

Oral History Interview

With

FRANK PACE, JR.

Special Assistant to the U.S. Attorney General, Taxation Division, 1946; Executive Assistant to the U.S. Postmaster General, 1946-48; Assistant Director, Bureau of the Budget, 1948-49; Director, Bureau of the Budget, 1949-50; and Secretary of the Army, 1950-53.

New York, N. Y. and Washington D. C.

January 17, January 22, February 17, February 25 and June 26, 1972

by Jerry N. Hess, Harry S. Truman Library

The Harry S. Truman Library

Independence, Missouri

June, 1974

NOTICE

This is a transcript of a tape-recorded interview conducted for the Harry S. Truman Library. A draft of this transcript was edited by the interviewee but only minor emendations were made; therefore, the reader should remember that this is essentially a transcript of the spoken, rather than the written word.

RESTRICTIONS

This oral history transcript may be read, quoted from, cited, and reproduced for purposes of research. It may not be published in full except by permission of the Harry S. Truman Library.

[1]

Oral History Interview with
FRANK PACE, JR.

.New York City
January 17 , 19 72

By Jerry N. Hess, Harry S. Truman Library

HESS: To begin, Mr. Pace, and for the record, will you give me just a little of your background?

PACE: Well, I was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1912, son of two citizens of Arkansas, both born and raised in northwest Arkansas. My father was a distinguished lawyer and my mother had been president of a bank at 27.

I was an only child, and moved very rapidly through school, finished high school when I was fourteen. My mother very wisely didn't allow me to go to college, I went to preparatory school and then on to Princeton and Harvard Law School. From there I returned to my native heath of Little Rock, Arkansas and became an Assistant District Attorney and served in that capacity for two years and then I became a General Counsel for the Revenue Department of the State of Arkansas. I tried a great many cases in the Supreme Court of our state and a couple in the Supreme Court of the United States.

[2]

Then came the war, I was in the Air Force, at home and abroad, and after the war I came back to Washington and went into the Federal Government in the Department of Justice, in the Tax Division, as an Assistant Attorney General. After that I became Executive Assistant to the Postmaster General; Assistant Director of the Budget; Director of the Budget; Secretary of the Army. Later I became executive vice president and then president and chairman of the board of General Dynamics Corporation. Today I am president of the International Executive Service Corps, an organization that sends retired businessmen to the developing countries on a non-profit basis to upgrade the management capabilities of developing countries. And I am chairman of the board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

HESS: Very good. We'll elaborate on a good many of those points, but what are your earliest recollections of Mr. Truman?

PACE: Well, I had met Mr. Truman when I was in the Department of Justice, but I had only met him. I had been recommended for the Department of Justice by Senator [John L.] McClellan, who was an old friend of Mr. Truman's and of course, Attorney General Tom Clark, who also was a friend of Mr. Truman's. While I had met him, it was not until I went into the Post

[3]

Office Department that I really first came to know Mr. Truman more than casually. I was selected for this position by Postmaster General [Robert E.] Hannegan, who was also chairman of the Democratic Party. And he said, "I need someone who has the ability to keep his hands on the administrative functions of the Post Office, because a great deal of my time will be addressed to the requirements of the Democratic Party."

When Mr. Hannegan left as Postmaster General, he evidently had spoken to President Truman about me as to his own sense that I might possibly make a further contribution in Government. And during that period, James Webb, who was the Director of the Budget, had spoken to me about becoming the number two man in the Budget.

President Truman called me over one day and offered me the position of Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board. I'm sure this was as a result of a conversation between him and Mr. Hannegan, although Bob never said anything to me about it. I told him that Mr. Webb had talked to me about the other position, and said I'd like the opportunity to think about it. He said, "Fine." And I returned two days later and said that I felt I preferred to be the Assistant Director of the Budget.

"Well," he said, "your choice surprises me Frank."

I said, "I thought it might, Mr. President, but I believe

[4]

the Budget will give me an almost X-ray view of the whole governmental process. Chairmanship of the CAB is a more glamorous, but in my estimation a more specialized assignment, and I prefer the more fundamental."

"Well," he said, "you made a wise choice."

HESS: Going back just a little bit, were you familiar with Mr. Truman's handling of the Truman Committee?

PACE: Not really, no, I did not know him during that period.

HESS: Did you attend the Democratic National Convention in 1944, that was held in Chicago?

PACE: I did not.

HESS: What was your reaction when Mr. Truman was selected for the second spot on the ticket, any particular reaction at that time?

PACE: Not really, I didn't know Mr. Truman that well at that time. Mr. Roosevelt was such an overpowering figure as President that the selection of the Vice President seemed almost inconsequential, and since I wasn't in on the infighting involving Mr. [Henry] Wallace, it really did not make a deep impression on me.

[5]

HESS: When did you become aware that President Roosevelt's health was failing seriously?

PACE: I think very much towards the end of his life. People whom I knew discussed it, I didn't know it personally, but it was quite clear that he only had a limited period of time to continue as President.

HESS: Where were you when you heard of his death and just what were the impressions that went through your mind at that time?

PACE: Well, I must say to you I can't tell you where I was when I heard of his death. I think I felt the shock that every concerned American citizen felt.

Here was a man who had moved us through possibly the greatest crisis of our entire national history. He had brought us out of one of the most difficult periods in history. He had an absolutely pervasive personality, and one tended to equate the future of the U.S. with Mr. Roosevelt. And therefore, I guess I had the same sense that a great deal of the things you had counted on were now gone.

HESS: What kind of a job did you think Mr. Truman would do?

PACE: You know, I have now known six Presidents, some of them quite well, but I don't think anyone can predict in advance what kind of a President a man will be. The Presidency is

[6]

essentially a rack on which a man is either stretched or strained. If he has stretch, those qualities show; if he doesn't, the strain likewise shows.

I had no way of knowing the really enormous amount of stretch that existed in Mr. Truman and I had no real way of realizing his potential, and I doubt that the people that knew him much more intimately than I fully realized what he could be.

HESS: One further question about Mr. Truman's earlier years, but you had graduated from Princeton in '33 and from Harvard in '36 and then you went back to Arkansas. You were going back to Arkansas just about the same time that Mr. Truman was elected Senator and coming to Washington, but do you recall anything about his particular associations in Missouri with the Pendergast machine or any of that?

PACE: Well, I didn't know anything about that. My family as I said came from northwest Arkansas which borders on Missouri. Members of my mother's family lived in Joplin, Missouri, they knew Mr. Truman quite well, and thought very highly of him. My uncle, Grover James, was one of Missouri's most distinguished attorneys and he told me that he held Mr. Truman in very high regard.

[7]

Now, if you think well of a man in a state when he's in politics, and you are somewhat a politician as my uncle was, you can be reasonably sure that the assessment is a sound one, because you know men very well in states like Missouri and Arkansas. So, I came forward with an impression of quality.

HESS: Two other gentlemen from Arkansas, such as yourself, who played prominent roles in the Government during the Truman administration, were John Snyder and Leslie Biffle. Did you have any association with those gentlemen in the early years?

PACE: Oh, yes, very intimate association. Of course, John being Secretary of the Treasury when I was Director of the Budget, we were opposite sides of the same course. We had an excellent relationship, never a difficulty between us. I think our points of view were really quite similar. And I would say that we worked very effectively in harness.

Les Biffle was very special, he had known my father very intimately, and Les made my path in the Congress a very simple and easy one. I believe he was one of the most respected men in the whole Congress and if you were treated well and thought of well by Les Biffle, your capacity to be effective in the congressional scene was indeed very great and I can't tell

[8]

you how many times Les, had me out for lunch with top Senators and top Congressmen and my relationship with the Congress over my years in Washington was of the highest order.

HESS: Jumping ahead just a little bit, but do you recall in the 1948 campaign when Mr. Biffle dressed as a chicken farmer and went out around the country. Did you ever hear him tell about that trip?

PACE: Oh, yes, indeed I did. Les had a great human touch. You look in any room and Les would be in the last seat in there, an enormously modest man, but a man of great intuition. When he went out on such a tour he got a clear sense of farmer reaction.

Of course, Mr. Truman was very special. Particularly as Assistant Director and Director of the Budget I came to know him very well. There was always a warmth between himself and his associates. You were very sure he would never let you down, in fact you had exactly the opposite problem. If you were in difficulty, your job was to keep Mr. Truman from rushing out and taking up the cudgels on your behalf, and to remind him that he was President and you were there to take the blows.

HESS: He was a little prone to do that.

[9]

PACE: Very prone, but believe me, that permitted you, when you were working for him, to go to lengths that you would not go with other Presidents. In other words, you knew he would understand the integrity of your position, and you got way out on the end of the limb for Mr. Truman, and never felt any concern when you did.

Speaking of that campaign, I remember an occasion when I was Assistant Director of the Budget. Since Jim Webb was out of town, and I had to call Mr. Truman on a major matter relating to the Budget. When we finished, I remember his saying, "We've got 'em on the run Frank, we're going to take 'em."

And I thought, "Boy, what kind of stuff is Mr. Truman shooting into his veins," because I was reading those eastern papers. And really he knew, he sensed when there was this real switch to him, and I just happened to have caught him right at a point where he had the feeling that the tide had really swung.

HESS: Do you think Mr. Truman really had confidence that he would win the election?

PACE: Oh yes, there wasn't any doubt about it.

I remember a marvelous story. I have a friend named Bill Milton who represented General Electric in Washington.

[10]

He invited my wife Peg and myself to an election eve party. And he said, "Frank, we're fond of you, but we must be frank, you're the only Democrats we know that we can gloat over."

So I told Mr. Truman about this. Mr. Truman reached down in his drawer and pulled out a red tie with a battery, a bow tie, and when you pressed the battery, a light came on that said, "Elect Truman," and he said, "Frank, on election evening, you go with those people, and you wear that tie," and he said, "At the beginning of the evening Mr. Dewey will be ahead and they will be exhilarated, and they will probably have a couple of more drinks. But," he said, "as the returns begin to come in the tide will turn," and he said, "without saying anything, just let them have at you. At just about 12 o'clock, you get out in the middle of the room, don't say anything, just press that button and have that tie light up, and those people will all pick up and leave." And it worked just exactly as he said.

HESS: You did that, did you?

PACE: I did just exactly that, and it worked just the way he said it would.

HESS: Were they rather surprised when Mr. Truman won?

PACE: Oh! Oh, surprised! They were appalled, literally. They

[11]

were so sure Mr. Dewey would win, that they honestly asked Mrs. Pace and myself to be there so they'd have somebody to tell them, "Isn't it just too bad."

HESS: All right, now moving back just a little bit, in 1946 you were appointed a Special Assistant to the Attorney General, U.S. Taxation Division.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Why were you selected for that appointment?

PACE: Well, as you remember I had been General Counsel for the Revenue Department of my state. My background was taxes, I was a lawyer, I'd been experienced both in trial and appellate work and I think I was a very logical candidate for it. My credentials in my own state were well recognized and it was something I very much wanted to do. I really was terribly happy in the assignment and enjoyed it thoroughly.

HESS: Now, Mr. Tom Clark was Attorney General at that time.

PACE: That is correct.

HESS: What do you recall about Mr. Clark. What were his strengths and what were his weaknesses?

[12]

PACE: Well, his strengths involved a vast amount of commonsense. Tom Clark, given any problem, would apply a very practical commonsensical ruler to it. Also he had great human qualities. He loved people and he made it very clear he loved people, he trusted people, people were prepared to make an effort for him. He never had any big shot complex at all. I would not have thought that Attorney General Clark would think of himself, or was, an intellectual giant. That wasn't his forte. His quality was practicality in getting things done. He had another asset, he had a great wife. Mary was just a superb person and I came, along with my wife, to know them well, and enjoy them thoroughly.

HESS: Any particular weaknesses, that he may have had in administering the Department of Justice?

PACE: I wouldn't have thought that he was an outstanding administrator and I don't think management was basically his long suit. But I think in the Department of Justice most of all you want a man whose integrity you have confidence in. Also confidence in his humanity, because there's great power in the Department of Justice. And you need an essentially human Attorney General. You don't want the greatest lawyer that ever came down the pike because managing the Department of

[13]

Justice requires far more than just the ability to assess the law, it has great administrative requirements, but it has great human requirements also.

HESS: And then you moved over to the Post Office Department as Executive Assistant, we have discussed that briefly.

PACE: I was recommended for that by Tom Clark, to Bob Hannegan, as well as by John McClellan.

HESS: Mr. Hannegan had been Chairman of the Democratic National Committee during the 1944 campaign.

PACE: That's correct.

HESS: Do you recall anything in particular about the role that he may have played in seeing that Mr. Truman was placed on the ticket?

PACE: Yes. Yes, my memory is a little vague on that. Bob talked to me a number of times about that very fascinating period. And my recollection is that Bob did really feel that Mr. Truman had great qualities for the assignment. I believe that the potential contenders were Mr. Justice Douglas, and Henry Wallace, as well as Mr. Truman. Bob Hannegan felt that of the three men, the man who had the best qualities for the Presidency was

[14]

Mr. Truman, and I think he played some role in identifying Mr. Truman to Mr. Roosevelt and in participating in his selection.

HESS: Mr. Hannegan resigned in 1947.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Do you know why he resigned, any particular reason?

PACE: You remember he had a very, very severe operation, from which he subsequently died. He and Senator [Stuart] Symington had almost identical operations.

HESS: High blood pressure operations.

PACE: High blood pressure of a very severe nature.

HESS: Removed the ribs.

PACE: They removed the ribs. Stu was unaffected by it, but Bob deteriorated and very shortly thereafter passed on.

HESS: Jesse M. Donaldson became the next Postmaster General.

PACE: Jesse M. Donaldson was old-line postal, deeply respected by everyone. There was a decision at that time that the Post Office should be separated from the Democratic chair-

[15]

manship, a decision of which I highly approved. I saw no reason at all why the two should be related.

HESS: What was Mr. Truman's view on that? As you know the Postmaster General had often been a political appointee. James A. Farley of course had been Democratic National Chairman. It had always been the spot to move into.

PACE: That's right. I think Mr. Truman felt that it should be separated.

HESS: It should be made a professional post.

PACE: ...it should be a professional post and the relationship at that time was really historical rather than logical. There wasn't any reason why the head of the Democratic Party should head the postal service.

The Post Office was really a very, very interesting place. Very little happened in the nation that one way or another didn't reflect itself in the Post Office and I think that its eventual progress where today it has been placed on a so-called private basis, is a very logical progression from the time when it was separated from the chairmanship of the party.

HESS: And then you moved from there over to the Bureau of the Budget.

[16]

PACE: That's right.

HESS: First as Assistant Director and then as Director and you have mentioned how you came to be selected for that particular move.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: As you headed that bureau later on, could you tell me just how the role of the Bureau had changed as established in 1921?

PACE: Right.

HESS: Just why was it first established and how has it evolved?

PACE: Well, obviously you had to have some means of controlling the expenditures of the Federal Government and the Bureau of the Budget emerged as the controlling factor.

Its position was established in the original determination to separate it from the Treasury and place it in under the President. I think that was a very wise decision. It made a great deal of sense. The raising of money through taxes, and issues of Federal bonds, etc., is quite a different requirement than that of the control of expenditures. They are two sides of the same coin, but they need to be handled

[17]

separately, I approve of it very highly.

HESS: Roosevelt had taken it out of the Treasury Department, is that correct?

PACE: That's correct. I believe that the Budget reached its peak--well certainly one of its highest periods under Mr. Truman. He relied on it very heavily and believed in it very strongly. Truman was the first man who really created the institution of the Presidency. Prior to Mr. Roosevelt the Federal Government had not been large enough to think of it in institutional terms. Mr. Roosevelt was not the kind of man who thought of Government in institutional terms, he thought of it in personal terms. He was competent enough and self-reliant enough to continue to manage even the largest government on a non-institutional basis. I think it could have been managed better by him had his decisions been affected before they were made, rather than after they were made, which was the process in Mr. Roosevelt's Presidency. But Mr. Truman deeply believed in the institution of the Presidency. He revered the Presidency as such, and he was a modest enough man not to think of himself as essential to the process.

It took such a man to really build the institution of

[18]

the Presidency, and under the very dynamic leadership of Jim Webb, Mr. Truman built the institution of the Presidency. It was in this period that the National Security Council emerged, it was in this period that all the basic institutional functions of the President began. And again, it took just such a person as Mr. Truman to permit it to happen. He always felt that as a person he was subject to any form of attack, but as a President, he was entitled and should receive respect. And he believed that one of his great contributions was his capacity to institutionalize what had been in the United States of America essentially a personal function up to that time.

HESS: Did you hear Mr. Truman articulate those views?

PACE: Oh, yes. Oh yes, not once but any number of times. He talked about how the Presidency had to emerge, what was necessary to permit a President to function in the enormously complicated circumstances of a modern world. You see Mr. Truman was the first President who really had to manage a government in peacetime with enormous international responsibilities.

And no President had ever previously managed this country with the scope and requirements that were placed on Mr. Truman. And the need for institutionalizing to

[19]

meet those requirements was very clear and always uppermost in his mind.

HESS: There were four gentlemen who served as Director of the Bureau of the Budget, first Harold Smith, and then James Webb, and then yourself and then Frederick J. Lawton. Did you four men use any noticeably different management techniques and did you operate in any significantly different manner?

PACE: Well, I didn't know Harold Smith. I have a sense that Harold Smith had done a great deal to build the Budget to its position of pre-eminence.

Jim Webb was really a driving management genius, that is his mind ran very deeply in the management process. He also had excellent quality in human relations, and he, I believe, played a great role in the development of the institution of the Presidency.

I was essentially a doer. It was less my role to model, than it was to shape, beyond model.

My relationships with the Congress were excellent. Mr. Truman had me work very closely with Mr. Hoover in the whole program of the Hoover Commission, and I think my relationships in Congress enabled us to get a great deal of the Hoover Commission recommendations adopted.

[20]

A further evidence of Mr. Truman's real love of the institution of the Presidency was his treatment of Mr. Hoover, which was exemplary. He really gave Mr. Hoover all of the honors and attentions due a former President. And I think later Mr. Truman deeply resented the fact that Mr. Eisenhower did not similarly accord him that kind of treatment. I know that Mr. Hoover was most appreciative of it. Although they were quite different kinds of men, I know how deeply Mr. Truman's treatment affected him.

HESS: Did you ever hear Mr. Hoover say anything along those lines?

PACE: Oh, yes, Once when I met with Mr. Hoover at the Waldorf, he indicated at length his own feelings about the President.

Mr. Truman had recognized the dignity of the Presidency both present and past and its need to be reorganized. I believed in the Hoover Commission recommendations and felt that bringing them to fruition was of the greatest importance.

When I was Director of the Budget, I created the *Budget in Brief*. I felt that the budget was a thoroughly non-understandable document, a great big tome, and yet in essence this more than the State of the Union message or anything else, told the people what was happening to their country

[21]

and so we produced the *Budget in Brief* and I think we sold it for a dollar. We sold a half a million copies and this was very pleasing to Mr. Truman. It was during this period that you began to have the President establish the "pie" chart and let people begin to have a sense of where...

HESS: Where the money's going.

PACE: ...where the money's going. Many people thought of the budget as a purely fiscal document; it was anything but that. It was essentially a social document with priorities established in dollar terms and therefore, a very finite and meaningful social document.

I paid a great deal of attention to recruiting personnel for the Budget Bureau. I personally recruited, because I felt that the quality of young men coming into that organization would decide its contribution over a period of time.

HESS: Who did you obtain for the Budget Bureau?

PACE: Well, mostly these were young people. I went to the colleges and there I recruited against...

HESS: General Motors, IBM...

PACE: ...IBM, General Motors, Time-Life, and...

[22]

HESS: Were they interested? What was the attitude of the...

PACE: Young people?

HESS: ...students.

PACE: Oh, very much so, yes. We drew the bright ones and I wasn't just interested in drawing the ones with a high IQ. I wanted to draw the ones who were practical because Government like academia can sometimes founder on intellectualism, so we got the very solid ones.

HESS: You've got to get people in there that are going to do something.

PACE: They've got to do something.

But all through this, Mr. Truman maintained a great interest in the budget. And he was very tough, very tough, on himself, in sustaining the budget.

I think the time when I really made up my mind when Mr. Truman was a great man, was one day when I brought over a project called the Central Arizona Project. It was addressed to the transfer of water from the Colorado River to Arizona, and in those countries it was said, "You can take my wife, but for God's sake leave my water alone," and this wasn't just a joke, it was a fact.

[23]

When I went in to Mr. Truman I never, as Director of the Budget, presented him with a decision. I always undertook to present him with alternatives. I remember one day he said to me, "Frank, you never have made a specific recommendation, why not?"

I said, "Very simple, sir, I wasn't elected President of the United States."

"Well," he said, "that's a refreshing point of view." But...

HESS: He was used to having people come in and tell him what they thought he should do.

PACE: Well, I wouldn't say that, but at least I don't think it was normal for him to be presented consistently with options.

In this case, I said, "From a purely financial point of view, Mr. President, I can't recommend this. And the benefit that will come from it is not comparable with the benefit that you could achieve spending that same amount of money elsewhere. But I know it has very great political implications for the State of Arizona and I know that Carl Hayden is one of your oldest friends and [Ernest William] McFarland has been one of your staunchest supporters."

"Well," he said, "Is the decision close?"

[24]

And I said, "No sir, frankly there are a great many other projects that from a purely fiscal standpoint, have a greater priority."

"Well," he said, "would you tell that to Senators McFarland and Hayden?"

I said, "Certainly I would, sir."

"Well," he said, "they'll be here this afternoon."

And they came and I told them and they were really stunned. McFarland was defeated I think as a result of it. But Mr. Truman stuck it out and right then I knew that here was a man who would pick the hard right against the easy wrong, despite the fact that he was known as a politician. Despite the record, I always thought he was a better administrator than he was a politician.

I remember one time saying to Mr. Truman, "Mr. Truman, by and large we're the majority party. If we give the people good Government, we'll go on being re-elected." I said, "Why do we fool around with these city bosses? Why don't we shed them?"

He said, "Frank, you're a splendid Director of the Budget, but you're a lousy politician."

And I said, "Yes, sir. I'll get back to my subject."

[25]

He said, "I think you better."

HESS: He had to get along with some of those city bosses.

PACE: He had to get along with all those city bosses.

HESS: I'll just read a couple paragraphs that Mr. Truman has in his *Memoirs*, pertaining to the budget. This is on page 33 of Volume II:

President Roosevelt had removed the budget operation from the Treasury Department during his administration and had moved it into the Executive Office of the President, under the supervision of a Director of the Budget. Before I began to work on my first budget, however, I decided to make a change, and with this in mind I called in Budget Director Harold Smith.

'I want this to be a tripod,' I told him, 'with the Secretary of the Treasury assisting you and me in building up the budget.'

And that is the way it was done in all eight budgets I made out as President.

Did you work closely with the Secretary of the Treasury as the President mentioned in the quote?

PACE: Oh, yes. Very well. There never was a basic decision that the Secretary of the Treasury was not privy to. In this case the Director of the Budget made the ultimate decision. I don't mean minor, I mean anything that was deeply fundamental.

[26]

Another interesting thing was, Mr. Truman called me to ask me if I would become Director of the Budget, I was recovering from an appendectomy. I said, "Of course, I'm honored Mr. President, I have only one request."

He said, "What's that?"

I said, "That you not make a major fiscal decision without at least giving me a chance to state my position."

"Well," he said, "that goes without saying, Frank." And he never violated it. Never violated it.

I cannot imagine a more satisfactory relationship than I had with the President in this job.

HESS: You mentioned a few moments ago that John Snyder's general viewpoint essentially was, the same as your own, or something to that effect.

PACE: I said to a high degree, yes.

HESS: To a high degree. Mr. Snyder is usually regarded as being quite conservative.

PACE: I was too.

HESS: Would you agree with that, and would you also characterize yourself in that manner?

PACE: Yes, I was basically conservative by nature.

[27]

HESS: Would that be a fiscal conservative?

PACE: I would say...

HESS: How would you describe yourself?

PACE: Well, I certainly am a fiscal conservative. But it is my belief that the great sweep of human events are liberal. I mean, the thrust of humanity is in that direction. I think that my concern is that the forces back of that thrust are always greater than the forces opposed to it. They are more articulate, they are stronger, particularly in a democratic society. And therefore, I feel that it is very important that people, even of liberal tendencies, accept a conservative responsibility.

I've always been impressed by Voltaire who said that "freedom is only the opportunity for self-discipline." And I think to a high degree that would describe my own sense of a democratic society, and whether you would call me conservative or not (I'm certainly fiscally conservative), I think my nature runs towards a support of liberal positions in social matters, but with an insistence on the importance of some measure of control.

HESS: A good many of the measures during the New Deal and then

[28]

Mr. Truman's Fair Deal, were described as liberal; better housing, more money for housing; more money for welfare. What were your views on such proposals? Were you opposed to them?

PACE: Well, my views on that were that the President of the United States decided the national direction. It was then my duty within the policies that he laid down, to see that they were administered with effective fiscal controls. I have to say that in the area of social legislation I felt that the country had, by reason of the war, had been deprived of social advances, and I had a concern that there might be a tendency to move too quickly to satisfy the problem. I think Mr. Truman understood my point of view rather clearly.

HESS: In Mr. Truman's *Memoirs* he went on to say:

The Budget Director called on Cabinet members and heads of government agencies and discussed with them their requirements. The Defense Department, which was the biggest spender, was the first department on which the Director called.

Is that correct?

PACE: Well, it really worked a little differently, they called on us. The Budget Director really sat in judgment on each department's budget, It was in the period that I was

[29]

Director, that a program was established whereby our budget people were actually working in the Defense establishment. I felt that to try to consider the Defense budget annually and with no more background to make actual decisions on so basic a problem as Defense was unwise, you have to have day-to-day and month-to-month knowledge of the requirements for sound decision making.

HESS: While it was being formulated.

PACE: While it was being formulated or the judgment was no good. And, fortunately, the Defense Department agreed with me, because otherwise you were forced into the position of meat ax cuts that were neither good for Defense or good for the nation.

HESS: One further point on Defense: Mr. Truman went on to say:

It was inevitable many pressures were brought to get me to approve larger appropriations. This was particularly true of the military. The military frequently brought pressure to force me to alter the budget which had been carefully worked out to achieve balance with other needs of government and our economy as a whole.

All of them made excessive demands but the Navy was the worst offender.

What do you think about that? Was the Navy the worst offender?

[30]

PACE: I would say that by and large, the Navy is more politically oriented than any of the other three services.

HESS: Why does that seem to be the case?

PACE: The Army, of course, has always been a very large institution, it has had to carry out a great many difficult domestic functions when I was Secretary of the Army we were given the responsibility of running the railroads. Thus the Army has been forced to take a broader national view. The Navy has been more elite, smaller, and I believe more politically oriented than the Army.

Don't let me give you the impression that I don't respect the Navy, they are superb people.

The Air Force, of course, grew out of the Army. It was the youngest of all the services and it had not developed quite the capacity to make itself felt at that point.

HESS: At the time that you were Director of the Bureau of the Budget did you find that the Navy gave you somewhat more trouble than the Army did, or perhaps the Air Force?

PACE: I can't really say that, no. They addressed their efforts directly to the President.

I have to say in this regard, mind you, that the military did this because they believed that the country needed it.

[31]

Their concern lay less with a balanced budget than with the needs of the country. And having been on the other side of the fence, I have to say I have some sympathy for their concerns in this regard.

HESS: At the time of the Korean invasion, our armed forces had been greatly reduced and perhaps their effectiveness was reduced also. I believe the armed forces had been cut back to such a point to where they couldn't function effectively, why were those cut backs made?

PACE: Well, you know, in these matters you are talking about generalizations that are hard to specifically identify. I mean by that, I think Mr. Truman at this juncture in history, felt that the great requirement was social development internally in this country. The mood of this country was in that direction.

I don't believe that you will ever have what anyone would describe as adequate defense and therefore it becomes a matter of judgment how far you cut back..

We had finished World War II, small wars had never occurred, we didn't realize that international leadership was very likely to bring us into contact with problems we hadn't faced before. Whenever a war comes you've always

[32]

cut back too far. Nobody is ever going to be ready for any kind of a war. And so it is clear that we had cut back too far. But I have to say to you when a war comes, you've always cut back too far.

HESS: And you never know when they are going to come.

PACE: That's right and I will also say that once one, come you almost inevitably over-organize yourself for it.

HESS: All right, we are about down to the end of this reel of tape. Is it about five?

PACE: It's about three of five.

HESS: All right, shall we shut it off?

[33]

Second Oral History Interview with Frank Pace, Jr-, Washington, D.C., January 22, 1972. By Jerry N. Hess, Harry S. Truman Library.

HESS: Mr. Pace, at the conclusion of our meeting on Monday afternoon we were discussing, the reduction that took place in the armed services between World War II and the Korean conflict. How significant in that matter of reducing the budget and reducing the armed forces was Mr. Truman's desire to balance the budget?

PACE: Well, Mr. Truman was socially a liberal, but fiscally a conservative. He was a real joy for a Budget Director to work with because he honestly treated the budget in a very commonsensical way, the way the ordinary fellows treated his own personal requirements.

I believe that Mr. Truman felt that sustaining a balanced budget in this society of ours was important. Now he also felt that meeting the social requirements of this country in peace took precedence over the requirements of the military in peace, and it was for this reason that the military, as it always is in peacetime, was significantly reduced during this period. And as I said earlier, no nation is ever ready for a war, unless they precipitate it.

HESS: Unless they set out to build a war machine and have at it.

[34]

PACE: And have it on a planned basis.

HESS: Well, what do you recall of Mr. Truman's views on the importance of a balanced budget?

PACE: Well, as I said earlier, he was a very strong believer in a balanced budget.

HESS: Do you think that he would have liked to have balanced the budget before the 1948 election for political reasons?

PACE: No, I honestly don't think he felt that this decision was really a political one. I think he made it on the basis of his own strong feeling about the way the nation should be run.

In the whole period, in the Budget, I never had any sense that Mr. Truman used it as a political vehicle. In fact, he almost had a sense of astringency about political interference in the budgetary process. I do not recall Mr. Truman asking me, as Director of the Budget, to ever make a budgetary decision on a political basis.

HESS: The reason why I asked that is it appears in several histories that with the '48 election coming up, things not looking too good, many people thinking Mr. Truman did not have a chance, that he wanted to balance the budget to present the country with a balanced budget and say, "Look what I've

[35]

done."

PACE: I don't believe this. I've heard that myself, but I'm quite sure that this was not Mr. Truman's idea of politics.

HESS: All right, and that pretty well winds up that line of thought.

Now, the next question I have is in reference to the Legislative Reference Service, and checking through the Enrolled Bill file, at the Truman Library, I found that Mr. Truman often placed great weight on the advice of the Legislative Reference Service of the Bureau of the Budget, quite often in opposition to the advice as provided from all other sources. If you also found that to be the case, why do you believe that he placed such reliance on their advice?

PACE: When I first was selected by Mr. Truman as Director of the Budget, I called on various former Directors with the Budget. When I became Director of the Budget, I visited all of the living directors and among them was Charles Dawes who was the first Director of the Budget (later Vice President), and who had indicated that the position of Director of the Budget had more influence on the nation than the Vice Presidency. Mr. Dawes gave me his views on the budget.

[36]

HESS: What were they? What did he say?

PACE: Well, I was going to really relate it to your question by saying that when we concluded Mr. Dawes said to me, he said, "Young man, you should always keep in mind that these Cabinet officers are the executive vice presidents in charge of spending and as such the natural enemies of the President. Good day, young man."

Now, I've given you a very clear evidence of Mr. Dawes' attitude, and to a certain extent I think Mr. Truman had a similar feeling. I believe he felt that the budget should be unaffected by special requirements or interests, except for honest special requirements or interests, because each Department had honest special requirements. But when you look for a new assessment of the national interest, he felt that the budget was the place he could turn to and get it, unaffected by politics or special interests. He relied very heavily not only in the legislative areas but frankly in the fiscal and management area on the Budget Bureau.

HESS: And you think that's why he placed such reliance on the recommendations of the Legislative Reference Service?

PACE: I'm quite clear on that. We were very strong in that field in my period, leadership was excellent and the quality

[37]

of men in it was very good. But I think it was its capacity for institutional contribution that interested Mr. Truman.

HESS: Do you recall when the Legislative Reference Service was set up?

PACE: No, I don't, it was before my time and I would assume it was fairly early in the budget process because it was a very critical part of it. Without it, you see, the budgetary process could be made meaningless.

HESS: At the time that you went out to talk to the former directors of the Bureau of the Budget, who else did you speak to? Did you speak to the two that had been there before Mr. Truman: Harold Smith and James Webb?

PACE: Of course, I had worked for Webb.

HESS: That's right.

PACE: And really...

HESS: You were his deputy.

PACE: I was his deputy, so I knew his views.

Smith I unfortunately did not talk to. I can't remember why. I did talk to Law Douglas who had also been an earlier Director of the Budget. I'm sure I intended to talk to

[38]

Mr. Smith, but I can't remember whether he was unavailable or ill but there was some reason why I did not have a chance to talk to him.

HESS: What do you recall about the press conferences that the President used to hold exclusively about the budget, the annual press conference on the budget?

PACE: Well, first I recall how superbly he prepared himself for them. He really was interested in the budget, this wasn't something that somebody else did. All the key decisions in the budget he'd made, and I believe he labored as hard over his budget message as he did over his State of the Union message, and he was very good at it. Mr. Truman's great strength, of course, was his ability to make the complicated simple, and the way he talked about very complicated things was the way the ordinary guy understood them, and that was really his great strength.

HESS: To what would you attribute his interest in budgetary matters? He had been county judge of course, which was an administrative position in Missouri and not judicial, and he had prepared many budgets for Jackson County.

PACE: I think that's partially it, my own instinct however is

[39]

that his section of the nation was really basically fiscally conservative. I came out of Arkansas, money was important to us, we didn't have a lot of it.

HESS: Money was tight, as an old saying goes.

PACE: That's right, money was very tight as he was growing up and later as I was coming on. The fact was that there just wasn't a lot of money. Money was something that you paid attention to, and your parents in that part of the world rather drummed into you the importance of not getting into debt.

You know in the East I think and probably in the Far West, there was a much greater feel for the leverage of money. I think basically those of us who came from the southwest had a critical sense of meeting things day to day, solving your problems within your capacity, doing without that extra pair of shoes.

HESS: And if you wanted to buy something you saved up the money ahead of time and then you'd pay for it.

PACE: To pay for it. That's right, borrowing was not regarded in our part of the world as a way of life. You lived within your means.

[40]

HESS: How would you evaluate Mr. Truman's grasp of budgetary matters as compared with some of the other Presidents that you've known?

PACE: Well, of course, I dealt much more intimately with him than I did with other Presidents. I've observed them largely from the outside. I'm certain Mr. Truman was far more interested in the budget than Mr. Eisenhower was. I don't mean by that that Mr. Eisenhower was not interested, he was. But Mr. Truman really took the budget quite personally and felt himself to be the protector of it against the demands of the Departments. Strangely enough, I'm sure Mr. Truman would never agree with this, but in fiscal philosophy what Charles Dawes had to say really fitted the way Mr. Truman thought. And I think he had a sense of intimacy with the budget and I know he worked at it.

HESS: Back to those press conferences just a minute. As I understand it, Mr. Truman, yourself, and the Secretary of the Treasury, would set on the stage...

PACE: That's right.

HESS: ...to answer questions.

[41]

PACE: This is just exactly correct, and we had of course, the "pie," the traditional "pie," that showed the division of the budget. We identified that portion of it that was subject to Mr. Truman's control, and that portion of it that was fixed. I do believe that we brought a greater understanding, both to the press and to the American people, about this really rather dry document and caused it to live in the minds of people as a vital factor in their lives.

HESS: Looking back on those days, how would you evaluate the general quality of Mr. Truman's answers to the questions that he was asked by the press?

PACE: I remember one thing I liked to quote Mr. Truman on, he said there are no bad questions, there are only bad answers, and it was this attitude that encouraged people to ask questions.

Mr. Truman also had another great characteristic, he wasn't at all concerned about saying he didn't know. He didn't try to talk about something he didn't know.

Thirdly he was a great user of staff and he'd toss a good many of the questions to Secretary Snyder or myself, but the ones he did answer, he answered them crisply, usually with a little humor, and showed a knowledge, grasp, and

[42]

interest in the budget that had to be impressive to the press.

HESS: As we mentioned Monday, Mr. Truman said when he first became President that he wanted to set the budget up under a tripod, the Bureau of the Budget, himself, and the Secretary of the Treasury. Now the Secretary of the Treasury during the full time that you were there was John Snyder.

PACE: Right.

HESS: He took over about one year after the beginning of the Truman administration. What is your evaluation of Mr. Snyder's understanding of the budget and budgetary matters?

PACE: I think that John Snyder, for whom I had great respect, was likewise a fiscal conservative. I think that he had more than his share of problems in the Treasury, managing the debt, raising the necessary monies, handling the Internal Revenue Bureau, and his side assignment in the field of customs.

Mr. Snyder was not an empire builder. There was no effort on his part to trespass in my area. He felt, I believe, that I was capable of managing that end of it, and while on really deep, or basic matters, I consulted the President and he uniformly consulted Mr. Snyder, but he neither sought to have or had any intimacy of knowledge about detail, which made for a very happy relationship.

[43]

The Secretary of the Treasury was in the Cabinet, he was a senior person, it could have been exacerbating, if he had sought...

HESS: He could have pulled rank on you if he had so wanted, in other words.

PACE: He could have tried to pull rank.

HESS: He could have tried to pull rank.

What would happen there if the Budget Director and the Secretary of the Treasury would have a standoff? Just a hypothetical question.

PACE: I would say if it was in the Budget Director's field, the Secretary of the Treasury in spite of his rank, his preeminence, would be the loser with almost any President I know. I don't think that the Budget Director would ever see fit to trespass in the field of the Secretary of the Treasury.

Of course, today, with the broader range of responsibility given the Budget Director and with the drawing of power much more fully into the White House than it was in my period, the two are much more equally ranked.

HESS: As you mentioned, Mr. Snyder is a conservative.

[44]

PACE: That's right.

HESS: That's pretty well recognized. Now, the budget is really a model of what the government is going to do.

PACE: This is right.

HESS: How much money it is going to spend for welfare, for housing, for health programming. Is it going to become involved in these matters, or is it not? Looking back on those days, do you recall Secretary Snyder's comments when someone perhaps wanted to put in a higher amount of Fair Deal, New Deal, liberal, matters than he thought should be in there?

PACE: I would say that Secretary Snyder really again was extremely good about not interfering in the budgetary process. I don't know what private conversation he had with the President. I'm sure there were a great many of them, (as I had a great many private conversations with the President). But a Budget Director becomes sensitive to influences with the President in his field and I think it's fair to say that Mr. Snyder really made no effort as far as I could see to influence any specific legislative area. I'm sure that in their discussions Mr. Snyder's conservative attitude must have been influential in certain fields. As far as my own operation was concerned, there were a couple of times when there were issues of great

[45]

fiscal importance, where I enlisted Mr. Snyder's aid. He was always ready and willing to give it because his attitude on how the budget should be managed coincided to a certain degree with my own, but he never, never interfered in it.

HESS: What would the President have done if he received conflicting advice from the Bureau of the Budget and the Council of Economic Advisers?

PACE: I think it depends upon the area. If you're talking about the broad development of the economic process about what was needed to ward off a recession, what was needed to control inflation, what was needed to increase trade, what was needed to deal with unemployment, I think the Council of Economic Advisers would have been preeminent in his mind. If it was...

HESS: Strategic decisions, more or less.

PACE: Yes, if it were the division of the dollar within that broad movement I think the Budget Director would have been compelling. President Truman was very good about that sort of thing, you know.

It would have been, to me, almost impossible to have worked with Mr. Roosevelt as Director of the Budget, because he tended to mix them all up and throw them into the pot. Mr. Truman tended to keep his lines of control really very,

[46]

very straight. In addition to which he was so honest with his own internal performers that nobody ever really had any doubt about where he stood on an issue.

HESS: That touches onto the subject of Mr. Truman's administrative ability. How would you evaluate Mr. Truman as an administrator?

PACE: Very high. Very high. He had excellent capacity to select people, and he was a superb delegator. The Presidency obviously requires delegation, it's far too big a job to handle on a personal basis.

HESS: Did you think that Mr. Roosevelt tried that?

PACE: No, I feel Mr. Roosevelt was very much of a personal operator.

HESS: Well, that's what I mean. To handle too many things personally.

PACE: Oh, yes, I thought he ran things basically by personal fiat and unlike Mr. Truman who had his decisions staffed on the way up to the President, Mr. Roosevelt had his decisions staffed on the way down from the President.

No, I have often said that in my judgment people tended to think more of Mr. Truman as a politician and less as an administrator. I happen to feel that he was a better

[47]

administrator than he was a politician. Although the election of '48 obviously makes that statement seem a little silly, but I still would say that his talents as an administrator have largely gone unsung in history. His courage, his simplicity, his sense of history have been mentioned, but his capacity as an administrator, and as I told you his ability to recognize the importance of the institution of the Presidency and build it up is one of the remarkable characteristics of Mr. Truman that I don't think has yet had the attention it should.

HESS: Of course, the Bureau of the Budget has now been reorganized into the Office of Management and Budget. Do you believe that reorganization brought about an improvement in the situation?

PACE: I don't, frankly, know the answer. I don't know the current problems; today the Government is bigger, more complicated.

We incorporated in the budget in my day full responsibility for the management of the Government. We had a very illustrious outside management council that worked with us constantly on this process.

I have often found that reorganizations, generally speaking, involve the same people, and possibly new titles, but don't really change the basic function. I think it's the man at the top and the people he has working with him that is compelling, whether you call it the Budget Bureau or the Office

[48]

of Budget and Management, these chart changes are rarely very compelling.

HESS: My next line of questioning has to do with the political events of 1948. Have we fully covered everything that we want to say about the Bureau of the Budget?

PACE: Yes, I think so. Again, if I were making a last statement here, it would be that Mr. Truman did use the Bureau of the Budget throughout the period I was Assistant Director and then Director as a means of creating the institution of the Presidency. As I said to you earlier, it was his own personal modesty, as well as his sense of the Presidency as an institution, rather than as a personal process that made it possible, and I believe that history as it looks over the course of the development of the U.S. Government and the U. S. civilization will give Mr. Truman very high marks for establishing this institution. It's not something people know very much about, you know, and yet it is something that is part of the warp and woof of the growth of our whole society.

HESS: This will just be asking for a supposition on your part, but we have mentioned that Mr. Roosevelt handled the Presidency on a personal basis not institutionalized at all, or very

[49]

little, and then Mr. Truman did establish the Presidency as an institution, or he slanted it more in that way. Just asking for a supposition on your part, but did you think that Mr. Truman thought that Roosevelt's way of doing things was wrong and that he tried to improve upon them?

PACE: No, I really don't. I think Mr. Truman had the greatest possible respect for Mr. Roosevelt. I think that he felt that Mr. Roosevelt's form of Government fitted Mr. Roosevelt's style and talents, and I don't think he thought it fitted his style and talents. And I think that the change was not a reflection of the inadequacy of the system, as much as it was his own sense of what was needed. It was his belief as to what society needed irrespective of who might be President. The decision for whatever reason, was highly beneficial for the nation.

HESS: Very good. All right, now moving on to the political events of 1948, as you will recall there was an effort before the convention on the part of some Democratic factions to see that someone other than Mr. Truman received the nomination that year, the ADA wanted General

Eisenhower. In your opinion was there a possibility that the Democratic convention might have chosen someone other than the President if he had wanted the renomination?

[50]

PACE: Not the slightest chance. Obviously the most attractive person from the Democratic point of view was General Eisenhower. Great popular appeal and the party felt, as the party always did, that it needed a winner and it had real doubts that Mr. Truman was that winner. The only person who possibly could have taken that on would have been General Eisenhower, (and that of course is very much in doubt), otherwise I would say Mr. Truman was clearly the party's choice.

HESS: Did you go to the convention in Philadelphia that year?

PACE: I did not, no. No, I have not attended any convention in my lifetime.

HESS: Is this a conscious decision that you have made?

PACE: I think to a certain degree, yes. I made up my mind quite early on that my basis of contribution to the society was in the broad administrative field rather than the political field. I felt that I could be a better administrator and render a better service if I were not semi-tinged with politics.

I felt if you go into politics you ought to go into it all the way. I felt that to dabble in it was only a losing game, so since I didn't intend to go into it up over my head, and I wanted to really function in the interest of the nation

[51]

rather than the interest of the party, even despite my earlier service with Bob Hannegan, I really pretty much divorced myself from politics. And I think that really what appealed to Bob Hannegan, was, although I had been a Democrat and have continued to be a Democrat all my life, I never functioned in any partisan political fashion.

HESS: Since you are from Arkansas, did you have any particular thoughts or feelings at the time that several of the southern states walked out of the convention over the wording of the civil rights plank?

PACE: No, I just thought that this was the normal political phenomena, having come from that part of the world, I obviously didn't approve of it, but I could understand why it happened.

HESS: What effect did you think that J. Strom Thurmond and the State's Rights Party would have on Mr. Truman's chances?

PACE: Well, I thought it was from his point of view a negative factor. Obviously the South had been a base on which the Democratic Party had developed over a period of time. Mr. Roosevelt

kept it as a base, and added a very strong element of labor and minorities to it, to make it an almost compelling party and when you begin to lose that base it obviously made Mr. Truman's chances that much weaker.

[52]

HESS: And he lost a good many of those states.

PACE: He did.

HESS: But he still won.

PACE: That's right, which was again a tribute to his ability not to appeal to any specific sector, but I think to a broad mass of the American people.

HESS: And there was another party cutting in that year, also, Henry Wallace and the Progressives.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: What effect did you think that Henry Wallace and the Progressives would have, about the same thing on the other end?

PACE: Not quite the same thing. I felt that these were votes that normally Mr. Truman would draw, but I did not feel it cut as heavily into his base as the Strom Thurmond movement.

HESS: It cut quite heavily into New York, though. As you recall, the votes that Wallace took away from Truman, gave New York to Dewey by a slim margin, and the Republicans got the entire electoral votes.

[53]

PACE: That's right, which they would have lost otherwise.

Well, what you really have to say is that from a political standpoint, it was David versus Goliath. Mr. Truman running under very difficult circumstances had two additional problems foisted on him and made his re-election seem that much more remote.

HESS: Were you present at any time that Mr. Truman spoke during that campaign.

PACE: No, I was not.

HESS: And we covered on Monday where you were on election night, with the bow tie.

PACE: This is correct.

I do remember it was in that year but before electioneering ever occurred--no let's see--no, it was subsequent to '48, that's right. It was subsequent to '48. I was thinking where I had been with Mr. Truman where he addressed a large crowd. and he went down to Little Rock, my native heath, and the crowd was so large, this was after the election of '48. He took along some of the members of his Cabinet and members of his own executive office and took me along. The crowd was so large they held it in the outdoor stadium, they had no indoor facilities able to accommodate the crowd, and when I

[54]

was introduced, being a hometown boy, a roar of approval went up and I felt a hand on my shoulder and I looked up and it was the President of the United States. He said, "Frank, you must be a hell of a Budget Director. They ought to be booing you, not cheering you."

This was so typical you see, of Mr. Truman. Here he is walking all the way around to get back of me so he could put that in to me right there at that moment. As I say, that's what made him, for the people that work for him, so very special.

HESS: Didn't John Snyder, who was also from Arkansas go along on that trip.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: And I believe Les Biffle was on that same trip is that right?

PACE: That's correct.

HESS: Any other Arkansans?

PACE: In the Cabinet?

HESS: You were the three people that in his speech, as I recall, that he mentioned in his talk.

[55]

PACE: That's right.

HESS: You three.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Was there anybody else from Arkansas along?

PACE: No--oh, you mean along.

HESS: Yes.

PACE: Oh, you had obviously Brooks Hays, who at that time was a Congressman, and I believe Senator McClellan was there.

HESS: I could be wrong, but I have read that speech in the *Presidential Papers*, and I'm not sure they got mentioned.

PACE: Well, they would have been mentioned, you know, Mr. Truman would not have missed that. Then my memory is not accurate.

HESS: All right, now back on '48. Did the Republicans and Governor Dewey make any particular mistakes that year that contributed to their defeat? When Mr. Truman won in '48. What were the Republicans doing wrong?

PACE: Well, obviously they did a great many things wrong.

HESS: Yes, they lost.

[56]

PACE: They lost. You remember Mr. Dewey, assuming victory, played a very cautious and really undynamic role and I think that the decision to coast in when you had a three up and four to go lead in the golf match, lost it for them.

Dewey had a few personal incidents like the railroad engineer that really reflected the fact that he just didn't have the human touch that Mr. Truman had. And so I think when they saw the momentum slipping away, it was too late to pick it back up. Their mistakes were essentially mistakes of overconfidence and timing.

HESS: One of the things that was mentioned at the time was that the Republicans did not feel that it was necessary for them to make any commitments, to make any promises that they would later have to live up to. That is just one of the factors in their overconfidence, but were there other factors that caused the Republicans to just rest on their oars?

PACE: You know you don't quite get out with the party organization to stir them up, you don't really leave that sense of imperativeness in the people who are working with you. These are not matters that can really be identified in black and white, they run much more in the gray area.

HESS: Did you think Mr. Truman would win? Even when you went to

[57]

the party that night wearing the bow tie, what were your own thoughts? Did you really think Mr. Truman was going to win?.

PACE: Well, I have to say that I knew Mr. Truman thought he was going. to win.

I had of course, in earlier days, seen my father's law partner run against Joe T. Robinson, and he was very confident he was going to win and he lost by a margin of about six to one. This was obviously not a comparable situation.

I guess if I have to say to you, I would say that I so badly wanted Mr. Truman to win that I probably thought he was going to win. But I think that there was another side saying, "Be sensible Frank, it just isn't likely that he will." But I guess if we added it all up and you were giving me a lie detector test, I'd have to say, "I thought he was going to win." I can assure you this, everybody at that party thought I thought he was going to win.

HESS: What did you say when you turned that tie on that night, anything?

PACE: Well, I mean...

HESS: Any comments?

PACE: Comments like, "Well, for God's sake," and then, "He sure

[58]

came well prepared didn't he?" and "Good night."

HESS: As they left to go home.

PACE: As they left to go home.

HESS: All right, now moving on, in checking Commander William Rigdon's log of the visits to Key West, I have found that you went down to Key West on occasion. One of those occasions was a trip almost a year later, from November the 28th to December the 20th of 1949, and it's indicated in Commander Rigdon's log that you were down there from December the 8th to the 12th. Also along on that trip were William Schaub, who was your assistant, he was Assistant to the Director of the Bureau of the Budget.

PACE: That's right, in the defense field.

HESS: And then John Snyder, Secretary of the Treasury, was also along on that trip.

PACE: That's correct.

HESS: Why were you there on that particular trip? Was it because of matters pertaining to the formulation of the Budget?

PACE: You see the ultimate formulation of the budget, the final

[59]

touches to the budget had to be made at that time. In other words I'd gone over the budget with the President, but then he'd given me general guidelines and gone back and refined it and out of that there still were a number of unanswered questions. I was down there really to get the President's answers in this area.

HESS: All right now, this just brings up the general subject of Key West. What do you recall about Key West, what part of the day was given over to work, what part of the day was given over to other pursuits, and what did you enjoy the most about Key West?

PACE: Well, I'll answer the last question first. I enjoyed that poker game that evening most, because playing against people who were clearly my superiors in that game, on the first evening I was the big winner. I remember at the end of the evening Mr. Truman called in the head of the Secret Service, Mr. U. E. Baughman. I remember he said to Baughman, who knew me quite well, "Do you see that man?" And he said, "Yes sir."

He said, "Well, don't let him off of this place until I get my money back."

Well, of course, that broke everybody up, but seriously the routine of the day was--the morning was devoted entirely

[60]

to work. Lunchtime was not a working session and normally there was work until about 2:30 or 3 in the afternoon, and then you were free to exercise in one way or another, volleyball. I remember playing tennis with Clark Clifford who was down there at the time.

HESS: Did you ever go swimming at the Truman Beach?

PACE: Oh yes, we went swimming usually before lunch. You could take off for about twenty minutes for a swim and of course, if Mr. Truman were engaged with somebody else, you would have a longer time free. In the evening if you were fortunate, Mr. Truman invited you to play poker with him and that was always, of course, a very rare treat.

HESS: Where did you stay? Do you recall?

PACE: Well, there is a compound there, as you know, and I stayed somewhere in the immediate environ, within easy range of where Mr. Truman was to be.

HESS: How many times did you go down?

PACE: Three.

HESS: What were the other two times, were they similar to this, were you down there working on the budget?

[61]

PACE: Well, I was not working on the budget, the other times, I was working on matters of the budget. In other words, while you set the budget for somewhere around the 24th, 25th of January, during the year, in the course of executing the budget, some very major decisions arise and so while the President went down at a normal time to Key West, I was there on matters of the budget.

I went down there once when I was Assistant Director of the Budget and twice when I was Director of the Budget. And each time it related to--it could have been some legislation, it could have been a specific and major undertaking on the part of a Cabinet officer.

HESS: Did you ever go down as Secretary of the Army?

PACE: Never did, no.

HESS: All three times were when you were with the Budget?

PACE: Yes, that's right.

HESS: Were you ever on board the *Williamsburg* with Mr. Truman?

PACE: Oh, yes.

HESS: What were the occasions, and what do you recall?

PACE: I can't really recall. I say--oh; yes I was on twice.

[62]

These were largely social occasions, when the President was taking time off and he very kindly included me.

HESS: Sailed down the Potomac?

PACE: Oh, yes. Sailed down the Potomac and it was always a great thrill because of the President's lovely sense of humor and he made his work associates his friends.

You know some Presidents keep a barrier from their assistants. President Truman felt that the President's position was its own barrier and while he .was never undignified in that sense, he did give you a sense of intimacy, and the *Williamsburg* was a place where you developed it to an even higher degree.

HESS: The men he worked with were the men he took to Key West and on the *Williamsburg*.

PACE: That's right, yes. He--to the best of my knowledge I don't ever remember any outside friends of Mr. Truman being along on any of these trips.

HESS: Did the poker games have a limit, do you recall?

PACE: Oh yes. Oh, yes. They had poverty.

HESS: A poverty pot.

[63]

PACE: A poverty pot. And when you got to a certain point you could draw from the poverty pot, and Mr. Truman was very careful about this. Besides which, if I may say so, the people who played there like Senator Kerr and Senator Anderson were the kind of people I'd only play with if there was a poverty pot.

HESS: They could afford to get into a big game.

PACE: It wasn't just that they could afford it, at poker they were so much smarter than I was. I mean I think there were some areas that I could give a very good go, either athletically or intellectually, but in poker believe me, I knew when I was in the presence of my superiors.

HESS: How would you rate Mr. Truman as a poker player? Was he as good as they were?

PACE: No, he wasn't. President Truman loved the game, and he was essentially in poker a gambler, he loved to gamble, and he understood the game. Let me say that I would say that Mr. Truman was a good and even possibly a very good poker player. He's liable to allow his emotional desires to play a role, but I would say that Senator Kerr and Senator Anderson were absolutely superb poker players.

HESS: I have heard that Clark Clifford was pretty good at the game, too.

[64]

PACE: Clark was good, very good, but Kerr and Anderson were a cut above Clark, or the Chief Justice, who played and loved the game.

HESS: All right, now moving on to your role as Secretary of the Army. At the time that you became Secretary of the Army in 1950, what was your evaluation of the strength and degree of the preparedness of our armed forces and of the Army in particular?

PACE: Well, I had known it largely as the Director of the Budget. I had felt that any army deteriorates in peacetime. I had felt that our own army included some very remarkable people. Mind you the Army was run by the "flower" of World War II. I doubt that in the history of this, or any other country, as remarkable a group of men were gathered together as were working in the U.S. Army in that period.

HESS: Why were you selected as Secretary of the Army? Tell me about that?

PACE: Well, I think that I had told Mr. Truman that I felt that he should have someone else as Director of the Budget because basically I didn't agree with the economic philosophy of Leon Keyserling who was the head of the Council of Economic

[65]

Advisers. I liked Leon as a person but my own belief was that his economic policies were much too loose. And I said to the President that I felt Leon's economic philosophy was more in tune with the political requirements of the times.

He said, "Well, Frank, this is as it should be, Leon should be liberal and you should be conservative."

I said, "Yes, sir, but I really feel that there ought to be a little greater philosophical rapport than there is."

And he said, "Well, Frank, if you've made up your mind it's better to do it that way, I don't want to lose you." He said, "Would you like to be Secretary of the Army?"

And I said, "Well, sir, I don't think that's the question." I said, "The question is do you want me as Secretary of the Army?"

He said, "Well, that's a refreshing point of view." And he said, "Obviously I did or I wouldn't have asked you."

So I said, "Well, sir, then I'll be your Secretary of the Army."

HESS: Gordon Gray had just retired.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Do you know why he left? Any particular reason.

PACE: No, I don't. You know he went down to become the president

[66]

of the University of North Carolina.

HESS: A pretty good school.

PACE: A great school, and Gordon of course is a great person and I assume that he had decided that he wanted to undertake this academic challenge. We worked very closely together, Gordon briefed me on everything. And I never really asked him why, he just left, and he really never indicated why.

HESS: At the time you came in as Secretary of the Army was there an awareness in the Pentagon and in the government as a whole, that the Communists might try to test our defenses in some part of the world?

PACE: I don't really think so. I think that frankly the only wars that America had engaged in and the recent memory of man had been total wars, World War I and World War II. Small wars had never been a part of our history. I don't think that any one thought that another world war was likely and I don't think people really thought in terms of small wars at that time.

HESS: The so-called brushfire wars.

PACE: Brushfire wars. It just didn't seem like we were likely to be engaged in those.

HESS: All right, we soon became engaged in one in June of 1950.

[67]

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Where were you when you first heard of the events in Korea and what went through your mind? What were your thoughts?

PACE: Well, very interestingly, we were having dinner that evening at Joe Alsop's and by an interesting coincidence, Dean Rusk was also having dinner that evening at the same place. And Dean Rusk was called and advised that evening about the North Korean invasion of South Korea and he advised me and he went to the State Department and I went to the Pentagon and I was there all night long on that first occasion.

My recollection is that Mr. Johnson was not in the city at that time and...

HESS: He had been to the Far East, as I recall, and was coming back at that time.

PACE: I can't tell you exactly where he was, I just remember that at the time this occurred he was not there and I took the original responsibility.

HESS: The President was in Independence...

PACE: That's right.

HESS: That weekend. It was on a Saturday. Dean Acheson phoned

[68]

him and talked to him and the President, came back on Sunday afternoon, and held a meeting at the Blair House that evening, a meeting that you attended. Now before this time you say that you

took the initial responsibility, but what did you do, what actions did you take between the time that you heard about the invasion and the Blair House meeting?

PACE: Well, between the time that we heard about it and the Blair House meeting, our function really was primarily one of correspondence by Telecom with General MacArthur keeping informed, making sure what was happening and trying to collect all the evidence to permit the President to make the decision that he ultimately had to make.

HESS: Our Ambassador in Korea at that time was Ambassador [John J.] Muccio.

PACE: Muccio, that's right.

HESS: And were you receiving any reports from him?

PACE: Yes, although his reports...

HESS: They probably came through the State Department.

PACE: ...came through the State Department. Our discussions were almost exclusively with General MacArthur during that period.

[69]

HESS: All right, now on Sunday evening after the President had returned there was a meeting held at the Blair House. What do you recall about that meeting?

PACE: Well, the President operated in his usual fashion, my recollection is that the people there were Mr. Acheson and Dean Rusk, and I believe Louis Johnson had returned by that time, and the three service Secretaries, the Joint Chiefs of Staff

HESS: That's right.

PACE: ...were there, and I can't remember if anybody else was or not.

HESS: Yes, Dean Acheson and...

PACE: Dean Rusk.

HESS: Dean Rusk and Philip Jessup.

PACE: Yes, Philip Jessup. Well...

HESS: And the others that you mentioned.

PACE: Well, the President asked each of us our opinion on what should be done.

HESS: What did you tell him?

[70]

PACE: Well, I think I told him very clearly that I felt we had to resist the attack. I told him that I felt that this was more than just a matter of Korea, that the Russians were testing, and if we allowed this test to go unchecked that they would undoubtedly take bigger steps and this would involve us in bigger problems. If we were going to stop this thrust, now was the time to do it and that we ought to undertake to do so.

HESS: Did he receive any advice in opposition to that viewpoint from anyone?

PACE: Not really, no. The feeling was very unanimous there. People expressed it in different ways. Some were a little more complex. I'm sure that a broader view of all the implications was made by Dean Acheson as Secretary of State, but the President had the comfort of really a unanimous assessment that this was the thing to do.

HESS: Was it discussed at that time that such a movement into Korea should be made through

[71]

the United Nations, as it was done?

PACE: Yes, it was. That was suggested by Dean Acheson at that time and it was concurred in.

HESS: Was it discussed that if it could not have been done through the United Nations that we should go in unilaterally on our own anyway?

PACE: I don't believe that there was a sense that it could not be done through the United Nations. I don't believe that the issue that it could not be done really arose, and therefore, I don't think the alternative was discussed. I'm quite clear in my own mind that had it been discussed this group would have agreed we should have gone in unilaterally.

HESS: All right, now, there was a meeting held the next night. This was Sunday night, there was another meeting held on Monday night, do you recall anything about the Monday night meeting? Were there any other subjects discussed?

PACE: No. I think Mr. Truman said this was too momentous a decision to make without everybody reflecting on it.

One of the interesting facts is that the original decision to go in was made on the basis of the belief that this could be handled by air and naval forces. It was not originally contemplated that land forces would participate. I think that if it had been contemplated, that land forces would participate, the decision would have been considerably harder to make, but on the basis that it could be handled by Air and Navy the decision was much simpler.

[72]

HESS: Was that articulated at the meeting?

PACE: Oh, yes, very definitely, and it was the opinion of the Joint Chiefs that this was possible and that it could be done...

HESS: By air and naval bombardment.

PACE: That's right, supporting the South Korean troops. The South Korean troops had received training from us and I believe there was a general belief that they were considerably stronger than they actually turned out to be. Or alternatively, the North Koreans were considerably stronger than we had anticipated.

HESS: And at that time we did have KMAG in there, the Korean Military Advisory Group, which had been cut back and I understand no larger at this time than about 500 men.

PACE: I think this is correct. My recollection is that this had been headed by "Tough" Tony McAuliffe who was one of the ablest trainers in the Army. I don't remember whether Tony--I am sure he was not in charge at that time. But he had had the primary training responsibility there and he was one of the people on whom we relied most heavily.

HESS: What were a few of the problems that the emergency brought up and how did you handle them during the first few days?

[73]

Looking back into July of 1950 what were some of the problems that you were faced with and how did you handle them?

PACE: Well, in the early stages since the function was primarily Air and Navy, our role in the matter was largely that of planner and thinker. However it was only about three or four days before we had a critical telecom from General MacArthur, advising that the North Koreans were overwhelming the South Korean troops and that if we intended to make an effective stand in Korea that it was imperative that we agree to commit American ground troops.

It's very interesting, I remember conversing across 11,000 miles in this question and answer fashion. General MacArthur had the most uncanny talent for anticipating the real meaning of a question and providing you with a pertinent answer.. I rarely asked a question but that I got the kind of answer to the question that indicated he clearly understood why I had asked the question. So communicating with General MacArthur was very clear and definitive.

After this, it was quite late at night, I called the President and awakened him and advised him of General Mac Arthur's decision. And he said, "Well, Frank, do we have to make that decision tonight?"

I remember saying, "No, sir, we don't, but the fact that

[74]

we don't have to make a decision is one that you should make rather than I."

And he said, "Well, Frank, I feel that we'd do a better job on this in the morning," and so he deferred the decision on that until the next morning.

I can't remember the exact date but there must be some records then of a meeting that we had the following day on this. Is there not some record?

HESS: I think so. The National Security Council was meeting regularly at the time.

PACE: Well, in any event, as a result, of this we did decide to commit ground troops, which was a much more fundamental decision than the original one although it was largely over-looked at the time. And I remember it was then my responsibility to advise General MacArthur that he had the authority to commit ground troops.

HESS: At the time that the decision was made to commit ground troops, was there anyone who advised against that action?

PACE: No, none.

HESS: It was something at the time that looked like it had to be done.

[75]

PACE: That's right

HESS: Because our forces had been pushed down so it looked like it might have been another Dunkirk.

PACE: That's right. At that point, you can't really call it a decision. I mean...

HESS: It is just something that has to be done.

PACE: That's right. America should no more enter something like that and then write it off. It just didn't lie in the American character.

If I want to catch that 4 o'clock plane I had better get going.

[76]

Third Oral History Interview with Frank Pace, Jr., New York City, February 17, 1972. By Jerry N. Hess, Harry S. Truman Library.

HESS: Mr. Secretary, to begin today, we have discussed the meeting at the Blair House on the night that Mr. Truman came back from Independence and they were discussing what to do about the situation in Korea; but at that time and in the meetings in the next couple of days, what was Mr. Truman's attitude?

PACE: Well, Mr. Truman was an excellent administrator, and as I said to you, he asked the opinion of everyone in the room without expressing any opinion himself at all. After it was over, he summed up what was the consensus of the group, asking if there was any disagreement with that consensus. We said, "No." He said that fortunately this coincided with his point of view, so there was no problem; but as I've said to you before, Mr. Truman has always been thought of as a great politician; but what few people understood was that he was a natural administrator. He was a natural user of staff; he selected them with care, and then he relied on them completely. This was again a perfect example of how Mr. Truman operated. Now, if we had all reached a conclusion that was contrary to his, he would have stated then his position and the reason why and asked us to challenge it. But since they coincided, there was no need for it

[77]

HESS: Do you think that one of the reasons that he did not present his views was that if he had done so, it might have inhibited others who felt contrary to those views?

PACE: Oh, very clearly. Anyone who has been a top administrator knows that if the boss speaks in advance...

HESS: You'd better agree with the boss.

PACE: Not necessarily, but it does put a very major damper on the enthusiasm with which you speak about a point.

HESS: During those meetings, do you recall if it was discussed whether or not the Soviets might come in if we did take this move, if we went into Korea?

PACE: Oh, yes, that was thoroughly discussed, and it was the conclusion of most people involved that the Soviets would not come in. It was the conclusion of all people involved that the Soviets would not come in, but there were different shadings of concern about it. However, it was agreed that if the Soviets did come in this really was something that had to be faced and dealt with, because otherwise the impression would be left with the Soviets that they could undertake any kind of initiative anywhere in the world and we'd be afraid to counter it.

[78]

HESS: Do you recall if it was discussed at this early date whether or not the Chinese Communists would come in?

PACE: No, that was not discussed. As a matter of fact, at least it was not in my mind, and it was not a matter that was raised at all.

HESS: Some historians are of the opinion that the Soviets instigated matters in Korea as a diversionary matter to get our attention away from events in Europe?

PACE: No, I don't believe that's true. I believe that the Soviets did not think that we would react to this action. They had come to the conclusion that this was an isolated part of the world, that our basic interests were not there, and that they were in a position, using North Koreans, to go ahead and take over that whole area. I think there's a tendency often to ascribe to your opponents either an intelligence or a quality of planning that often isn't there. I think this was a very simple mistake on their part as to how we would react.

HESS: In your opinion, should the President have tried to get a joint - congressional resolution to support this decision, to share the load with Congress, in other words, such as was done in the Tonkin Gulf matter?

[79]

PACE: Yes, and I frankly said that to him.

HESS: What were the counter arguments, why wasn't that done?

PACE: I said this to him not at this meeting, but at a later time. He said, "Frank, it's not necessary. They are all with me."

I said, "Yes, Mr. President, but we can't be sure that they'll be with you over any period of time."

The matter never was raised as a matter of discussion at this larger meeting. It just so happened that I had a very strong feeling that here was a chance to very clearly get the support of the Congress at a time when it was very necessary.

HESS: Did any others of the President's advisers also feel that same way?

PACE: I have no idea. It was not brought up...

HESS: In the main meeting. All right.

Jumping back just a little bit to Secretary Louis Johnson, what is your opinion of the manner in which Louis Johnson acted to meet the problems that arose at this time? How effective was he?

PACE: I did not feel that Louis Johnson was an effective Secretary of Defense. I don't believe he paid attention to

[80]

the details of the Defense operation. I don't believe he knew them deeply. I believe he overstated our capabilities and our strengths prior to this. I don't believe he had the breadth to grasp the totality of the problem that we faced.

HESS: He had been in the position since March of 1949, a little over a year. Why was he appointed to this high post?

PACE: Well, obviously I don't know. That was not a matter to which I was privy.

HESS: Any opinions?

PACE: Well, Mr. Johnson was a top political figure in the Democratic Party. He was a very persuasive man. I liked him personally.

HESS: He accepted the position as chairman of the finance committee in 1948 also.

PACE: That's right. I'm sure that in this regard Mr. Truman would never give that important a position to a man just because he served in the Democratic Party. I think he probably was personally over-impressed with Mr. Johnson's capabilities.

HESS: Moving on to a dual subject of the landing at Inchon. This took place on September 15. As you know, much has been

[81]

written about this. There was a breakout of the Pusan perimeter from the column moving up to the north, took a little while to break out. There were good, valid reasons why good military men thought that an invasion at Inchon was ill advised: The mud flats, the island that's out in front of Inchon, the fact that there were other cities or other places where an invasion could have been made; but nevertheless, General Mac Arthur's position did win out, and it won out in glorious fashion. It's well-known that that's one of the things he will be known for, the success at Inchon. What were your views on that? Did you think that movement was a good idea?

PACE: Well, remember I came to the Defense Department in April of 1950. The Korean war broke out in June and this was quite early on. I was not a military expert in that sense, and therefore my views were really not important on that phase of it. I do recall that the Joint Chiefs of Staff, uniformly, thought it was a bad idea, and I think that they advised General MacArthur of that feeling. I think that all I can say is that after it was achieved, it made a very deep impression on me as to General Mac Arthur's capability as a commanding general.

HESS: Just in general, what was your opinion of his capabilities?

[82]

PACE: Well, again, I knew nothing of him other than through what I had read. His reputation, of course, was unique, and I accepted that. I must say that whatever I thought about him was enhanced by Inchon.

HESS: One thing had come up about General MacArthur the previous month: That deals with the letter that he wrote to the commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in August. The letter really states his views of why Formosa was so important, and as he called it, "the unsinkable aircraft tender," but it was in disagreement with Mr. Truman. Mr. Truman wanted the people on Formosa to stay there. He sent the 7th Fleet down and said, you know, "You fellows don't come over here; and you fellows don't go over there." But at that time, the letter was contradictory to what Mr. Truman had wanted to do for Formosa, and he said later that he should have fired MacArthur then. He said that he was talked out of firing MacArthur at that time. Do you recall anything--this is in August, this is before Inchon--do you recall anything about Mr. Truman being talked out of firing MacArthur during the month of August over a VFW letter?

PACE: No, no, I don't, although I would assume that if Mr. Truman was talking about firing MacArthur, that people he probably talked to would be General Marshall and Dean Acheson.

[83]

I don't think he would have called us in. Certainly the matter was never one that I was aware of even.

HESS: In what I have read about it, he did not identify who he spoke with. He said, "They talked me out of it." So, I didn't know who "they" were.

PACE: I wasn't the "they."

HESS: You weren't that high up to be the "they."

PACE: No, I wasn't high enough to be the "they."

HESS: About this same time, Secretary Johnson resigned. He submitted his resignation on September 12th. It was made effective on the 19th. I understand that he had an address that he wanted to make, and so he was left in the position until the 19th, the invasion coming on the 15th. What is your opinion about the resignation of Louis Johnson? Why did that come about?

PACE: Well, remember Mr. Johnson was under considerable attack for some of the statements he had made about our readiness. The Korean war had not moved...

HESS: "Cutting the fat out of the Armed Forces."

PACE: "Cutting the fat out of the Armed Forces," and the Korean

[84]

war had not moved to the satisfaction of the public or the press or the Congress at that particular juncture. And I believe--my own assumption, and this I do not know, I'm giving you purely my assumption--is that Mr. Truman felt he had to have somebody heavier in there running it, and I think he sat down with Mr. Johnson and said that he felt with the war on he needed someone who had had experience in this matter, and that he was going to undertake to get General Marshall to take this over.

HESS: In your opinion, do you think Secretary Johnson had ambitions for higher office? In other words, would he have liked to run for President?

PACE: I think this was not out of his mind.

HESS: Did you hear talk like that around the Pentagon, was it fairly common knowledge?

PACE: No, no, no, I wouldn't say that. I rather doubt that Mr. Johnson talked about it, and I think that if anybody asked him about it, he would have denied it. I knew Louis Johnson reasonably well. He was a proud man. He was a West Virginian. A high-level political type. His background had been law and politics and it would not be unusual that he might have thought one day the lightning might strike. I don't think he thought

[85]

it was a very likely occurrence.

HESS: How good an administrator was he? If you had something to take up with him, was he difficult to see, would things move if you went into see him with a plan?

PACE: Well, no, I had no problem ever seeing Louis Johnson. He was very kind where I was concerned. I don't think he had the confidence of the military, and I think he was inclined to be a little erratic in his decision making, and therefore I don't think the system worked very well. I don't think he was a good administrator. A good administrator first wins the confidence of the people who've got to administer for him. He did quite the contrary. He was inclined to be arbitrary.

HESS: I also understand there was a good deal of conflict between him and the Secretary of State, Mr. Acheson?

PACE: Yes, that's correct.

HESS: That may have played a part in his resignation.

PACE: I'm quite sure it did.

HESS: Now, Secretary Johnson's Deputy Secretary of Defense had been Stephen Early.

[86]

PACE: Right.

HESS: He had been Press Secretary, as we all know, for Mr. Roosevelt. Did you work with Mr. Early and just what seemed to be his duties? What was he doing then?

PACE: I did work with Steve Early. No one could know him and not like him. He was a wonderful human being. Again, his capabilities in this field and experience in this field was quite limited.

HESS: He was a public relations man, wasn't he?

PACE: He was a good public relations man. I think this was his role, and picking up some of the pieces that Mr. Johnson let fall around, seemed to be his primary responsibility. People would go to him when things might be going the wrong way, and he'd be in a position to go in; and then he was very persuasive with Mr. Johnson, and who put a lot of store by him.

HESS: Why was General Marshall selected as the next Secretary of Defense, or persuaded to come into the Government?

PACE: I think Mr. Truman always just had an inordinately high opinion of General Marshall, and faced with this really major crisis, he had to have somebody he could lean on.

[87]

HESS: He was there for one year. He came in September '50, and he left in September of '51. Now, a heck of a lot took place within that length of time.

PACE: Was he there only that short a time?

HESS: Yes, he was. That was before Mr. Lovett.

PACE: I know that, but I...

HESS: September to September.

PACE: Mr. Lovett was his Deputy during that period.

HESS: Mr. Lovett was his Deputy and then he took over as Secretary of Defense.

PACE: It's hard for me to believe that he was there only a year.

HESS: Looking back on that time and all the events that took place in there, what is your general evaluation of General Marshall's handling of the job?

PACE: Well, in the first place, I think of all the men that I knew in that period, I regarded General Marshall most highly. He was a man of great incisiveness; he had a keen sense of human nature, and particularly with General Marshall, I always had the feeling I was in the presence of history.

[88]

I never felt that General Marshall made a decision on a contemporary basis. I think his mind was always functioning in terms of how this would fit into the historical perspective of the United States. I don't believe any man could have done for Mr. Truman or for the Nation, the things that General Marshall did during that period. I have to say that that one year of association with him was probably the most satisfying period of my life. So, you shouldn't ask me any more because I'm obviously prejudiced.

HESS: We all have our little prejudices.

PACE: This one's a large prejudice.

HESS: This one's a large one, all right.

On October 7th of 1950 a resolution was passed within the United Nations authorizing the U.N. forces to move north of the 38th parallel to "insure conditions of stability throughout Korea." This was with General MacArthur moving in from Inchon and the forces that had broken out of the Pusan perimeter had moved north, retaken Seoul and now they had U. N. sanction to move north of the 38th parallel. As you will recall, the resolution of June 27, 1950, spoke only of repelling the invaders from the region south of the 38th parallel, South Korea, so the decision had now been made to move into

[89]

North Korea. Did you attend any meetings in which it was decided to change the scope of the war, which was very obviously done, and what were your views and recommendations?

PACE: Yes, there were a great many discussions on this. Again I don't remember any contrary opinions. If there were, I just don't recall. It seemed a very natural thing that in order to bring some sort of order to that area, it would be necessary to consolidate the successes that had been achieved at Inchon and to really try to restore some universality to Korea rather than leaving it as a divided land. The opinion of almost everybody that if you did that, there was going to be constant trouble, an inability to grow and develop. I'm quite sure that I favored going north of the Han River, which as I recall, was the boundary line.

HESS: Reading just an excerpt from *The Korean War*, Matthew B. Ridgway's book. This is on page 44:

The plan for crossing the 38th parallel to destroy all the hostile forces on the peninsula had of course required prior approval from Washington, for the implications of such a crossing were manifold. Red China had been threatening by radio almost daily that it would come into the war if North Korea were invaded...

So now we have definite threats on the radio from the Communists, the Red Chinese, saying "If you do come north of the 38th parallel we will attack." Now, was this seriously

[90]

discussed? Was this taken as a serious threat?

PACE: Not really, no. You've got to remember that the Red Chinese had been threatening throughout the period. General Ridgway merely emphasizes that they threatened at that time, but this was not something that started at that time. Quite frankly, I guess it's a case of crying "wolf" that often. I do not believe that at that time anybody seriously believed that the Red Chinese were going to enter the war. Certainly General MacArthur had very clear ideas that they would not, and I have to say that after Inchon I was very impressed with General Mac Arthur's capability to assess problems out there on the ground.

HESS: That's October the 7th. October the 15th was a very interesting day, the day of the meeting at Wake Island. Let's just start back at the beginning since you attended that meeting, perhaps with when you first heard there was to be a meeting.

PACE: Well, I first heard about it from General Marshall who said that the President had discussed with him who should go to Wake Island and this historic meeting with General MacArthur, and he told me that he had recommended that I go. I was Secretary of the Army; the Army had the main responsibility

[91]

in that area, and that he felt that as the civilian head of the Army I should go to Wake Island with President Truman. I believe that General Bradley and Admiral [Arthur William] Radford and Averell Harriman, Phil Jessup, and Charlie Ross, the Press Secretary, have I got most of the principal participants?

HESS: I think so. I have a list here. One question, did General Marshall at that time say anything about whether or not Secretary of State Dean Acheson had been considered to go?

PACE: He did not. No.

HESS: Dean Rusk, who was Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs. He was the head man from the State Department...

PACE: That's right.

HESS: ...that went.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Did you ever hear anything about why Secretary Acheson did not go?

PACE: I assumed for the same reason that General Marshall didn't go. They felt that there was enough prominence to the operation by President Truman going. Also, General Marshall didn't think very much of General MacArthur, as you know, and vice

[92]

versa. I have an offhand guess that Dean Acheson didn't think very much of General MacArthur. They just felt that there was no reason on something that historic to get into personalities.

HESS: And antagonize him further.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: There was some discussion about where the meeting was to be held. Some people advised that General MacArthur be called all the way back to Washington.

PACE: Right. This was the President's decision. He felt that under the circumstances that it was fitting that he should go out into the area where General MacArthur had the responsibility for the discussion. There's no lack of sense that he had the right to order General MacArthur back; it was just that General MacArthur had the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the war, to bring him back with the period of time that would elapse just didn't seem appropriate to the President.

HESS: Continuing on, just what do you recall about the trip?

PACE: Well, you know that the President awarded a medal to General MacArthur. General MacArthur was down to meet us

[93]

when we came in. Of course, the thing that really stands out in my mind about it was the fact that General MacArthur said that the war would be over by Thanksgiving and that the men would be home by Christmas. It made a very deep and abiding impression on me.

HESS: You recall him saying that?

PACE: Oh, yes, very specifically.

HESS: Here we have what later was drawn up and entitled, "Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island Conference on October 15, 1950." That was compiled from notes taken by various persons at the conference, and by Miss Vernice Anderson. As you recall, she was Ambassador Philip Jessup's secretary, and had been asked to go along to work on the communique, the joint communique, that would be issued at the end of the meeting. So just glancing through--I have several questions on it--but just glancing through, does that seem to be a fairly accurate presentation, rendition, of what you recall took place?

PACE: Yes, it does. Yes.

HESS: I noticed on page 3 you asked the General if there was anything in terms of ECA or Army cooperation that you could do to help him and he replied: "No commander in the history

[94]

of war has ever had more complete and adequate support from all agencies in Washington than I have."

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Was that more or less his way of speaking or did you actually feel that you did have this great cooperation and liaison...

PACE: Did he feel that way?

HESS: Yes, and did you feel the same way, too? Were things going pretty smoothly?

PACE: As far as our relationship, the relationship between General MacArthur and the Army, our relationship was excellent. I think that, well, my own chief of staff felt that General MacArthur proceeded in too arbitrary a fashion from time to time, and I'm sure that's true, but you've got to remember that General MacArthur was a very senior man with a high success ratio and a high level of ego, and I never thought that was particularly unusual. I did think it was important that General MacArthur thought he was going fully supported.

HESS: On page 2 you say, "When the Army's responsibility ends, could the Army provide aid in psychological rehabilitation? Should KMAG continue?" That's the Korean Military Advisory Group, of which I understand, at the time of the invasion,

[95]

there were about five hundred men and officers in Korea with KMAG.

PACE: This is right.

HESS: This brings up a little side thing that I want to talk about before we go on with the meeting, but the Army had been cut back, had been moved out of Korea one year before the

invasion. In June of 1949, the Armed Forces, the Army, had been moved out, and all that was there for that year was KMAG. Was that a mistake, was that an error, a cutback like this?

PACE: Well, I'll have to say to you that any reduction in the Armed Forces that's followed by any military activity is automatically a mistake. The demands and requirements of the civilian are paramount in times of peace; and the demands to cut the military are universal; you have them now. Everyone wants less military; they assume peace will be automatic. If you ran into any form of war in the next six months whoever is running Defense and whoever is President would receive ultimate blame for not keeping the Armed Forces high enough. So when you say to me, "Was it a mistake?" In the light of events it was a mistake, but in the light of the times, I guess that the answer that I should honestly give you is that if you're going to get out of a country you ought to

[96]

get out of it entirely. You ought not to leave some remnants there, and if you get out of it you ought to make up your mind that you're not going to go back in and defend it. We weren't that sophisticated at that point; we hadn't lived long enough; we hadn't seen the consequences of involvement. Withdrawal was probably sound, but when we made it we should have coupled it with a decision to totally withdraw and a decision that if somebody wanted to take that part of the world over we were prepared to let them do it.

HESS: That brings up the subject of Dean Acheson's speech at the National Press Club almost a year later, I think it was January 12, 1950, when he drew the line of our defense perimeter and there sat Korea outside of the defense perimeter.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: Was that an invitation--you know, that's been called an invitation to the Communists, "We're not going to defend it; we've taken our troops out; we've drawn a line excluding this country."

PACE: Who knows? I mean, it was universally believed that that particular step did encourage the Russians to move. I would say it was probably a factor. I can't believe it was compelling. I don't believe the Russians make decisions on the

[97]

basis of what the Secretary of State tells the National Press Club. But I would assume it was a factor.

HESS: A couple of more items from the "Substance of Statements Made at Wake Island." On page 8, the President said,

General Mac Arthur and I have talked fully about Formosa. There is no need to cover that subject again. The General and I are in complete agreement.

In here that is all it gives. Of course, it shows the stars indicating that other things were left out, one or more paragraphs or a great deal, was left out, both before and after that statement. But do you recall during the main meeting--now, as I understand, when the President and General MacArthur first got together they went off together for an hour or so and then they came in for the main meeting.

PACE: This is right.

HESS: During the main meeting at which you were present was Formosa, the Nationalist Chinese, Chang-Kai-Shek, was there anything discussed other than what the President said here?

PACE: No, whatever the stars were they were unrelated to that. No, that was not really a matter pertinent to our discussions. Our meeting was primarily on the total military situation. The President wanted to be very sure that General MacArthur was being properly supported. I think that he could see that

[98]

if there were some problem that would arise, the allegation could arise, "It happened because we hadn't done our job back in Washington." I believe the President wanted to nail down the fact that our support was adequate. You'll notice that the thrust of all my remarks and questions really addressed themselves to insuring that General MacArthur had whatever he wanted or needed to do the job.

HESS: And at the bottom of page 8, the President asked you, "I believe this covers the main topics. Secretary Pace, did you have anything else to take up?"

And you said, "Yes, sir, but I can take them up separately with General MacArthur, and I imagine General Bradley has some also."

So you recall what you discussed with the General after the meeting was over? What types of subjects?

PACE: Well, basically, we talked specifically again about the nature of supplies. I again raised the question with him about the end of the war, because, see, that had a great many implications as far as I was concerned, because if General MacArthur was right, and quite frankly, I was thoroughly prepared to believe he was right, (because everything I had seen had led me to believe that he was indeed a military genius), then there were a great many steps that ought to be

[99]

taken in preparation for the war's end.

HESS: All right, did you know that Miss Vernice Anderson was seated in the next room taking shorthand notes?

PACE: I did not, no.

HESS: Did you think that was generally known among the participants of the conference?

PACE: Well, if it was generally known, nobody told me.

HESS: But you did think from looking it over for a few moments that it is accurate for what is here?

PACE: I do. Oh, yes. When we came back it was decided that General Bradley and I would have an off-the-record conference with the press about Wake Island, which we did, which was promptly leaked the next day. The general trend of the discussion became public in almost no time at all.

HESS: Who leaked it?

PACE: I can't tell you. I really don't know. It was a very disappointing process from my point of view. I mean, I realize a lot of off-the-record things are treated casually, but I felt that this one was really one that should not have been.

[100]

HESS: All right, on the subject of Formosa and Nationalist China and Chiang Kai-shek, how did you think they should have been handled? Should Chiang's armies have been used in one way or another? Should he have been isolated on Formosa?

PACE: Frankly, I did not think Chiang's armies should be used. There was first the problem of how you integrated Chiang's armies into the whole Korean effort. I did also feel that the one thing that would bring the Chinese Communists in without any shadow of a doubt was to bring Chiang Kai-shek over to the point where he had a toehold on the mainland. While I said to you I did not believe the Chinese Communists were going to come in when we went north of the Han River, I did feel very strongly that they would clearly come in if any of Chiang Kai-shek's forces were brought there. I believe General MacArthur just had a very clear belief that the Chinese Communists weren't going to interfere in this operation at all.

HESS: Now I mentioned a little while ago about the 7th Fleet being brought into the Formosa Straits quite early on in the Korean conflict, the President was quarantining Chiang Kai-shek on Formosa and saying that the Red Chinese should not attack the other way. That has been pointed out by some as perhaps an error, because even if not one shot had been fired, if

[101]

we had not put the 7th Fleet in there, Chiang's forces would have remained as a threat, even if they never got one foot wet or fired one bullet toward the south China coast, the Red Chinese would have had to keep soldiers there, but when we said to the world that "Chiang is not going to be allowed to attack the mainland," even if he could not have done so successfully, that freed Red Chinese to move north and down into Korea.

PACE: I don't buy that theory at all. One thing the Red Chinese had plenty of was manpower. They could double the number of men that Chiang could ever get across onto the mainland, assuming he could, and still have carried out the same effort they carried on without any difficulty at all.

HESS: In your opinion, was there a political motive behind President Truman's trip to Wake? The Congressional elections were coming up in November and there was some speculation that the President wanted to meet with a successful commander in the field after the Inchon landings, and gain some glory before the midterm elections.

PACE: I wouldn't say that was out of his mind.

HESS: Did you ever hear him say anything about it?

[102]

PACE: No, he never would have said anything, and I would not say it was his primary purpose, but Mr. Truman recognized that to manage the country you had to remain its effective political leader. Anything that justifiably bolstered the position of the Commander in Chief was a proper act, both in his judgment and, frankly, in mine.

HESS: One person who has set that down in print was Courtney Whitney, in his book, *MacArthur: Rendezvous with Destiny*, I believe it is. That is his opinion of why Mr. Truman wanted to have the meeting at Wake.

PACE: I would assume that General Whitney would think that.

HESS: It's not surprising, is it? All right, not too long after these events, the Communist Chinese did come into the fighting. What was the feeling around the Pentagon at that time?

PACE: It was really a great shocker, just no question about it. Nobody had expected this at all. It was really a reflection on our total military planning. Much of the blame for it, I think, was properly placed on General MacArthur who was on the ground, and his intelligence very clearly indicated that they would not participate, but it was a shocking thing, and we had troops trapped up there. There was both a shock and a pall of gloom in the Pentagon.

[103]

HESS: This was in November and then in December, our troops got pushed back down into the south. During that time General Mac Arthur was making various statements about wanting to bomb north of the Han river...

PACE: The Yalu River.

HESS: ...the Yalu River, to move north of there. He had several different proposals to bomb industrial plants in China, to bomb military staging bases. What was your view of that? Should we have permitted General MacArthur to do more of what he wanted to do, to widen the war?

PACE: On this, the joint chiefs of staff were unanimous. They believed it was a bad idea. First, they didn't think it would stop what was being done; and second, another point was the high degree to which we were vulnerable. We had a port at Pusan without any anti-aircraft protection. Their troops had been used to fighting with air interception; ours marched right down the middle of every road. And if in the process of doing this you also brought the Russians in, which was a possibility, we were infinitely more vulnerable--our whole supply line, our people--we were very, very vulnerable. General MacArthur had made an original mistake in judgment about whether they would come in. I think he compounded that or would have if he'd carried out his proposition of bombing

[104]

north of the Yalu and in China.

HESS: In April of 1951, General MacArthur was dismissed.

PACE: Right.

HESS: What do you recall about the background, what are your views on that? Was it necessary?

PACE: Well, I was on a trip to the Far East. It was what one refers to as a routine inspection trip, and I arrived in Tokyo and was greeted thereby General MacArthur. I remember that as Secretary of the Army I was very interested in whether General MacArthur would seat me on his right, because, although I was his superior, I had to remember that when he was Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, I was at the Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. But that's facetious, because he did seat me on his right; he did have a dinner in my honor that was a very extensive one. I did have some three hours with him at the Dai-Ichi Building, in which we had really very long and intimate discussions about both the Army and the war. Then I received a cable from General Marshall, which read:

This is explicit. Repeat, this is explicit. You will proceed to Korea and remain there until you hear from me. Signed: Marshall.

It didn't say a day, a week, a month, a year. So I bid adieu

[105]

to General MacArthur and flew to Korea where Matt Ridgway was in command, and we visited a number of hospitals, decorated some soldiers on the ground. One day we flew over the Chinese lines, and there was a hailstorm immediately after we landed. If it had come about twenty minutes earlier, I would have been the first Secretary captured by the Chinese.

I went to the headquarters of Colonel John Throckmorton, whom I knew, and he said there was a call for me from Seoul, and I took it and it was from General Lev [Leven C.] Allen. He said, "I have a cable for you, Mr. Secretary, which reads:

Disregard my cable No. 8743. You will advise General Matthew B. Ridgway that he is now the Supreme Commander of the Pacific; Vice General MacArthur relieved. You will proceed to Tokyo where you will assist General Ridgway in assuming the incidence of his command. Signed: Marshall.

Well, I said, "Read that to me once more, Lev,, I don't want to relieve General MacArthur on one reading."

So he read it once more and I took General Ridgway out in the hail. General Ridgway used to wear those live grenades and I thought if that hailstone hits one of those live grenades, they're going to need a new Supreme Commander and a new Secretary. And then I took General Ridgway, as I say, out into the hail, and I said, "General Ridgway, it's my duty to advise you that you're now the Supreme Commander of the

[106]

Pacific; Vice General MacArthur relieved."

He said, "I can't believe it, Mr. Secretary."

I said, "I can't either, so I'll repeat it. You're now the Supreme Commander of the South Pacific; Vice General MacArthur relieved."

I said, "I don't think, Matt, that we ought to go now to Tokyo, because General Mac Arthur's got a great many things to do. I think tomorrow it might be useful to communicate and find out if it's convenient for General MacArthur for you to come tomorrow. Now," I said, "let's get that cablegram I was to disregard."

So I remember General Ridgway and I walked in one of those beautiful Korean graveyards, and about midnight we got the message, which read: "You will proceed to Tokyo where you will advise General Douglas MacArthur that he is relieved of his command." The message had been sent through the port of Pusan, because they were afraid to send it through Tokyo where it would have been intercepted by [General Charles A.] Willoughby. There was a power failure at Pusan, and I never got the message.

HESS: On that point, I want to read one paragraph from Ridgway's book.

The news of my sudden elevation to the position of Commander in Chief of the U.N. forces reached me, as dramatic news often does, in a most undramatic

[107]

way. Actually, when the news did reach me, I did not realize what it meant, for it came in the form of a question from a war correspondent. I never could remember the name of the correspondent, but the question was, in effect, whether I was not due congratulations. It was a question that would have made sense to me if I had known that General MacArthur had been relieved and I had been selected to replace him. I just stared back at the correspondent and told him quite honestly that I did not know what he was talking about. At the time, I was taking Secretary of the Army Frank Pace on a tour of the front, to show him, among other things, the 936th Field Artillery Battalion, formerly a National Guard unit, from his home state of Arkansas. And I was far more concerned with this visit than with the hidden meaning behind any cryptic questions.

So the reporter had heard something on this nature before it had reached the two of you on your tour in Korea.

PACE: This is correct, because, you see, the President had assumed that I received the prior cablegram, which I had not done. I remember that General Ridgway had an Arkansas flag on his jeep. As we went by the soldiers I heard one soldier say, "What is that flag?"

Another looked at him and said, "Why, that's an Arkansas flag."

He said, "What the hell's so good about Arkansas?"

HESS: Were you in favor of the decision to replace MacArthur?

PACE: To be perfectly frank, I knew none of the events that led up to it. Most of them had occurred while I was on

[108]

this trip out to the Pacific, and so if you're asking me whether in the light of after events I thought it was wise; I thought it was not only wise but necessary. But at the time I knew nothing about it.

HESS: Did you then go to see General MacArthur?

PACE: Actually, I saw General MacArthur in Hawaii. He had stopped off there, and as I went back...

HESS: What was his attitude?

PACE: We did not really have an occasion to talk. The story had grown up that I had been sent out there to fire him, and General MacArthur said he didn't believe that that was true, that he had talked to Secretary Pace just before that, and he really didn't believe it was true.

I have always--this is just purely a Pace thought--I believe that General MacArthur really created the basis for his firing. I felt that the crowds around the Dai-Ichi Building were getting to be very small; I felt that his period of glory there had passed; he was a great student of history; I felt he felt Mr. Truman would be easily defeated and that if he could be fired under dramatic circumstances he could return and get the Republican nomination for President and run for President against Mr. Truman. I felt he engineered

[109]

his own dismissal. The kind of letters that he wrote, a man steeped in military and national tradition knew very well was out of order. I can't believe that he would undertake such an action without realizing what the consequences would have to be.

HESS: Conscious acts on his part.

PACE: That was my feeling. I never heard anyone else advance that theory, but I always felt that way. Interestingly enough, at the time that I was coming back from Tokyo, John Foster Dulles was coming out to Tokyo, and he had with him Earl Johnson, who was my Assistant Secretary, and they contacted us by radio and we met in Wake Island, which was never known to the press or the public at all. I discussed all of the details of what I knew about this with John Foster Dulles. We met in a small chapel there, and spent about two and a half hours, and then he went on to Tokyo and I went on to Hawaii. But the fact that there was a meeting was never known at all. It's one of the few things that I ever did of significance that the press didn't know about.

HESS: They probably didn't have as many press men that time as they did on October 15th.

PACE: There weren't any there.

[110]

HESS: I understand they were swarming around the place on October 15th

PACE: Oh, sure, in October they were all over, but here there were none at all.

HESS: I had heard that on the flight across the Pacific that John Foster Dulles, when his airplane was fairly close to General Mac Arthur's, they had communicated by radio. I knew that one was flying one way and one was flying the other, but I had never heard anything about John Foster Dulles stopping at Wake to talk with you. You just mainly brought him up to date on what had transpired?

PACE: On what had transpired there, what had happened and what my own reactions were about it.

HESS: What was the reaction of John Foster Dulles, a leading Republican? Did he exhibit any reactions?

PACE: No, he really didn't. We didn't talk about the wisdom or the lack of wisdom of the firing. I think he accepted it as a fact. As a statesman he had to almost accept that President Truman had no option. He was going out on President Truman's behalf.

John Foster Dulles was less a Republican than he was

[111]

an American, just like Dean Acheson was less a partisan than he was a supporter of the Nation.

HESS: Some revisionist historians in the last few years have been attempting to find in the Truman years the roots of today's ills and disasters. It has been said that Mr. Truman reversed the Roosevelt philosophy of tolerant accommodation towards the Communist world and setting a hard anti-Communist line, counter-revolutionary course, which resulted in the hot and cold wars. Mr. Nixon's trip to China, a trip that began only this morning, will probably be pointed to by some as an attempt to correct the wrongs that went back into Mr. Truman's times. Did you see these as wrongs? What are your views on this?

PACE: Well, I didn't see them at the time as wrongs; I don't see them now. I don't believe that it was possible to accommodate with the Communist world at that time, and I believe that Russia had to mature. Many of my associations were with people like Mark Clark, who had had to deal with the Russians in Italy and in Vienna, and who had found them to be completely untrustworthy in any dealings at all. All of the military who had had some association with them had found them unreliable.

My own sense was that there had to be a passage of time

[112]

in which you undertook to maintain a useful status quo until maturity came. I don't believe that four years ago Mr. Nixon or anybody else's suggestion that a President should go to China would have meant anything. I don't think they would have entertained the thought. President Nixon's trip to China is only because China's worried about Russia. If they didn't have those Russians on the border, I doubt very seriously if Mr. Nixon would be setting foot in China. So, I just don't buy the idea. I think at the time this was the only course that could be followed. In all frankness, I'm not sure we wouldn't have been better off if we had followed a harder line. As the sole possessors of the atom bomb I think the Russians got away with a great deal that...

HESS: What should we have done that we did not do?

PACE: Well, I believe that basically our whole effort with the Russians was a conciliatory one. I remember flying back from Brussels from the NATO meeting, and I remember flying over Spain, the Pyrenees, with General C.J. Lawton Collins and General [Alfred M.] Gruenther, and discussing whether that would be natural defense if the Russians moved across Europe, as they very well could. I personally think we overestimated the intentions and the capabilities of the Russians. I just believe that a firmer and possibly a tougher stand with the

[113]

Russians would have maybe made our ultimate accommodation easier.

HESS: As you know, a good deal of our actions at that time have been classified, placed under the one word, "containment," which was made very popular by George Kennan in his article by "X." Do you recall, thinking back on those days, if Kennan's writings, if Kennan's article and his statement of the doctrine of containment had any effect on your views?

PACE: No, no. Really, my views were affected much more by Dean Acheson. Remember, I went to Brussels as Chairman of the Defense Ministers, where I worked very intimately with Dean Acheson. Then I went as General Marshall's representative to represent the Secretary of Defense both at Rome and at Ottawa. So I dealt very intimately with Dean Acheson at all those times. The State Department policy and thinking really emanated from Dean Acheson, who was a clear, incisive, and in fact, brilliant thinker. The views of Kennan, the views of [Charles E.] Bohlen, all these formed part of it, but the essential pattern of that period in that area was basically laid by Dean Acheson.

HESS: One of the problems that the Army had to deal with in Korea were the prison camps on Kojedo Island.

[114]

PACE: Oh, dear, I remember that.

HESS: What problems did they present and how did you try to handle that?

PACE: Oh, well, you had a problem--as I recall it--there was a revolt among the prisoners. Who was the General in charge there?

HESS: There was a General who was captured there for a while...(General Frank T. Dodd)

PACE: Yes, the General who was in charge was a very able man, but there was a lack of discipline in that operation, which is very rare in the Army, very rare. Joe Collins went over. We straightened it out. We had to replace the man who headed it, because he was trying to solve the problem in too conciliatory a fashion. It just didn't work out.

HESS: All right, I think that brings us pretty well down on our list of questions. We are paring them down. Shall we cut it off for the day?

PACE: Can we?

HESS: Fine.

[115]

Fourth Oral History Interview with Frank Pace, Jr., Washington, D.C., February 25, 1972. By Jerry N. Hess, Harry S. Truman Library.

HESS: All right, Mr. Secretary, we are up to and through the dismissal of General MacArthur, and in September of 1951, General Marshall retired, but just a couple of questions on him. You mentioned that you met with him before the trip to Wake Island. What did he say at that time; did he make any comments about General MacArthur that we should record?

PACE: No. No, really my more significant meeting with General Marshall--I did meet with him before I left--but my more significant meeting was after we came back.

HESS: Tell me about that.

PACE: Well, I came into his office and I said, "General Marshall, General MacArthur says the war will be over by Thanksgiving and the troops home by Christmas."

Well, he said, "Pace, that's troublesome."

Well, I said, "Sir, you must not have heard me, I said, the war would be over by Thanksgiving and the troops home by Christmas."

He said, "I heard you, but," he said, "too precipitate an end to the war would not permit us to have a full understanding of the problems that we face ahead of us."

[116]

And I said, "But General Marshall, do you mean by that that the American People would not have fully had an opportunity to grasp the implications of the cold war?"

He said, "I certainly do."

But I said, "General Marshall this has been a very, very difficult and extensive war from the American People's point of view."

"Yes," he said, "I know, Pace, but you didn't live through the end of World War II the way I did, and watch people rush back to their civilian jobs and leave the tanks to rot in the Pacific and the military strength that was built up to fade away."

I said, "I know, General Marshall, but a great deal of water has passed under the bridge since then." I said, "Would you say I was naive if I said that the American people had learned their lesson?" And he looked at me with those cold blue eyes and he said, "No, Pace, I wouldn't say you were naive, I'd say you were incredibly naive."

HESS: So he thought we should keep up our guard longer even if the war did end at that time.

PACE: That is correct, I think he felt that there was an inherent disposition on the part of the American people to assume that

[117]

all would go well. We were an optimistic people and that once a war was over, we wanted to get back to peaceful pursuit, and it was not a natural tendency on our part to keep our guard up.

HESS: Did he seem to accept General Mac Arthur's appraisal of the situation that the war might be over by Thanksgiving, and the troops might come back? Or was he skeptical about that?

PACE: No, if he was skeptical about that he did not indicate that he was skeptical about it. I believe that he had a high respect for General MacArthur as a military commander. I think their differences were differences in personal attitudes and approaches. And I believe that he felt that General MacArthur was on the ground, close to the situation and able to evaluate it. I don't think that he challenged that decision.

HESS: Did you ever hear General Marshall articulate any of those differences that he may have had with General MacArthur?

PACE: Not in specific terms. In general conversation it was clear that he had concerns about General Mac Arthur's inner drive, his egocentricity. But General Marshall was not a man to talk about other men; he just didn't do it. What I'm

[118]

saying to you is the kind of impression one would gain, but to specifically say this or that about a General--he just wasn't that kind of a man.

HESS: What seemed to be his views in March and April when it looked like serious difficulties were going to arise between the President and General MacArthur? What seemed to be Marshall's views then?

PACE: Well, I am reasonably sure that General Marshall played a very compelling part in the President's determination to relieve General MacArthur.

HESS: I have read, and I believe Mr. Truman has written along these lines, that when he asked his advisers if he should dismiss General MacArthur, General Marshall was the only one who hesitated, and he took some papers home and looked over them and came in the next morning and agreed with the President that that had to be done. Have you heard that story?

PACE: I have and I can believe that it would be accurate. I believe that General Marshall, because he honestly did not basically, himself, like General MacArthur as a person, would be doubly careful about making any recommendation for his dismissal.

Over and beyond that I think General Marshall, of all

[119]

advisers, would have been peculiarly aware of the danger to the nation as a whole of the dismissal of an extremely popular American commander, almost a legendary figure. So I can understand, and would believe, although I do not know this to be true, that General Marshall would have acted exactly like that, but I am also quite sure that when he came in after that consideration, and agreed that the President could move without hesitation and without personal concern.

HESS: General Marshall retired, again, in September of 1951 and was replaced by Mr. Robert A. Lovett, who had been his deputy.

PACE: Right.

HESS: What is your evaluation of the manner in which Mr. Lovett handled the position as Secretary of Defense.

PACE: Oh, Mr. Lovett was an enormously broad-gauged man. He had many of the qualities of General Marshall, a sense of history, a sense of perspective, an overall top man.

If I were to differentiate I would say that General Marshall tended to be more incisive, that the course to be taken was much clearer to General Marshall than to Mr. Lovett and that the decision-making process moved much more quickly and cleanly. I don't want to say this in derogation of

[120]

Mr. Lovett, because I've made clear before that I thought General Marshall was possibly the most remarkable person that I had a close association with in my life. And quite obviously if you feel that way, nobody is going to quite come up to it.

I want to say that I think Mr. Lovett was an exceptionally fine Secretary of Defense, but I believe that General Marshall had an incisiveness, and a sense of how to manage an administrative process, that was greater than Mr. Lovett's. Also historically, Mr. Lovett had been a number two man to General Marshall, both in the State Department and in the Department of Defense, whereas General Marshall had for many years been a number one man accustomed to making hard decisions after careful consideration.

HESS: The truce that was established in Korea, was established of course, after the Republicans came in. Do you think that it would have been possible for Mr. Truman to have reached somewhat the same agreements with the Communists before the election? Could he have ended the war on the same terms, or as favorable of terms, as General Eisenhower did?

PACE: I remember that there was a great deal of belief on the part of people who had served in the Defense Establishment that that was true, that Mr. Eisenhower had merely used the circumstance to achieve a settlement that Mr. Truman was

[121]

not prepared to accept. I can't honestly say that that was true. Mr. Eisenhower came in with great prestige, he was the newly elected President, he was a new figure in old and unsatisfactory discussion of...

HESS: And during the campaign, he had used the phrase "If elected I will go to Korea."

PACE: That's right. That is correct. So, you're asking me a highly speculative question, I answer it in the vein that it is speculative, but my instinct is I doubt Mr. Truman could have achieved the same settlement. I would say to you that I am not sure that if the same settlement could have been achieved Mr. Truman would have accepted it.

HESS: Were there negotiations going on in the background that the general public did not know about with the Communists, to try to reach a settlement?

PACE: If there were I was not aware of it.

HESS: Your counterparts in the other services who served in the same period of time that you did, were Francis P. Matthews, and Dan Kimball at the Navy Department, and Thomas K. Finletter who served as Secretary of the Air Force for the entire period that you were Secretary of the Army.

[122]

PACE: That is correct.

HESS: Just what is your general evaluation of those men and how effective were they in their positions? First, Mr. Matthews.

PACE: Frank Matthews I do not believe ever fully mastered the whole requirements of the Navy or the military process. I don't remember, but I believe that he was not there for a very long period of time, and I would have to say that during the period he was there I did not feel that he made a basic impact on the Navy.

HESS: He took over at the time that Secretary Sullivan...

PACE: Secretary John Sullivan resigned.

HESS: ...resigned over the fact that they would not build the aircraft carrier--there were other things, but the fact Mr. Louis Johnson cancelled the contract for the USS *United States*, the super aircraft carrier, then Mr. Matthews took over.

Do you know why Mr. Matthews was appointed Secretary of the Navy? It seems to me he did not have much of a background along those lines.

PACE: I have no idea. You remember he was appointed prior to the time I came to the Pentagon.

[123]

HESS: That's right.

PACE: He was from Omaha, you see.

HESS: He was from Nebraska.

PACE: Yes, somewhere in Nebraska, and he was a competent man, but not a man that I ever felt really intimately associated himself with the real deep problems of the Navy and the services.

HESS: During the Korean war I understand that he made a speech, I believe it was to the Sons of St. Patrick in Boston, disagreeing somewhat with the way the Truman administration was carrying out the war, and with the objectives of the war and was soon released and was Ambassador to Ireland for awhile, is that right, do you recall that?

PACE: To be perfectly frank that's very vague in my memory. The facts are correct, the speech I really don't recall. I would not have thought of Frank Matthews really as openly identifying a different course than the President. He just didn't seem like that kind of man to me. I would be inclined to say that this was more a press development, a possibly not too well thought through phrase, rather than a direct indication that the war was not being fought along correct lines. That's just--but I'm giving you here pure speculation.

[124]

HESS: And he was replaced by Dan Kimball.

PACE: I had known Dan Kimball slightly prior to that time. Dan was a great humanist, people couldn't help but like Dan. He had great acceptance on Capitol Hill. And he was a man who had a view beyond the Navy, and I felt, was a very effective Secretary of the Navy.

HESS: And then Mr. Thomas Finletter, Secretary of the Air Force.

PACE: Tom Finletter was quite different from Dan Kimball. They couldn't have been more different. Tom was an intellectual, very precise in his thinking, probably immersed himself more deeply in the whole philosophy and pattern of Defense than any of the three of us. He was a driving force in the establishment of the secretariat, of the secretaries of the services. It was established on the assumption that although we each exercised leadership over our individual Chiefs of Staff that they exercised a persuasion on the Secretary of Defense as the Joint Chiefs of Staff that really nullified our individual leadership. This was a unique experiment, never again repeated, in which the secretaries really established the equivalent of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the Joint Secretaries and Tom was a leading force in that.

HESS: What was your view in the setting up that secretariat?

[125]

PACE: I was very strong for it. I agreed with Tom very strongly that if you were to have true civilian influence there needed to be a counterpart to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

HESS: Was it effective; did you have that counterpoint with the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

PACE: Well, I would say that the Joint Chiefs of Staff would always, under any circumstances, because this had long been an institution, would always have a greater preeminence in its relationship with the Secretary of Defense. But, I felt that the institution of the Joint Secretaries did a great deal to minimize the preeminence of that position. I felt that if the other were institutionalized, and carried out over a period of time, it had an opportunity to achieve an institutional position that would have been useful to the Secretary of Defense.

HESS: Did you hire someone and place them in charge...

PACE: We did.

HESS: ...of the secretariat.

PACE: We did, yes.

HESS: Who was that?

[126]

PACE: A fellow named Ed Dickenson. I think I...

HESS: Did he have a staff?

PACE: He did; yes he had a small staff, I think two or three people. We determined that it would not be a large staff.

HESS: Is he around?

PACE: I'm sure he is. At one time he served with Governor Harriman in New York, and I think he'd be a very interesting fellow for you to talk to.

HESS: I do, too.

All right, anything further on Mr. Finletter?

PACE: No. I liked him a great deal. We were different people. I am more in the Dan Kimball tradition, a populist, enjoyed people, knew my way around the Hill, I had many friends there, but Tom and I worked very well together.

HESS: Was Mr. Finletter somewhat lacking in contacts on the Hill?

PACE: Well, I think that that in the law is referred to as a negative pregnant, I would say that Tom Finletter was not the kind of man who knew the Hill well. I'm sure that he had friends there, but I would not say that that was his forte.

[127]

HESS: All right, and the men who served as your Under Secretaries were Archibald S. Alexander.

PACE: Right.

HESS: And Karl R. Bendetsen, and the man who was your Assistant Secretary from Mr. Bendetsen, Earl D. Johnson and Fred Korth. Tell me just a little about those men, starting with Mr. Alexander.

PACE: Well, Arch Alexander was Assistant Secretary under Gordon Gray when I came there. He was a man of great character, great warmth, not in my estimation an exceptional manager, was not also the man to make the kind of hard decisions that you have to make in a position like that, particularly in the case of a war. Arch was with me I believe for about a year. I don't know, I can't identify it, but then he was replaced by Karl Bendetsen who was a brilliant man, thoroughly capable of making hard decisions, indefatigable worker, and a great and strong believer in the critical importance of civilian control. In the enormously complicated period of the war, Karl was really basically indispensable.

My Assistant Secretaries were Earl Johnson, who had an investment banker's background, but an extremely capacious mind, and very great ability to assimilate details. He was,

[128]

for his position, remarkably well adapted.

Another was Fred Korth who was a Texan, lawyer, very broad-gauge fellow, very broad-gauge mind, extremely well oriented to people. All these men related very well with the military. The military accepted them, didn't overdo their civilian leadership nor did they back away from it.

Now the third was...

HESS: Mr. Bendetsen.

PACE: Yes, well, I've already spoken about him.

HESS: Tell me a little about your relations with General Bradley. What type of a man was he and was he easy to get along with?

PACE: Oh, enormously easy. He had, for so competent a man, such incredible modesty. You just automatically felt comfortable with General Bradley, the kind of fellow who with all he had on his mind would always deal in an extremely relaxed way; with all of his modest ways, had great personal courage, high convictions, unique character. And in the period in which Mr. Acheson was suffering from the disabilities of the "red herring" statement on Alger Hiss, General Bradley really carried a great deal of the foreign policy of the U.S. on his shoulders along with the military problems. I found him a superb man.

[129]

HESS: All right. Perhaps one of the major changes of the military setup during the Truman administration, was the unification of the Armed Forces into the Department of Defense. And as you know, during the changeover, the Navy expressed a good deal of fear that they might lose the air wing to the Air Force; they might lose the Marines to the Army. Just in your general opinion, was there any basis for those fears, would the Army have liked to have taken over the Marine Corps, and do you think the Air Force would have liked to have taken over their air wing?

PACE: Well, I think I can only speak for the Army, although at the time of the establishment of the Department of Defense I was in the Bureau of the Budget where I had a really overall view of it and played a considerable role in it, I don't think the Army ever for a moment considered taking over the Marine Corps. I don't think they could, I don't think that they had--there may have been some individuals who might have thought that that was an appropriate thing, but the thought that it might be done effectively, it seems to me, was without reasonable basis.

HESS: One of those individuals was General J. Lawton Collins, and he came out with what came to be known as the Collins plan at that time, which pointed toward the absorption of

[130]

naval and Marine aviation into the Air Force, and not quite an outright abolition of the Marine Corps, but they would be reduced to a ceremonial force, and the rest would be taken over by the Army. Now do you recall anything about General J. Lawton Collins'...

PACE: Attitude on that?

HESS: ...attitude on this?

PACE: Well, only that he made the statement. I think that General Collins, who was a great competitor, always found the function of the Marine Corps a little galling from his point of view. However, that of course, would cause the Marine Corps to have concern. But quite frankly, to me it is a totally unrealistic proposition, not just politically unrealistic, I'm talking about institutionally unrealistic. I just can't conceive of this elite corps functioning within the structure of the army.

I would say to you that this competition between the Marines and the Army was very prevalent throughout the Korean war, one which I constantly, frankly, played down. I remember one day Dan Kimball called me and said, "Frank, Cliff Case is here in my office and he says that he is not getting his share of the tanks at the proper time."

[131]

HESS: He was commandant at that time.

PACE: That's right. Well, I said, "Why don't you send General Case down?"

He said, "Well, now he doesn't want to come down, he just wants you to know about it."

Well I said, "Well, that's fine," I said, "why don't you send him down."

So, he came down and he was a little embarrassed about it. And I said, "General Case, how far behind do you feel you are?"

He said, "Sir, I think we are entitled to thirty-two tanks, not that we won't get them, but we're not getting them in time."

Well, I said, "If I check it and I feel that this is correct, how would you feel if the next thirty-two tanks went to the Marine Corps?"

And he said, "Oh, sir, that would be more than I would expect."

Well, I said, "Well, that's just what is going to happen if I find that to be correct," and that's what happened.

Interestingly enough, outside of Mr. Kimball, when General Case retired I was the only civilian that was invited to the farewell lunch. And I think that I did play a

[132]

considerable role in downgrading the really almost inevitable competition that would occur between two great institutions during a war.

I remember that I myself felt certain facets of that competition because whenever I walked into a dinner and they played the "Halls of Montezuma" everybody jumped up and down and shouted and I said, "By gosh, we've got to have an Army song that will move people the way that song does," and through my aides I commissioned the great song writers of that period to write a song for the Army; write the Army song. I think there was Lowe, Lerner, all of those great ones. Well, it's an amazing thing, they came up with zip...nothing. This sort of song has to come out of a great heart and sense of spirit, no genius can sit down and do it. And so we ended up with "The Caissons Go Rolling Along." But, I didn't want you to get the impression that I myself did not feel that sense of competition.

HESS: What's your personal opinion, do you think it is a good thing, does it raise esprit de corps to have these various units, to have the Marine Corps, and to have the different units, the "Big Red 1" in the Army, where men can identify...

PACE: Oh yes.

HESS: ...with a particular group?

PACE: I think it's critical, I really do I think that the Army in particular is so big that if you're just in the Army, that doesn't mean anything, you've got to be with, as you say...

HESS: The "Screaming Eagles," or something like that.

PACE: ...the "Screaming Eagles," or the "Big Red 1," I think that that identification is fine and if I am correct, and I haven't been that close to it, although I have for three years been president of the Association of the U.S. Army, I feel that they are getting the most out of the Marines without denigrating the Army in the process. If I were starting it today, I don't believe that I would start them separately, but to try to reorient them at this stage in history would not appear feasible.

HESS: If you were starting all over from scratch, would you have it a bit more unified?

PACE: Oh yes, yes, I would.

HESS: But as it is now it's best to leave it alone, is that right?

PACE: Well, maybe to modify it from time to time, as circumstance permits.

[134]

HESS: Okay, now leading into the political events of 1952, now, we have covered your views on political involvement, but what do you recall about the political events in 1952, perhaps starting with when you first became aware that Mr. Truman did not intend to run for re-election. Were you at the National Guard Armory that night at the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner on March the 29th, 1952, when he made his public announcement?

PACE: Yes, I was.

HESS: Did you know anything about that decision on his part before that time?

PACE: I did not.

HESS: Did not. Were you somewhat surprised or not, did you think that was a natural thing for Mr. Truman to step down at that time?

PACE: I rather did, yes, I thought probably Mrs. Truman played a good part in the decision. A marvelous woman, eminently sensible. Mr. Truman had been through some very hard times, and I think she felt that Mr. Truman was a competitor and would give too much in a campaign. She felt this was the appropriate time and he concurred in that decision and I

[135]

can't say I was that surprised.

HESS: Of course, at this time no one really knew who the Republican...

PACE: Nominee was.

HESS: ...competition, the nominee was going to be, but what's your general impression, do you think Mr. Truman could have won?

PACE: Over Mr. Eisenhower? It would have been very, very difficult. Mr. Eisenhower had a certain appeal to the ordinary American, he was of them and yet above them, he...

HESS: Difficult to defeat.

PACE: He would have been enormously difficult to defeat.

HESS: After Mr. Truman removed himself from the race...

PACE: Obviously that was not in Mr. Truman's mind. If you asked Mr. Truman there would be no question how he thought it would come out and he probably would have been right, and I would have been wrong, because I was wrong about the prior election.

HESS: After Mr. Truman removed himself from the race, who did

[136]

you think would be the best man for the Democrats to put up, or did you concern yourself with those matters?

PACE: I really didn't have a candidate. We were so deeply involved in this very difficult period in the Army that I really paid almost no attention. As I didn't participate in any political activities. I thought Adlai Stevenson was an absolutely superb man, he intrigued me as a human being.

HESS: Are you ready to leave?

PACE: Yes, I have to go.

[137]

Fifth Oral History Interview with Frank Pace, Jr., Washington, D.C., June 26, 1972. By Jerry N. Hess, Harry S. Truman Library.

HESS: Mr. Secretary, on the subject of the Korean conflict and the possible use of atomic weapons therein, do you recall if the likelihood of using the atomic bomb in Korea was discussed at any of the meetings?

PACE: Indeed it was. It was discussed really quite continuously over the latter period of the Korean war. It was always discarded on two grounds: The first, that it would not be productive, that this was not the kind of war in which the use of the atomic bomb would be effective--I say three reasons--and I don't put them in order of priorities. Second, was the concern about the moral use of weapons of this nature against a smaller country in this kind of war, and the third was that if it proved ineffective then its function as a shield for Europe would be either minimized or lost. So, you had really three quite compelling reasons against its use.

HESS: As you may recall, after the Chinese Communists had entered the fray in November of 1950, Mr. Truman in a press conference made some reference to the fact that he would use whatever weapons that it was necessary to use to meet the military situation. Clement Attlee came from England at that time to discuss that remark with the President, as

[138]

I recall. Was that a period of time when the President may have been swinging over, may have thought that there were conditions under which use of the atomic weapons would be justified?

PACE: I frankly rather doubt it, the discussions had been quite general on this subject and I think if I had to make a guess, that the President was really merely enforcing his position, negotiation-wise, with the Chinese Communists. I really quite seriously doubt that Mr. Truman was swinging towards the use of atomic weapons in that war.

HESS: Did you ever hear him articulate any conditions under which he thought their use would be justified?

PACE: No. No, I did not.

HESS: All right. Was it ever recommended by any of the advisers that the use of atomic weapons might be given to the commanders in the field, the discretion of whether or not to use it would be moved out to the commander in the field?

PACE: No. I heard no such reference.

HESS: All right. Anything else on the use of the atomic bomb?

PACE: No, I think that covers it. You see, in stating.

[139]

those three items, I've identified the basic problems. Probably one, the question of its effectiveness, was really very much at the top of military people's minds, and their general conclusion was, that it would not be effective.

HESS: You mentioned that moral considerations was one of the reasons why it was not used. What did Mr. Truman have to say at the time on that subject? Why I ask is that he had ordered its use in times past and has been roundly condemned as we all know by a number of critics, for that very reason, for not considering implications in the moral use of the atomic bomb.

PACE: I think that the two situations were substantially different, certainly substantially different in my mind and I think substantially different in his.

No one ever talked about the use of the atomic bomb except as a tactical weapon in this particular situation. No one conceived of it as the use of the atomic bomb against cities or anything of that nature. And so you were considering here a lesser moral question. However, I still think that the question of the moral posture of the USA in using an atomic weapon against a lesser foe under these circumstances was very much in a great many people's minds.

I never heard the President speak on that subject

[140]

specifically, but at the military levels at which this issue was discussed, these three factors were compelling: One, its value as a tactical weapon; two the moral impact, and three the relationship between Russia and Europe if it proved to be ineffective. And of the three the third was as compelling as the others.

HESS: We would lose a degree of control over Russia, if it...

PACE: If it proved to be ineffective.

HESS: All right, moving on, what do you recall about the transition from the Truman administration to the Eisenhower administration? Who worked on those matters? How smooth was it? Could it have gone better? Since you were Secretary of the Army right up to the end of the Truman administration.

PACE: Well, as you recall, there was not any intimacy at that juncture, between President Truman and President Eisenhower.

President Truman always regarded politics as a game to be played to the hilt, in which you said the things that would advance your cause and he never regarded it as a personal matter.

Mr. Eisenhower, who was unused to politics, did frankly personalize it, and as a result, two men who had a great deal in common were driven apart by different attitudes

[141]

towards this particular function. Mr. Eisenhower regarded it as something in which you said only exactly what you thought and any reference to people was clearly and identifiably a proven matter. Truman regarded it as the development of a pattern in which you sought to bring your side out the winner.

So, to the extent that Mr. Truman was not himself running for office, the transition should have been smoother really than it was. I think that the relationship between Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Truman was very perfunctory and I don't think that the values of the previous administration were transitioned on to the new administration.

HESS: Who replaced you, who was Mr. Eisenhower's Secretary of the Army?

PACE: Bob [Robert T.] Stevens took my place.

HESS: Did he come in, or did he send representatives in during the last few months of the Truman administration to talk with you or to look over the operation of your office?

PACE: You mean after the election?

HESS: Yes, after the election and before the inauguration.

PACE: Oh, he came in himself. I had known Bob Stevens and there was never a problem between us at all. The transition there was very simple, very smooth. Bob and I have been friends,

[142]

he had been Army oriented, he was a gentleman, the whole transition there was very simple. and very smooth, no problem whatsoever.

HESS: Did he have any assistants who came in at that time who may have spent some time in the office, going over the files and checking things?

PACE: I'm not sure that Bob Stevens was identified as Secretary of the Army until really quite late along in the game. I think that maybe it was not much more than two or three weeks before Mr. Eisenhower took office that Bob was selected. And so the kind of long term interrelationship just wasn't there. But as far as that was concerned I remained available to Bob for judgment and identification of our past practices.

HESS: So the transition in the Department of the Army was quite smooth?

PACE: Quite smooth, no problem at all.

HESS: Good.

Briefly, how would you rate the Presidents of recent years, from Mr. Roosevelt to the present in terms of intellectual ability, administrative ability and as men? We have discussed Mr. Truman's administrative ability, but just how would you rate the Presidents you have known; Roosevelt,

[143]

Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson?

PACE: Well, Mr. Roosevelt came in under very perilous circumstances, and obviously did an absolutely unique job of turning the country around from a sense of despair to a future of hope. He was a consummate politician, a man utterly confident of himself and I felt brought to the country, really, some great and needed changes.

I felt that he had not thought through all of the changes that he achieved. For instance, there is no question but that business had exercised an undue control over the process of labor, but I feel in righting the balance, Mr. Roosevelt created undue strengths in labor that had at least in this day and age, made our competitive position extremely difficult to sustain.

So, I would rate Mr. Roosevelt certainly as one of the unique Presidents of all times. I frankly think he would have been a greater President if he had two terms instead of four. I had the

feeling that towards the end of his period in office he was really consolidating positions that he felt were important, but were not in my judgment thoroughly thought through.

I also believe that Mr. Roosevelt introduced into the political system the necessity for presidential candidates to promise more than they can deliver, and established it

[144]

as a pattern in our political life. This has proven to be disadvantageous to the democratic political process.

HESS: And that wasn't done to such a great degree before?

PACE: Well, not at all really. As you know the democratic process--except in certain areas--was much more limited than it became after that time. Whether the media, the development of television, radio, the greater rise of the press would have brought this about anyway, I don't know. But at least I think that the pattern was established by Mr. Roosevelt, who was, as I say, not only a remarkable statesman, but also a consummate politician.

Mr. Truman, I think, would never be rated as an intellectual and certainly he would never rate himself as an intellectual. The thought that he was an intellectual would be more appalling to him than anybody else in my estimation.

But he brought a quality of commonsense, an ability to equate with the ordinary man, a remarkable degree of courage, a capacity to select people and to delegate and to administer that I think will make him one of the exceptional Presidents of our times.

And it's even more remarkable when you consider that Mr. Truman when he came to the Presidency had really deep and abiding doubts about his capacity to be President. He

[145]

lived under the shadow of this magnetic and attractive and dominant personality, Mr. Roosevelt, and yet he emerged from it and remained himself without trying to become a carbon copy of Mr. Roosevelt,, and I think he will emerge as one of the great Presidents.

Mr. Eisenhower, whom I knew well as General Eisenhower, was a superb human being. He had a great capacity for attracting and working with other people. He won the confidence of people because he was a straightforward, direct, and a basically honest man. He really never liked politics. He really, I don't think, liked the Presidency. I think the frustrations of it were more disturbing to him than the possibilities of it.

HESS: When he was in the Army and gave an order, it was carried out.

PACE: That's right.

HESS: When he was the President and gave an order, it might not be.

PACE: Well, the odds were quite substantially that it would not be.

So. I would say that Mr. Eisenhower brought a period of calm to this country which was tremendously important,

[146]

but when you think in terms of the forward thrust of the society, you can't say that Mr. Eisenhower contributed a great deal to this.

Mr. Johnson was a remarkable man.

HESS: We're leaving out Mr. Kennedy.

PACE: Oh, Mr. Kennedy was so short a period of time. Well, Mr. Kennedy was a very remarkable man, great charm, deep political insight, great confidence in himself, a capacity to view the United States in its global perspective. All of the ingredients of greatness were there. Whether those ingredients could have been put together to achieve what his very remarkable speeches suggested, I guess neither I nor anybody else will know, all we know is that the potential for greatness was there.

Mr. Johnson of course, was a completely different man. He was also a remarkable political politician, highly pragmatic. He had probed deeply into the problems of the Senate of the United States in a very masterful way, but had great difficulty transitioning from a very personal leadership that made him one of the great Majority Leaders of all times, into the capacity to delegate, that is necessary for success on the national scale. I think he showed great courage in staying with the unpopularity of the Vietnamese

[147]

war. He introduced a great deal of meaningful social legislation for which he will be well remembered. But I must say he surprised me beyond all belief when he chose not to run again. I never would have believed that Lyndon Johnson would not have a second run at the Presidency.

I guess that's a fairly full estimate of some people I knew pretty well.

HESS: All right, in your opinion what were Mr. Truman's major accomplishments and what were his major failings?

PACE: Well, his major accomplishments it seems to me were very clearly the postwar planning for Japan and for Germany. These will always be one of the high spots.

Mr. Truman is condemned for dropping the atomic bomb, and I'm not one of those who agree with that. I think he was moved by completely humanitarian motives, and that is the sort of thing you could argue back and forth.

He certainly showed an ultimate quality of the spirit and reflected the generous nature of the United States not only in the exceptional terms of peace that were granted to aggressors in the war, but also in the selection of the men who carried this out: MacArthur in Japan and Clay with McCloy and Conant in Germany.

The Marshall plan, of course, was, I believe, one of

[148]

the unique achievements of all times. Without it the postwar years would have been intolerable.

Domestically I think his social program was well ordered and he felt always that he was the representative of the common man and his forward movement. As you recall from my earlier statement, I'm a fiscal conservative and I felt he went faster than he should have. I myself would have moved slowly in the direction of what I regard as a social explosion that...

HESS: Did you discuss that with Mr. Truman, perhaps at the time that you resigned as Director of the Bureau of the Budget?

PACE: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, I did.

HESS: What did he say?

PACE: Well, he basically said, "Frank, I am following the course of history." He said, "The course of history is to take care of people socially, and I am following the course of history."

And I said, "I agree, Mr. President, but our problem is not one of direction, it's one of timing, and I frankly feel that we move too quickly."

Well, when you talk about timing you know this is

[149]

purely a matter of human judgment and obviously, he was President and I wasn't.

HESS: You have mentioned that at the time you resigned one of the reasons you did so was that you felt Leon Keyserling's policies and ideas were somewhat closer to what Mr. Truman wanted.

PACE: This is correct.

HESS: But when we discussed that point I don't believe I asked what you and Mr. Truman said at that time.

PACE: Right.

HESS: All right, what do you see as Mr. Truman's failings?

PACE: Well, as I say, I think he moved too...

HESS: That's one of them, is it?

PACE: I would rate that as frankly, in my sense, as number one.

I have felt as I said, that between the years, oh, 1932 and 1972, which is a span of forty years, we've had a development in this country that could well have taken place over 150 or 200 years. I think we have moved too fast.

HESS: What particular items do you think moved a little too fast and could have been slowed down?

[150]

PACE: When you say could have slowed down, who knows whether...

HESS: I mean are you speaking of health care, are you speaking...

PACE: I'm speaking of almost the whole sweep of social legislation.

HESS: Integration?

PACE: Oh no--well, integration--well, let's now talk about integration.

You will recall that I was the first Secretary to totally integrate the black man into the Army. And I believe as deeply as anybody that failure to grant him equal rights, economic, social, and political, is one of the real scars on this country. Again I believe that his integration, if we had given him and the society a little more time to absorb it, would have come along a little more effectively than it has.

Now the answer to that is that if you move more slowly you might not have moved at all, and I think Mr. Truman would say, "That's fine, Frank, but frankly, we'd still be back where we were. You either have to make the total move or not at all." I'm aware of that. My instinct still runs to the fact that the black man would have been served better if the process would have been more carefully advanced than

[151]

it was.

It's never a very popular position, you know, to say that anything should ever be held back, because the important individual needs are there, there's no denying it.

I said as Director of the Budget that it wasn't just a question of the pork barrel things you could cut out, there obviously were some, but they were minimal. The thing that amazed me as Director of the Budget was the real need and the vast requirements that existed for expenditures in this nation. The issue is whether in providing, in these forty years, for people as well as we have, there has been created for your children, and grandchildren and great-grandchildren conditions with which their society is unable to cope.

You take the specifics of any social legislation, you're hard put to ever take a position against it. Any decent human being is, including myself, so when you say to me, "What do you specifically oppose," I have to say to you, Frankly I don't specifically oppose anything.

I merely say when you look at it in the long sweep of history, if America gets ahead of itself, the people who pay the price for it, are not the people now, they're your grandchildren and your great-grandchildren and your great-great-grandchildren. If America does not remain strong, they are the people who pay the price, and it is for that

[152]

reason that I was always a very--and remained very strongly in favor of limiting the present to ensure the preservation of the future. This is where any fiscal conservative is really outmatched in any theoretical discussion. Because you say, do you want to stop cancer research? Do you want to stop Social Security? Certainly you don't, the issue is purely one of timing.

HESS: Any other failings? What did Mr. Truman do that he might have done wrong?

PACE: Oh, no, I think when I have specified my concern on timing, I'm not--I really find it difficult to fault Mr. Truman. Maybe a lot of smaller things, but they play no role at all, but even there his limitations never approached his contributions.

HESS: At the time that you were Director of the Bureau of the Budget would you go over and have some friendly conversations with the President, just like this?

PACE: Oh, yes, yes. Because my relation with the President was very fine and very...

HESS: Do you find that he pretty well defended his viewpoint, or did you argue these things out?

[153]

PACE: You never completely argue something out with the President. I said my relationships with the President were warm and intimate and they are, but it could never be like you and myself talking, because he is the President and once anybody, even if it were your closest friend, dons that mantle, then there is a certain restraint in the nature of your conversations. Because in

the long run he ultimately has to make deep and basic decisions and he has to live with them and therefore you aren't arguing in a theoretical fashion. You present a point of view, if it's different than his, then that's it, you don't go on beyond that point because...

HESS: You've made yourself clear.

PACE: You've made yourself clear, and it's important that if you're once of his advisers he knows what you are and how you think, because then he knows best how to use you. On the other hand, for anyone, I believe to press a point of view with the President, beyond a certain point, is not serving either the country or the President. If you feel deeply enough about your difference with the President then you should resign, and indicate why, but I have to say you, at least for me there is a special aura about the President. I'd never call any President, "Truman" or "Nixon," nor do I let my children do it. All have to call them, "Mr. Truman," "Mr. Roosevelt," "Mr. Nixon."

[154]

HESS: On the subject of advice to the President, Mr. Truman mentions in his *Memoirs* that he liked a wide diversity of men and viewpoints around him. He had Oscar Chapman on the liberal side, he would have John Snyder on the conservative side, because he felt that each had something to contribute and he wanted to hear the viewpoints...

PACE: Very definitely.

HESS: ...of all sides before he made up his mind.

PACE: Very definitely.

HESS: Did you have that same feeling?

PACE: Oh, no question about it.

HESS: But you still felt that you should resign as Director of the Bureau of the Budget?

PACE: Yes, I did.

HESS: You felt that your viewpoint was just too far from his, is that right?

PACE: Yes, just too far from Leon Keyserling's, and I felt that the President tended in that direction. I don't think the President ever intended to go as far as Leon went. But I think he leaned basically in that direction. And I

[155]

felt that because my views on this subject were really quite positive that it was the wrong place for me to be.

HESS: I believe Mr. Keyserling took over as Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in 1949. Of course he had been one of the original members...

PACE: This is right.

HESS: And then when Dr. Nourse resigned in '49, there was a period of time in there when he was acting chairman and then he took over as chairman. Did you have conversations with Mr. Keyserling?

PACE: Oh yes . Oh, yes, I liked Leon as a person. We just couldn't see things in the same way.

HESS: All right, what is your estimation of Mr. Truman's place in history?

PACE: Well, I think that he will be regarded as one of the great Presidents. I've always felt that way, even when many of my people whom I saw quite regularly felt very derisive about it.

HESS: Do you think the public's image of Mr. Truman has changed substantially since he has left office?

[156]

PACE: Completely. Not just...

HESS: What do you see as the reasons for that change?

PACE: Well, I think when Mr. Truman was President they saw many of the small things that were played up by the press: His defense of Margaret against...

HESS: Paul Hume?

PACE: ...the critic; the balcony. Mr. Truman was so essentially human a person, and so real a person, he was subject to attack on minor subjects. And I think as time has rolled on, and his courage and the really large things that he did and did so well, become apparent, then people come to quite different conclusions. This is why General Marshall was so wise in saying that he just couldn't see writing a contemporary autobiography, because your personal judgments were not up to the requirements of history.

HESS: What is your favorite memory of Mr. Truman?

PACE: Well, there are so many. I guess my favorite memory is the one that I mentioned to you when he made up his mind on the central Arizona project that he was going to advise the two oldest friends that he could not do it. I think my favorite memory, I mean there it is because then I knew

[157]

that he would do the hard right against the easy wrong. And I believe that's critical in any President of the United States.

HESS: Do you have anything else to add on Mr. Truman or your role in the Truman administration?

PACE: No, No, none other than the fact that I loved it when I was doing it. I thought Mrs. Truman played a remarkable part; it will never be fully understood, in providing much of the cement that went into Mr. Truman's strength. There was a warm and intimate human quality to the whole administration that I'll never forget, and he brought it, and it will always be one of the great and meaningful periods of my life.

HESS: Well, thank you very much.

PACE: Its been a privilege.

[175]

INDEX

Acheson, Dean, 67-69, 85, 91, 92, 96, 111, 170
Air Force, U.S., 2, 30
Alexander, Archibald S., 127
Allen, Leven C., 105
Alsop, Joseph, 67
Americans for Democratic Action, 49
Anderson, Clinton P., 63, 64
Anderson, Vernice, 93, 99
Arizona, 22, 23
Arkansas, 1, 6, 7
Arkansas, flag of, 107
Armed services, secretariat of, 124-126
Armed services, unification of the, 129-133
Army, U.S., 2, 129-133
Army, Department of the, 30, 64-133
Atomic weapons, possible use of in the Korean War, 137-140
Attlee, Clement, 137

Baughman, U.E., 59
Bendetsen, Karl R., 127-128
Biffle, Leslie, 7, 8, 54
Blair House meetings of June 25, 26, 1950, 68-72

Bohlen, Charles E., 113
Bradley, Omar N., 91, 98, 99, 128
Budget, Bureau of the, 2-4, 7, 8, 16, 17, 19-26, 28-38, 40-48, 58, 61, 64, 65
Budget in Brief, 20, 21

Case, Clifford, 130, 131
Central Arizona Project, 22, 156
Chapman, Oscar L., 154
Chang Kai-Shek, 100, 101
China, Communist, 89, 90, 100-103, 111, 112, 138
Civil Aeronautics Board, 3, 4
Clark, Mark W., 111
Clark, Mary, 12
Clark, Tom C., 2, 11, 12, 13
Clifford, Clark M., 60, 63, 64
Colorado River, 22
Collins, J. Lawton, 112, 114, 129, 130
Collins Plan, 129, 130
Congress, U.S., 7, 8, 19
Council of Economic Advisers, 45, 64, 65, 155

Dai-Ichi Building, Tokyo, Japan, 104, 108
Dawes, Charles, 35, 36, 40
Defense, Department of, 28, 29, 31
Defense, Secretaries of, 121-128

[176]

Democratic National Committee, 13, 15
Democratic National Convention of 1944, 4, 13, 14
Democratic National Convention of 1948, 49-51
Dewey, Thomas E., 10, 11, 55, 56
Dickinsen, Edward, 126
Dodd, Francis T., 114
Donaldson, Jesse M., 14
Douglas, Lewis, 37
Douglas, William O., 13
Dulles, John F., 109, 110

Early, Stephen T., 85-87
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 20, 49, 50, 120, 121, 145, 146

Fair Deal, 28
Farley, James A., 15
Finletter, Thomas K., 121, 124-126
Formosa, 82, 97, 100, 101

General Counsel, Department of Internal Revenue (Arkansas), 1
General Dynamics Corporation, 2
General Electric Corporation, 9
Gray, Gordon, 65, 66
Gruenther, Alfred M., 112

"Halls of Montezuma", 132
Hannegan, Robert E., 3, 13, 14, 51
Harriman, Averell, 91
Harvard Law School, 1, 6
Hawaii, 108, 109
Hayden, Carl, 23, 24
Hoover Commission, 19, 20
Hoover, Herbert C., 19, 20
Hume, Paul, 156

Inchon, South Korea, 80, 81, 88, 89
Integration, racial, 150, 151
International Executive Service Corps, 2

Jackson County, Missouri, 38
James, Grover, 6
Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner (1952), 134
Jessup, Philip C., 69, 91, 92
Johnson, Earl D., 109, 127, 128
Johnson, Louis A., 67, 69, 79, 80, 83-86, 122
Johnson, Lyndon B., 146, 147
Joint Chiefs of Staff, 124, 125
Joplin, Missouri, 6
Justice Department, Tax Division, 2, 11, 12

[177]

Kennan, George F., 113
Kennedy, John F., 146
Kerr, Robert S., 63, 64
Keyserling, Leon, 64, 65, 154, 155
Key West, Florida, 58-61
Kimball, Dan A., 121, 124, 126, 130, 131
KoJe-do Island (POW Camp), 113, 114
Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG), 72, 94, 95
The Korean War, 89, 106, 107
Korean War, 31, 33, 66-95, 97-109, 115-121, 137-140
Korean War:
 armistice of 1953, 120, 121

- atomic weapons, possible use in, 137-140
- China, intervention in, 89, 90, 100-103
- MacArthur, Douglas, dismissal as UN Commander, 104-110, 118, 119
- Soviet role in, 77, 78
- 38th Parallel, decision to cross by UN forces, 88, 89
- Wake Island Conference, 90-94, 97-99, 101, 102

Korth, Fred, 127, 128

Lawton, Frederick J., 19

Legislative Reference Service, Bureau of the Budget, 35-37

Little Rock, Arkansas, 1, 53-55

Lovett, Robert A., 87, 119, 120

MacArthur, Douglas, 68, 73, 81-83, 88, 90-94, 97, 98, 100

MacArthur: Rendezvous With Destiny, 102

McAuliffe, Anthony, 72

McClellan, John L., 2, 13

McFarland, Ernest W., 23, 24

Marine Corps, 129-133

Marshall, George C., 84, 86-91, 104, 105, 113, 116-120, 156

Matthews, Francis P., 121-123

Milton, William, 9, 10

Missouri, 6, 7

Muccio, John J., 68

National Security Council, 18

Navy, Department of the, 29, 30

New Deal, 27

New York, Presidential Election of 1948, 52

Nixon, Richard M., 111, 112

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 112

Pace, Mrs. Frank, 10, 11

Poker games with President Truman, 62-64

Postmaster General, U.S., 2, 3

Post Office Department, U.S., 13-15

[178]

Presidency, office of the, 17-20

Presidential election of 1948:

- Biffle, Leslie, in, 8
- Budget, U.S., and the, 34
- Democratic National Convention, 49-51
- Republican campaign mistakes, 55, 56
- third parties in, 51, 52

Truman, Harry S., role in, 9, 10
Presidential election of 1952, Democratic nomination, 134, 135
Presidential transition, 1952-53, 140-142
Press Conferences on the Budget, 38, 40, 41
Princeton University, 1, 6
Progressive Party (1948), 52
Pusan, South Korea, 81, 88, 106
Pyrennees Mountains, 112

Radford, Arthur W., 91
Ridgway, Matthew B., 89, 90, 105-107
Rigdon, William M., 58
Robinson, Joseph T., 57
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 4, 5, 17, 25, 45, 46, 48-51, 111, 142-145
Ross, Charles G., 91
Rusk, Dean, 67, 69

Schaub, William, 58
Secretariat of the Armed Services, See: Armed Services
Secretaries of the Armed Services, See: Armed Services
Secret Service, 59
Seventh Fleet, U.S., 100, 101
Smith, Harold, 19, 25, 37
Snyder, John W., 7, 26, 41-45, 54, 58, 154
Sons of St. Patrick, 123
South Korea, U.S. evacuation of in 1949, 95, 96
Soviet Union, 77, 78, 111-113
Spain, 112
State's Rights Party (1948), 51, 52
Stevens, Robert T., 141, 142
Stevenson, Adlai E., 136
Sullivan, John, 4, 122
Supreme Court, U.S., 1
Symington, Stuart, 14

38th Parallel (Korea), 88, 89
Throckmorton, John, 105
Thurmond, J. Strom, 51, 52
Treasury Department, U.S., 16, 17, 25, 42-44
Truman Beach, 60
Truman, Bess Wallace, 134, 137

[179]

Truman, Harry S.:
 atomic weapons in Korean War, position on use of, 137, 138

Blair House meetings of June 25-26, 1950, and, 69-72, 76
Budget, and the Federal, 22-26, 28, 29, 31, 33-38, 40-48, 59, 61
Central Arizona Project, and the, 22-24
Korean War, Congressional support in, 78, 79
Korean, War, decision .to commit U.S. ground troops in, 73-75
Key West, Florida, vacations in, 59-61
Little Rock, Arkansas, visit to in 1949, 53-55
MacArthur, Douglas, dismissal from military command, 118, 119
MacArthur, Douglas, and VFW letter controversy, 82, 83
Pace, Frank, appointed Assistant Director of the Budget Bureau by, 3, 4
Pace, Frank, first acquaintance with, 2, 3
Pace, Frank, relationship with, 8, 9, 152-154
Presidency, accession to the, 5, 6
Presidency, and the Office of the, 17-20
as President, assessment of, 144, 145, 147-150, 152, 155-157
Presidential Election of 1948, and the, 9, 10
Presidential Election of 1948, opposition of third parties in, 51, 52
Presidential nomination of 1948, and the, 49, 50
Presidential nomination of 1952, decision not to seek, 134, 135
Presidential transition of 1952-53, and the, 140-142
truce in Korean War, possible attainment of, 120, 121
Vice-Presidential nomination of 1944, selection for, 13, 14
Wake Island Conference of 1950, and the, 90-92, 97, 98, 101, 102
Williamsburg, U.S.S., trips on, 61, 62
Truman Memoirs, 25, 28, 29, 154
Truman, Margaret, 156

Unification of the Armed Services See: Armed Services
United Nations, 70, 71, 88
United States, U.S.S., 122
University of North Carolina, 66

Veterans of Foreign Wars, 82
Vinson, Fred M., 64

Wake Island, 109, 110
Wake Island Conference (1950), 90-94, 97-99, 101, 102
Wallace, Henry A., 4, 13, 52
Webb, James E., 3, 9, 18, 19, 37
Whitney, Courtney, 102
Williamsburg, U.S.S., 61, 62
Willoughby, Charles A., 106
World War II, 64, 66, 116

Yalu River, 103