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RONALD REAGAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

FINAL EDITED TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD ROWNY

May 17, 2006
Washington, D.C.

Interviewer

University of Virginia

Stephen Knott

Also Present

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INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL EDWARD ROWNY

May 17, 2006

Knott: The purpose of this interview is to record your recollections, particularly of Ronald Reagan, and your role during the Reagan years. The transcript of this interview will be housed at the Reagan Library in Simi Valley, California, and at the Miller Center at the University of Virginia. This is part of our Ronald Reagan Oral History Project and we are very glad you came forward.

Rowny: This piqued my curiosity.

Knott: Could we begin with me asking simply how you first met Ronald Reagan? What were your initial impressions of him?

Rowny: As I think you know, I resigned from the army in protest on June 15, 1979. I had been a military representative to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the SALT II talks [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks]. I was unhappy with the treaty that President [Jimmy] Carter signed. I thought that it would get us nowhere and only lead to bad agreements in the future. Accordingly I put in my retirement on the 15th of June, 1979, and went to the Woodrow Wilson Center as a scholar for a year, reporting there about August 10 of that year.

I spent the first couple of months at the Woodrow Wilson Center preparing testimony. The Senate was objecting to the provisions of the SALT II Treaty, and this amounted to not only my testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee but also answering dozens of questions that they put to me in writing. It became clear sometime in early December 1979 that the Senate would not have the necessary two-thirds votes to pass the treaty.

In December of ’79, I got a phone call from a man who described himself as “the Governor.” I wasn’t sure which Governor this was. He said that he had heard about my testimony against SALT II and he agreed with it. I was surprised that he knew many of the details. Very few people knew the ins and outs of the treaty but he said he agreed with my testimony and thought that I took a courageous stand in opposing it. He asked me if I thought it would pass. I said no and he said that was good. He asked me if I would meet with him when he came to Washington, because he was running for President and he wanted my advice on armament and arms control. I said I would.

I met Ronald Reagan downtown at the Hay-Adams Hotel. The meeting was scheduled to go half-an-hour but it went closer to three hours. He asked me a number of details about the treaty, asked my opinion about what had been agreed to and why I thought the treaty would not be, as the Joint Chiefs had said, a useful step to a further treaty. I said it would not be a step but a step into a chasm. You can't take two steps across a chasm; you would never recover from that. He agreed. We had a highly satisfactory conversation.

During that conversation he was particularly interested in the ABM [Anti-Ballistic Missile] Treaty. He asked me about Mutual-Assured Destruction. After I described it to him and he said, "Let me see, General, if I've got this straight. You mean that we've got a pistol at the Soviets' head and they've got a pistol at our head. Is that right?" I said yes. He said, "Well, that's kind of MAD, isn't it," using the MAD acronym. I said, "Yes, it's aptly named MAD." He said, "Why don't we put on a helmet and protect ourselves?" I replied that the scientists don't promise us a defense in the near future. Besides being difficult, it would be very expensive. He said, "The Soviets seem to take ABM very seriously." I said, "I'm glad they do, but a defense is not here yet."

He said, "We should capitalize on what the Soviets think" and he favored an anti-ballistic shield. He said, "I've talked to Edward Teller and he's convinced me that it can be built and it's feasible. In any event pushing ABM will help us during the negotiating process." He asked me if I knew Teller. I said, "I met him and am a great admirer of his work." He told me I should talk to Teller some more. He said, "I have great faith in Teller's belief that ABM can be built."

Reagan said, "I'm going to need advice from people like you. Would you come help me in my campaign?" I said, "I'm inclined not to. I've had enough of this arms control business and am ready for another career. I'm ready to move into something else. Besides, I've been pilloried and tarred with the brush of modern journalists as being a hardliner. I read in the papers that you get much the same treatment and are called a wild cowboy. I don't relish adding to my difficulties." He smiled and said, "We both ought to do what's right for the country." He added, "I don't think you're Genghis Khan and I don't think you think I'm Genghis Khan either." He saw that he had me hooked.

Reagan said, "Why don't you come and try it out? Go to Dick Allen and tell him that I want you on my advisory staff." I went and Allen said fine, and I became a part of the advisory staff. During the spring and summer of 1980, I made several campaign speeches for Reagan; one important one in Iowa. Senator [Charles E.] Grassley was in some trouble and Reagan thought that my speech would help. I did these at my own expense. I became part of the Reagan advisory staff and got to know him better.

Knott: Could you tell us who some of the other members were of that advisory group that you were a part of? Do you remember any of the other people?

Rowny: Dick Allen was the major player. Gene Rostow and Paul Nitze came in from time to time. Members of the Committee on the Present Danger who were supporting what Reagan was doing were also feeding him a lot of information.

Knott: Was Richard Perle an advisor?

Rowny: Yes, Richard Perle was, but I don't think he was in so much on the advisory side on the arms control at that time. I think he advised more on armaments. I had known Richard for a number of years.

Knott: He had been with [Henry "Scoop"] Jackson?

Rowny: Yes. I was a Jackson protégé. In 1951 I had come back from Korea and was conducting a course at the Infantry School on the possible use of nuclear weapons. This instruction was conducted at night in what I call "profit time," proficiency improvement time. We were forbidden from teaching anything on nuclear weapons because the Army had none. Nuclear weapons were the province of the Air Force and the Navy but mostly the Air Force. I had done some experimenting in Korea with helicopters and developed a concept that I called the "swarm of bees." The concept was that if the Army had nuclear weapons, we could fire one in the enemy's rear. Soldiers, transported by helicopters and wearing protective gear would land on the stunned enemy while they were still in a state of shock.

During one of these profit time sessions, a rather disheveled captain stood up to ask a question. His uniform wasn't too sharp and he needed a haircut, however he asked some very good questions. I said, "Captain, you seem to know so much more about this than I do. You had better come up and take over the stage." He came up and took over the rest of the meeting, the rest of that session.

I took the captain home for dinner afterwards, who introduced himself as a Congressman from Washington state, Scoop Jackson. He said he liked what he heard. I told him it was all unofficial, that I couldn't teach any of this officially and it was all off the record. Two days later I was summoned to the Secretary of the Army's office in Washington. I learned that this was a result of a call from Congressman Jackson to the Secretary of the Army. I thought they were going to pat me on the back, but instead I got severely talked to. The Secretary said that I shouldn't teach unauthorized subjects—I said I wasn't. He added I shouldn't get Congressmen to proselytize for me, to go for my case, and to try to carry water for me. He told me I was silenced and not to teach any more off-duty courses. He said it could get the Army in trouble with the Air Force over rules of mission. I called Congressman Jackson later but he only laughed. He said, "Don't worry, these things will pass." I said, "It's probably ruined my career."

Later Jackson invited me to his Saturday morning sessions. Dorothy Fosdick was his policy person. She had two assistants: Richard Perle and Frank Gaffney. Richard was the senior assistant and seldom came to a 9 o'clock meeting before noon. Frank Gaffney carried a lot of the water. These meetings started a long friendship with Jackson and I became quite fond of him.

He later again influenced my career adversely. When I was working in Brussels as the Deputy Military Commander, I came back to Admiral [Thomas H.] Moorer of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to report on MBFR [Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions]. General [Johannes] Steinhoff, the head of the NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] Military Committee, did a brilliant thing. The United States at that time was against starting negotiations with the Soviets and

Steinhoff thought they should. He made me his deputy, the head of the NATO MBFR working group, which forced the hand of the U.S.

Later I reported to Moorer on the progress of MBFR. He said, "I don't want to hear about MBFR; I want to talk to you about SALT." I said, "I'm not into SALT." He said, "I know that, but there's some crazy German over in the White House who thinks you ought to be my advisor on SALT." He said, "I don't want you; I have a man in mind." Admiral Blackwell, I think his name was. The Air Force advisor to Moorer had just been fired, largely at the behest initiative of Senator Jackson. I said, "Fine, Admiral, because I don't want the job." I added that, "I have now finally recovered somewhat—I'm on a track—in the next eight to nine months I might be in line for a fourth star and I think this would kill me to come over to SALT because that is only a three-star post." Moorer said fine.

Knott: This is Admiral Thomas Moorer?

Rowny: Yes, Admiral Thomas Moorer. The next morning I went in to see him. He threw his arms back and said, "Rowny, I'm dead. That damned German in the White House is stronger than I thought. He made a deal with Scoop Jackson that you will be my deputy and in return, he would back the ABM Treaty." I said, "I still don't want it, Admiral." He said, "You will have to go talk to the Army about it."

I went to talk to the Chief of Staff of the Army, who happened to be a contemporary of mine, General [Fred C.] Weyand. He said, "This is more powerful than you and me. You've got two choices: one, to take this job, or else you can retire right now." I said "Can I go talk to Scoop Jackson?" He said sure. I went to see Scoop. He listened for a while and then said, "Rowny, have you ever heard of duty, honor, country?" He hit me right in the solar plexus. He said, "You know Russian, you've studied negotiations, you know the weapons. You're the man for the job and that's it."

I went back and signed up then to become the Joint Chiefs of Staff Representative on SALT. I lived with that from early '72 until late '78. I was getting more and more distressed with the way President Carter, Secretary [Cyrus R.] Vance, and [Paul] Warnke were giving away the farm. I went to the Joint Chiefs in early December '78 and told them of my concerns. They told me, "It's your job to protect our interests. We agree with you; we want you to continue to fight them."

I couldn't fight the Russians without support from back home. Several days before Christmas when Warnke and Vance came over to Geneva and practically gave away the farm in what was to be the final treaty, I said that I was going to quit. Secretary Vance called me into his office in Washington the day after Christmas and said, "If you quit now it's going to be embarrassing for the President. Why don't you stay and do what your conscience tells you. If and when we sign the treaty, if you're still not satisfied with it, you can retire then. I would like you to stay quiet and support the President and do the best you can at what you think is right." I did as he directed. On June 15 President Carter signed the treaty, which I considered faulty. Accordingly, I retired.

Knott: You told us about meeting Ronald Reagan and doing a little bit of—you went out to Iowa and gave a speech during the '80 campaign.

Rowny: I made a couple of other local speeches, one in Maryland and one in Alexandria, as I remember.

Knott: How did the offer come to you to join the administration?

Rowny: After the election, I got a call from Mike Deaver. He said, "The President was pleased with the work you did and it helped him get elected. He wants to know if you will take over the Arms Control Agency." Before that, while in Geneva, I had gotten to know Bill Casey, who was introduced to me through a mutual friend. Whenever Casey would go on one of his many trips to the Middle East, he'd stop by and we'd have a talk in Geneva.

I remember on one trip—I'm not sure of the date—he came back from Iran and said, "I've just been to Tehran and the Shah is finished." I said, "What do you mean? The President just said this was our greatest ally and great friend." He said, "No, the Shah's sick. He's lost his nerve." I reported back to CIA through channels what I had heard from Casey. They said, "We know. We've heard it from Casey himself. He's one of our informants."

After the election, Casey had a brilliant idea. He talked the President into forming what he called the Thirty Wise Men Group. Are you familiar with that?

Knott: I've heard the term.

Rowny: Casey told the President-elect: "One of the quickest and best ways to get up to speed is for you and [George Herbert Walker] Bush to appoint an advisory committee and have each of these people write about ten pages on his specialty. Then have them come in and give you a ten-minute briefing." Three of us from Reagan's advisory staff were told to be kind of the gofers, the ones who helped the thirty wise men. Each of us had ten. One of mine was Scoop Jackson, of course, and another was Al [Alexander] Haig. I had known Al Haig since he was a Lieutenant in Japan. Arthur Burns was another one of mine. Strangely enough, Scoop Jackson did not write anything about arms control or armament. His paper was on what he believed would be the next big problem for the United States after the Soviet Union: Mexico. That startled everybody.

Reagan listened very carefully to these people but I don't know that he read any of their papers. It was a problem getting them to condense their material to ten pages. I remember there were several people who starred at these meetings. One was Jeane Kirkpatrick, who wrote on the United Nations. She took on Henry Kissinger, who was one of the wise men. They had a difference of opinion on the role of the United Nations; she thought the UN should have a limited role, while Kissinger thought the UN should play a major role. Jeane Kirkpatrick conducted herself very well. I could sense that she would be offered some big job in the administration. She was offered the Ambassadorship of the UN. Haig also did a very good job, which I believe was part of the reason he was picked to be Secretary of State.

Houston: Didn't you have an official position in the transition of the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency]?

Rowny: While the thirty wise men and women were briefing the President and the Vice President I came across a very interesting paper. It was by Herbert Cohen, not one of the thirty, entitled: "How to Get the Hostages out of Iran." Cohen, an old friend, had written a best seller: *You Can Negotiate Anything*. Cohen was invited to brief the President, who liked what he heard.

Reagan offered the paper to President Carter. Carter said he had heard about Cohen's paper but was not going to do anything about it. Carter authorized Reagan to act on Cohen's advice. Reagan did so and within an hour after becoming President the hostages were released.

December 10, 1980, or so, I got a call from either Mike Deaver or [James] Baker. There were four people running the show for President-elect Reagan: Mike Deaver, Jim Baker, Ed [Edwin] Meese, and Dick Darman. I had known Meese from before. We did some work at the Heritage Foundation. Whoever called me—it might even have been Dick Allen—said, "There are eight people at the CIA transition team at each others' throats. The President would like you to go out to Langley and take over the CIA transition team. You know Casey, the new CIA designate, and you also know the current chief, Stansfield Turner. What you probably don't know is that they aren't talking to each other. Your job it to take over the CIA transition team." I spent four fascinating weeks as head of the transition team. I replaced four of the eight people with four others I knew, after which the transition went smoothly. I would go in and talk to Stansfield Turner at 8:30 in the morning. At 9:30 in the morning I would talk to Casey. Very seldom if ever did they meet together. I was kind of the go-between.

I developed a close relationship with Casey. When Casey was casting around for a deputy without much luck, he asked me if I would become his Deputy. I said, "No, I think what you need is a true intelligence professional." He said, "You have used intelligence in the military." I said, "Yes, I've used a lot of intelligence but I've never been in intelligence formulation." I said, "Why don't you take Vice Admiral Bobby Inman?" He said, "I asked him and he's turned me down." I asked, "Do you really want him?" He said, "Yes, don't you think he's the best man for the job?" I said yes. "If you give me permission, I think I can talk him into it." I talked Bobby Inman into taking the job. This later turned out to be not too smart because a year later Bobby Inman was fired. He had gone off the deep end on a couple of subjects but I'm not sure what they were.

I was not exactly a stranger to the Reagan staff. I worked closely with Casey, Meese, and [Joseph] Coors. I had gotten to know Coors through Casey. Coors was very powerful. He had an office in the Blair House, where I would go to talk to him, mostly about people.

Knott: Who is this, General?

Rowny: The head of the Coors Brewery. On Casey's initiative, I had gone one time to Colorado, when I went out to talk for Grassley in Iowa. I was quite impressed with Coors' knowledge. He was strongly embedded with Meese at the Heritage Foundation. As you know, Heritage wrote the playbook for Reagan's first year in office.

I don't know who put me up to head the Arms Control Agency. I said I'd be honored and delighted to do it. I had a terrible time over the next few weeks. When I started there were six

members of the Foreign Relations Committee against me. I would go back and talk to them again and again, trying to convince them I wasn't a wild man, a cold warrior, or anti-Soviet. The head of the Foreign Relations Committee was Senator Charles Percy.

Finally, after several weeks, I got the last man on board and Percy said he would approve my nomination and tell the President that my nomination was approved by the Foreign Relations Committee. That same Friday afternoon, I had lunch with Gene Rostow. We talked about my trials and tribulations, and the difficulty I had been having with the Foreign Relations Committee. There was no hint from Rostow that he knew something was up. Monday morning I picked up the paper and read that I had been dropped as the head of the Arms Control Agency in favor of Gene Rostow. This was the first I'd heard about it. I called Percy, who said, "It's news to me. I just reported you in this morning."

I had a great deal of difficulty getting an audience with anybody. I finally went in to see Deaver. He said, "We have decided that we've got plenty of Republicans around. Gene Rostow has a great reputation as an intellect and is Dean of Yale Law School. We've asked him and he has agreed to take over the Arms Control Agency." I said, "Thanks a lot. That's a hell of a way to treat anybody," and left. The next day I got a call asking me to come see the President. The President asked, "What do you think of this appointment of Rostow as head of the Arms Control Agency?" I said, "Rostow is a good man but this is really playing dirty by me. I fought like hell for you during the campaign trying to get you elected. I don't know how much I helped." "You helped a great deal," he said.

"Yet I'm treated like dirt and read in the paper that I'd been dropped." He said, "Didn't they tell you that I want you to be the arms control negotiator?" I said, "No, nobody said anything about that." The President asked, "Will you be my strategic arms control negotiator?" I said, "I don't think so, Mr. President." He asked, "Why not?" I said, "How do I know I'm not going to be dropped again before I'm confirmed by the Senate? I can't play ball with a group like this."

He said, "General—" Later, after I was confirmed, he asked me: "What do I call you, 'General' or 'Ambassador'?" I said, "Mr. President, it took me 20 years to get to be a General and 20 minutes to get to be an Ambassador." He stood up and saluted. He said, "Yes, General, I get the point."

He said, "I apologize for my staff who treated you poorly. They should have told you that I think that you know the Soviets and you know the language. You've studied Russian history, speak Russian, and know them backwards and forwards. That's what Scoop Jackson told me. He said you'd make the best negotiator." He had obviously talked to Jackson somewhere along the line.

I said, "No, I respectfully decline. I would like to go back to another job. I've been offered an attractive job in civilian life at about two or three times my salary. I could use the money and it's interesting." The President said, "I really want you. Why don't you try it for a couple months? Then if you don't like it, you can just say that for some other reason you want to leave. I think you're the man for the job and I'd like to have you." I said all right.

I didn't have nearly as much trouble with the Foreign Relations Committee getting appointed to the job of chief negotiator. I was known to the Senators and I think some of them felt a little sheepish. Percy did, too. He felt sorry for me although he was no friend of mine from an ideology point of view.

Houston: Percy is sort of a liberal Senator.

Rowny: Very liberal and set in the Senator Church mold. Percy believed the Soviets could do no wrong and we've got to have an agreement; they've got these terrible weapons facing us and we can't have hardliners in the business. Nevertheless he backed me and I was confirmed.

Knott: Did the President give you any marching orders? Did he give you any sense of where he wanted you to go with this?

Rowny: Not immediately. I was invited to sit in on the Cabinet meetings when they'd discuss arms control. Reagan told me that his first priority was to get us in a good negotiating posture. He asked me: "Are we in a good negotiating posture?" I said, "Hell no, Mr. President. The Soviets are outspending us, outgunning us and out-manning us all around." He said, "Well, we're going to correct that." He put his priority on rebuilding the defenses of the United States.

I was fascinated at meetings when Cabinet members would say, "Mr. President, you've got double-digit inflation; you've got double-digit unemployment; you can't spend this kind of money for armament. The country just can't afford it." And the President would answer, "I've got to remind you, I'm the President of the United States. The role of the President according to the Constitution is to provide for the defense of the United States, and that's what I'm going to do." Reagan had several people on his side: Haig, Weinberger, and Casey. But the others were advising against building up the defenses and spending so much money for armament.

A little later, after the President felt we were in a better posture, he began to philosophize with me about negotiating. He was very proud of the fact that he had negotiated deals as the head of the Motion Picture Association. He told me the same stories, probably ten times over. He told me about deals he pulled. On one occasion he got his opponent to agree with him by taking him into the men's room away from his advisors. He'd say, "Look, we're the only two who know what we're doing here." He used to like to repeat that story. Somewhere along the line he picked up "*doveryai, no proveryai*," "trust but verify." Or as he would say it, "Trust, but cut the cards."

I don't know who gave him that term originally but he liked it. He was interested in the Soviet personalities, particularly [Andrei] Gromyko and [Leonid] Brezhnev. These were not planned sessions, but conversations, often after our Cabinet meeting or waiting for some photo-op or something.

Knott: What made them tick?

Rowny: To answer what made them tick, we would ask: "What do you think of them?" "How do you deal with them?" "How do you impress them?" "What do they understand?" I'd studied negotiations with the Soviets at Yale, where I had written a paper on the subject back in graduate

school. I got the 25 best books on negotiating with the Russians, read them all, made a big chart, and formed what I called the "Ten Commandments." Reagan had heard about my ten commandments for negotiating with the Soviets and liked them: Exploit their weaknesses. They respect strength. You don't want to insult them. You don't want to talk down to them. You don't want to browbeat them but you just have to be firm. And he said, "That's exactly right, General."

I told the President the horror story of Secretary Vance's first meeting with Gromyko. We had briefed Vance and told him how Gromyko, in an initial meeting with anybody, would be very imperious and insulting and would browbeat them. We said, "You just have to let that roll off your back. That's his style, and then you can get down to business afterwards." During this initial meeting with Vance, Gromyko did his usual and Vance immediately said, "Mr. Foreign Minister, if you don't like what we've proposed, here is our fallback position." And then he gave him the fallback position even before Gromyko asked for it. Reagan said, "Gee, that was dumb as hell, wasn't it?" I said, "Yes, it was."

Later President Reagan gave me more instructions and at one stage wrote me a long letter, which I have in my files. It was a several-page letter that outlined his philosophy and what he wanted me to do. It was largely along the lines that we had talked about.

Houston: General, I think it would be well to include Reagan's letter to you and the ten commandments.

Rowny: Good idea. The ten commandments are at Appendix A, Reagan's letter to me at Appendix B.

During the negotiations I had my enemies, mostly in the press, who thought that I was too much of a hardliner and too tough on the Soviets.

Knott: Did you have any enemies in the Administration itself?

Rowny: Not at that time. I had heard rumors that I had annoyed Nancy Reagan and was an undue influence on her husband. She was always correct with me, but never warm and close. It was later that I acquired enemies within the Administration.

Events took a turn after Reagan was shot. I was in the White House the day that Reagan was shot. I saw Haig, who was tired and distraught. He was worried that the Press Officer was wounded, and that his assistant wasn't doing too good a job. I didn't hear him make the "I'm in charge" speech, but I could understand his situation. I was sympathetic to him because things were in disarray, and Haig wanted to assure the public that everything was all right. Haig was not allowed to go to the hospital; only Deaver, Baker, and Darman. Maybe there was a fourth member but I'm not sure. And of course Nancy Reagan.

After the "I'm in charge" speech, relations became more and more strained between Haig and the California Mafia (as Deaver, Baker, and Darman were called). I had a certain issue—I don't recall what the issue was now—that had to be resolved at the Cabinet level. The President decided he would resolve it over a lunch. To my pleasant surprise, I won my point. I left the

lunch to go home to pack up to go to Geneva. The plane was leaving that afternoon and my wife said, "Turn on the TV. Haig's been fired." I did so and learned that Haig had been replaced.

[BREAK]

Rowny: Richard Allen was also rubbing the California Mafia the wrong way. There was an incident over a gift watch, which the Mafia used as an excuse to get rid of him. Mr. Knott, did you ask Allen about this?

Knott: Oh, yes. We did that interview about three years ago, and I don't remember the details. Had you known [George] Shultz at all, prior to this?

Rowny: No.

Knott: Did you have a good relationship with him?

Rowny: No.

Knott: What were your differences with him, if you don't mind sharing them?

Rowny: Our issues were ideological and stemmed from my differences with Nitze.

When Shultz was appointed Secretary of State, he moved Nitze (who headed the INF team) into an office right next to his on the eighth floor. It was clear that Nitze and Shultz were close on everything. My office was on the fourth floor. As time went on, there were irregularities and I was not invited to Shultz's meetings. Shultz decided that Nitze was his sole man on arms control. He characterized him as a Wall Street banker for whom he had high regard.

Nitze and I agreed on most things but had certain important differences. I was invited to the Secretary of State's morning meetings. If an arms control matter came up and Nitze and I agreed, there was no problem. If I disagreed, I would write a dissenting memo and send a copy to Shultz and to the National Security Advisor. I believe there were 19 such disagreements which had to be resolved by the President. My score was 18 to 1. Eighteen out of 19 times Reagan decided in my favor.

Shultz treats me harshly in his book and says that Nitze was the man who was knowledgeable and to be trusted. Shultz called me a firebrand. He writes in his book that at one stage I came into his office "with my hair on fire." I sure did. Although Nitze and I had equal status and a meeting was scheduled on my subject in Moscow, I was not on the manifest. I wanted to know why and Shultz said, "We only have so many spots on the plane." I said, "I happen to be the chief negotiator on START and this is my subject area." He said, "Well, I've got Nitze along," which was the wrong thing, from my point of view, for him to say. Nitze headed the INF team and was not Shultz's sole advisor across the board.

In short, Shultz tried to ignore me and we did not hit it off well. I tried to be respectful and polite to him. He very seldom, if ever, called on me. Of course, he was annoyed that when Nitze and I had the differences of opinion, we followed different procedures. If Nitze disagreed with Shultz, Shultz said, "This is my decision," and Nitze would say, "Yes sir, you're the Secretary." He would fall in line and he would back Shultz' position. I played the other game. If I disagreed, I would notify Shultz but take the matter to the NSC Advisor. Not always, but invariably, I would be backed by Weinberger and Casey. Later, I got to be quite friendly with Judge [William] Clark, who was the National Security Advisor. At the Cabinet level I was not without friends.

At the meetings when we had these differences, the National Security Advisor would outline the subject and the nature of controversy. Shultz would usually speak first and give his point of view. Weinberger would then give his point of view and then some other Cabinet members might chime in. Nitze then spoke and then I was always last. I was pleased that even when we ran overtime, Reagan never cut me off. He always let me have my say. As I said, I won most of the time, which didn't endear me to Shultz.

Things came to a head in Geneva when two of Nitze's staff, his chief of staff and another military member, came to see me on the seventh floor. They said, "We know Nitze is up to something and we don't like it. We don't know what's going on." This was the famous "walk in the woods" incident. I went to see Nitze and said, "I hear that you're talking to [Yuliy] Kvicinskiy about something." He glared at me and asked, "Who told you?" I said, "I have my confidential sources." He said, "My meeting with Kvicinskiy is top secret." I said, "I've got top-secret clearance and we're not to have any secrets between us."

I sent a cable back to Richard Perle, who was in the Defense Department, and I said, "Something is going on Nitze is making an unauthorized proposal to Kvicinskiy, which sells the U.S. short." Richard took the matter to Weinberger, who took it to the President. But before Nitze got orders to cease and desist, the Soviets had rejected his proposal even though it was very favorable to them.

Knott: We have heard a lot about the divisions between George Shultz and Caspar Weinberger. It's fairly public knowledge at this point. Do you have any additional observations to share with us on that?

Rowny: I'd understood that they had been pretty close in business before they came to Washington. I attribute a lot of the difficulties to the institutional, that is, organizational differences. Weinberger had a hard-nosed staff and Shultz had a softer staff. I remember talking to Haig about the troubles he had in the first couple of weeks as Secretary of State. He said, "They bring me a problem, I make a decision and lo and behold, it's not carried out. They do what they want to do."

Knott: "They" being—?

Rowny: The State Department staff. Many of them had been there for a long time. Haig said, "I'm not in charge. I can't control these people." I attributed a lot of differences between Shultz

and Weinberger to their staffs and not to them. I never heard them raise their voices or say anything untoward about each other; they were always correct and polite.

Houston: General, but what did Weinberger think of Nitze? Because you've mentioned that Nitze and Shultz were very close.

Rowny: Weinberger never talked to me very much about Nitze. Weinberger was close to Richard Perle, who was in a difficult position. Perle was in an ambivalent position because he was a protégé of Nitze. Nitze brought him to Washington, s introduced him to [Albert] Wohlstetter, and helped get him a job. Perle owed loyalty to Nitze and showed it until his final breaking point at the "walk in the woods" incident, where he felt that he had to report this up the line.

Perle agreed with me that Nitze's proposal was against the interest of the United States. Nitze considered himself the country's best expert on Germany. He felt that if we deployed our Pershings to Germany, it would be the end of NATO; that the German Government would fall and NATO would break up. I disagreed with that but it wasn't my area. I didn't follow the Pershing deployments day by day the way Nitze did.

As a broad overall policy, I was very much in favor of deploying the Pershings into Europe. Nitze was reluctant to do so. I don't remember the details of Nitze's secret proposal but I think he said something like, "We will not put in our Pershings if you cut your SS-20s to the number of cruise missiles we have." At the end of Reagan's first term of Nitze quit as head of the INF team.

Knott: Do you know why he quit?

Rowny: No, not really. He said—and I'll give him credit for this—that his wife was ill. His wife was not with him in Geneva, and he missed her. I think he quit because of her health. Nitze's deputy took over and I got along fine with him.

At the end of Reagan's first term, Gromyko said to Shultz, "We're not getting anywhere and need new teams." I thought we were making some progress but we were certainly not close to a treaty. Gromyko said, "Why don't we sweep our slates clean? You get a new team and I'll get a new team." I heard about this for the first time at a Cabinet meeting and Reagan asked, "What do you think, Ed?" I said, "Mr. President, it's a ruse. We'll fire our team and get a new one; they won't fire their team. If they are fired they'll be back." But Shultz convinced the President to make this switch. Now I was out of a job again.

In a couple of days, I was called in to Reagan's office. He said, "You were right, you know, on the Soviets not putting in a new team. They double-crossed us." I said, "I told you so, Mr. President." He said, "Well, it's done, but I'd like you to be my Special Advisor." I said, "Mr. President, we've been through this before. We went down this route on the Arms Control Agency job, which I heard about secondhand. I've had enough of this. Why don't you get a new team?"

President Reagan said, “I’ve asked Nitze to be a Special Advisor and he’s agreed. What I need is a counterbalance to Nitze.” I said I didn’t relish that task. I liked Nitze in the past even though I didn’t agree with him on some things. He said, “Why don’t you become a second Special Advisor?” I said, “I respectfully don’t want to.” And he said, “Can you say no to the President of the United States?” I said, “Not really.” He said, “Well, try this out for a couple of weeks.” It was the same old thing he told me before. So I tried it out.

Now that we were both Special Advisors our former relationship became strained because of the “walk in the woods.” Shultz put Nitze into an office next to his. I had left the State Department, and when I came back found that they had given my old office to somebody else. I toyed with the idea of going over to the Old Executive Office Building, where I had been offered a space, but decided that it wouldn’t work. It would be too far away from the State Department where the action took place. In the end they got me back in my old office.

We were getting nowhere because as Reagan said, “Every time I try to make some improvements here, the General Secretary dies on me.” I believe the succession was Brezhnev, [Yuri] Andropov, and [Konstantin] Chernenko. Finally [Mikhail] Gorbachev comes in and Reagan sees an opening. I don’t think he said, “I looked into his eyes,” like [George W.] Bush said about [Vladimir] Putin. But Reagan thought, *Here’s a younger man and maybe we can do some business with him*.

The original meetings after Gorbachev took over were just as bad as the old ones because they were still run by Gromyko. However, Gromyko was soon replaced by [Eduard] Shevardnadze (who later became President of Georgia). Shevardnadze was a much more open type. To Shultz’ credit, he worked closely with Shevardnadze and they were making progress. With Reagan’s help, they brought Gorbachev around.

It was in Geneva that Reagan staged the meeting down at the boathouse. Reagan had them set a fire and provide chocolate and drinks and so forth. Reagan proposed they take a walk but steered Gorbachev into the boathouse. Afterwards, Reagan reported to us what went on and said, “Boy, if I could ever get him alone and work on him, I think I could bring him around.”

Knott: Did that concern you when you heard him say things like that?

Rowny: A little, because I thought that the Soviets would remain Soviets. I wasn’t sure that Gorbachev would be flexible, and became worried because Gorbachev began to make proposals about getting rid of all nuclear weapons. Reagan toyed with the idea, which made me uneasy.

Houston: Describe that, General, when you thought he sounded like Martin Luther King. You have that in your book, when he was talking about getting rid of all nuclear weapons.

Rowny: I recall Reagan saying something like, “I can dream. A politician has to dream. We ought to get rid of all these nuclear weapons.” I said, “Sure, but for years we’ve been saying ‘trust, but verify.’ If you get an agreement to get rid of all nuclear weapons, they’ll agree but you’ll never be able to prove that they have gotten rid of theirs.” He said, “We’ll handle that. We won’t go that far.”

In 1986 the subject came up again at Reykjavik. I was quite nervous because Reagan was talking to Gorbachev one-on-one about getting rid of all nuclear weapons. I wasn't sure that safeguards were in place. At Reykjavik we had an all-night meeting. The Soviets had come ready to deal. They had put a new man in charge of their negotiating team but six of their regular members were not there. There were six new members. Only one old member was there, Viktor Karpov, my old counterpart from the START days, but he was overshadowed by Marshal [Sergei] Akhromeyev, the new leader.

Lo and behold, there was quite a bit of progress made at the all-night meeting, particularly on INF. By the time four or five o'clock in the morning came along, Akhromeyev had agreed that they would take all the SS-20s out west of the Urals if we wouldn't have any Pershings on our side.

We had a meeting with Reagan at the Hofdi House there in Reykjavik early in the morning before we met again with the Soviets. I remember the quarters were very cramped. The bathroom was very small. Shultz and Weinberger and someone else were standing in front of Reagan; Richard Perle, Ken Adelman, and I were standing in the bathtub. Reagan walked in and said, "I'll take the throne." So he went up and sat on the toilet.

Although we were talking about INF, I tried desperately to get the discussion around to whether or not we give up all the nuclear weapons. I was leery of what might be going on. Richard Perle, Adelman, and I pled with Reagan not to make any deal on going to go to zero. We said there is no way can assure verification. Shultz and Nitze were either silent or not backing us. There was an obvious split.

The meeting Saturday morning was inconclusive and so we went to Saturday afternoon and at this point, the ABM Treaty came up. Gorbachev became very annoyed when ABM came up. He slammed his book shut and walked out. Most everyone was crestfallen; however I was delighted because at least it saved the one thing I was worried about and that was possibly giving up all nuclear weapons. It was the one time my hero had not let me know where he stood.

The usual routine after these summits was that Nitze would brief NATO and I would go on my circuit of my four clients: Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, and Canberra. After briefing the Japanese staff I was very proud of the fact that we had reached an INF agreement, and that the Soviets would not deploy any SS-20s west of the Urals. However, I called to have a meeting with [Yasuhiro] Nakasone and he was not pleased at all. He said, "There will be zero SS-20s in Europe, but there will be 100 east of the Urals pointed at us. I said, "The Soviets have proposed that they deploy no SS-20s west of the Urals. If they insist on deploying 100 SS-20s east of the Urals, we can deploy 100 Pershings in Alaska. Premier Nakasone said, "That will never happen. Besides, they will still have 100 Ss-20s pointing at us."

I came back and reported at a Cabinet meeting what Nakasone had said. Most of the staff was quite disappointed. They thought we had a breakthrough on INF but Nakasone was not buying it. He wanted zero–zero; zero in the west and zero in the east. I recall Reagan saying, "Then we won't sign it. We'll hold out for zero–zero." Reagan added, "I'd rather assure a close relationship

with the Japanese than have an agreement with the Soviets on INF." Eventually the Soviets did come around and proposed reducing to zero east of the Urals. It came out all right in the long run.

Knott: General, were you surprised about this streak in Ronald Reagan? You talked about it almost as a dreamer streak in him. Had you seen that in 1980? Is this something that evolved in him over time or had it always been there?

Rowny: I think it evolved. I can only speculate. I never had a chance to talk to go into depth about it. I know he had very serious thoughts about going to zero after he was shot and know that he wrote a long letter to Gorbachev in his own handwriting. The State Department wanted to edit the letter, but Reagan would not let them do it. Another speculation is that Nancy might have gotten to him on this one issue and thought that he could be a dreamer who could somehow pull it off. She definitely did not like nuclear weapons. I don't know that Nancy will ever talk about this. Did you get much feedback on this whole issue about giving up all nuclear weapons from any of the other people you've interviewed?

Knott: Some, yes. There seems to be a difference of opinion. Some people have told us that they think this anti-nuclear streak was in Reagan for quite some time.

Rowny: at least someone wrote a book on this.

Houston: [Paul] Lettow. In fact, we went to hear him speak.

Rowny: I hadn't heard much about going to zero until after the first Geneva meeting. Gorbachev had written to Reagan about this and then we began to study the issue. Several of us chimed in. I'm sure Perle, Weinberger, and I were on the same side. We believed that we could reduce by large numbers but we couldn't go to zero until we had a much better verification regime.

About the time Reagan's second term began, he shifted his thoughts from armament and arms control to human rights. He occasionally put human rights higher than nuclear weapons on our agenda. To give Shultz his due, I think he and Shevardnadze had something to do with this. They had gotten nowhere with Gromyko on human rights.

After the first meeting with Gorbachev in Geneva while we were having a postmortem, Reagan said, "Now what?" Nitze said, "I'll go brief NATO," and I said, "I'll go brief my four clients." Reagan asked, "What's Gorbachev doing?" I told him Gorbachev was going back to debrief the Warsaw Pact in Prague. Reagan said, "He's going to debrief them; I wonder if Warsaw Pact would like to hear *our* version of what happened here?" most people shook their heads "no." I was sitting in the second row and nodded "yes." Reagan said, "Rowny thinks that they would like to hear our side. Do you think you can get in to debrief the Warsaw Pact?" I said, "I'm willing to try."

I knew our Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, retired general [Julian] Niemczyk. I called him up and asked, "Do you think the Warsaw Pact would be interested in hearing our version of what happened here?" Niemczyk called back in about an hour and said yes, come ahead. I got caught

in a big snowstorm and I couldn't get into Prague. I then took a military plane which was turned back to Berlin. I finally got a train and went from Berlin to Prague. By that time the Warsaw Pact Ministers had left. Accordingly, I briefed the Czech President, [Yashar] Yakish. He was called in from home on a Saturday in the snowstorm and I briefed him.

A little later I got a call from our Ambassador in Warsaw, who asked, "What are you doing in Prague?" I told him. He said, "Why don't you come debrief the Polish President in Warsaw?" I said, "I will if invited." Shortly afterward I got an invitation to go to Warsaw. I called on General [Wojciech] Jaruzelski and briefed him on what happened in Geneva. At the end I asked, "With your permission, I'd like to talk to Lech Walesa and some of the dissidents." I had already met secretly, I told him, with the Charter 88 people in Prague. He replied, "I'll take note of that." I met then with Walesa and Bronislaw Geremek, who had been at Wilson Center with me. Later Geremek became head of the Polish Sejm (Parliament).

Having debriefed those two, I was invited to go to Budapest. After Budapest, at the Poles' suggestion, I went to Rome to debrief the Vatican. I was pleased to be able to brief the Pope. I repeated this pattern four times. Reagan was always interested in my conversations with the Pope, and especially about Poland.

Knott: What would he ask you about the Pope? Do you recall?

Rowny: Reagan asked, "What kind of a man is he?" "What kind of questions does he ask?" "What are his interests?" "Who influences him?" I told him he had his difficulties with his Latin American bishops and some of the U.S. bishops who were against Reagan. I said that while I had a hard time with some of the staff, I always hit it off well with the Pope. I told him the Pope was very much interested in what kind of people Reagan and Nancy were. It was interesting that they were both curious about each other. The big high point of Reagan's second term was his speech in Moscow. I think this was the best speech Reagan ever made.

Knott: You were in the hall?

Rowny: Yes, I was there. I was with him and I saw Reagan scrap his notes. He had planned an hour lecture but he just spoke extemporaneously for half-an-hour, after which he took half-an-hour of questions. A thousand or so card-carrying youths stood up and cheered and gave him a standing ovation. He had given them a lesson in Democracy 101, which was tremendous.

We had had some difficulties going into Moscow for that last trip with the speech that Reagan would give on entrance. Tony Dolan had written a very good speech about the bells chiming in Prague and someday there would again be chimes in Moscow. The State Department kept scratching that out. But with Peggy Noonan's help, I kept putting it back in. The State Department was afraid of offending Soviet sensibilities by introducing imagery. In the end we won out.

To go back, I must say that I was quite surprised by the "Star Wars" speech. I didn't know it was being written. I didn't know anything about it until I went in to meet with my counterpart this particular morning, who showed me the *Herald Tribune* with the headline about "Star Wars."

My counterpart Victor Karpov began berating me that perfidious Uncle Sam was violating the ABM Treaty. Although I had not seen the speech, I told him that we were not violating the treaty. I was pretty sure that I was on solid ground. Karpov stormed out of the meeting but later came back and told me that he had done so under instructions from Moscow.

I was not a principal, but was in on the sidelines of the famous "Evil Empire" speech. The speech went through a couple of iterations where the State Department kept taking out references to an "Evil Empire" but Reagan stuck to his guns.

Knott: Did that kind of rhetoric help your task in Geneva?

Rowny: It helped our morale but it made for more friction. We had a lot of feedback from our counterparts who said, "That's no way to negotiate. Don't insult me and I won't insult you." We adopted that line and were always civil to one another.

Knott: General, can I ask you to give us some sense of what or how your Soviet counterparts viewed Ronald Reagan? Were they curious to ask you, for instance, questions about what made him tick? And did they give you feedback on what they thought of him?

Rowny: First, let me go back. They were very critical and disdainful of Carter. They said, "He tries to convert us and change our nature. He doesn't understand us. We can't do business with a man like Carter." They added, "We can do more business with your Republicans than we can with your Democrats." Except for the "evil empire" episode, the Soviets kind of admired and had a great deal of respect for Reagan.

Once Reagan got into human rights the Soviets complained. Karpov said, "He's off the mark. Arms control has nothing to do with human rights. They should be handled separately. You have your government, we have our government; we don't like this mixing and these linkages." I thought that Reagan was on the right track and at this point Shultz was on the right track, too, with Shevardnadze.

Mrs. [Raisa] Gorbachev was quite a problem. She was very sharp-tongued, insulting at times, short, and curt. At the last meeting in Moscow she invited Nancy down to the Moscow Portrait Gallery. She kept her waiting while she talked to the press about the United States. She complained that the United States was lecturing them on human rights. She added: "They've enslaved and kept blacks back for 300 years. Moreover, they've taken land away from the Indians. Who do they think they are, lecturing us about human rights?" I must say, I admired Nancy for keeping her cool and not answering Raisa in kind. She just changed subjects. She comported herself very well. Perhaps you've heard this before—shortly after the first meeting we had with Gorbachev, somebody asked, "Mr. President, what do you think of Raisa?" He said, "Well, it's the first time I've met the wife of the head of the Soviet Government who weighs less than he does."

After I left the Government, as was customary, I briefed former Presidents. Briefing Carter was always the most difficult for me. He was polite but we were not on the same wavelength. [Gerald] Ford was rather easy. [Richard] Nixon was a charm; easy to debrief. On one occasion

he said, "I know you've come to talk to me about these nine points." He had the nine points on a piece of paper from somewhere. He said, "We agree on eight. Let's skip them. Let's talk about the ninth one where we have some disagreement." I was impressed that Nixon would take the trouble to prepare himself to talk to me.

Knott: Nixon was somewhat critical of Reagan's approach at times. Did you pick any of that up?

Rowny: I can't recall that there were any differences.

Houston: I believe it was sort of similar to Kissinger's critique of Reagan.

Rowny: I don't remember the issue after I briefed Nixon on one occasion, a member of the press picked up a difference between Reagan and Nixon. I spoke to them about the difference off the record, but it came out in the paper. The next day I was called in to see Howard Baker, who was then Chief of Staff. He said, "Ed, did you say this?" I said yes. "What the hell did you do that for?" I said, "Well, they asked me and I answered off the record." He said, "You know better than that. Nothing is sacrosanct in this town." I thought I'd be fired but Baker came up and gave me a hug and he said, "You won't do that again, Ed, will you?" I said no. He was a real joy to deal with.

After I left the Government I would go see Reagan on every birthday. He was very proud I taught him to play *Happy Birthday* on his harmonica. I went out to California a couple weeks before he wrote his famous letter that he was ill. I was supposed to have a half-an-hour with Reagan. Nancy was upstairs but Reagan came down in his jeans and red shirt. The half-an-hour stretched to an hour or so. I saw that he was fading, that he didn't remember things and was vague and got things mixed up. But he was still fairly coherent even in those days. As I was leaving, the car was waiting for me out in the driveway and he said, "Ed, you look kind of glum." I said, "Mr. President, it's the first time that I've talked to you and you haven't told me a joke." He said, "Oh yes," and then he told me a joke.

Knott: Do you remember the joke?

Rowny: I remember the joke. I don't know if you want to publish it or not.

Knott: Sure.

Rowny: Reagan said that a woman was going downtown to a store to buy a watchdog. A former suitor was pestering her and he was trying to visit her. At the pet shop the salesman said, "Here's a good watchdog for you." She said, "That's not a watchdog. That's a little 20-pound Shih Tzu." He said, "Oh no, this is a good watchdog. Look, you say 'watchdog' and he comes on alert, then you point." He pointed to a wire trash basket. *Zoom*, the dog chewed the whole thing up and spit it out, sparks flying. So this woman bought the dog. When the former suitor came around, he tried to get in the house with a key. She said, "You can't come in." He said, "Oh yes, I can. I have a key and I'm coming in." She said, "You can't. I've got a 'watchdog,'" at which point the

dog went on alert. He opened the door and said, "Watchdog, my ass," and Reagan went, "Ooh," and felt his bottom. He loved these jokes.

Houston: General, tell that story about when you were—during Solidarity, when Reagan took you to an Irish event. He thought you were Irish.

Rowny: Shortly after I went to work for Reagan, he took me to a St. Patrick's Day party with the Irish Ambassador and introduced me as Rowny of Ireland. I said, "Mr. President, I'm not of Irish descent; I'm of Polish descent." He said, "You never told me that." I said, "You never asked me, Mr. President." After that, I became an honorary member of the Iberian Society, because Reagan had introduced me as an Irishman.

Knott: One of the raps against him was this notion that he really didn't know the details. In some cases people would say he wasn't even that smart. What would you say to that?

Rowny: He didn't know a lot of details and I don't think he cared about them. He told me at one point, "That's what I have a staff for." I told him the story about the first time I had briefed President Carter. He had called me and said he wanted to see me at 8:00 A.M. in his office. He had gotten there at 5:00 in the morning, had read all my brief sheets and knew what I was going to brief him on. He then started asking me detailed questions, such as the beta of this and the throw-weight of that, which I didn't know about. Reagan said, "I don't do that to you, do I?" I said no. He said, "That's why I hired you."

On the other hand, Reagan possessed keen insights. He had a real feel for the ultimate. We were never sure that we would get the Soviets to come around. We never knew if some madman might pull some stunt, and we certainly didn't trust Gromyko. Perhaps trust is the wrong word, but we were leery of him. We knew the Soviets were not insane; they were rational. On the other hand, it was a very dicey business. Reagan kind of understood all that but approached it with equanimity. I told you already, he'd let the staff treat me shabbily on a couple of occasions, but on the other hand, on a one-to-one basis, he treated me decently.

The time I found him most knowledgeable of all was when he talked to me on the phone in Washington when I first met him. Those were the longest talks I had with him during the whole time that I'd known him. During the time I worked for him we seldom had long conversations. He knew the fundamentals of the power equation and what it would take to deal with the Soviets. He had great confidence in his persuasive abilities. After the boathouse meeting he said, "If I could get Gorbachev to the States and take him around and show him what's going on, I think I could bring him to my side." He had great confidence in his sales ability to persuade certain people; not Brezhnev or his predecessors, but certainly Gorbachev. Of course Gorbachev was saying a lot of the right things, such as *Glasnost* and *Perestroika*.

I think that the idea that all these points were written for Reagan and he was choreographed is overblown. Of course, a lot of his meetings were choreographed but the basic ideas were his own. Times when we would get his best insights were after he debriefed us following his one-on-one meetings with Gorbachev. You could gather from Reagan's feedback some of his true

philosophy. In other words, he never lectured us or gave us detailed instructions. Rare exceptions were his long letter of instructions to me and occasional longer conversations.

Earlier, when I was the Joint Chiefs of Staff Representative we would send out draft statements back to Washington for approval. They would be vetted throughout Washington and get chewed up. When the statements came back, sometimes it was undecipherable. When I became chief negotiator, I told the President, "Please give me general instructions and don't force me to have my statements to the Soviets pre-approved in Washington." He said, "I agree with that." As a result, my job became a lot easier.

Also—I didn't ask him—I just did away with drinks across the negotiating table. When I was a Joint Chiefs of Staff representative, we'd bring our bourbon and they'd bring their vodka. We'd drink their vodka, they'd drink our bourbon, and "twongs got tisted." Although we didn't have any drinks across the negotiating table, Karpov, my opposite member, would occasionally turn his back and take a swig from his flask. He would occasionally consume a flask of whisky during a negotiating session. It sharpened his wits and made him more aggressive. He was one of the few people I've known who would get better with stimulus.

Many of our important points were Reagan's, for which he didn't get credit. Often Reagan would seem to doze off during a meeting and we weren't sure he was paying attention. Then at the end he'd come alert and show that he knew what was going on. On occasion, when a Cabinet member would drone, Reagan would begin doodling.

Knott: What would he doodle generally?

Rowny: He would draw beautiful horses' heads. Once, when a Cabinet member was going on and on, on a subject not on the agenda, I looked over Reagan's shoulder and he was drawing a horse's ass. I laughed and he said, "Sshh." I'd love to have that doodle. I think Reagan was underrated as to the independence of his ideas and the soundness of his intuition.

Knott: What would you say to those folks who say that he won the Cold War?

Rowny: I'd say they were right. He won the Cold War without firing a shot. When he gave me my award at the end when I was leaving, he called me one of the chief architects of peace through strength. However, it was Reagan who provided the inspiration and built an edifice on any ideas provided him. Peace through strength belongs to him.

Knott: You referred earlier to the fact that you'd been treated shabbily, once or twice, perhaps. That didn't tarnish your opinion of him?

Rowny: I was disappointed that he wasn't in charge, that he wasn't in control, that he'd let these things happen. But the way he put it to me caused me to forgive him. As he said, "Are you going to say 'no' to a President?" I couldn't say 'no' to a President; it's just not what you're taught at West Point. I felt that at times Reagan was choreographed and that a lot of his staff made decisions, such as the firing of Allen to gain greater control. I don't think the California Mafia

liked Haig because he was showing too much independence. Shultz and Weinberger had been around a long time, and knew how to handle themselves.

The people who I felt had the most influence on Reagan didn't brag about it or do it openly. They did it quietly behind the scenes. These included, besides the California Mafia, Coors, Meese, Judge Clark, Casey, and Weinberger. He was always polite and correct with the others but these are the ones whose advice he would follow.

Knott: Do you have something that you consider to be your greatest accomplishment during this period, during your period as an arms control negotiator and as an advisor to Reagan?

Rowny: I think my biggest accomplishment, which was largely accidental, was keeping Reagan from giving up all nuclear weapons. Had events gone the other way at Reykjavik, he may have been willing to enter into an agreement on zero weapons, and somehow achieve verification later. A second achievement was his behind-the-scenes backing of Solidarity in Poland by using Lane Kirkland. I was proud of this because of my involvement, including conversations with Kirkland, Polish leaders, and the Pope.

Probably my biggest accomplishment was simply surviving. Of about ten influential newsmen, six powerful ones were against me. Among them were Strobe Talbott, Rick Burt, Les Gelb, and Walter Pincus. Among my friends were William Safire, Hugh Sidey, and Bob Bartley.

Houston: Was Walter Pincus the one who got you fired?

Rowny: Yes, Monday morning headlines of his story read: "Rowny Sabotaging the SALT Talks." Nothing we had talked about was in that article. He had gotten all this from other sources. This happened under the Carter Presidency. [Zbigniew] Brzezinski called me and said, "What the hell is going on?" I told him Warnke had ordered me to talk to Pincus off the record. Even so, nothing in the article was anything we had talked about. Brzezinski said, "Pack up and come home." I was packing but meanwhile, I had called my classmate, George Brown, who was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and told him what happened. Brown went to see the President and told him what the score was. The result was Brown called me back and said, "Unpack and stay there."

I had my sea of troubles, plenty of them here and there. The worst was my on-again, off-again relationship with the White House. I don't know how many other people experienced that kind of difficulty. I don't know if you have gotten that from others.

Knott: We have gotten that from some others, yes. It does seem that personnel was a weak point in the Reagan Administration with him.

Rowny: There were other strange personnel events. One example was when Baker and Don Regan got together and changed jobs. To my knowledge, they just told Reagan what they had decided to do.

Houston: Was it Regan who said women don't understand throw-weight?

Rowny: Yes, and I went to talk to him about that. I said, "You had better quickly apologize." He said, "Women don't understand throw-weight; I don't even understand throw-weight. Nobody really understands it, but you might." I said, "Don, this is not something you're going to get away with." "It's going to blow away. It's a 24-hour story." But it wasn't' the press kept fanning the fire.

There were some more pleasant moments. I had helped bring back Van Cliburn from retirement to play at the White House during Gorbachev's first State visit. Van Cliburn played "Moscow Nights" and Raisa and Gorbachev sang along.

Somebody asked me one time, "Why do you like Reagan?" I said, "For one simple reason—he seemed to like me. You can't fault that, you know." I had a much better track record with Reagan than Nitze, even though he had all the tickets. Nitze had the background and was powerful, but Reagan backed me. I also liked Reagan because he let me deal with Solidarity. This had nothing to do with arms control, but interested me. I was proud of the relationship I developed with Lech Walesa, also with General Jaruzelski, who treated me with kid gloves. Reagan was interested that the Pope had forgiven his assassin.

Knott: He asked you about that?

Rowny: Yes, and I told him, "That's something that I couldn't do, but I guess if a man is holy enough, he can do that." Reagan said, "I'd never get away with anything like that. Even if I wanted to, the press would think it was a ploy or that I was trying to play up to the public." He had a good, common-sense approach on such basic issues.

At Reykjavik at about two o'clock in the morning, our old team sat across the table from their new team. The only old member on their side was Karpov. Nitze was the head of our team, which they called Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. I was the only one who spoke Russian on our side and everyone spoke English on their side except Akhromeyev. At two o'clock in the morning during a coffee break, I spoke to Akhromeyev. I said, "Marshal, I guess you're the last man in a uniform from World War II." "*Nyet*. I wasn't in World War II," he said, "I was in the Great Patriotic War." "Have it your way," I said. He said (speaking in Russian), "I'm the last of the Mohicans." I said, "Where did you get that?" "We had to study Fenimore 'Cooper-ski' in school, so we knew all about Fenimore Cooper, that great Russian author," he said with a twinkle in his eye. He had a good sense of humor. I was very saddened when he committed suicide at the time of Gorbachev's arrest.

Knott: General, this has been great. When you get this transcript, if you remember other things, you can just write them right in the transcript.