

Oral History Interview  
with  
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Washington, D.C.  
June 23, 1971  
by Richard D. McKinzie and Theodore A. Wilson

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#### NOTICE

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BATTLE: . . . fairly close but somewhat peripheral. I saw virtually every paper that ever went between Secretary [Dean] Acheson and President Truman over the four years of that era, and I sat in on the meetings. I was then assistant to Dean Acheson, and a very close relationship existed between them; he admired President Truman enormously.

I was quite a young man at the time; I was 30. I had those four years with Dean Acheson and then later came back and had a similar job with Dean Rusk for a year or so. Then I was an Assistant Secretary twice, and an Ambassador.

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The interesting thing to me, I think, is the parallel between those administrations and the current one in terms of relationships between the White House and the executive agencies of Government. This is, I think, rather timely. I read last night an article by Dean Acheson in Foreign Affairs, which will interest you; it is very much on the point we're talking about.

I remember most vividly--this is an interesting contrast--two things that happened to me that I think tells something about the nature of the Truman administration. Soon after I started to work for Acheson, General [Harry] Vaughan called me and said, "The Secretary's office is about to receive a recommendation on a problem." I've forgotten what the issue was; it doesn't make any difference. He said, "I think this is very wrong and I very much hope that you will see that the Secretary does not

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follow the advice of the State Department."

The paper came up to me and I read it. It was rather concerned about the fact that the White House had called me and I was--well, it was one of the first times I suppose this had happened--and I went in to see Dean (I did not call him Dean in those days), and I said, "I've had a call about this matter from General Vaughan."

And he said, "Well, what's the recommendation?"

I said, "The recommendation of the Department of State is so and so and so and so, but General Vaughan said . . ."

He said, "Well, I don't care what General Vaughan says." Then he turned to me and said, "What do you think?"

And I said, "I don't really think General Vaughan's right. I think the . . ."

He said, "That's quite enough. You don't even have to talk with General Vaughan if you

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don't want to." He said, "If you have any problems around the White House, you just refuse to talk to them; you don't have to talk to Vaughan if you don't want to." He said, "I'll take it up with the President--whatever." He added, "Don't ever tell me that I must do something because the White House says so. If the President says so, that's a different thing. When the White House says something," he said, "we won't pay any attention to that."

Well, that's a terribly interesting comment in terms of the relationship between Dean Acheson and President Truman and the confidence he had in that relationship and the certainty that he could go on his course and follow what he thought to be right. As long as you had the President with you there was no worry about it.

Now, Admiral [Sidney W.] Souers was the

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executive secretary of the NSC; he was around, but I never had many conversations with him over a long period of time.

I never knew, at any point, of him veering from the perfect balance of his posture and his place in Government. Now contrast that with what happened to me many years later. I came back at the beginning of the Kennedy administration. I had been out of Government for several years. Dean Rusk asked me to come back and to take on a slightly different kind of job as executive secretary of the State Department (which I held for about a year and a half). The first day I came back Dean looked at me--Dean Rusk looked at me--and said, "Look, the first thing I want you to do is to try to get the White House under control." He said, "This is just overwhelming."

Now, he knew that I knew Mac Bundy and Arthur Schlesinger and all the group that were

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around at that particular period. Well, to my absolute astonishment, the volume of mail, memoranda--they weren't going through one channel, they were going all over the building, all over the White House, and Assistant Secretaries of State were writing contradictory recommendations to the President, going through different channels. We tried to get this in order and in time were reasonably successful, not totally successful, but reasonably successful, given the pressures on the White House staff that existed at that time. Mac Bundy is an old friend of mine; I've known him for a long time and we're still very good friends. He and I worked quite well together, but the large activist group that we had around the White House at that time was in sharp contrast to what we had had earlier in the Acheson period.

I think the contrast is even greater today, as you view Henry Kissinger's staff of 100 or

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more, and contrast the degree to which the State Department has constantly been hammered down. But if you read this article I was referring to last night, Acheson makes an exception of his own period in terms of the gradual decline of the influence of the Department of State and a sort of failure of the Department to continually be able to assert itself, with its prerogatives, in the field of foreign policy.

President Truman had two or three qualities I thought were really quite remarkable. They were remarkable in an interesting way, because they, I think, were based on a sense of humility. There were very few people in public life that I admire as much as I admire President Truman, but I think it's a mistake to consider him a brilliant man. He wasn't; he was a limited man, but he had one or two great attributes. One is he knew his limita-

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tions. He knew that he didn't know everything; he accepted his own limitations, and he did something about them, and that's pretty strong stuff, you know, when you find anybody who is able to--that's pretty good. He put together the best Cabinet that I have ever served with and I have served with quite a number of them.

WILSON: That's a striking statement that's come up again and again. We've had the experience now over the last two years of being in gatherings when Dean Acheson and Averell Harriman and a number of extremely powerful people, strong people; they just comment that this was a good Cabinet, a strong Cabinet, they knew who was boss. With the sort of limitations that we're all aware of, and with the kinds of very strong personalities that were in this Cabinet, we're still at a loss I think to explain the relationship that existed there.

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MCKINZIE: The relationship between Dean Acheson and President Truman, the President being a very salty and a very direct kind of man, and Acheson being an urbane . . .

BATTLE: He's also salty. Well, the friendship surprises me; it was a rather strange friendship. I never would have ever bet on it at all, but it existed and it still exists. I've been with Acheson, President Truman, six or eight people, and spent entire evenings with them both in office and out of office, while President Truman was in office, and really the relationship was quite obvious and very strong, and they both recognized it. They were totally different people. They both had guts about them, a courage and saltiness about them.

Dean's covered with a veneer of Eastern seaboard polish, and Truman is sort of Middle West, but they both had that quality of strength

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and directness that was really pretty remarkable. Acheson trusted me totally, and I went everywhere with him. I went around all over town with him.

I don't recall it ever happened before or after in the State Department, but I would go over with him to see the President--not often, but occasionally. I would often sit in meetings with him with other members of the Cabinet who came over to see him, and I was around. I was in the background; I had no role of my own. It was all sort of indirect by virtue of my relationship with Acheson, but I saw the Cabinet in action in a rather remarkable way at that time. And it was an astonishing thing. There was apparently little backbiting; there was a remarkable sense--except

by Louis Johnson, who was a bastard. He really was. But the rest of the group was quite remarkable; there were strong ones and weak ones, but in the main

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they were good. The Cabinet and the level just below the Cabinet were quite remarkable. They had a sense of direction and they sort of knew what they were about, where they were trying to go, and what they were trying to do, and they did it very well.

WILSON: How much of the cohesion was the result in your view of the kinds of problems that so many of these men had had in the Roosevelt administration? We were amazed; of course, [John W.] Snyder and Harriman and Acheson and a number of others had had that experience in trying to get things done during the war and even before, in a very different kind of administrative situation. Is it fair to say they were so grateful, or did it have a sort of different atmosphere?

BATTLE: That might have been part of it, but I think there were two or three elements that contributed greatly to it. First, nobody

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expected President Truman to win; therefore, the group that was around him came into being primarily because President Truman had no obligations. He didn't have to pay off anybody. Therefore, his obligations to make appointments because of large campaign contributions, and political pressures, simply didn't exist. He could do what he wanted to do. And therefore the Cabinet members were appointed because of their worth, their individual worth, and not because of any specific thing they had done.

Secondly is, I think, that this produced a bit of quality in a man, and there was a common sense of goal. They had a responsibility for the whole direction of our country at a very key time. The next thing was a new set of problems, and they were new, and they were untried and they were untested and they were unknown, and really they were postwar problems of a magnitude we've never seen. There was a kind of unity of the

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Cabinet and those around and it was very true of the State Department also, particularly through the [Joseph] McCarthy period; a common outside enemy gave a cohesion inside. That may sound a little hard to believe, but it's very true.

MCKINZIE: You say that in the State Department as well?

BATTLE: Yes. There was very little ratting and running in the period of McCarthy. There was really, of the senior people, only one, that ratted and ran. The pressure I'm sure was great on a lot of people; they thought that the Democrats had had it, and that the administration was on its last legs, and--this, that, and the other thing. I'm sure that the appeal of being able to deal with

the enemies of that group, the Republicans of the period, and McCarthy particularly, who wanted information on individuals and so on--I'm sure of this group.

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I knew only one person who was an exception and I won't mention his name. I'm not particularly reticent about such things, but nothing is a certainty and therefore I don't want to engage in being critical. There was very little that I would call ratting and running on our own thing, and everybody held together remarkably well in the State Department in the face of enormous outside challenge. All sorts of charges were leveled at us; charges of Communist sympathizers, homosexuality, God only knows what, were bantered around in those days. It's hard to believe.

WILSON: That's very interesting, but as you know, the public record, and the historical record, has it a little differently. It has the revival or some temporary cohesion of the Department of State taking place under George Marshall, because he put in organizational charts and the [George F.] Kennan approach--the idea of, "Well, the State

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Department's finally doing what they were set up to do--to engage in longterm planning." And then the interpretation is that there is a slight drag of erosion under McCarthy and under charges of Dean Acheson being an Anglophile--you know, that sort of problem.

BATTLE: I don't agree with that. There was an erosion, but it was not erosion of the common sense of purpose that existed then. Some people got out. The effects of the period were probably felt later rather than immediately, but at the top structure of the problem, except for Phil [Phillip C.] Jessup, who was one of the finest human beings I ever knew in my entire life--no one around the top structure was really charged with anything. Of course, those were McCarthy days. But the top structure held together remarkably well. Down in the bowels of the place I suppose there was erosion, and certainly there was later; I felt it particularly

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at the beginning of the Kennedy administration.

I remember those around Arthur Schlesinger, and we were talking about the abolition of the OCB and the fact that the Department of State in his judgment had to grasp the initiative (I hate the phrase, but nevertheless, I use it), and take the leadership of the foreign policy again. Somehow it was up to the Department--the Foreign Service--to assert itself. I said, "Arthur, I agree with you in principle completely, but I completely disagree with you in practicality and in practice. It isn't going to work." I said, "You are right in terms of what it ought to be, but it isn't. It can't be, and the reason for that is, one, you have the Foreign Service at their very lowest point."

He said, "They're all Republicans."

I said, "They are not; I suspect that you'd carry them overwhelmingly to the Demo-

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cratic side if you took a poll." But, I said, "They are demoralized for two basic reasons. One is the aftermath of McCarthy, and all that it did--the failure of the Eisenhower administration really to challenge it as far as the State Department was concerned. Secondly, you have the failure of John Foster Dulles to use the Department of State at all. He mistrusted it totally, and he would have nothing to do with it if he could avoid it. He used almost none of the staff around the place. He made foreign policy out of his vest pocket. So did Dean Rusk later, but for a different, a slightly different set of reasons. And these factors I think had made the top structure of the Foreign Service a pretty defunct thing; there wasn't much left of it.

It got back on its feet pretty well for a time, and then it had its problems later. All in all I think it's done much better in recent

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years; but the problem was you had had the senior people who had grown up in the eight years of the Eisenhower administration in which McCarthy ran rampant. That's when the greatest disservice to the State Department and the Foreign Service occurred, because in those eight years you felt the impact of the earlier McCarthy movement, but you also had a Republican administration which had in its capacity the chance to challenge McCarthy and was not willing to do so.

Therefore, the Foreign Service sort of went along for several years being beat from the outside and not used within. At least in the Acheson era they continued to be used and to be trusted, and the top structure held together remarkably well, remarkably well.

WILSON: You mentioned that at the time of Truman's election, this group at the top had sense of new problems. Would it be fair to say that in

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part the approach taken was just to consciously cut the United States away from the impedimenta of the war, of the wartime planning, postwar planning, of international and multilateral approaches to solve certain problems and basically to say in 1949, "Okay, if these solutions, these approaches aren't going to work, the United States is going to have to take the lead, consciously assert its power and see what can be done with it." Is that a fair statement?

BATTLE: Yes, I think that's a fair statement. The remarkable thing to me is that President Truman with his--no majority at all, a very slim one, in the Congress--was able to direct and preside over a total departure from our heritage in terms of foreign policy.

Now, admittedly, the American public was ready for something, was ready to be led. It's a rather strange thing to me that he could find

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it possible to get as much money through the Congress and with a Secretary of State, who after the Hiss statement, became rather generally brushed aside, at least in political arrangements, but who was still accepted as a major intellectual force, and a leader in the Western World. It's a remarkable thing, and yet somehow a whole series of new directions were carved out. I got many letters from Dean Acheson over the years, including one from him about the middle of the Dulles era in which he said, "You know, the real problem is that this administration is following us too slavishly." He said, "They really ought to be looking at themselves. They're not absolutely sticking to the courses that were set."

I think the tragedy, and I'm going beyond what I'm supposed to be talking about, but I think the whole tragedy of Vietnam and of the period that we're in now, is a following too slavishly of what had gone on in the Truman era, and also over-reaction to the dangers that the Truman

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era flushed out.

I believe, myself, that the tragedy of Vietnam is understandable in the context of history. I think our presence there was part of the sweep of history. The charges that were leveled at Truman for having lost China and the charge that the Far East had been sold down the river because of Communists in Government and all that rot--that had a tremendous influence on both Kennedy and Johnson in terms of their refusal to be put in the same position. And there was the idea that you don't want to be the first President to ever lose a war--all this I think was an aftermath of the Truman era. The policy of containment, that's a simplification, but the policy of opposing communism around the globe, was an oversold, over-followed policy. It should have been tested a little more carefully earlier, and the American public prepared for

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it. But the same sorts of speeches were still being made, the same kind of arguments were still being advanced in the early sixties that were advanced in the late forties. What we really got was an entirely different turn of events.

WILSON: We have the impression that, with George Kennan aside, that within the Department of State there was not automatic willingness to apply the doctrines or the prescriptions of containment everywhere in this 1949, 1950, 1951 period in other agencies.

BATTLE: I would agree. I think there was a greater willingness to test inside of the Department, but the real limit was the American electorate, and the real limit was the Congress, and the real limit was that the margin of victory was rather slight in the 1960 election. Everybody was a little afraid at being called too liberal;

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there were still worries about charges of being pro-Communist and things of that sort, and the 1954 agreements and all that they were supposed to represent. The whole realm of the past, I think, had a great deal to do with our involvement.

Not on the basis of that should you forgive us for not having seen the light of it earlier than we did, but try to explain how we got in the morass, not how we should have gotten out of it or why. I think we were caught in a stream. The involvement was bit by bit by bit and it all went back to both the masterful job of selling a philosophy, in the 1949 to 1952 era, plus the McCarthy challenge, and the challenge really of the Republican Party, on the loss of China.

WILSON: What role did the outbreak of the Korean war have in confirming an effort to apply containment generally? If, speculating, if

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Korea had not occurred or had not occurred quite that way, might there have been a different course?

BATTLE: Possibly. Quite possibly.

MCKINZIE: We have the impression that many of the things that were on the board were quickly revised. Particularly, aid of an economic nature which had been for, say, industrial development before 1950, suddenly became a kind of military assistance, which, of course, has something to do with industrial development and so refocuses the whole bit. You had something to do, I think, with that whole . . .

BATTLE: Yes, I was rather deeply involved in the Korean thing. I was involved only in the sense that I represented my boss, but I was involved. Not that I had any independent authority or independent position, as his assistant, but I

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was present at most of the meetings, keeping current on the aftermath of that and later the whole period leading up to the [General Douglas] MacArthur firing, and all that. I was deeply involved in it from the beginning, and it was an incredible period.

WILSON: Recently at a meeting of historians in New Orleans, Lawton Collins spoke before a gathering of diplomatic historians. He suggested, and I think his book suggests also, that MacArthur really sold, in a way, and forced the response of the administration by the way he presented the problem when he came in--the Korean attack, and if we don't do something within a very short time, you must wake up the President, and that sort of thing. Might you say something in general about the administration's relations with the Far East, or with MacArthur?

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BATTLE: I think we had created a figure there that was hard to deal with on any basis. I shudder to think how he saw himself. I happened to have been on the receiving end of his telegrams for a very long time. I was in the war in the Pacific myself; I was on staff jobs and I used to read all those things on MacArthur, when he was managing the South Pacific. I was accustomed to reading his telegrams at that time and then again back in the State Department. That went on a few more years. We created a very real problem. I think part of this has to be again in the stream of history. It goes back even before World War II and to the nature of our own involvement, particularly in the postwar period. I think we groped around for answers to a problem that we couldn't solve. Look at the excesses of the Congress in the period before the Korean War; I remember vividly the legislation that was passed. It would have been, I suppose, early 1950 when the

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300 million dollars for use in the general area of China were passed. The administration hadn't asked for it; the Congress in its ultimate wisdom and overwhelming generosity gave us 300 million to be spent in the general area of China, to combat the spread of communism in the area. "General area" covered anything you wanted to do with it. They had to give themselves a sense of having done something.

I remember a Friday when we had a briefing on the status of China, on what pockets there were that we could aid with some of this large amount of money. A group of CIA and military people were there, and they said, "Well, there were a couple of pockets in the north and west of China that they thought could hold on indefinitely with support from outside, and that we really should proceed to aid them militarily and otherwise."

The following Monday, or perhaps Tuesday,

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those pockets that could last forever were gone. Now this gives some idea of the rapidity with which the scene was changing and the fact that we didn't know where to turn. Moreover, there was no shortage of money. Chiang Kaishek was known to have vast hordes of money in bank accounts here and elsewhere; there was no shortage of funds. He had all the military equipment needed. He was losing it faster than they could get it out there; it was all going. Whether you were really helping them or not, was entirely doubtful, but that was all too simple to have been understood. Instead, there was the charge that somehow the Administration was letting Chiang Kai-shek fall; that stalwart democrat, Chiang Kai-shek, who was anything but an exemplary person in any possible way. We as a country, I think, in that period had something to do with making this so. We are always dealing in extremes. Everything is either all

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the way one thing, or all the way the other, and usually, very often, the middle course is the proper course.

WILSON: What did you do, what did the Department do in its approach to Congressmen, the China lobby or the "Asia firsters?" Just hopeless, or were there any continued efforts to try to . . .

BATTLE: Well, there were continued efforts to placate; there were some efforts to explain. They never quite caught up with the problem, because the disaster was occurring. No one ever quite understood why. The historical antecedents of it were not new, and we did a few things. We issued the White Paper, and I heard a series of comments over the last several days referring to that in terms of the New York Times papers on Vietnam. That's an interesting parallel.

MCKINZIE: It is.

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BATTLE: Poor Phil Jessup, who had nothing whatever to do with the preparation, originally, of the White Paper. I happened to be present when Dean Acheson asked him, in the summer of 1950, maybe in the spring, to look at the White Paper that had been in preparation and see whether it held together as a document and also whether it would do any damage in terms of our relations with other countries. Phil reviewed it and perhaps made some changes in it, but he certainly had not put it together. He later got tagged with the responsibility for having written and put out the White Paper. The implication was that somehow the Administration had wanted China to go over to the Communist side, which is, of course, ridiculous. But there were various efforts to explain and justifying what course we were taking. A lot of catch phrases came out at the time. There was a charge that Acheson had said we could do nothing in China; we must wait until the dust

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settled.

My recollection is that the phrase did not originate with him; it was Patrick Hurley. We tried to run it down at one point and I think we could not find any place where Acheson had said it, and we found it back in an earlier statement by Patrick Hurley. Perhaps this is not a totally fair thing. The statement was thrown around as coming from the Administration and it was shocking that there was really very little you could do.

I think the issue that has plagued us, and still plagues us, is how far we will involve ourselves in a land war on the Continent. It has come up over and over and over again. It came up in the context of China, and of Chiang Kai-shek on the mainland. It came up in the context of Korea, and whether we had won the war that was there. It came up later in the Matsu and the offshore islands debate and it has plagued us, and will plague us for a long

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time in respect to Vietnam.

But it's all part of the same problem. It's all part of the question, will the United States involve itself in a land war with troops on the mainland of China?

MCKINZIE: When discussions came up regarding the alternatives to the land war with China, there were evidently quite divergent views on how the United States should go about preventing the further spread of communism. There were people who argued that we needed a kind of people-to-people approach with broad technical assistance programs and then there were others who argued that you could best do it through massive injections of American investment capital. Were you part of this kind of debate, or did it seem to rock the State Department much at the time?

BATTLE: Well, as was so often true of my life at that point and totally untrue of it later, I

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just sat there and heard it all. I wasn't supposed to speak, just listen. I involved myself to a degree, probably much more than was profitable to my role in life. But I had no responsibility except to my boss and I was not independently responsible for any part of the operation. There weren't great divergencies of view. I think the overwhelming view inside the Department and inside the Government was there wasn't a thing you could do about the fall of China. There were uncertainties about whether there would be lasting resistance within China itself, about how complete the control of the Chinese would be over the mainland and how successful it could be, and indeed about what Russia's own involvements would be in the control of China. There were a lot of questions raised, but I think no one really saw anything very precise we could do. Again, if you had started much earlier, and if you had had a

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different kind of administration to work with, it's conceivable that something might have happened. But given the fact that you had Chiang Kai-shek, an extremely ripe old government and hardly one that's going to bring land reform and all the changes that were needed on the continent, little could be done, and especially not in the context of a civil war in the country. It was very hard to do anything unless you had something to work with. We might have done something a bit earlier; I think that's conceivable. I don't think anything we did then was going to change the course of things. I think it was too late by the time I knew anything about it to do anything with it. Actually I think that was already the case before the 1948 election, and I had nothing to do with that part of it. I came to work with Dean in March of 1949, the first day of March 1949, and he'd been in office six weeks.

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Well, by early spring we were already in very serious trouble. I said a moment ago the White Paper was 1950, I think it was 1949.

WILSON: You were presented--or Secretary Acheson was presented--with the Point IV idea when he came in, which was not originally a State Department idea. Point IV received an enormous amount of publicity and attention, but received very little money for the next four years. What was the nature of State's attitude toward Point IV?

BATTLE: You are quite right; Point IV was not dreamed up by the State Department. It was totally contrary to routine philosophy at the time. In fact, the Foreign Service in the middle forties, let us say, when I first joined, in 1946, was, I thought painting a very narrow view of itself, and of our country, and what direction the Service and we should be moving.

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The Foreign Service Act of 1946 is a remarkable piece of legislation, but for all the wrong reasons. It's remarkable because it's very flexible and not very clear, and therefore permits you to do just about anything you want to, but it has nothing to do with the vision of those that prepared it. It was prepared on the basis of exactly the wrong direction, that what we really needed in our country was a small elite corps, and that the real key--I talked with the people at the time who were preparing it--what we really needed was a very small corps and we should all recognize the political relationships, the political aspects with a controlling doctrine, and that these newer things--economics, and information, and intelligence--were not really basic. They were one whack below what a Foreign Service officer should be dealing with, and the Department refused to really try to gain control

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of these several emerging new agencies in those fields. The new agencies came along afterwards. The information agency was set up later, and the aid agency was set up later; the CIG, later CIA, was set up later. But initially all these functions were more or less residual functions remaining in some of the wartime agencies, but in terms of peacetime had not been placed as functions, and were still available to be tools of foreign policy. The Foreign Service, those who were really guiding the direction of it at that point, didn't see it. To me it was the biggest mistake the Service ever made.

I was president later, many years later, of the Foreign Service Association, and I dealt with that period in my final speech to it. In the speech I said I felt this was the major failure the Service had made, that is, in not anticipating what the needs of our own country

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were in meeting its diplomatic requirements of the years ahead. By not training themselves, by not broadening, by not bringing in economists, by not bringing in people who knew something about information and intelligence and that sort of thing, they let themselves be dominated by others instead of dominating them, and that was the beginning of the decline of the role of the Service in the Department.

WILSON: That's very helpful.

BATTLE: I am trying to answer your question on Point IV and attitudes toward it. I was then in the Office of European Affairs, which was a sort of stronghold of the traditionalists. I remember when Point IV was proposed it was taken as a political gimmick; it was not taken seriously. The interesting thing to me is that in the space of the next few years, it became absolutely part and parcel of the diplomacy used throughout the world and even those who had thought it

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was a silly gimmick in the beginning recognized it as a major new tool of diplomacy. But that was not the case in the original period. To the best of my knowledge, Point IV was written in at the White House. I wasn't in a position to know at that point.

MCKINZIE: It was written at the White House.

BATTLE: That was my impression; the Foreign Service and the State Department did not grasp quickly, and made no effort to utilize it for a considerable time.

WILSON: George Elsey and a young man who actually was in the State Department. The latter had written a memo to the public affairs office, I think, and it was sent back to him. He took it over to the White House, to George Elsey, and was very shaky about it and . . .

BATTLE: Do you have any idea who that was?

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WILSON: It was a man by the name of Ben Hardy, Benjamin Hardy.

BATTLE: Oh, I know Ben.

WILSON: Died in a plane crash. But I think if we have any one problem in making sense for our own purposes of writing this history of foreign aid, the problem of sorting out the organizational administrative arrangements, it is what you've alluded to here, the reluctance, or the concern, within State about going operations.

Maybe I'm putting it wrongly when I say that; and also then the concern of other agencies that stayed not cooperational as they were developing their own control. We've discovered, for example, in the original discussions about control of Germany, that at first the Army didn't want a longterm occupation. No one was looking toward a longterm occupation. The Army did not want administrative control and said

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State should take it. Almost unanimously, I think, people in State said, "No, this is not our function, we don't want to become involved in this." I don't know whether that's been a major

factor. What you said about the approach taken to the Foreign Service is very interesting; it put State in a very difficult position later, even in the Truman administration one would say.

We gather that Mr. Acheson's relations with people like [Paul G.] Hoffman and Harriman who had the money, were very good, but what in general were State's relations with ECA, with NSA, and with these agencies, with Treasury for example, who seemed to have taken a very strong role?

BATTLE: They varied all over the building, depending on the country and then the personalities of those involved in given country situations.

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The tragedy is, of course, that the State Department did not see and recognize that the control of foreign policy was going to necessitate the control of those agencies.

When AID was created, there was a strange reluctance to involve State people; it was very limited activity. Actually at the beginning I thought that the staff that came into AID in the beginning was probably the best staff that was assembled around town here. They had the quality that the Peace Corps had at its beginning later. It was the new agency, it was the new exciting thing to do, it was what everybody sensed as being the new thing of the time, and all kinds of bright young men and women came around from business and banking; all sorts of young lawyers even came down. They'd stay for a year or two; that was 1948, 1949, 1950, and then they began to phase away; they began to be taken over by others. And of the career services in

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my opinion, the Foreign Service is by far superior above any of the others. With all that's wrong with it--there's plenty wrong with it--it's still by far the brighter service, compared to the Coast Guard and the FBI and all the others, the military and all the others that exist. Foreign Service officers are much better educated and broader gauged. They have traveled a great deal. There were many problems, but once the sort of sexy atmosphere of the new programs was gone, they were able to manage quite effectively.

In the beginning there was a reluctance to involve themselves and I would say there was a tendency not to see the extent to which they, the AID missions, were properly staffed. The AID agency was staffed with very bright new people who in many ways were much less stereotyped than our own Department of State. But given time, things sort of changed a bit. AID

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was surpassed and controlled and dominated but never used as it might have been at the beginning. At the beginning, in the Foreign Service, economics was not regarded as a

gentleman's profession; that is, finance and economics and intelligence and information skills were not the things that ambassadors were made of. Ambassadors grew up or trained on the political side, almost with exception, and it's still the case. This is a fact.

I told Chet [Chester] Bowles at the beginning of the Kennedy administration that I had heard with interest that various administrations had brought in people from the outside for senior posts, from cultural areas, from economics, business, what have you, writers, et cetera. I said, "Now, if that's possible to do from the outside, with no background, why can't it be done from the inside? And if you really want to attract the best people into the Service, you've got to have some ambassadors from USIA, you've got to have some ambassadors

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from the economic side, from the cultural side, across the board. Then, if you give some sort of ratio to numbers, you will begin to attract into all of these specialized fields the best the Service has. But as long as it is generally believed that you can only be an ambassador by coming up through the political side of the house, and working the Office of European Affairs, Near East, and South Asia, and whatever, you're never going to attract the top people into these functional areas; they're not going to take them."

WILSON: What effect did this have? Perhaps we might use the issue of the pressure for economic integration which was one theme of the ECA period--Hoffman's speech, and Harriman, and all of that. It was this pressure on the American side for economic integration. How did you view that?

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It never came off; there was a suggestion or had been suggestions to us that State Department took a more cautious view because the State Department was in this sense better prepared to recognize the political difficulties, and was not prepared to go out on a messianic limb. Was that a fair statement that these temporary agencies, or the new agencies would tend to go off in these directions and that . . .

BATTLE: Well, it is fair and it isn't fair. Now, the truth is that what happened in the Department of State in the period of 1948, 1949 and 1950, is that the brightest and most imaginative people were in the economic side, but the point I'm making is they were not Foreign Service officers. They were all the people who had been brought in from the outside because the Service would not and had not attempted to train people, or to get into those fields. Now,

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some of the creative work that was done in that earlier period was from people who were not Foreign Service--they had not come in from the bottom of the Foreign Service. They were Paul

Nitze, Tye [Tyler] Wood, Woodbury Willoughby, Winthrop Brown, Willard Thorp, John Leddy, those fellows. Not one of them--Win Brown's still there, later he became a Foreign Service officer--but the rest of them were really essentially in the Civil Service or people coming in postwar, or even the latter part of the war, but they were not career Foreign Service officers.

Now, that group in large measure had quite a different view of the world at the time than did the traditional Foreign Service, very different. That group grasped the challenge of the new Marshall plan with enormous enthusiasm, and the people like Nitze and those that I've mentioned, Willard Thorp,

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that whole group, were very much part of what was going on and saw what it meant and saw the future, and the need for integration, et cetera, et cetera. I think they were much more in tune with the time of the moment and of the future, than was the Foreign Service.

MCKINZIE: You must have seen them then presenting their case to Secretary Acheson at the same time Secretary Acheson was getting it from these other people.

BATTLE: Yes.

MCKINZIE: How did he handle these two . . .

BATTLE: Well, this changed rather markedly when Acheson came in. Of course, you had a whole series of pressures. You had the Point IV thing which suddenly got more attention than we ever expected, and the Marshall plan, which had become a vast new thing. The Service got on

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the bandwagon very quickly, and stayed with it very well, I thought. The Foreign Service--I've been its most severe critic within, but in the main it's held up very well if you take a long view of things.

I can be very critical of them in the 1945-1946 period. My criticism of them in terms of meeting the needs of the time and reflecting the spirit and requirements of the new administration, gets less and less and less as time goes on, however, up until the Dulles-Eisenhower period. Then I thought there was a strong decline and a rise again in the Kennedy period. I can't really speak with any sense of what it was like when I left Government in 1968. In my last post I was Assistant Secretary for Near East and South Asia. I had a remarkable bureau then, the best bureau I ever headed and I headed four or five while I was there. But I don't know whether it's fair to equate that group

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with the Service in its entirety or not. The quality of the AID staff had gone steadily downward since the 1948 period, while the relative strength of the Foreign Service had gone steadily up.

WILSON: If I may play a devil's advocate on this question for a little longer. We've had a number of people tell us that that sort of thing develops, that the downgrading of personnel and of the possibilities for achievement is an inevitable thing in large agencies of the kind that the ECA and AID became. However innovative they are in the beginning, they go through this organic process. The critics then say, "Well, the good people who come in because they seem to have a chance to do something may well do something in the Marshall plan era. But then they see their options being frozen, and so they decide they always can go back to academic life, and they do it." So we have pretty gloomy

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prognostications about the programs, about foreign skills.

BATTLE: Well, I suspect this is true. I also suspect that the element that Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. (and Junior) writes about, those peaks and valleys of human activity, have something to do with it. Diplomacy always reflects the time.

WILSON: Were you in a valley with this transition to basically military assistance toward Europe? The documentation that we've seen would suggest that in terms of morale there was a kind of holding operation. There were very important decisions to be made, and being made, of course, but yet we have the impression that the possibility of getting a unified defense force in EEC and the possibility of really making NATO into a viable deterrent weren't believed by a lot of people who were involved. Is that

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correct?

BATTLE: I don't know that I can generalize about it. I served in NATO in 1955-1956. I was in Denmark before that. I think there was unmitigated gloom when EDC collapsed and didn't make it. I think that was certainly true of people working there. Perhaps there were those who felt too much emphasis was being placed on the military, and I suspect they were right. I must say I think they were right. I later became Assistant Secretary of the Near East and South Asia and the excesses with respect to military assistance became a terrible problem to have to live with. I left Cairo in March of 1967 and went through my entire new area before I came back to be Assistant Secretary for the area. I was struck with a couple of things, and that is that we had been arming the whole series of countries against an enemy we saw, and they were arming against the enemy that they

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saw, and they weren't the same enemy at all.

We were arming Pakistan against the Chinese and the Russians, and they were arming because they wanted to clobber the hell out of the Indians. The Arabs opposed the Israelis; and the Greeks, the Turks. We were arming Greeks and Turks because of the Russian threat. What they were really doing was getting ready to take a good swag at each other over Cyprus, and you could just go on and on through the area and find that kind of problem.

I don't really think that even in the context of the fifties, the extent of the armaments of Pakistan made much difference in the context of the struggle against either the Chinese or the Russians. I think the efforts Dulles made in charging that neutralism was inherently evil, and that, therefore, you had to be on one side or the other, was a lot of rot. And I don't think that the efforts of SEATO really added up to

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very much. It didn't add up to much militarily, and I think a much wiser course would have been to have put in more economic assistance, to make them economically viable and get them off the military kick.

WILSON: Were there spokesmen for that view at that point?

BATTLE: Not much, no. I wasn't here at that time; I was abroad. I was concerned with Europe, where I think it did matter. I think Europe was a very different case. But in the underdeveloped countries, what difference does it make that there is an internal hiatus in Pakistan, it would seem, quite recently? What difference does it make in terms of the struggle against the Russians? Very little.

WILSON: There's a suggestion in some of the recent information about the early NATO period that there was a sense of that in Europe as well.

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I can recall Sulzburger quoting, or describing the origins of the EDC proposal. He mentions an American colonel, George Lincoln, whom he says wrote the French proposal on EDC and he said that the French really didn't buy it because it was given to them as an American conception of how European defense should be organized and that it ignored history for that reason.

BATTLE: There was a period in which I think the United States became a proponent of military policy, of armaments, to the exclusion of everything else. That was number one. Economic growth, and economic development and economics, on the other hand, were relatively unimportant.

Really this is an overstatement; I'm over generalizing, but we were eternally and constantly pressuring for military programs, when they saw only their economic problems. I suspect that they were nearer right than we were, that somewhere in the middle of these

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two courses was a balance.

MCKINZIE: Did this view, the American view as you have just described it, did it emerge during the Truman period, say about Korea, or is it a much later time?

BATTLE: I would say in the period of 1948 to 1953, the cold war was at its coldest--or the hottest--whatever the cliché is. I think in that period the emphasis was properly and understandably on the military. But this became less the case after, say the mid-fifties. The early tendency, except for sporadic changes, was for interest in the rest of the world probably to be more in the direction of economic growth than in the military. But our interests continued to be military. This is what I think maybe Acheson had in mind when he wrote to me that they do follow us too slavishly. They were following, in a world context, this order of

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things which became an obsession with John Foster Dulles.

WILSON: Yes. You may not wish to answer this question, which deals very much with the role and participation of Averell Harriman in the period. I wonder if you can give us your views on just what his significance was, what his relationship with the President was.

BATTLE: Well, Averell is a very close friend of mine. I came back the other day on the plane with him from Austin. I went down for the dedication of the Johnson Library. We sort of had breakfast together and stayed together all day. I go through periods when I get very cross with him. We've been friends for a very long time, and I suppose we will always be friends. Averell has played so many roles it's hard to generalize. I think he has a tendency to be a bit zealous about whatever it

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is he's doing. He wasn't always as dovish on the Vietnamese thing, for example, as he would like for us to believe. He was just as hawkish as could be two or three years ago.

He relates to a time; he gets absolutely obsessed with a time, a place, and a direction. Actually Averell got better over the years, I thought. At the beginning I wasn't impressed with him. I first knew him in about 1948, and I wasn't awfully impressed with Averell. I thought he was a befuddled kind of a fellow, but as time went on, I came to have an enormous respect for him. He was close to President Truman, or so he seemed to be. I wouldn't say intimate, but he was close to him. He was an intimate at meetings. They have had some arguments on several things, but essentially there has been a good relationship there, as one looks backwards over the long period of years.

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WILSON: We've had a sense of that in their visits to the Truman Library for the annual board meetings, in the voting and the byplay.

BATTLE: Well, Averell and Dean are perfectly all right for a little while together. It's only when they are together for longer periods (and I've been with them for long periods), that the stresses and strains of past arguments and what have you pop up now and then, but in the main this has been a good relationship.

WILSON: Is it fair to say that he became somewhat disappointed with his status in Europe as special representative, that he thought he was being shunted aside?

BATTLE: Well, perhaps. He was talking with me about this the other day, but I didn't listen very carefully. I don't know how he got started. Oh, we were talking about Dean; it had nothing to do with his relationship with Dean, and how

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he came back as the Director of Mutual Security and all of that. I had the strong feeling at the time and I had it even the other day, that Averell really thought that more was happening back home. He does not like to be out of the mainstream. Even today, he can't bear not being in the middle of everything; it just kills him. I think he saw that more was happening here than was happening there, and he wanted to come back to Washington. I think that was a basic point; also perhaps he may have expected to go on to bigger things than he did at that particular moment.

WILSON: Yes.

BATTLE: He, I think, had in mind a couple of things that didn't work out. But he came back; he was quite happy apparently with the role he had. It wasn't a very clear role; he behaved quite well. He was always a constructive force. He was use-

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ful in the discharge of Louis Johnson, shall I say. He was very useful in the aftermath of that. He, I think, had less impact on policy at that moment than he had later in the Kennedy era.

WILSON: Is there any relationship between his apparent dissatisfaction with his role in Europe, and the remarkable situation or position occupied by Eisenhower after he went back to Europe?

BATTLE: That could be; I never heard him on the subject, but it would be consistent with his attitudes. I just have no personal evidence. I didn't really come to know Averell intimately until the mid-fifties I guess.

WILSON: What sort of relations did Secretary Acheson have with the two obviously Republican representatives? There was Eisenhower, who seemed to play the role of heir apparent even before he

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became involved in politics. The President to our minds deferred to a remarkable degree to Eisenhower after he went back to Europe. Also, of course, there was John Foster Dulles, who was in and out and back and forth again, during this period.

BATTLE: Well, I never saw any particular conflict between Acheson and Eisenhower. That he was running for office was pretty clear to all of us. I remember going to the NATO council meeting, the Rome meeting, in the fall of 1951, and he came in and stood at that meeting. I remember going back to the residence with Dean that night after the session, and I said, "If you don't think that was a political speech I've never heard one. It's perfectly clear, almost a launching of a campaign."

Well, it was very shortly after that that the campaign did get underway.

So, it was all fairly clear he was going

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to try to run. Of course, President Truman had tried to talk Eisenhower into being his heir apparent, you know, and this confused things a little bit. It wasn't entirely clear at this time whether he was a Democrat or Republican. He wasn't really partisan.

(Now, I assume I can put a time limit on this, because I have at the other libraries.) Dulles in my opinion was an unmitigated disaster, and I must say to my regret that I had a large hand in talking Dean Acheson into accepting the arrangement that was worked out to bring Dulles into the Department. Dean didn't want to do it; he said the President will have a fit. Well, the President did, but everybody eventually came around.

Actually, the message came in an interesting way. Carl [W. McCardle] called me at home one night; my recollection is it came in more than one way, but this was the first action.

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Carl called me at home one night. He was with the Philadelphia Bulletin, and later became Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. He was very close to John Foster Dulles, and Dulles had just run and been defeated in New York. McCardle called up and he talked endlessly.

I said firmly, "Carl, you are trying to tell us something, what is it?"

He said, "Well, Dulles is worried that his role in the administration will be lost."

Then I said, "Are you trying to tell me that he wants to come to work?"

And he said, "Yes."

And I said, "Well, let me think about this."

He said, "I've just seen Dulles and we agreed that I would call you."

I went in the next day, and Acheson for some reason was not there that day, and I talked with Jim Webb about it. Jim said that I had lost my mind and he would have none of it. He

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thought I should present it to the Secretary later; I've forgotten how much later. Acheson said "no" as I remember it. Then we got to Paris and a message came from Webb saying he thought we ought to send a message back to President Truman. By that time everybody here was coming increasingly under fire politically, and each step of the way I tried to talk them into it. I was perhaps wrong, but it seemed a very wise move at that moment because we were trying to preserve bipartisan foreign policy. Maybe this was something, a step that would help to preserve that. The Dulles appointment grew out of all that, and the appointment to do the Japanese peace treaty.

Well, for the next months he did primarily the Japanese peace treaty, but he also worked on the Austrian treaty and the German problems, and economic interests in Europe, and the whole

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series of things. I got on a rather interesting basis with him. It was a tough basis. I did not admire him, but I tried to make it work as well as possible and to make his participation as useful to the Administration and the country as I could. In a funny kind of way he accepted; I won't go as far as to say he liked me, but he accepted me.

In the beginning he was appalled when I would go into the office when he came in to see Acheson. I said to him once, "Mr. Dulles, as soon as you leave I go right in there and find out everything you've been saying. It takes me about five minutes to know precisely what's been said; then I follow up on what has to happen." I said, "I think it would be easier if I would just come on in there and go. If you have anything that you want to speak to the Secretary about without me, I would accept that. I will probably find out, but if you want to do that, all right."

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Well, from then on I didn't make any move; but every time he would come he would say, "Luke, come on let's go in." And so I'd go in and sit down.

Well, a lot of things happened. I won't go into all the incidents where I felt he behaved badly, but there were many of them. Then finally he decided he wanted to resign. The Japanese peace treaty had been completed. It was the summer of 1952, perhaps the spring of 1952. He was anxious to get in the campaign. He called me once and asked me to come to his office, which I did, and he said, "As you know, I'm about to resign."

I said, "Yes, I'm aware of it."

And he said, "I want to show you my final statement and you tell me whether it's fair or not."

Well, he handed me a document and it read something like this: "John Foster Dulles today

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announced his resignation. He was brought in to do the Japanese peace treaty; that was the only thing he had done, and having completed that, he was now leaving."

And he said, "What do you think of that?"

I said, "Well, Mr. Dulles, it suffers from one thing."

He said, "What's that."

I said, "It's not true."

And he said, "Well, what's the matter with it?"

I said, "Well, on my insistence you've been given telegrams, all kinds of them. By my own direct conversations with you, you've been in on sessions, and talked endlessly on all kinds of things--the Austrian treaty, the German problems, a whole series of things." I said, "For you to suggest that this Japanese peace treaty is the only thing that you had anything to do with is just grossly misleading."

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Well, he finally changed it a little bit, but not much. What he was trying to do was to escape any responsibility for anything that had gone on except the Japanese peace treaty, which he thought was a huge success.

No, I took a rather dim view of Dulles. Acheson did too, a very dim view. Somehow we managed to make it work as well as we could.

I'm afraid I've got to go.

MCKINZIE: Yes.

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