

Oral History Interview

with

HARDING F. BANCROFT

Chief, Division of U. N. Political Affairs, Dept. of State, 1945, later Director, Office of U. N. Political and Security Affairs; U.S. Deputy Representative U. N. Collective Measures Committee with personal rank of Minister, 1950-53. Served as an assistant to the U. N. commission that investigated the Greek crisis in 1947.

New York, New York

June 25, 1974

by Richard D. McKinzie, Harry S. Truman Library

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MCKINZIE: Mr. Bancroft, how did you happen to go into Government service in the first place?

BANCROFT: I was in the Navy in the years of 1943-45. During the fall of '45 I was in the Pentagon, in the Military Government Branch, where I was a lieutenant representing the Navy, on a committee called the Working Security Committee, the functions of which were to work on

the documents which provided for the control machinery and surrender terms of Germany; JCS-1067, as I

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remember the number. I was the representative of the Navy Department. The official member was the Secretary of the Navy, but I was the person who actually went to the meetings and reported to Mr. [Ralph A.] Bard, who was then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and occasionally to Mr. [James] Forrestal, but mostly to Mr. Bard. We worked on problems of JCS-1067 and the de-Nazification program, the control machinery to a lesser extent -- the surrender terms and the division of the German territory for the occupation by the victorious Allies.

I had known Professor Philip C. Jessup, who was later a judge of the International Court of Justice at The Hague, quite well, and I worked for UNRRA a little bit, prior to joining the Navy, at the first UNRRA Conference in Atlantic City in the autumn of 1943. I was the so-called drafting officer at the conference, assisting Abraham Feller, a delightful man who became the first General Counsel of the United

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Nations.

The experience on the Working Security Committee heightened my interest in foreign affairs, and brought me into active contact with Mr. Jessup, who then was in the State Department. He suggested to some of them that I would be a good candidate for some job over there, so I went over and saw Joseph E. Johnson, Chief of the Division of International Security Affairs (IS) in the Office of Special Political Affairs (SPA). He offered me a job in his division as assistant chief of I.S.

MCKINZIE: How did you happen to get involved in lend-lease?

BANCROFT: I joined the Office of Price Administration in 1941 before the war began. I went there in February, 1941 as a member of the legal staff. When the landings in North Africa took place and the Germans moved out in May 1943, they were

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worried about the economy of North Africa. Three of us from the legal staff of OPA were attached to the North African Economic Board. Later I succeeded Lloyd Cutler as General Counsel of the Board. I was on loan from the Office of Price Administration to the Lend-Lease Administration. I stayed there a relatively short time, between April of 1943 into the fall of '43, when I decided I wanted active military duty and joined the Navy.

MCKINZIE: Can you recall what you expected out of lend-lease? Our postwar planning in the State Department envisioned not just a postwar world like the world which had existed before the war, but a better one, modeled after the views of Cordell Hull and more economically open.

BANCRAFT: I saw the postwar plans as a great potential to the future. At the same time, while the war was going on it was confined to more narrow terms. The object of the game for

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lend-lease in North Africa was to be sure that the Allied forces had the materiel that they needed as well as the material for the civilian populations in the countries in which they were operating. Our particular job there was to be sure that the flow of materials coming into North Africa did not result in an inequitable distribution of the goods to the civilian populations or result in huge inflation, because of the great shortages of civilian consumer goods. That's what we were looking for. The lend-lease people were involved with goods coming to North Africa, and how they should be distributed internally. But it seemed to me less a conceptual thing at that time; that is, simply a good distribution method, the same way you distribute newspapers so they get around to the proper people at the proper time.

MCKINZIE: Did you share this -- if you want to call

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it -- Hullian vision of the future

BANCROFT: Oh, yes. I think it was the precursor to the whole foreign aid programs following the war, the whole business in Germany and France, indeed the Marshall plan for Europe.

I must say that I think our sights were lowered while we were in North Africa, certainly. We didn't see then the larger problems; we just saw the problem of whether the goods arrived and were properly distributed, and did not result in an inflationary situation. We tried to limit the inflationary forces that would work in such a short supply situation.

MCKINZIE: When you went to work for Joseph Johnson in the State Department, what kinds of early assignments did you receive?

BANCROFT: When I arrived there the San Francisco meeting had been completed and the U. N. Charter signed. The next stage of the development of

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the United Nations was the Preparatory Commission then at work in London. They had gone over there soon after the meeting in San Francisco to prepare for the first meetings of the General Assembly and the Security Council of the U. N.

Adlai Stevenson was the head of the United States delegation to the Preparatory Commission. My work at that point was to prepare drafts of the constitutional documents flowing from the Charter; the rules of procedure for the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the other bodies. We dealt with such matters as how elections should be held, when the meeting should be held, how often, and their permanence. We spent a lot of time on the concepts of having permanent representatives of the states at the site of the Unified Nations, wherever that was going to be. We thought that was as a practical matter, a most important thing. We thought also it was terribly important to have regularity of meetings, even though there might

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be nothing on the agenda, so that the Security Council did meet regularly. We didn't really specify, although we thought it was important to have at least monthly meetings. We had thought of the concept of General Assembly meetings, not only the regular meetings, but also special General Assembly meetings for something which might come up with urgency, which would require a meeting more often than the regular annual meeting provided for in the Charter.

MCKINZIE: Was this in any way anticipatory of Soviet-American difficulties?

BANCROFT: No, it really wasn't. It was based, I think, on the experience of the League, which was going on all its cylinders for quite a long time and then gradually started to deteriorate. People lost interest as they saw it become ineffectual. We thought that the postwar mood of the international community was such

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that it would demand a more effective international organization. We felt it was important to have permanent representatives at the U. N. site and regular meetings, so that the Security Council would always be available for whatever crisis should arise. We figured that, in normal times, there would always be little crises and little fires that should be put out.

MCKINZIE: How much hope did you have for the U. N., personally, at that time?

BANCROFT: I had tremendous hope at that time; I was a tremendous enthusiast for it. I thought of it as an absolutely essential ingredient to maintain peace in the world, to provide for collective security, and to carry forward the momentum that had been created by the working relationships of the Allies during the war. This -- the Allied war effort -- was something which everybody recognized as a well-done job, and the objective -- and the problem -- was to continue

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it in peacetime.

MCKINZIE: Arthur Vandenberg, I guess, said that the success of the U. N. would be directly proportional to the temperature of the U.S.-Soviet relations. Does that seem like a fair assessment to you?

BANCROFT: I think I would have put it another way. I thought it was not necessary that the U.S. and Soviet would always see eye-to-eye on every issue. What I thought was essential was that the U.S. and the Soviet would be willing to sit down and discuss the issues with their own interests obviously involved, but that they would not resort to the solution of those issues by war or something less than war. This was what was to be avoided.

MCKINZIE: A lot of people who had been students of international organizations contended that from the beginning the U. N. should have existed at

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the expense of the member nations' sovereignty and it didn't; that it ought to have some power over national governments in order to be really effective, but that would have been politically impossible.

BANCROFT: Yes. That's what I think we thought at the time; that it would have been politically impossible, just in the nature of things. The governments would not give up their sovereignty to be dictated to by the great powers. At the same time they had to be, we felt, watched over. I was not a critic of the veto of the five great powers on the Security Council. I thought the veto could be a workable thing, even though it would mean that in certain cases some ideal action could not be taken. Therefore, the agreement of the permanent members should always be an essential thing, particularly the U.S. and the Soviets, of course, but the others too. The U. K. was then more of a great power than it

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is today; it was a major force in the world. We thought of the U. K., France, and China, with the great resources that they had as being the people who would be intermediaries between the U.S. and the Soviets, who were then not the super powers they are regarded to be now. They were the potential super powers because of their emergence from the war with all the strength that they had.

MCKINZIE: Were you at all involved in the location of the U. N. in New York?

BANCROFT: No. Obviously, we followed that very closely as we were working on it. I had some doubts about New York to tell you the truth, simply on the ground that it was such a big city that I thought the U. N. might get swallowed up in the city life. In a place like Geneva, the U. N. could be as the League had been, the dominant force within the city and the main thing to see. New York has got

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all that culture, industry, and so on; it would make it a less desirable spot. Moreover, I had doubts about it being in the United States. That would have been my first reaction; it shouldn't be in a territory of one of the great powers. I thought that would be a harmful thing, but I think I've been proved wrong on it.

Secondly, seeing that the United States was to be the place, I would have been more in favor of a smaller city in the United States where they could be sort of an international enclave and not subject to the rigors of New York City living, which are great. I must say it's all been proved to be satisfactory. Some complaints have come from some of the permanent representatives, but these have been minor.

MCKINZIE: You were on the front lines at the time of the Greek-Turkish crisis in 1947.

BANCROFT: Yes. I was on the Greek side of it entirely. In 1947, during the revolution in

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Greece where the guerilla movement was very active at the time, the British said they were going to have to pull out of the area; they couldn't afford to stay there. There was substantial aid coming to the guerilla movement in Greece from its northern neighbors: Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia. The United Nations Security Council, after a long debate, decided unanimously (with the consent of the Soviets, which we did not expect to get at the time) that the Security Council should send over a commission to Greece to investigate the extent to which the northern neighbors of Greece were providing aid to the guerillas. A commission was established with one representative of each of the eleven members of the Security Council on the commission. The representative of the United States was Mark Ethridge, who went over with a small group of assistants: Cyril Black, a professor at Princeton; an Army officer; and a couple of administrative people.

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I functioned, in my capacity in the State Department, as the man who briefed Mr. Ethridge before he went, to tell him about the situation, what the U. N. action had been, what the U. S. policies were supposed to be, and what the general situation was. Mr. Ethridge spent two or three weeks in Washington and we got out big briefing books for him and so on. After he had been over there for a little while, he asked if I would come over to join him, which I did in March of 1947. We were stationed in Salonika but the commission sent task forces out to other parts of Greece to interrogate the people, mostly village officials, who had in fact been witnesses of the aid coming from the three northern states.

We tried to see General Markos [Vaphioidis], who was the leader of the guerilla movement, and sent out a little group who spent two or three weeks in the mountain area trying to locate him. They never reached a rendezvous

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with him, but we thought that it would be fair to get his point of view; and it was important not only to be fair but to give the appearance of fairness.

I think the main thing that the U. S. was trying to do in that mission was to make this a very fair investigation; to hear all sides, not particularly with the preconceived notion that the Greek Communists were being aided by the Albanians, Bulgarians and Yugoslavians, which in fact they were. We were not to assume that at the outset, but to get evidence of that fact to present back to the whole Security Council, so it could take what action was required.

MCKINZIE: At that time Mark Ethridge and Gordon MacVeagh, who was the Ambassador, were both sending back dispatches which were fairly alarmist about the situation in Greece.

BANCROFT: Oh, very much so. I didn't mean to say

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that we didn't know that. What I was trying to say was that it was very important that the Security Council Commission should not only act with total impartiality and fairness, but that the proceedings should be carried out with total impartiality and fairness and perceived by the world to be so. When its report was submitted to the Security Council as a whole it would not be a

totally biased report, which would reflect what the Russians used to call the "mathematical majority of the U. N."

We did write a report, which was a divided report, with Poland and the Soviet representatives dissenting from most of the conclusions. This was a precursor of the fact that when the United States and others attempted to introduce a resolution in the Security Council for the type of action (I must say I have forgotten what form it took) which would remedy the situation, the Soviet Union then vetoed the resolution and no action was taken.

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MCKINZIE: At the time of the investigation were the relations between the members of the delegation and the Polish and Russians fairly cordial?

BANCROFT: They were very cordial, yes. The time of the writing of the report was the first time that tension was felt. Earlier there were things that the Soviet representative did not want us, as I remember, to see; certain witnesses who they would regard as "hostile" witnesses. They didn't want the commission to see them, but we insisted on that and they were overruled and accepted that. We didn't have, of course, the veto on the commission. It was just a kind of majority vote or non-vote situation on the commission.

MCKINZIE: The Truman Doctrine and the aid by the U. S. of four hundred million dollars to Greece and Turkey eclipsed the commission's report. There was criticism at the time about bypassing the United Nations on that aid, arguing that in a

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way it was weakening the U. N. and setting an important precedent for the future. Do you recall your feelings about that?

BANCROFT: My feelings were that the situation was so bad in Greece and the probabilities of the democratic Greek Government maintaining its position in Greece, of not being overthrown by the Communists, were very remote; it was going to fall. Therefore, if we wanted to save it from the Communists, it was essential that there be some unilateral aid, as well as international assistance or action. Not only was Greece involved, but it would have had a domino effect if the Greek Government fell; Italy was very precarious at the time and France was precarious at the time. We thought that it was a possibility, and I'm sure the President did, that if there wasn't aid to Greece and Turkey, these other democratic governments in Western Europe would fall.

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In Greece it wasn't the sort of communism which was a "will of the people" type of communism; it wasn't a majority situation. It was a dictatorial communism, which General Markos and his adherents in the hills were trying to deal with. It wasn't a popular movement of the majority of the population.

MCKINZIE: Of course, the monarchy wasn't exactly beloved by the people either at that time.

BANCROFT: You couldn't be more accurate. That was, of course, the problem. That was the same problem we had later on in Korea and other places. We were forced to back individuals who weren't the greatest of men, as opposed to forms of government, in order to preserve what we regard as democracy as opposed to some form of dictatorship. We have seen too many recent dictatorships not to be unaware of that.

MCKINZIE: You were involved in the early days of

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the nation of Indonesia and its evolution.

BANCROFT: Yes. That was comparable to the Greek situation, in the sense that the Security Council of the U. N. also sent out a commission to Indonesia in which the United States had a representative, Dr. Frank Graham. Here you had the problem of the interest of the Dutch, and this made it a different situation in a sense. The Indonesians really did want independence from the Dutch, and the Dutch were most reluctant to let them have it. The commission that Dr. Graham was on was a three-man commission, I remember -- Australia, the U. S., and a third country that I forget. Their objective, as developed by Dr. Graham, was to make the evolution from the colonial status in Indonesia to an independent Indonesia with the least possible effect on the Dutch who were out there and on the Dutch countrymen; to try to insure that the leaders of the insurrection movement

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were the best leaders that he could find. I was not as closely involved with this, as I was a long way away, but it was our section in the State Department and members of my division which were the backstop for Dr. Frank Graham.

MCKINZIE: President Roosevelt was always concerned about the colonial holdings of the European powers, and at least at the end of the war the United States consistently took anti-colonial positions. Do you think, given the changing nature of the world, that that position was modified much by the time that Indonesia was separating from Holland?

BANCROFT: There was a real division in the State Department on Indonesia. It was not an open and shut policy, because of the way the State Department was organized. You had the European Division on the one hand, you had the Far Eastern Division on the other, and you had the United Nations Division sort of in the middle. Our

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role there was to try to bring the two together. Now, the European Division used to think of the Dutch as their clients, and the Far Eastern Division would think of the Indonesians as their clients. Indonesia came up at that first meeting of the United Nations in London in January, 1946, as did Greece, for that matter. Those were the first two items on the agenda, as I remember, of that meeting. So you had a very mixed situation, and that mixed situation was never really resolved until the time when Secretary [General George] Marshall, in 1948-49, said that he felt that we had to live up to the policies of the U. N. Charter with respect to Indonesia, and to affirm -- call it anti-colonial, perhaps it was -- the need for the independence of Indonesia.

I remember we had a whole lot of meetings in Paris during the General Assembly meeting there following the Berlin Blockade in the fall of '48. In early 1949, Dr. Jessup was the person who had to announce the

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United States policies formulated by General Marshall. Then a lot of Dutch soldiers sent back to Phil Jessup the United States Army medals that they had earned as members of the United States Army or as members of the Dutch Army during the war. He got very nasty letters, because as representative of the United States in the U. N. Security Council he had come out in favor of Indonesian independence from the Dutch.

MCKINZIE: What about the problem in the State Department of the European Division -- Jack Hickerson's division -- and the Asian division. Diplomatic historians are inclined to say that the Truman years were years of "Europe first" with foreign policy. Did you have to keep that constantly in mind when you were dealing with U. N. affairs?

BANCROFT: Yes. The European Division was the dominant division in the State Department for

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quite a long while, because of James Dunn, "Doc" Matthews and Jack Hickerson. It was a very able and strong division. The Far Eastern Division was not anywhere nearly as strong. [W. Walton, Jr.] Butterworth was in charge of that at the time. Although he was a strong and able Foreign Service officer, the preponderance within the State Department of power, prestige, and influence lay in the European side of things. They were not as anti-colonial as many thought President Roosevelt's policy had been. They were not ready to see the colonial powers give up their colonies as quickly as they in fact have.

MCKINZE: To what extent were votes controllable in the U. N. in those years? This is not to say that the U. N. was by any means a mirror or a puppet of the U. S. policy, but there were methods and evidently occasions when things could be managed -- at least more so than they can now.

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BANCROFT: At the General Assembly meetings, and I think I went to all of them until I left the Department, the U.S. delegation had a system whereby we had what we called "liaison officers" with the different regions of the world. They were in touch on an hourly basis and certainly a daily basis with each of the representatives of the other states that we wanted to support the resolutions which we supported. They used to do a lot of talking about "arm twisting," but I never believed especially that this had very much effect. After all, the states whose arms were being twisted had their own national interest to think about. There were some states, which carried no weight at all, who said, "Well, we'll vote whichever way the U. S. votes," but I don't think there were so many of those. The policies which we were advocating in the immediate postwar years were policies which in general coincided with the national interests of these other states. Mr. [Andrei Y.]

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Vishinsky used to shout about the "mechanical majorities" which were available to the United States and the U. K. It wasn't a mechanical thing at all, nor was it in my view due to the persuasive powers of these liaison officers of the United States or the fact that these states were willing, with some exceptions, to vote any way the U. S. did. They were looking to their own national interests. They were not in favor of the chaos of the world; they were not in favor of widespread, involuntary communism in states which didn't want to be Communist.

MCKINZIE: What about the implicit threat of withdrawal of aid, which was a very large part of U. S. foreign policy by that time?

BANCROFT: I suppose they always took that into account. But I would doubt that that was the dominant force which determined their votes. In this period when the Russians were in the

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minority, they were being awfully difficult. They were not advocating causes which supported a strong international organization at that time. We were, in general, advocating policies which supported the strong international organization, and they knew that. We were in general supporting anti-colonialism, or a good evolution from a colonial situation to an independent situation. I think that the merits of the cases have much more to do with it than the fact that U. S. aid was or was not going to be forthcoming, or that "arms were being twisted" for any other implicit or explicit reason.

MCKINZIE: At the time of the Indonesian independence problem, did you or the people with whom you dealt in the State Department have any clear idea of how Asia was going to evolve, and where those emerging nations like Indonesia would eventually fit in a large scheme?

BANCROFT: Well, we saw what had happened in Communist

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China. We saw the way that China went. It was all happening at about the same time. At that time, either rightly or wrongly, most people thought it was a very bad thing for China to become a Communist state. We felt, as I remember, the dominant conceptual feeling that if you could have democratic states in Asia other than China, that would be a helpful rather than a harmful thing to the United States interests. This was just as easy as that. We thought that if, for example in the Indonesian situation, the Dutch insisted on their colonial status, the likelihood of Indonesia becoming a democratic state would be most remote. I'm looking, obviously, back at that after twenty-five years.

MCKINZIE: You mentioned that you did some backstopping on the Kashmir...

BANCROFT: Now, that came in a little earlier, 1947

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or '48. One day, just all of a sudden without any preliminaries, the British brought over Mr. [Sir Girja Shanker] Bajpai. I've forgotten his title, but he was a very important figure there. He came

to see us, and said that the situation in India and Pakistan was likely to erupt into a religious war which would have no stopping. But somehow or other it had to be stopped. We tried to think of some role the United Nations could play and moved on from there. It was obviously not a huge success, except in the sense that war did not occur in any large degree. The problem with Kashmir is still undecided; I don't know when it's going to be decided. At least the U. N. did succeed in avoiding a total horrible war that could have taken place, because the feelings were running terribly high at the time. The U. N. sent over the Kashmir Commission, and in this, as in the Indonesian case and in the Greek case, our people from our division did go over

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and support the individual representatives on the spot. The men in our division were extremely able people, and we were able to support these missions in a way that I think was extremely effective at the time.

MCKINZIE: At the same time they were on the scene were you dealing with the Indian and the Pakistani delegations in Washington?

BANCROFT: Yes. There was Sheikh [Mohammad] Abdullah, who was a major force there. He was a difficult person to work with. The Indians and the Pakistanis both, of course, didn't want to have a war there, and each of them, I think, really wanted to have the Kashmir situation resolved peacefully. The Pakistanis felt that the Indians were less willing to have a peaceful solution than they were, because they thought that Mr. [Pandit] Nehru, being a Kashmiri himself, was really not an unbiased, nonpartisan figure in any sense. The Pakistanis thought

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of themselves as being much more unbiased than the Indians did. My own feeling was that the Pakistanis had a little bit more on their side than the Indians did in the Kashmir case. They were more rational and more willing to have a peaceful solution.

MCKINZIE: Do you remember how your work changed or what happened when, in June of 1950, the Korean war broke out?

BANCROFT: Well, the Korean war was, of course, the great example. I was on vacation in Canada at the moment the war broke out. I think that the United States did about as good a job as they could under the circumstances, and my criterion of "good" is being supportive of an effective international organization. I think the President was very wise in that case in having the matter taken immediately to the United Nations. The fact that the Russians were absent from the Security Council at the time

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enabled the Security Council and the General Assembly to take action. It gave U. N. support and blessing to the measures, which the United States thought were essential to be taken. We were acting in form at least not unilaterally, but multilaterally, and our big job then was to try to get other states to support the action we were taking, to contribute to the action and make it truly an international U. N. force. In all candor, we used the U. N. as a device to support what we

probably would have done -- what we had to do -- anyway, which differentiated to such a large extent from Vietnam ten years later,

MCKINZIE: What kind of difficulty did you have in getting support for these actions?

BANCROFT: At this time, Mr. John Hickerson was the Assistant Secretary in charge of United Nations Affairs. He had moved from his job

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in the European Division to that, which was a deliberate move by Secretary [Dean] Acheson. I don't know exactly how to state it, but I talked to the Secretary personally about this. I felt that Mr. Hickerson thought so much in European terms that he would not be the ideal man to be in charge of the United Nations. Dean Rusk, who had been his predecessor, went over to the Far Eastern Division, and Mr. Acheson told me, I think in candor, that he thought it was a very helpful intra-State Department maneuver to put Mr. Hickerson in charge of the United Nations, in order to make him more aware of it and to think more about it as an important element of United States foreign policy. He did not believe that Mr. Hickerson would in any way downgrade the United Nations or fail to support it in accordance with the pronounced policies of President Truman and the Secretary of State. The president, you remember, repeatedly stated that the U. N. was "the cornerstone of U.S. foreign

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policy."

I think this was a wise move that Secretary Acheson took. Mr. Hickerson wasn't a great proponent of the U. N. before he came to his new job, but I think he did become a proponent of the U. N. and realized its importance. Going back to Korea now, Mr. Hickerson was the man who used to hold weekly meetings with those nations which were contributing to the Korean war on our side -- the U. N. force there. He was the one who dealt with them, and he dealt very effectively with them to try to get them to provide military assistance and aid of various sorts for the U. N. force in Korea.

MCKINZIE: Did you perceive at the time that a lot of things were wrecked as a result of the outbreak of the war in Korea? The Marshall plan had gone into effect in 1948 and was supposed to run for four years, to 1952. With the outbreak of the war it was necessary to convert a lot of

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economic development programs into rearmament kind of things, thereby creating some difficulties. Did you at all get involved in this kind of relations?

BANCROFT: No. Although, obviously, one was aware of that, I did not get into these questions myself. My own work following the outbreak of the Korean war really jumped one step ahead to the question of how we could exploit the fact that the General Assembly could be, in certain circumstances, an effective force in the United Nations in the absence of unanimity among the great powers on the Security Council.

This is a fairly obvious thing; there was nothing recondite about it. The fact was that the General Assembly had acted in the Korean situation because the Soviets absented themselves from the Security Council. We thought if the Soviet Union was going to be a disruptive force in the U. N., and was going to exercise its

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veto in a kind of profligate way, we ought to have some machinery within the United Nations which would enable the U. N. to act if a majority of the members wanted it to act, even if the Security Council was prevented from action by the vote of one of its permanent members. We thought that the majority of the U. N. should not be thwarted by a veto in the Security Council. This was clearly something which had not been expressly thought about at the time of the adoption of the Charter, but there was language in the Charter that supported that sort of concept. That, coupled with the idea of the need for developing collective security arrangements, was the origins of and the basis for the Uniting for Peace Resolution which was adopted in 1952. You have to go back a little bit from that to the fact that the Charter of the U. N. did provide for military forces to be available to the United Nations and it had a body called

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the Military Staff Committee, which was an arm of the Security Council. That committee had never been able to get anywhere in terms of getting those forces into being or even planned for in anyway. I had the idea that we might be able to take advantage of this specific situation stemming from Korea. The mood of the majority of the United Nations was fairly clear that they did not want to be prevented from doing anything at all -- to be totally impotent -- in collective security terms, and would be willing to take some action. So, if another Korea ever happened again and U. N. action was thwarted by veto in the Security Council, the General Assembly would have the right to act.

For a couple of months I worked on this Uniting for Peace Resolution. I finally drafted something which provided for the fact that the U. N. General Assembly could act in the event of nonaction by the Security Council because of the veto. And it also urged the members of the

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United Nations to commit themselves to provide forces and other forms of assistance to a united collective action adopted by the General Assembly. This resolution (I've forgotten the terms of it; I used to know them by heart) urged each state to make provision of forces, earmark them, and think about what other types of assistance they could give; either providing rights of passage, taking economic measures and economic sanctions, or a whole variety of other things. The Uniting for Peace Resolution also created the Collective Measures Committee, to plan for the ways that these arrangements could be made by the individual states in terms of a commitment to the United Nations; to provide this assistance if another situation occurred.

In the same resolution was a provision for a body called the Peace Observation Commission. It would be a commission that could be sent to a place where there was some likelihood of a breach of the peace, or a situation which might

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lead to a breach of the peace. This would be a kind of advance line to look over a situation which was likely to erupt, before it had in fact erupted. The Peace Observation Commission had in fact been used in the Middle East by then. I think that was the constitutional background for it.

The Uniting for Peace Resolution was the main thrust of the Secretary's speech at the 1951 General Assembly meeting. The speech was made by Secretary Acheson and the matter was handled by Mr. Dulles, who was on the delegation that year. He did a really extraordinarily effective job. We got this Uniting for Peace Resolution through with a vote of something like, 52 to 6 or 7; that proportion (I forget how many members there were at the time). The Latin Americans were all in favor of it. All the new independent states and the middle European states (that is, middle-sized European

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states) were all in favor. The people who were most worried about it were the British and the French. The British were worried because they were scared that with the newly emerging independent states, the former colonies, a General Assembly would have too much control, and they would be de facto giving up their veto rights in the Security Council.

MCKINZIE: How do you now feel about that with 135 members or so in the General Assembly?

BANCROFT: Well, the resolution is still on the books, and the reports of the Collective Measures Committee are on file to be used when needed. I think that if there was the vote in the General Assembly, I would see no reason why it should not act in a threat or breach of the peace situation. Obviously, you can conceive of a situation where the United States wants to veto something in the Security Council, and that veto is overridden by an Assembly vote, it would be detrimental

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to the United States. Still, I just can't quite conceive of the situation where we would have a real national self-interest, contrary to a Security Council majority and which the majority of members of the U. N. would override and take action, I don't know if I can support that, but I implicitly believe it. Of course, if the majority of the nations of the world are no longer democracies, however you define it, then we'd be in the soup anyway.

MCKINZIE: You did a great deal of work drafting a resolution in the State Department, and you later worked with Mr. John Foster Dulles, who was on the delegation to the U. N. Was bipartisan foreign policy real in the Truman administration? There was a lot of talk about it then.

BANCROFT: Yes, I think it was. Mr. Vandenberg was a great factor in making it real. He was a real believer and it's too bad he died so early. Mr. Dulles believed in it with reservations.

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In 1948 Mr. Dulles was then the man who was likely to be the Secretary of State if Mr. [Thomas] Dewey won the election. He drew some lines restricting bipartisan foreign policy at that point. He would not, for example, participate in State Department discussions of the Palestine situation

at the time just after Count [Folke Af Wisborg] Bernadotte had been assassinated and Ralph Bunche was taking over.

In the period after Mr. Truman's election in 1948, between then and when Mr. Eisenhower was elected in '52, I would say that Mr. Dulles' role at least was a bipartisan role. He had a lot of ideas that in my view were bad ideas, but he didn't try to bring them into effect in a partisan way. For example, he used to say that we should take steps to get the Russians out of the Central and Eastern European states, and that we could roll back that little bit of history conceivably by force if necessary. That seemed to me like a terrible idea.

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He was a hundred percent for the Uniting for Peace Resolution. As I said, I drafted it before we had a preliminary briefing for the United States delegates on the General Assembly. I spent a lot of time talking to Mr. Dulles about this. He didn't make any adverse comment and he was totally in favor of it. He didn't suggest any substantial changes in it at all, and there were no changes at the time of the preliminary briefing. At the time when we were negotiating, we did have to make changes in order to take into account the views of other friendly states. He was very adroit in negotiating that. He was a very good citizen and soldier on this particular General Assembly item; he couldn't have been better.

MCKINZIE: How did you do the drafting on that? What kinds of precedents were you able to come up with? Do you remember the kinds of things you read or who you talked to and how did it evolve

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from this need to this draft?

BANCROFT: As I say, it was quite an obvious thought to have. The type of work that I did, in terms of background reading, was primarily the experience of the League of Nations; when it had commissions of this sort, its failure to take action at the time of Ethiopia, and that sort of thing. That was the principal background reading I remember. I had the idea that inasmuch as the military assistance part of the U. N., the Military Staff Committee, had failed to function, and that the fact was that the U. N. in Korea had been able to get other states to provide forces and other forms of assistance in Korea, we could take the Charter and convert it to meet a similar situation in the future where the veto prevented Security Council action.

The sequence of events under the Charter provides for, first, investigation; second,

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economic sanctions; and then, if these measures were inadequate, the use of armed force. I thought of taking what the Charter provided for as action to be taken by the Security Council and giving it to the General Assembly -- making it the action body in case of a veto. In this Uniting for Peace Resolution, we provided not only for the possible use of armed forces but also for the earlier action that the General Assembly could take by the way of economic sanctions.

When the Collective Measures Committee was started and functioned, we went through, one by one, the type of things that the member states could do on a collective basis short of the use of armed force and economic sanctions. We divided our committee into subcommittees which dealt with those different things. The basic idea was that each state -- in the armed force part -- would undertake to provide forces to the United Nations when

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called upon by appropriate resolution of the General Assembly. This would be in accordance with its obligation under Article 43 of the Charter. If each state earmarked some of its own military forces and kept them in a state of readiness for U. N. use in a U. N. action, this would differentiate this particular force within the army or navy. They'd be earmarked for U. N. use, and therefore would have different types of training for a collective action of an international sort, as opposed to the national action in a normal war. That would be a very helpful thing, and that's what the resolution said. The U. K. and France put forward objections at the time but they were persuaded out of those objections and were willing to support it.

MCKINZIE: You didn't have any trouble with Under Secretaries or Mr. Acheson on this?

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BANCROFT: Oh, no. Mr. Acheson was always slightly skeptical of the effectiveness of the United Nations, but he used to say, "If you can do it, why it would be ideal. I just am not absolutely sure that this sort of thing can be done." The speech that he made was written by Marshall Shulman, but Philip Jessup had a hand in it and I did, too. Then Acheson and I and Shulman went over it on several long sessions. He didn't disagree at all with the content of the speech and of the policy he was advocating. He was in favor of trying to do it, but he was skeptical. He was not absolutely sure of whether, having been passed by the General Assembly, it would ever work in action, but he felt that the U. S. should exploit the situation which had happened in the Korean war and try to equip the U. N. to be able to do something. He had the feeling -- I think we all did -- that anything the United Nations could do by way of preparatory work,

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so that it could get some plans ready to be put into use and adapted to fit the circumstances of any particular case, could be a new and useful form of equipment -- armament that the U. N. should have.

Then there was the Collective Measures Committee, which was established and worked for two years, and came up with a report. I was then taken out of my job as chief of the division of UNP -- United Nations Political and Security Affairs -- and became the representative on the Collective Measures Committee. I devoted two years to its work and did most of the writing of this report, which was, I think, a relatively good report. It was relatively short, it made quite clear what everyone was supposed to do, and it set up machinery for going to the various states and asking them to make the arrangements and take the action which was called for. Here we had a kind of a funny situation with the United States, because our

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military did not want to earmark any particular force for the United Nations. They didn't want to have specially trained and specially equipped force for this, as Canada did, for example, and the Scandinavians did. On the other hand, it didn't want to fail to support the whole concept. What it did was to say, "Well, we'll have all the United States Armed Forces available for it."

That was unfortunate. It had a bad effect on the other states, because they felt this was lip service rather than real. Even though the commitment was real; obviously it said "subject to our constitutional processes." The resolution itself was subject to each individual nation's constitutional process.

MCKINZIE: Did you feel, at the end of that, that had there been an immediate emergency that there would have been some kind of U. N. action.

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BANCROFT: I don't think there would have been any doubt of it, had there been another Korea. It would have to have been, I'm afraid, with the temper of the time, something where the Communists were on one side and the democracies on the other. I'm trying to think of a situation where it could have been used. Well, Rhodesia could have been a pretty good example of where the Uniting for Peace Resolution could have been put into effect by the use of economic sanctions -- embargo without the Security Council being involved, if some state had vetoed the Rhodesia economic sanction. I think that would have been cleared; that would have gone through easily. Now, when it comes to the use of force, that always is going to be much more difficult, but I think it would have been put into effect, and those states would have contributed to the U. N. force in a manner quantitatively larger than they did in Korea. I don't see any doubt of that

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had it happened in such circumstances. Having these 22 years pass between then and now, what would happen now I don't know. I do know that it's there -- everybody knows it's there -- and I feel sure that if something happens where a U. N. collective measure was required, the Committees report would be looked at. The states would go through it with their own constitutional process and decide whether or not they wanted to do it. So, it's there, it's on the shelf and it's gotten awfully dusty, but someday it may be pulled down.

MCKINZIE: That must have been rewarding work. Why did you leave it?

BANCROFT: I left it because I am a Democrat. I don't know how frank you want me to be. I used to like Mr. Dulles in a way; as I say I knew him well, and he liked me. We were really quite good friends in a way, despite the age difference. Still, I had grave misgivings as to whether or not

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he would be a good Secretary of State. I think there also undoubtedly was to some extent my feeling that I had been in the Government long enough. I'd been in eleven years, and I was offered a job as the legal adviser for the International Labor Office, with the prospect of living in Switzerland, which my wife liked the idea of. This was still U. N. business, although a collateral part of it. I went from the State Department to the International Labor Office under a formula

which they had for employees in the State Department, which permitted you to come back if you wanted to with a kind of leave of absence situation, if you worked for a U. N. organization. So, I didn't feel I was totally leaving it. I merely had some real doubts about Dulles. He never seemed to be a man of really great principle, and I always felt that the Secretaries that I'd served under -- overwhelmingly Mr. Marshall and almost as overwhelmingly Dean Acheson -- were

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men of the highest principles. I didn't think Mr. Dulles was an example of that.

MCKINZIE: Mr. Bancroft, we thank you very much.

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