German economic affairs. All of us were concerned with the policies and programs of the American occupation authorities in Germany who were dealing with their British, French and Russian counterparts in the Allied Control Council and actually governing the American Zone. This involved policies in the very fields that I had been working on in the European Advisory Commission when we drafted the directives for the occupation zones that were never used. Early in the occupation General Lucius D. Clay headed U.S. Military Government in Germany, and he took his orders from the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army. As long as the military were responsible in Germany the State Department's role was secondary. In those days Bob [Robert J.] Murphy was the senior State Department man in Germany. He was Clay's political adviser and he took his orders from the State

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Department, but they were not orders to Clay, just high-powered advice, which General Clay could ignore. Even on the political side it was the Government branch of military government, rather than Murphy's political affairs office, that had responsibility for the political reconstruction, elections, etc. in the American zone.

MCKINZIE: But you told me that Murphy was the best guy we could have gotten. I think those were your words.

LIGHTNER: Yes. Well, I'm being a little long-winded and perhaps it isn't necessary to give all this background. We started earlier to talk about what we in the State Department did to counteract the Morgenthau plan philosophy which was strongly reflected in the basic military directive, JCS-1067.

I'm getting around to that, but wanted to clarify the limitations of the authority and influence of the State Department and even Bob Murphy on our German policy. The necessity to

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convey instructions to General Clay only through military channels meant that the State Department was practically hog-tied. The military in Washington are never inclined during war and postwar periods to overrule a theater commander. In this case it was General Clay. And so we in the State Department found that whenever we wanted OMGUS (General Clay's Office of Military Government) to do something different from the way they were doing or planned to do, we had fantastic obstacles to overcome. When this happened and we could not get new directives sent out as military instructions, we could only send them out as State Department instructions or guidance to Bob Murphy. He could approach Clay as Clay's adviser and if Clay threw him out, as he was quite apt to do, usually in a polite way, that was the end of it. If the issue was important enough we could try to get the Pentagon to go along, but that was seldom successful.

However, Murphy was successful on many occasions in persuading Clay to accept his advice. He and Clay became great

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personal friends and Clay respected him. If anybody could get the General to think about something and to change his mind, it was Bob Murphy.

Getting back to the State Department and the problem created by the fundamental differences of views between the Central European Division (CE) and the German Economic Affairs Division (GEA) over economic policy, the difficulty was based on GEA's sympathy with the Morgenthau plan whereas we in CE believed it to be entirely the wrong approach. For example, on numerous occasions some aspect of the basic directive JCS-1067 required interpretation. Clay had the decision but the State Department's advice through Murphy was our usual channel to try to influence the decision. It was hard enough to get an agreed State Department position and it was even more difficult to get the military to go along, which was why the Murphy channel was the usual method of communicating with Clay's headquarters.

MCKINZIE: Kindleberger contends that sometime in 1946

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the economic people came around to the view that there would have to be some reconstruction of German industry even above the level of industry agreement, which was being hassled around about then or had been hassled around previously.

LIGHTNER: Well, to us those months between V-E Day and mid-'46 seemed a long time. That's when much of the dismantling was taking place. It was a crucial period when much time was being lost in restoring the economy and our group in CE found that we were being opposed at every turn by those who wanted to carry out literally the provisions of JCS-1067. You know, Jimmy Riddleberger was the one who sweated out this whole business of dealing with the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department during the days of planning for the occupation of Germany, and also later on in dealing with the Kindleberger group.

MCKINZIE: You look at the period between the Morgenthau plan and the Marshall plan, one of which represents a "salted earth" policy, and the other an industrial

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development policy. The question of historians who are always concerned with pinning things down to precise things inevitably comes down to: what was the turning point? Was there any particular event or any absolutely crucial time period in which the change from the Morgenthau plan to the direction of the Marshall plan was made?

LIGHTNER: I think it was fairly gradual. I think the military had their directives based, as I said before, very much on the philosophy of the Morgenthau plan, the basic JCS-1067. They had to

accomplish the main chores, which everyone agreed had to be done at first, the denazification and the demilitarization. Germany never was to be in a position to wage war again. But how does one prevent a modern state from ever waging war again? Easy answer- you strip it of its industries and you make it economically unable to produce the weapons of war. But that was overlooking a whole lot of other features, which made that concept impractical and unwise, Yet that was not apparent to the pro-

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ponents of the Morgenthau idea at the beginning; but they found in practice, in administering defeated Germany, that it wasn't enough to prevent "disease and unrest;" the Germans could not live on that basis in the modern world. You couldn't hold them down to that point; we weren't that kind of conquerors. Anyway, it gradually became clear to our people who had favored the Morgenthau plan that in our own interest, in terms of our ability to accomplish our political goals in Germany, you had to give them hope for the future. How could we make them a democratic country by treating them as the Romans treated the Carthaginians. I guess the turning point was Secretary Byrnes' speech in Stuttgart in September 1946. By that time after the experience of running occupied Germany for a year, the more Draconian policies of JCS-1067 were being interpreted differently. More and more people along the line were coming to see that we had to help the Germans restore their economic life, their industries and so on. We were breaking

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up cartels, we were shipping some reparations to the Russians (dismantled industrial equipment), but at the same time with the other hand we were helping small industries and encouraging other forms of economic activity.

One of the reasons why it took so long to get the economy of Germany going after our own policy changed, was that the Germans took some time to recover from the effects of their defeat. Furthermore, you had an untenable situation in that Germany was divided into four zones- -four economic units. Potsdam said it should be one economic unit, but that wasn't the way it worked. There were four economic units, like little countries, with barriers between them, and it was impossible for them to have a viable economy under the circumstances. So, first you had two zones getting together for economic reasons- - the British and American. And finally, in the spring of 1948 on the eve of the London negotiations which led to the decision to create the Federal Government of Germany,

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all three Western zones came together as trizonia. This was nearly two years after the Stuttgart speech and the economic situation in Germany was still at a very low ebb. But the big upturn, the start of the economic miracle of West Germany's recovery was in sight. At least what sparked the recovery of Germany was the currency reform, the revaluation of the currency in Western Germany on a ten to one basis in May 1948. For the first time since the end of the war the Germans began to have some confidence in their future. The stocks that they had sitting on their shelves began to move off the shelves to be sold.

A brief digression on the “cigarette economy” in those early days illustrates the extent of the deterioration of the Reichsmark. For Americans in Germany and for many Germans the chief medium of exchange had become American cigarettes. For example, on a visit to Berlin in 1946 (or ‘47) I was invited to lunch with an old friend, an American newspaper correspondent. After lunch he took me out in his sailboat. We went to his sailing club on the Wahnsee in his motorboat. On the way back

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to his palatial villa, when I expressed some surprise at his modest style of living, he said, “Al, you know what I paid for the motorboat? Fifteen cartons of Chesterfields, the sailboat cost me nineteen cartons.” Well, that’s how it was in those days for those who could buy unlimited supplies of cigarettes from the Army PX for a dollar a carton. The Germans didn’t have it so good. But they used the cigarettes they bought to buy food and clothing from tradesmen who would not take German marks, which they had no confidence in. I remember on several official trips I made to Germany at that time, how we used to use cigarettes for tips--you’d leave two cigarettes at the table instead of fifty cents or whatever the tip would be for a good meal.

Anyhow, currency reform changed all that. It was the beginning of renewed confidence and of the economic boom that followed. This was overdue, considering that the war had ended three years before.

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The Marshall plan of ‘48 was not applied to Germany until ‘49, and then it had a fantastic effect in bolstering an economy that was already beginning to move. Its effect in Berlin was delayed a year, because of the blockade of Western Berlin by the Soviets from May 1948 to June 1949--nothing could get through by rail, highway or barge. Berlin was kept alive by Allied airlift that ferried into the city foodstuffs and fuel- -even coal- -and a whole new power plant, piece by piece--using all kinds of aircraft, including old C-47s. Of course, during the year of the blockade there was no economic progress in Berlin. But in Western Germany the Marshall plan infusion was beginning to take effect and by 1950 under the Federal Republic’s first Minister of Economics, Dr. Ludwig Erhard, the economic miracle was in progress. The changes that were taking place, especially in the whole spirit of the place, were spectacular. The Germans realized that it was worthwhile going ahead- - that they had a future. They went to work and being Germans they did

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produce. Their success was largely the result of their hard work, although Willy Brandt, Konrad Adenauer, Ludwig Erhard and many other Germans have given the Marshall plan a great deal of credit. True as that is, we on the American side ought to realize from our experience how easy it is to pour that kind of help down the drain when given to people that aren’t going to use it well. The Germans certainly made the most of it. Its political objective was also well served which was especially important in a country so recently dominated by the Nazis.

MCKINZIE: May I go back to an earlier period here? When you were sitting with James Riddleberger in Washington, was there any talk at that point about the necessity of ultimately involving Germany in some kind of reconstruction plan which would be larger than just that of Germany. I think specifically of the comment that Dean Acheson made in his book where he says that “to think of a Europe

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without a Germany is to think about a body without a heart,” and that you had to have a reconstructed Germany, he realized late, in order to have a reconstructed Europe.

What was going on in the Central European Division in the State Department, let’s say in ‘47 and so on? Was there some sort of massive realization, to overstate the case?

LIGHTNER: Well, I’m not sure that I can pinpoint thinking on this subject in 1947. But I think one should go back several years earlier in any case, when Riddleberger and his staff began thinking about the future of Germany, especially around 1942 and 1943. I only know about this from talking to individuals who were there at the time. In the State Department, beginning in 1942 and through 1943, the group of planners that were concerned with what to do with Germany after the war gave much thought to the question of whether Germany should be partitioned. One of the position papers the U.S. delegation took to the Moscow Foreign

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Ministers meeting in November-December 1943 made a strong case against partition. This paper subsequently became the basis for inter-Allied discussion. The recommendation against partitioning Germany emphasized the fact that you could not artificially keep the Germans apart. The forces of irredentism are just too strong. There are other illustrations in history that support this view. That is, that the vitality of the Germans, their will to survive and their consciousness of being Germans over and above their provincial feelings of being Prussians or Bavarians or Rhine-landers add up to too great a unifying force to permit Germany to be divided indefinitely.

There would be a risk involved in leaving Germany whole, considering that it was a post-Bismarck, united Germany that had been the biggest problem for the rest of us in two world wars. The rationale for taking the risk in this postwar period was that if the Western World was to survive, somehow you would have to manage to assimilate

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Germany within a world system strong enough to control any future militarist movement in Germany. At that time no one knew what the postwar system would be like, and of course there would be a potential danger in a recovered unified Germany. It seemed to the State Department planners that better than partitioning Germany was a democratic Germany whose people might be convinced that it was in their interest, in this dangerous world, to get along with their neighbors and with us; that neither Germany nor any other nation could ever again be powerful

enough to try to go it alone.

MCKINZIE: I'd like to ask, too, about your perceptions of General Clay's economic aspirations for Germany. How much clout did General Clay have with the State Department when he made economic recommendations? That is to say, Germany was taking a great deal of Army resources, not only in maintenance of occupation troops, but also other funds to keep the German economy afloat. In fact, even in '46,

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as I recall, there were some attempts necessary to get a hundred million dollars for food to get the German people through that winter. To what extent did General Clay call the economic tune?

LIGHTNER: You're talking about the pre-Marshall plan period?

MCKINZIE: Pre-Marshall, yes.

LIGHTNER: Well, General Clay called the tune in just about everything. Did I mention the general propensity of the Pentagon not to give orders to the commander in the field?

MCKINZIE: Yes, you did mention it.

LIGHTNER: Well, you have that situation coupled with the State Department's lack of direct authority, unless agreed to and transmitted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But here, again, I feel I sound too much as though there were always these clashes. Clay was the man on the spot. He probably changed his mind as early as anyone stationed in the field

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on the need to get the Germans working, if for no other reason than to reduce the cost of subsidizing them. Clay and his able economic chief, General Bill [William] Draper, discovered it was necessary to get the coalmines going and steel production, and to speed up production across the board. They weren't as interested in the decartelization policy, I think, which the Treasury Department people were particularly pressing for. In general I'd say that Clay, who started out interpreting JCS directive 1067 rather literally, found out in practice that the directive wouldn't work.

I like a story they tell in Bavaria during the early occupation, early in 1946, I believe. The Americans withheld grain from the breweries because there was a grain shortage and it was needed for bread and food. However, without their beer the Bavarians wouldn't work. Things were at an impasse, until someone brought in to the American general a piece of paper citing a leading German chemist and a dietitian that in Bavaria beer was a food.

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It was pointed out to the general that under the disease and unrest formula of the directive,

opening the breweries was needed to stave off unrest. So the problem was solved. The practical aspects won out. The breweries opened, the people went to work, the rubble was cleaned up, etc.

MCKINZIE: Could I ask you to give a personal account of the airlift? Where were you when it began and how did it affect your work?

LIGHTNER: Well, I really don't have a personal account of that because I was in London during that whole spring of 1948 working with the U.S. delegation on the tripartite agreements that led to the formation of the German Federal Republic. Representatives of the Benelux countries were kept informed as we progressed. During this time General Clay and Bob Murphy used to come over from Berlin to our meetings to give their advice, and they also kept us informed of the fast moving developments that were occurring in Germany leading up to the

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blockade that began about the time the London talks ended. There may be some connection between the forming of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Russian blockade, although I couldn't document this. It seemed clear that the Russians instituted the blockade to try to starve West Berlin into submission, to force the Allies to give up their position in Berlin, and to turn Berlin over to the East Germans. The decision to form the Federal Republic of Germany was followed immediately by the Russians' proclaiming that the Eastern zone was now going to be the German Democratic Republic, and by the blockade. I don't recall which came first.

I went into Berlin a couple of times during the airlift, but I don't have any significant anecdotes about it. It was a dramatic story from first to last. It was a gamble that was highly successful. One of the most significant aspects was psychological, the way in which it brought together the conquered and the conquerors, if you

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can still use those terms three years after the end of the war. They were brought together in a most remarkable way that stood them in good stead during the many difficult years that lay ahead when Berlin was under more ultimatums and pressures from the Russians.

I was in Berlin during the subsequent Berlin crisis, as I mentioned before, from '59 to '63, and observed that spirit of cooperation between the Berliners and the Allies. We depended on each other, particularly the Germans on the Americans. The Berliners felt, particularly since the airlift days, that we were their great protectors. It is certainly unusual, historically, I think, for that kind of relationship to develop.

This friendly relationship has another side to it. You may have heard of something called "Berlinitis"--something that affects some Americans, British and French serving in Berlin who become so identified with the "heroic" Berliners that they lose their objectivity. This is a sort of endemic disease

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of diplomacy and it is one reason they move diplomats around so often. The rationale is that if a person is left in one place too long, he can become so understanding and sympathetic with the problems of the country that he cannot properly represent the interests of his own government. Diplomats must remain objective, but being human, sometimes that is difficult. For example, imagine some of the meetings that go on between the man at the head of the Israeli desk and the man at the head of the Egyptian desk in the State Department. The Americans are more than likely to be influenced by the view of their clients. So Berlin produced quite a sympathetic lobby back home, beginning with General Clay, may I add.

MCKINZIE: When did you join the Office of Political Affairs of the High Commissioner for Germany--in '49, after the airlift?

LIGHTNER: Yes, in the summer of 1949 I went to Frankfurt as the number two man in the political section

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of the newly established HICOG (the High Commission for Germany). John J. McCloy had just taken over from General Lucius Clay, who had headed the Office of Military Government.

MCKINZIE: Did you find by that time diplomatic relations fairly regularized, that it was not that much different to be in Germany than it would have been to be in, say, one of those posts that you had asked for when you first began your diplomatic career, in Rome, Paris .

LIGHTNER: Still very much occupied.

MCKINZIE: Even at that point?

LIGHTNER: Yes. Well, four years later in '53, after a stint in Korea, I returned to Germany as Consul General in Munich, but I was also U.S. Land Commissioner for Bavaria, which was part of the U.S. zone of occupation. I dealt with the Minister President of Bavaria who was elected by the Germans, but the sovereign power still rested with the High

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Commission and I was the High Commissioner's man in Bavaria. I well recall the day in 1955 when, as U.S. Land Commissioner, I marched down to the office of the Minister President, flanked by the British and French Consuls General, in their capacities as land observers. The three of us walked in and I delivered a letter to the Minister President handing back full sovereignty to the Germans. The Allied High Commission and the Land Commissioners in the states like Bavaria were out of business. Our High Commissioner in Bonn, Jim [James B.] Conant, was now just our Ambassador and in Bavaria I was just the Consul General. And this was five years after V-E Day--1955.

MCKINZIE: So, when you went there in '49 you still did feel very much the occupation?

LIGHTNER: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, I attended meetings of the Allied High Commission across the river from Bonn in the spectacular Schloss Petersburg, where the Commission met every week. I

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attended the meetings of the political advisers with the British and the French in formal sessions.

MCKINZIE: You mentioned these meetings of the High Commission and the committee work. Could you talk about your relations with the new German Government- - that is to say what kind of spirit prevailed by that time?

LIGHTNER: The High Commission and its related committees met without participation of the Germans. There was no formal contact yet, in those days of the High Commission, with the Germans. It was just the three powers- -the British, the French and the Americans. The U.S. headquarters was in Frankfurt; the British were up in Hanover; and the French were in their zone, Baden-Baden. In Bonn there was the German Parliament--the Bundestag, and the executive branch under Chancellor Adenauer. In Bonn we had a liaison house. It was a very nice residence and a colleague of mine, Charlie Thayer, whom I'd known in Moscow years before, was its head. He had a

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staff of three or four Foreign Service officers, all of whom spoke German fluently. They were knowledgeable and very good in dealing with the Germans. They ran a sort of open house to which German legislators and officials would be invited to meals and receptions, usually very informal affairs, where people would get to know one another. They would drink beer and talk and have a great time and exchange ideas and pick up useful information. Through this exchange we were able to obtain factual information, but also insights into the way the Germans were thinking and planning, e.g., how one faction in the Bundestag was going to get together with another faction to try to get a majority to put through certain legislation. It would work both ways. They were interested, also, in finding out from the Americans what they were thinking. In this case it was the Americans, but the British had a similar arrangement there in Bonn. Sometimes you'd see a French or British representative attending one of Charlie's soirees, or dinner parties.

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Our senior officials, including High Commissioner John J. McCloy and key members of his staff would hobnob with high German officials at the liaison house.

MCKINZIE: Could I ask you to move now to the circumstances which led to your appointment as Deputy Chief of Mission in Korea in 1951, and ask you to narrate something of your experience there?

LIGHTNER: Well, this brings up a subject that probably should be brought out in talking of the postwar period: the impact of the Senator Joe McCarthy years on the Foreign Service. This is related to your question of how I happened to go to Korea. The entire State Department and Foreign Service had been accused of disloyalty and harboring Communists. Our most knowledgeable China hands had been unjustly accused of having sold out to the Commies, and their careers had been ruined, people like John Davies, John Carter Vincent, [Oliver E.] Clubb and Jack [John S.] Service.

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Things had been carried to such a point by 1951 that when they were looking for a number two man for John Muccio, our Ambassador in Korea, they purposely looked for someone without experience in the Far East. In 1951 the Korean war had been going on for a year and was still going on; the Embassy counselor [Everette F.] Drumright had been transferred, after having been there for many years; they needed a new man. Instead of looking around for the most knowledgeable China or Far Eastern expert available, they decided on the following qualifications for Drumright's replacement: he should be of a certain rank in the Foreign Service (Class 2 or 1); unmarried, because no dependents were permitted to go there; and he should be uncontaminated with any previous experience in the Far East.

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I qualified on all those counts. I had only been in Frankfurt two years and they transferred me, sending in my place none other than John Davies, who had not had previous experience in Germany but could not be sent back to the Far East.

As for my experience in Korea, one of the most interesting periods for me was the time when I was Chargé 'd Affaires and had the full responsibility of running the mission. This happened to coincide with a grave political crisis in the country. In 1951 and '52 when I was in Korea the Government of Korea and diplomatic missions could not operate in the capital of Seoul, which had been overrun and changed hands about four times during the Korean war and was badly devastated. However, the UN Command Headquarters under General Van Fleet, head of the Eighth Army and the UN Command, was located in Seoul. The diplomatic corps and the Korean Government were all down in Pusan on the coast, the port through which all the supplies for the Korean war came; and the UN Commission was there, too. This was quite an important commission- -UNCURK- -the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea. Its function was largely to observe and report back to the UN in

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New York on political and military matters.

Some further background on UNCURK: Before the Korean conflict, the UN had been very much involved in the efforts to form a united Korean Government after World War II. These efforts failed. The UN could only arrange elections for South Korea. North Korea was under the Russians and the Red Army and they saw to it that North Korea, just like the East Zone of

Germany, developed into a good, strong Communist state. So they refused to permit free elections in North Korea or a government for all Korea, just as they did in Germany.

When the Korean war broke out the UN Security Council, in the absence of the Russians, had voted to go to the aid of the South Koreans. Thus, the Korean war effort, although the United States bore the brunt of it, was assisted by sixteen other nations. The military command headed by an American general, was also the UN Command. UNCURK, the UN Commission, was, of course, reactivated and by the time I arrive in May 1951

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it was located in Pusan, as were the Embassies and Korean Government.

When Ambassador Muccio went on home leave in the spring of 1952, I took charge of the Embassy. It was time for the election of the President of Korea. Syngman Rhee had been elected in 1948, and his term was coming to an end. The constitution provided for the National Assembly to elect the President. This is one way of doing it. We do it differently, but that's the way they did it. Well, Rhee had become more and more difficult to deal with, for us and for his own people. He was an old man around 80, with many attributes of the aged. For example, he was unreasonably vindictive about the Japanese. In a way you can understand why--he'd been thrown out by them. He'd been in exile for forty years while the Japanese occupied his country; but still after World War II a younger person might have recognized the necessity of obtaining badly needed economic and technical help from neighboring Japan. It was the logical place, but

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Rhee was dead set against it and held up any kind of trade and any kind of contact with the Japanese, thus impeding his country's development.

Rhee was also unwilling to encourage bright younger people to take on important positions in government. Whenever some young Korean would emerge as a competent minister or a deputy minister in the cabinet, and start getting his name in the papers a bit too often, the chances were he would be eased out because the old man was jealous of any possible rival--anybody doing too well. This was frustrating to the efforts we were making to try to bring the Koreans along toward some semblance of a democratic system. After forty years of Japanese occupation, Korea had a long way to go to develop anything approaching a democracy, but we considered this goal to be important, and more and more it seemed to us that as long as Rhee was in the saddle any kind of progress along that line was being stymied.

Anyhow, when President Rhee realized something

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that we in the Embassy had known for months, that the last person the National Assembly was going to elect President in the June election was himself, he took matters into his own hands. He declared a state of martial law; he suspended the Constitution; he arrested sixteen of the top

opposition leaders in the National Assembly. A great many others went into hiding. At one stage there were forty members of the National Assembly who were held for forty-eight hours on a bus and not permitted to get out even to go to the toilet. He didn't want them to go into the National Assembly in order to prevent a quorum from attending for fear they would elect someone else President.

His stated reasons for all these actions were that all of these people were Communists. It was the old witch-hunt. The charges were ridiculous. A lot of these assemblymen had had members of their families dragged off to the North in 1950 as victims of the Communists. Well, the situation went from bad to worse. I protested, even before I had instructions to do so . .

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MCKINZIE: Protested to whom?

LIGHTNER: To Rhee. I went to see him. My approach was, "You can't do this when there's a war going on, especially in view of the fact we're fighting here for the principle of freedom and democracy. You just can't get away with it." I met with the UN Commission; they were just as horrified, and they protested, too. On a most urgent basis, I got Washington to get President Truman to write a strongly worded letter to Syngman Rhee along the same lines.

MCKINZIE: Were the people in the Far Eastern Division willing to support that when that came into the State Department, to go to the President and get that kind of a . .

LIGHTNER: Yes, they did and very promptly. But let me give you some more background. Rhee's actions to prevent a quorum from meeting to elect a new President were only part of his game. He would allow the Assembly to meet if the first order of business

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were to adopt a constitutional amendment, which could be done by a two-thirds majority, providing for the election of the President of the Republic of Korea by a popular vote of the people. Well, this is something we wouldn't have thought of opposing if it were done legally, but we certainly opposed his manner of doing it, blackmailing and strong arming the Assembly. Quite rightly the Assembly refused to consider a constitutional amendment "under the gun." They insisted in following the prescribed orderly process of referring the proposal to committee for discussion and debate. This deliberate proceeding would have been too late to affect the upcoming election. Hence, Rhee's decision to force his will on the country. So he declared a national emergency, drove all opposition assemblymen into hiding, accused them of being Communists, declared martial law, promoted a renegade colonel to be his martial law commander, and appointed a notorious "Chinese warlord" type of hatchet man, Lee Bum-suk, to be

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his Minister of Interior in charge of the police and security.

As I recall, the letter that President Truman wrote to President Rhee indicated that all the world was watching this test of the collective security principle which the Korean war exemplified. There had been an unprovoked attack on South Korea, and seventeen UN nations had come to the rescue of that country to resist aggression against this democratic, free country. And what Rhee was now doing was an affront to that cause, because he was setting aside the democratic constitution and resorting to arbitrary methods. The President urged Rhee to restore the constitution.

I'm sure the President knew that his appeal would be insufficient to deter Rhee, who was fighting for his political life. We were invoking a very high-minded principle, but Rhee knew and we knew that if he followed it, it would lead to his own downfall. That was the weakness in our position. But there was a way out if we had chosen to take it.

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Late one night, I remember it so clearly, a jeep drove up to the door of the Embassy residence where I was living and the Chief of Staff of the ROK Army came in. He said he was speaking for the other chiefs as well. He said the military had a war on their hands, but they couldn't sit still any longer and see the home front disintegrate. He believed that the time had come for action to be taken. He said that with a handful of soldiers and a few Marines his people could put the President, his Minister of Interior and the martial law commander under house arrest. There would be no bloodshed. They would release the forty or fifty Assemblymen who were now in jail, and urge them and the others in hiding to come out and hold their election. He assured me that the military did not want to take over the government, and they'd be out of town a week after the new President was installed. Then he said that since the ROK Army of which he was the Chief of Staff, was under United Nations command, he needed to have the okay of the U.S. Government before he could make this move.

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All that was needed was word from me that the United States Government would look the other way--no U.S. involvement was required. I have never seen this story in print, incidentally. I cabled Washington, urging acceptance. I told the UN Commission about it. They thought it was a heaven-sent opportunity.

MCKINZIE: The UN Commission in Pusan?

LIGHTNER: Yes.

MCKINZIE: You discussed this fully with them?

LIGHTNER: I told Jim [Sir James] Plimsoll, the Australian member, and I think he talked to a few others. Plimsoll is now the Australian Ambassador in Washington and before that the head of the Australian Foreign Office. I was in close touch with the Commission throughout this crisis. Their support was important because the UN was so deeply involved. Key members of my

staff, especially in the political section, also agreed this was a great opportunity. So I said in my cable that

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Rhee was bent on forcing the National Assembly to do his will, and that we ourselves were unable to intervene in Korean affairs. Now we had a heaven sent way out to get rid of Rhee, who was no longer helpful to us or to Korea. I admitted I couldn't predict who the next President would be. The Assembly itself didn't know. But four or five candidates were logical. I had heard their names when I had talked to some of the Assembly members about the alternatives. So I passed this on to Washington.

MCKINZIE: Excuse me. When you say you talked to some of the Assemblymen, did this mean about who would be candidates, or did you talk to some of the Assemblymen about ways to eliminate . .

LIGHTNER: I had talked about other candidates, but they were urging me to do something to force Rhee to uphold the constitution. To Washington, after the proposition by the ROK Chief of Staff, I had argued that if we missed this chance we'd probably have Rhee on our hands for a very long time, and

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that Korea would probably end up with a military dictatorship. I knew the Department was going to have a real problem in dealing with the Pentagon on this, because in wartime especially, military headquarters generally supports the field commanders. I knew that the two field commanders concerned, one in Tokyo, and General [James] Van Fleet up in Seoul, didn't want to risk any change in the leadership of the ROK, and really couldn't have cared less about anything else. Incidentally, I knew that General Van Fleet was a tremendous admirer of Rhee's. It was a kind of, "I scratch your back and you scratch mine" situation, exchanging many favors. This relationship I felt could affect Van Fleet's judgment.

General Mark Clark, who had just arrived at the GHQ in Tokyo, had already talked to Rhee in my presence when I accompanied him and General Van Fleet to a call on President Rhee shortly after this crisis began. I think I was introducing General Clark for the first time to Rhee.

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Anyway, in discussing the situation, General Clark told Rhee in my presence that the United States military had no interest in the political situation in Korea as long as the war effort was not affected. In this connection, Rhee had been drumming up support for his position by organizing big demonstrations in the streets, letting out factory workers and school children to yell and scream and wave flags in the streets. General Clark made it clear that he wanted no interference with the supply route through Pusan- - the port to the railroad, to the trucking roads- - and that as long as the supplies kept coming through Pusan, he couldn't care less what was happening politically in Korea. In other words, don't have any demonstrations in the streets and don't divert

troops from the front line. Well, that's all Rhee needed. He didn't need any troops from the front lines and he immediately ended the demonstrations, so there was never any question about the flow of supplies through Pusan. He knew the U.S. Government pretty

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well and he was confident he would get his way. Anyhow, Ambassador [John J.] Muccio was brought to Washington from Providence where he was getting an honorary degree from his alma mater, Brown University. They sent a plane for him, and he attended a crucial meeting in the State Department in which they decided not to interfere with Rhee--not to do anything.

MCKINZIE: Not to interfere in the sense of not looking the other way?

LIGHTNER: Yes. Not to go along. Muccio told me later that the decision in Washington went the way it did largely because he, Muccio, like me, had been unable to say who the Assembly would elect to take Rhee's place. This was the weakness in our position; we couldn't say who was going to be the next President. I still think to this day that any one of the four or five people whose names had been mentioned as plausible candidates would have been better than ten more

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years of President Rhee. They had not had that degree of executive experience that would have been useful, but in most cases after serving in cabinet posts their careers had been lopped off before they could go on to anything else. There was also a former head of the National Assembly and several other potential legislative leaders.

I believe another reason why the State Department didn't go along with the proposal to look the other way was the Department's very great reluctance to tangle with the Pentagon on a matter which would have been a knock-down, drag-out fight. I had reported in detail to the State Department about General Clark's and General Van Fleet's remarks to President Rhee about the attitude of the U.S. military toward the political situation. I think I understand the Department's reluctance to have a showdown on this issue. However--and maybe this is an indication of that field point of view that fails to see the big global picture- -I would say that the issue was important enough for

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the State Department to tangle with the Pentagon, and to put it right up to the President for decision. This never got up to the Pentagon or to the President.

So, in Pusan I had to tell the Chief of Staff and the President of the Assembly, who came up to my July 4th reception, that the U.S. Government was not prepared to support the Assembly. The Assembly President quickly got word to the delegates that the game was up- -there was no further use in resisting- -in staying in hiding and so on. In the next day or two the Assembly came out of hiding, mustered their quorum and passed the constitutional amendment for popular election of the President. In a few weeks Rhee was reelected. He carried on for eight more years,

in which I would say that some of my worst forebodings came true. He wasn't deposed until finally in the student riots of 1960 one thing led to another and he was ousted.

I have been asked how I could carry on working for the State Department after an experience of this

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kind. Wouldn't it break my spirit? All I can say to this is that I believed strongly at the time that we had a great opportunity, that the risks were worth taking, and that it was the right course to take. But I serve the U.S. Government and carry out U.S. policy which is not made in the field. In this case my recommendation went up through the line and the powers-that-be considered it from all aspects. I don't think it is true in this particular case, but these decisions can involve considerations of domestic politics.

Well, in the field you get used to the fact that policy is made at home, where considerations other than those that are apparent to you are involved. When Washington makes the decision, then there is a U.S. policy, and whether you like it or not, it's up to you to carry it out, unless of course, it is a matter of principle so important to you that it would be impossible for you to go on serving. But in my experience this doesn't happen. During the Vietnam war I wasn't serving

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in positions where ethical considerations might have arisen. But in my experience, where the Government makes decisions different from your own recommendations, they have been decisions involving political, not ethical, judgments. I don't think any of us can have the assurance, even when we believe that we are right, to be sure that we are right. Therefore, if a considered recommendation is turned down in favor of another policy, I take the view that they could be right and anyway it is now our policy. I think that approach is shared with most of my colleagues. However, it is interesting to note in this case that time has shown that we probably should have taken the risk. We did pay a price, having Syngman Rhee in power so many more years.

During those eight years from 1952 to 1960 when Rhee continued to be the strong man of the ROK, we could have had a useful influence over the development of, and the education of, a younger President and other leaders who might

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have been amenable to some American guidance. I mean we should have had or wanted a puppet or anything like that. But Rhee was an autocrat leading the country straight to military dictatorship; whereas under any one of the alternative candidates the ROK might have developed toward a democratic system. This was at a time when they might have been receptive to ideas and help from the American side, which was already providing fantastic amounts of economic assistance.

MCKINZIE: A question I'd like to ask involves, I suppose, a matter of judgment. It is the difference between influence and intervention. At that time, when all that was going on, you obviously didn't see that as a moral issue, that by inactivity one might be charged then or in the future with intervention. If that was intervention, is that morally reprehensible? What would have been intervention? It would have been inactivity, turning away, while this presumably bloodless coup took place.

LIGHTNER: Well, I wish we had more decisions in which

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intervention could be accomplished by not doing something. I'm more worried about our intervention when it means doing something. I confess I never thought about this being subject to an accusation of intervention, but I would have taken that chance, too. How sensitive can you get on this subject? From any moral, ethical viewpoint we would have been on the side of the angels, insisting on upholding the constitution.

MCKINZIE: Later, did you ever have the feeling that Syngman Rhee knew that you had.

LIGHTNER: Oh, he knew all along because before I presented this letter from Harry Truman, I visited Rhee on several occasions on my own as various things were happening. The trouble was that, whether on instructions or not, the American representative coming over there and saying that we insisted that he must do something which could only lead to his own defeat in the election, could only be taken by him in one way.

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That is, it would be taken that the person conveying the message was personally bound and determined to see the guy ousted from office. I never was under any doubts that Rhee felt that way. I could see his whole attitude toward me from that time on had changed. I stayed on another six months after the Ambassador came back, long enough to help the new Ambassador get started. I didn't have any dealings with Syngman Rhee during that period. It seemed better not to. In any case, with the arrival of Ambassador Briggs there would have been no reason for my dealing directly with President Rhee. But I did make an effort to avoid even social contacts with Rhee. A person like that is bound to take these things very, very personally. The fact that I might be just doing my duty in carrying out instructions would not have made much difference to him. He tended to hold me personally responsible for the U.S. Government's position objecting to his high handed behavior. I don't believe he necessarily knew

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anything about what his Army Chief of Staff had done; the Chief of Staff was never ousted. The people who knew about that were not interested in hurting the person who had taken a great chance in coming to us and saying, "Let us get rid of him." Rhee was sore at me for our protests and for bearing the letter from Truman, which was the official American point of view.

MCKINZIE: What about the position of Ambassador Muccio in all that? He was away and you were Charge' at the time that this occurred, but nonetheless, Muccio must have been identified with the general policy of protest?

LIGHTNER: He was away.

MCKINZIE: Did that make that much difference?

LIGHTNER: Well you'd have to know Rhee a little bit. He was an octogenarian, and all this was a very personal thing. He associated with an individual the government policy of the man that he had to

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deal with, and Muccio was not there at the time. I doubt if Muccio ever would have brought up with him anything about this period of crisis, which happened while Muccio had been away, because it was a "fait accompli" when Muccio returned. Actually Muccio was only back for a short time before his transfer. He'd been there four years. Ellis Briggs arrived in November. Muccio must have left around September or October.

Could I mention one thing about Muccio's attitude toward this? Muccio and I never talked about it very much. One day years later, the fellow who took my place, Niles Bond, a great friend of Muccio's, had the Muccio family and my family for Sunday lunch here in Washington -- I forget what year it was--while I was back from Berlin. Anyhow the conversation came around to this subject of Rhee and the difficulty of dealing with him and so on. Bond and Muccio were talking, and I was right there with them. I heard Muccio say--and I'm sure it was very much

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for my benefit although he didn't look at me--"You know, Niles, we could have avoided all this years ago, if we had only been smart enough to have followed (I don't recall whether he used my name) the Embassy's recommendation when we had the opportunity back there in 1952. We could have got rid of the old so and so, and that's where we made our big mistake." I never talked to him about it, but I was grateful for his saying this in my presence.

MCKINZIE: How does one handle it when the Chief of Staff of a foreign nation comes to the Embassy and says he would like to talk intimately and privately? Doesn't that just generate tons of paper work when you're reporting, and run all kinds of difficulty for those people who are involved in those kinds of confidential discussions? Was that a concern of yours? I'm talking about security, I guess. You mentioned that these people were never fired in the future. This whole discussion must have been among a very small number of people.

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LIGHTNER: Well, I sent all of my messages in "top secret," and "eyes only," the most sensitive classifications, for this very reason. You never know what happens to them at the other end.

I remember in Berlin during the time General Clay came out for six months, 1961-62, during the Berlin crisis. He went back to Washington for a brief visit, and when he came back to Berlin he told us about an incident during his first day back in Washington. At a cocktail party, a young lieutenant colonel from the Pentagon came up to him and said, "Oh, General Clay, I'm so glad to meet you. By gosh, I really thought that was a dandy crack you got into that message day before yesterday about General [Charles] DeGaulle," and then he referred to it more specifically. Clay almost went through the roof. He had sent out a message- -one of these "from Clay" messages "for the President--eyes only" things, and here was this guy in the Pentagon- - in his daily reading- -noticing it as if it were in *Newsweek*. Clay instituted a

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little investigation on his own and he found out- -my figures may be all wrong now- - that something like 175 copies of this message were distributed in the Pentagon, 85 in the State Department, and God knows how many in the White House.

MCKINZIE: It was an "eyes only" telegram?

LIGHTNER: Yes. This made an impression on all of us when Clay came back and told us about it.

MCKINZIE: I was asking about security, and how you handled the sensitive situation.

LIGHTNER: In those days we used to worry from time to time about Drew Pearson's revelations of alleged texts of secret documents that used to come out in the newspapers every now and then, just as subsequent generations- - if you are in the Government--worry about Jack Anderson. I don't know how you prevent this, either via the press or otherwise getting into foreign government hands, which could lead to the undoing of somebody.

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You have to rely on the security system and hope for the best. On occasion I have used the CIA channel to communicate with Washington. That channel was used to arrange the exchange of Russian super spy Colonel Rudolph Abel for two Americans, Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot, and an American graduate student by the name of Pryor. The exchange took place early one morning in February 1962 on Berlin's Glienicker Bridge and at CheckPoint Charley, under dramatic circumstances. Arrangements were made by Brooklyn lawyer Jim [James B.] Donovan, who had come out on a special mission. His presence in Berlin was kept very secret during the time he was negotiating with the Russians' contact man in East Berlin; all of this was eventually worked out. The need for special secrecy was because any leak might have ruined the chances of carrying out the exchange. Anyway I was instructed to communicate exclusively on the CIA channel. I guess there is less distribution of messages sent in CIA channels than there is in the State Department channels, because there have

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been other occasions when a CIA Chief of Station would hand me a message from somebody in the State Department requesting me to use the same channel of communication in reply.

MCKINZIE: Well, the reason I asked about the security of communications in transmitting that proposal of the ROK Chief of Staff was that it was so sensitive that if it had gotten out it would have been the end of his career.

LIGHTNER: Yes. I understand. It's a very good point. There was a real risk. But he must have been betting that we would jump at the chance to get rid of Rhee.

MCKINZIE: You went to Korea because you had no previous experience in the Far East, because you were single, and because you . .

LIGHTNER: Well, I was a Class 2 officer.

MCKINZIE: Did you survive the McCarthy era of Truman without any charges from McCarthy or any of his committeemen?

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LIGHTNER: Well, let me see, this was .

MCKINZIE: This is '53.

LIGHTNER: I went from Korea to be the Consul General and Land Commissioner for Bavaria, but I was not commissioned as Consul General. I was in charge of the office with six hundred people working under me, because we had a Voice of America operation there, as well as our normal functions. I was acting as Consul General, but I wasn't commissioned as a Consul General of the United States until two years later, because I wasn't properly cleared. I couldn't find out what took them so long. I found out later that this had to do with an accusation of some kind. When I'd inquire periodically, I'd be told, "Just be patient; we have to work this out." It wasn't as embarrassing for me as it might seem as I was known as the Consul General, but I worried some as to what was causing the holdup. It was no reassurance to know that the Department's security chief was a McCarthy hatchet man--by the name of

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Scott McLeod. Nor was it reassuring to learn that my new number two man in the Consulate General was one of McLeod's protege's. He had come into the Department from the FBI and when he joined my staff in Bavaria, he had just been commissioned a Foreign Service officer. I can't remember the source now, but I was told at one time, "You better watch out for so and so; he was sent out there to get you."

MCKINZIE: What did this do to the morale in the Service?

LIGHTNER: It was pretty bad; there were so many people that went down the drain. Some of them I had known for years as loyal, competent, devoted public servants and here they were being thrown out for some accusation of misconduct or error of judgment allegedly committed twenty years previously- -maybe before they had joined the Foreign Service. This was the time of the numbers game, as we called it, in which the State Department administration itself wanted to show the McCarthy people

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and their friends that they were rooting out all the "Communists" in the State Department. None of them were ever identified, that I know of, as such. You recall McCarthy had announced a list of Communists in the Department. Nevertheless, the Department would report the figures from month to month, the number of people who had resigned. They were easing them out, forcing their resignation, as a result of accusations and intimidation. Some of the people would not agree to take lie detector tests; and some preferred to resign rather than go through the process of hearings, publicity and all that indignity. Of course, I don't know the reasons for many of those resignations. Perhaps some of the accusations were true, but as I mentioned if you examined the accusations in the light of the careers of the individuals, in most cases there would have been no cause for them to leave.

In the matter of the "China hands," the State Department really eliminated almost ever-

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body who was connected with China policy at that time, people who later were recognized as being more correct than their accusers, or more correct than the policy of the Government at that time. I refer to the substance of their reporting. Yet they were eased out under all kinds of accusations, and we lost a whole generation of the best expertise we had in this very important field. This resulted in a sort of a lapse in the training program for the China field, and we will long pay a price for this gap.

MCKINZIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

APPENDIX

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LIGHTNER: For what it is worth, here are some additional comments about working with General Clay based on my association with him in Berlin in 1961-62.

Clay is an extraordinarily able, intelligent, tough, strong-minded, willful, arbitrary person who knows his own mind and does not change it readily. I know him pretty well because he was sent out to Berlin when I was the State Department's senior representative in Berlin during the Berlin crisis from 1959 to '63. In the period after the wall went up in 1961, when we were trying to

bolster the morale of the West Berliners, President Kennedy sent General Lucius Clay, and Mrs. Clay, out to Berlin as his personal representative. The channel of command and the lines of communication at the American mission in Berlin were not changed by the arrival of General Clay, but it was an extraordinary situation for Major General Albert Watson, the Berlin commandant, and myself, because Clay was so far senior to Al Watson and myself both in military rank and in his temporary

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diplomatic rank. He was the great general, hero of Berlin, and he represented the President of the United States. As a matter of fact, while Clay was with us, from October to May, neither our Ambassador in Bonn nor the head general in Heidelberg ever came to Berlin if they could possibly help it. It wasn't too clear who ranked whom and no one wanted to tangle with Clay.

I had very close dealings with General Clay during this time- - twenty years after he had been Military Governor- - and there were certain parallels in my situation and in Bob Murphy's in the earlier period. Instructions to the Berlin mission now came on the State Department's channel. All outgoing telegrams were signed, "Lightner," because the lines of authority remained as before, but those sent by Clay began "from Clay." So some of his vitriolic language, insulting to various people . .

MCKINZIE: It had your name on it.

LIGHTNER: These messages were signed "Lightner." I

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think that General [Nauris] Norstad, for example, associated me with the substance of Clay's messages. He was our head military man in Paris, the NATO commander. But, actually, most of the time I agreed with General Clay. That is what made this extraordinary relationship possible. If, during Clay's seven months in Berlin, he and I hadn't agreed on most of the big issues, it wouldn't have been possible. There were several occasions when he would hand me a telegram he had drafted and ask me to send it out. I'd read it over and say, "Lucius, you know you are going to do more harm than good with a message like this. They are going to get furious at you, and they are not going to do what you want. It's not all that urgent; why don't you wait until tomorrow morning and see if you really want to send that?" Sometimes he would and sometimes he wouldn't send it. Sometimes he'd change his language a little bit, and every once in a while he'd say, "Al, here's a telegram; send it out. I don't want to hear

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your comments on it. I'm going to send it out anyhow."

No comment on General Clay would be complete without mentioning that for all his macho qualities he is still in social situations a southern gentleman, gracious, soft spoken, hospitable and charming.

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