

**Dean Rusk Oral History Interview – JFK#6, 4/27/1970**  
**Administrative Information**

**Creator:** Dean Rusk

**Interviewer:** Dennis J. O'Brien

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**Biographical Note**

Dean Rusk (1909-1994) was the Secretary of State from 1961 to 1969. This interview focuses on the internal operations of the Foreign Service, the appointments of ambassadors during the Kennedy administration, and staffing the State Department, among other topics.

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Sixth Oral History Interview

with

DEAN RUSK

April 27, 1970  
Washington, D. C.

By Dennis J. O'Brien

For the John F. Kennedy Library

O'BRIEN: I think a good place to start this morning would be with the question, is the job of Secretary of State too big for one person? You once in one of the earlier interviews used the analogy of a four-motored plane.

RUSK: Well, I think that the job of the Secretary of State is so comprehensive that no one man can carry out all of its functions. It requires a very substantial organization behind the Secretary of State and requires a substantial amount of delegation of authority. I've often called attention to the fact that a thousand telegrams go out of the Department of State on every working day. Of those the Secretary himself would see seven or eight before they go out. The rest of them go out on the basis of delegated authority to literally hundreds of officers of the Department who are authorized to act for the Secretary, to sign the Secretary's name to cables. This is something that is not generally appreciated by the public.

A President can't be his own Secretary of State. A President must in fact delegate the overwhelming bulk of the conduct of our foreign relations to the Department of State. But it's also true that a Secretary of State cannot be his own Secretary of State. He must also delegate to Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, office directors, and others who are authorized to work for him. The mass of business has grown so much in this

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postwar period that junior officers in the Department of State are now having to make decisions which before World War II would have gone to the Secretary. This puts a great premium on those processes by which policy becomes known to all those officers who are acting on behalf of the Secretary.

During the eight years that I was Secretary of State, two million one hundred thousand cables went out of the Department signed "Rusk." The interesting thing to me is that I can remember only four or five of those cables which had to be pulled back and revised because they had missed the point of policy involved, so that whatever the processes are by which officers of the Department know what policy is expected of them by the President and the Secretary of State, the process works pretty well. This involves a good deal of distribution of material around the Department; it involves speeches and press conferences by the President and the Secretary of State (and these are, in fact, guidance to other officers in government); it involves many meetings in which policy questions are discussed with junior officers in the Department. So to answer your question specifically, the Secretary of State depends upon a very large organization to work for him and on his behalf in conducting the foreign relations of the United States.

O'BRIEN: Now, in organizing the Department you chose to make it into a line responsibility rather than using and relying on a personal staff. What went into this decision?

RUSK: Well, I felt that the heart of the Department was to be found in the political bureau of the Department, that meant the several so-called regional bureaus and the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. They were the ones who carried the main line of responsibility for our relations with particular areas of the world, and the U.N. office, of course, was in charge of a process which comes in contact with almost every aspect of American foreign policy in the course of a year because of the large number of items that come before the United Nations for discussion. But those line bureaus could not serve themselves with all the staff functions that were required efficiently if each bureau had its own complement of staff--for example, a legal advisor, an economist, a fish and wildlife man, a cultural exchange man, and all the rest of it--so we tried to service the regional bureau by having staff bureaus to provide service for all of them on a consistent basis so that we would have a central office for determining the position of the United States on legal questions, for example, matters of international law. Our labor office and our scientific office and our cultural affairs office would all serve the various bureaus but with some inner consistency in the type of things we were doing in one part

of the world when compared with things in other parts of the world.

But I always felt that the political bureaus were the heart of the Department. They were the ones who were responsible for overseeing the full range of our relations with their particular parts of the world. They're also responsible for obtaining the coordination with other departments and agencies within the government of the United States, which itself was a very burdensome and busy activity, and that function was left mainly to the regional bureaus.

O'BRIEN: Well, in terms of the regional bureau and the level of people--well, could they effectively deal with other branches and other departments of government? Did you ever see any problems that were encountered by people who were simply not of the rank and stature of some of the people in the other bureaus?

RUSK: Well, in the first place, there were many questions on which there were differences of opinion within the government, sometimes within the Department of State, sometimes differences among departments. This was perfectly natural because many of these questions were borderline decisions, they involved disagreeable alternatives. Sometimes there were questions that had no good answer, no comfortable answer, and so there were bound to be differences of opinion, as there would be in any group of reasonable men. My experience was that when the State Department had a clear view as to its own policy, great deference was paid to the Department of State by other departments and agencies of government. Where the Department of State did not have a clear view, then the process began to break down and other departments and agencies moved in to fill the vacuum. So the Department of State had as much leadership as the Department of State was able and willing to assert.

And I think both President Kennedy and President Johnson wanted the Department of State to take the clear leadership inside the government on the formulation of policy. President Kennedy I think did so because he wanted a convenient place to which to look when he himself became interested in particular policies, and he became interested in a great many, sometimes involving matters of the merest detail. But he always knew that there was in the Department of State someone who had pulled together all of the considerations involved and who was in touch with other departments and agencies and therefore with whom he could talk to get a rather comprehensive view of what the problem was.

Now, other departments and agencies have their own duties under statutes, under the Constitution, and by direction of the President. Almost all departments and agencies have activities

which carry them beyond the national boundaries of the United States. It was necessary for the Department of State to look sympathetically upon the duties which other departments and agencies had with regard to the foreigner because that too was a part of the foreign relations of the United States. So the Department of State had to be in support of the responsibilities of the Treasury in international financial matters and the responsibilities of the Interior on such questions as oil and responsibilities of the FAA [Federal Aviation Agency] in civil air, navigation, and things of that sort. So we tried in the Department of State to look as comprehensively as possible upon the total foreign relations of the United States and to help the President to evolve consistent and reasonable policies with the total scene in view.

This was a very large responsibility and required a great deal of work and many meetings and a breadth of view on the part of Foreign Service officers that had not been the custom before World War II. American diplomacy was revolutionized by World War II and the new role which the United States came to play after World War II. And one of the obligations of the Foreign Service was to grow with that growth in responsibility. Many of them did very well at it; some of them failed; and we have some of the old-timers who simply withered on the vine and could not keep up with the change in modern diplomacy.

O'BRIEN: Was it possible in 1961 and was the Department of State capable at this point of assuming this role of leadership that had been particularly defined by President Kennedy, despite the fact that, you know, some of the other agencies had become so firmly entrenched in foreign affairs?

RUSK: I think so, because in the postwar period we've had a series of Secretaries of State who, in fact, exercised leadership in the government-- General Marshall, whose position within the government was almost unquestioned; Secretary Acheson, who was very able in that regard; Mr. John Foster Dulles, who asserted the leadership in a very persistent way--so that when I became Secretary of State I found that there had developed a general tendency in government to look to the State Department for leadership on policy questions. This would not have been true in 1945 because during World War II President Roosevelt took much of the conduct of foreign relations out of the hands of the Department of State and turned it over to those who were running the war (namely, the military) or to individuals like Harry Hopkins, and so for a time there the Department of State got out of the habit of asserting leadership in the town on the formulation of foreign policy. But by the time I became Secretary of State in 1961 this had been corrected by the Secretaries of State that had preceded me, so we had no particular



problem in that regard.

O'BRIEN: How much is the President and the White House involved in this question of organizing the State Department and, also, promoting the Department towards a stronger leadership within the government on foreign affairs? Is it a conversation, for example, between you and President Kennedy?

RUSK: President Kennedy emphasized this point in a document which the historian will be able to get, a letter which he sent to every ambassador insisting that the ambassador be in fact the head, the effective working head, of the total U.S. team that was stationed in the foreign country. That meant that the ambassador was held responsible for the activities and operations of all agencies and departments who had representation overseas. Well, the other side of that coin was that in Washington the Department of State, who instructs the ambassador, had to assume the same role inside the national capital in order to be able to put the ambassador in a position to function as the President wanted him to function. That was a very important letter which President Kennedy sent out, and clarified a good many relationships that needed clarification.

O'BRIEN: How did that letter generate? Was this at your suggestion?

RUSK: I forget exactly whether it was my original idea or whether it came from the Under Secretary, Mr. Bowles, or whether it came from discussions with the White House staff or just how it originated, but I was very much in favor of it and helped draft it.

O'BRIEN: Was there any reaction to that on the part of, well, let's say, other agencies like Treasury, Defense, CIA?

RUSK: No, I think that they all accepted it in good grace and in good spirit. It seemed a very logical thing to do. It's very hard to have an ambassador in a foreign capital in charge of things that he was not really on top of because, in fact, as far as the foreign government was concerned, he was responsible for the totality of relations between that government and the government of the United States. So no, it was accepted pretty generally throughout government without much problem.

O'BRIEN: Well, in terms of the functions of the bureaus, the geographic regional bureaus, there seems to be a real division here between people interested in foreign

affairs who might be called outsiders, and insiders, who are basically State Department Foreign Service people, as to the effectiveness and function. There's a good deal of criticism that they're sluggish and that they're slow, particularly at this period. How did you see this as basically an outsider coming in--well, as an insider and an outsider both--in 1961 coming in as Secretary of State?

RUSK: When I first became Secretary I was disturbed by the slow reaction time of the political bureaus, and I felt that this was related to some extent to the layering of echelons of authority in the Department. We had the Secretary and the Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries and Deputy Assistant Secretaries and office directors and deputy office directors and country officers. I noted on a number of occasions, for example, that incoming telegrams would have an obvious answer to them, and I could have picked up the phone and called somebody and said, "Send them a telegram saying no," or saying yes or whatever the answer would be. But I didn't do that. I let the machinery work and then discovered that perhaps two weeks later a cable would come back from the machinery giving the obvious answer. And I felt that it was unnecessary for us to spend that much time on the process. And the reason it took two weeks was that the incoming cable had to filter down through all echelons and then the reply cable had to filter back up through all those echelons.

So I tried to reduce the number of echelons basically to three, to simplify the chain of command by having three basic points of authority. One was the Secretary, with the Under Secretary acting as his alter ego. Second was the Assistant Secretary, who was a Presidential appointee. And the third was the country director. I tried to eliminate the level of office director and make it involve three offices in the primary responsibility for shaping up a policy: the country director, the Assistant Secretary, and the Secretary. We made some improvement in this regard, but the bureaucracy has a way of keeping things the same even though you try to change, and so I'm not sure I succeeded fully.

O'BRIEN: Well, did you feel any real frustration at the bureaucracy of the Department in those years?

RUSK: There were times when I felt that we were making things much more difficult than in fact they ought to be, particularly in terms of minute clearances with different officers all over the Department. Now, it was necessary to get clearance from other departments and agencies

that were involved in the problem--I had no particular worry about that--but sometimes I would see a telegram coming back up for my approval that had twelve or fifteen or even twenty clearances by officers within the Department of State. I thought that process of clearance was too cumbersome, that the line responsibility ought to function, and that it was not necessary for every tiny point to float all over the Department for weeks getting clearances when those who were carrying the primary responsibility knew in fact what the answer had to be. I tried to simplify that, but again it was always a constant battle.

O'BRIEN: Well, there were suggestions back in those years that desk-officers--well, they might even go to a point of appointing people at the ambassador level or career minister level as desk officers. Is this basically the problem?

RUSK: Well, in trying to simplify the chain of command of the Department and base it upon a country officer, an Assistant Secretary, and the Secretary, I felt that we could and should use more senior officers as country directors. Normally they had been relatively junior officers, and because they were junior they did not carry the authority within the bureaucracy which I felt a country director ought to have. So we experimented with appointing some country directors who had had ambassadorial experience, but they were rather grumpy about that kind of an assignment because traditionally these had been junior officers and senior officers looked upon this as a sort of demotion, and it did not work as successfully as I had hoped because we did not have as many senior officers as country directors as I had hoped we would have. But my own concept had been that the ambassador in the field and the country director in the Department were a co-equal team in charge of our relations with that particular country, and therefore that the country director ought to be a man of authority and stature and experience and ability and judgment who could act as the opposite number of his ambassador within the Department of State.

.Now, we've had, in these more recent years, a good group of country directors. I used to insist upon seeing them along with their Assistant Secretary when we had meetings to discuss particular problems. I would ask the Assistant Secretary to bring his country director along with him, so I got to know a good many of these country directors pretty well, and I must say I was rather impressed with the quality of men that we were putting on those jobs. But they did not turn out to be as senior as I had originally thought they might be.

O'BRIEN: The question of generalist versus specialist, particularly in terms of promotion and advancement in the Foreign Service, comes into this as well. What are your own feelings on this--or what were your own feelings in the Kennedy Administration, and have they changed?

RUSK: The transformation of American diplomacy in this postwar period has called for the widest range of talents. We had need of both the generalist who took the comprehensive view of our total relations with a particular area and also a first-class specialist who would feel at home in dealing with economic problems or legal problems or other more specialized issues. I always took the view that a specialist ought to be in line for advancement in the career just to the same extent that a generalist was, and we actually named a number of ambassadors who had come up through specialist experience. I felt, for example, we ought to draw occasional ambassadors from USIA [United States Information Agency] or from AID [Agency for International Development]. Those were men who had specialized rather intensively during their apprenticeship. But the Department requires both generalists and specialists, and if it's to work properly the specialist must be considered as someone who is not shunted to one side because of his specialty but who in fact is in the mainstream of authority and responsibility and should be considered for promotion alongside of the generalist. It took a little doing for the Department of State to get accustomed to this idea, but I think we've made a great deal of headway in it since the end of the war.

O'BRIEN: Does President Kennedy become concerned about these things in your talks with him, and how much is he concerned about internal problems in the State Department like this?

RUSK: President Kennedy rarely talked to me about the actual structure of the Department of State. Now, we would discuss individual personalities from time to time because we have a great many presidential appointees in the Department of State, all the ambassadors and all the Assistant Secretaries, for example, and the President took a personal interest in some of the key appointments, but, in general, he did not get into the details of the actual structural organization of the Department of State. Some of the men around him tried to at times, but he himself did not do that.

I was always a little skeptical about reorganization. I'd lived through so many reorganizations in government myself that

I had the view that no miracles were to be performed by reorganization, that in fact the organization of government, the real organization of government, depends upon the way in which confidence is delegated from the President downward. And each President and each Secretary of State will have people working under them in whom they have great confidence and to whom they will delegate considerable responsibility. Now, that is what makes up the real structure of authority in government, that unwritten, unseen extension of confidence by the President downward. The details of reorganization are relatively unimportant compared to the placing of people in key positions in whom the Secretary of State and the President have complete confidence.

O'BRIEN: Well, a lot has been said about the morale of the Foreign Service in the late fifties and at the beginning of the Kennedy Administration, Just how did you find it when you assumed the role of Secretary of State?

RUSK: When there is a change of party administration there tends to be a period of nervousness in the relations between the career service on the one side and the new political leadership on the other. This was very apparent, for example, when President Eisenhower was elected and Mr. John Foster Dulles became Secretary of State. That was the first Republican administration in twenty years, and the career service had become so accustomed to working for a Democratic administration that they weren't quite sure what was going to happen under a Republican administration. Then eight years later we had a Democratic administration return to office after eight years of Republican administration.

A new President is almost always going to look upon the Foreign Service at the beginning with a certain reserve because they are career men, they're not his men, they're not his appointees, they're not people that he instinctively knows will be completely loyal to him. That usually works itself out because the Foreign Service has the responsibility for serving those who are elected by the people to determine policy. I once complimented the top British civil servant on the way in which the British civil service had remained outside of party politics. He said, "Oh no, you have it wrong. The British civil service supports one political party at a time." Now, I think the Foreign Service was ready to give President Kennedy complete loyalty and support, but it took President Kennedy a little while to learn that and to give his confidence to the Foreign Service.

There were other questions affecting morale. I took a rather harsh view of morale in the Foreign Service. I'd learned in the Army that an enlisted man is entitled to have a morale problem but an officer is not, that an officer is responsible for maintaining his own morale. And I rather

took the view that when a man becomes a Foreign Service officer, it's up to him to sustain his own morale and that he should not be nursed and babied by those above him, that he should be staunch and sturdy and resilient and should look after his morale himself. Now, we tried to look after such things as pay increases and retirement benefits and improvements in the assignment procedure and things of that sort.

Well, in all the matters affecting the Foreign Service I kept constantly in touch with the senior members of the Foreign Service who were right at my elbow; people like Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson, Ambassador Charles Bohlen, Mr. Alexis Johnson, and others of that sort, so that the things that I did with respect to the Foreign Service were almost always done with the blessing of the senior members of the Foreign Service with whom I consulted. Now, there were some officers who worked for me who were skeptical of the ability of the Foreign Service to meet the obligations that had been thrown upon American diplomacy. Mr. Chester Bowles, for example, instinctively looked outside the Foreign Service for people when we had spots to fill. So, in a sense, I spent a good deal of time battling for the Foreign Service and making it clear that, other things being equal, I felt that a career Foreign Service officer had one notch up on other candidates for particular jobs and that it was only where some special talent or some unusual ability was apparent that I was comfortable about reaching outside the Foreign Service for people to fill important jobs. I instinctively looked upon the Foreign Service as my own constituency and tried to build that up. We got to a point where 70 per cent of our ambassadors were Foreign Service men, and we had Foreign Service men in key posts in the Department of State during my tour of service.

O'BRIEN: Well, in the past twenty-five years, or since World War II, the Foreign Service and the Department have been attacked, well, first of all in the fifties by the right in the [Joseph R.] McCarthy period and now, more recent years, the liberal left has attacked the Department, particularly in the Kennedy years. Do you see any real problems in the quality and the integrity of the Foreign Service as a result of this?

RUSK: I don't think so. During the Kennedy period there were not many attacks on the Department itself from outside government. There were some grumblings on the part of some of the Kennedy cabal, some of the men around Kennedy, who did not feel that the Foreign Service was giving President Kennedy the partisan support that they felt he ought to be getting, and we had a good many arguments about appointments involving people inside the service and people outside the service. But I don't recall that we had any significant attacks on the Foreign Service or on the Department from outside

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the Departments during the Kennedy years. That was a period of relative quiescence in this regard.

O'BRIEN: It's actually, then, later. I was thinking in terms of Schlesinger's attack from the left, which is a later one, but as a Kennedy person, certainly very associated with the Kennedy period.

RUSK: One of the traditional criticisms of the Foreign Service is that it doesn't come up with fresh ideas. Now when you look into this you discover that good ideas are very rare, and very seldom do good ideas come into the Department from the outside that have not long since been thought out in the Department, weighed and judged and acted upon or discarded. I had great regard for the ability of the Foreign Service to box the compass and to find the real alternatives that we might face in a given situation and to look at new ideas honestly and carefully and thoughtfully.

We had many advisory committees during the period that I was Secretary. Each geographic bureau had its own outside advisory committee, and we had various other groups advising with us. Very seldom did a good new idea come out of any of those groups. During all the debate on Vietnam, I never saw a new idea on Vietnam come from outside the Department that had not long since been thought of and weighed in the Department of State. So new ideas are hard to find, particularly in the case of the United States, whose freedom of action is limited by its power and its commitments and its resources and its responsibilities in world affairs. There's just not a great deal of room for maneuvers on the part of a country that carries so many responsibilities as does the United States.

O'BRIEN: How does the idea of the foreign affairs academy generate, and what's the response within the Department to it?

RUSK: Well, there were some Congressmen--I think Senator [Karl E.] Mundt was one of those who came up with this idea--who felt that there ought to be an undergraduate foreign affairs academy comparable to West Point and Annapolis to train young men for the Foreign Service from a very early age, that this would develop a sense of commitment and honor and dedication, that was looked upon partly as a defense against Communist penetration of the Department. My own view was that the age sixteen to eighteen is much too early to expect young people to make a decision to go into the Foreign Service, that we ought to have a great diversity of background in the Foreign Service and that we would be better served if we drew people in from all over the country from many different kinds

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the job after they finish their college work rather than build up a stylized pattern of Foreign Service officers through some undergraduate foreign service academy. I was always opposed to the foreign service academy myself.

O'BRIEN: How did the President react, do you recall?

RUSK: President Kennedy was never interested in the foreign service academy.

O'BRIEN: There's another question here. The Foreign Service, of course, is a very highly organized group. There's been some criticism in regard to the slowness of promotion, particularly among the younger officers, the slowness of promotion, the selecting out process, the feeling that there's too much in the way of conformity demanded by some of the senior officers. Did you get involved in this problem?

RUSK: Yes, I did, in many ways. We speeded up the rate of promotion, particularly in the junior grades, and we also tried to work it out that new Foreign Service officers, class 8, would be given a variety of experience at the very beginning and not be stuck off somewhere stamping invoices for two or three years and the dull and degrading kind of clerical work that could be done by a foreign service staff officer or by a good secretary.

Now, one of the problems in the Kennedy Administration was that young people felt that they had an important role to play in the Kennedy Administration, and I interviewed a great many young people who wanted to work for the State Department but who wanted to start at the top, young people who had never drafted a note, who had never negotiated anything, who had never talked to a foreigner about any serious business, who wanted to start out by being an Assistant Secretary. Now, diplomacy is a profession. There are a great many things about it that require learning. There is a good deal of dull work to be done to prepare one's self for higher responsibility. Just as the concert pianist spends eight hours a day practicing before he steps on the platform, those who occupy the so-called "glamorous job" in diplomacy have had to spend a great deal of time in just drudgery in getting ready to perform that kind of responsibility. So we had some problem during the Kennedy Administration with the thought on the part of so many that somehow the Department should be staffed by young people at the very top, young people who were not prepared to carry out such heavy responsibilities.

O'BRIEN: Well, in terms of the modern Foreign Service officer and the modern diplomat, particularly in the time that you have been in government, have you seen a narrowing of the responsibilities in the latitude of activities of a diplomat or a foreign service officer as a result of the communications developments that have taken place?



RUSK: No, I think that's one of the myths that have grown up in this postwar period because the development of communications speeds up the pace of events and very often puts a premium upon the judgment and the ability to make decisions of the man on the spot in some distant part of the world. Every week some illustration would come along that would indicate that the role of the ambassador is at least as important now as he was in the old days when he did not have such communications because events were moving so fast that even with rapid communications it was not always possible for him to get a timely instruction from the government. So I think that the postwar period has seen an increase in the sheer pace of events, which adds to the responsibility of the Foreign Service officer and requires from him an alertness and initiative which was not present in the old days.

O'BRIEN: Well, has the public relations part of being a Foreign Service officer or an ambassador, has this tended to become, in the time that you've been in government, a more important function of the roles that he plays?

RUSK: The public relations aspect of foreign policy has become much more important in this postwar period because we are . . . [Interruption] We are involved with the rest of the world so much more intensively than we have ever been before that our foreign policy requires much broader and deeper public understanding than it did when we were isolationists back before World War II. This throws upon the Department a heavy burden of informing the public and sometimes in engaging in public debate on important issues of policy.

Now, we, in general, don't expect the Foreign Service officer to carry the burden of public debate, particularly of partisan debate. This is primarily a job for the President and the Secretary of State and the Presidential appointees in the Department, the Assistant Secretaries, but, nevertheless, I suppose in the course of a year two thousand Foreign Service officers would make speeches in different parts of the country on foreign policy. We tried to meet as many requests for speakers as we could, and Foreign Service officers, therefore, took an active part in the public exposition of the policies of the Department. Once in a while that would involve one or another of them in partisan debate in the Congress and would involve some criticism from some political source about the attitude taken by a Foreign Service officer. We tried to

protect them as much as we could against that because they are career men and are not supposed to be caught up in partisan debate. In the British system they would not permit their career diplomats to engage in that kind of debate, but in our system it is necessary to call on the Foreign Service officer to help carry the burden of public exposition.

O'BRIEN: When an ambassador is abroad or a foreign--well, particularly ambassadors when they are abroad, a number of these men chose to go out and participate in all kinds of local functions, become involved in touring countries, the nations they were in, and others took a more conservative line. How do you see this as Secretary of State in the Kennedy Administration? Were you encouraging or letting them pretty much set their own style?

RUSK: I tended to let each ambassador find his own way on that kind of problem because the situation in different countries varied so much that it would be hard to generalize about what would be the right course of action for a particular ambassador in a particular country. In general, I felt that the primary responsibility of an ambassador was to maintain good relations with the government to which he was accredited. I was always skeptical of the view that the ambassador should attempt to become a popular figure among the public of the country to which he is assigned. That always runs the risk of complicating his relations with the government because it might draw him into the discussion of controversial issues in the host government in the host country and could draw him into matters that were not strictly his business, so that I put great priority myself on having clear and good relations with the authorities to whom he was accredited.

And I always took that view with ambassadors accredited to the United States. I never cared to see ambassadors accredited to Washington go out across this country and engage in public debate on matters on which we were conducting relations from the Department of State. And, in general, it worked out pretty well in that regard.

O'BRIEN: I was thinking of one specific instance of a foreign ambassador--it was the Philippine Ambassador, and I believe it was [Carlos P.] Romulo. Am I mistaken?

Didn't Romulo become involved in one of the debt settlement problems almost to the extent of overdoing it?

RUSK: Well, sometimes ambassadors will lobby pretty actively in the Congress and will conduct information programs in this country in support of his own country's point of view over against the point of view of the United States government. Well, some of that is acceptable; it's a part of his job. And we want to keep open the ability of our own ambassadors to set forth and defend the policies of the United States in other countries. A man like Romulo was almost an American in the sense that we had had the special ties with the Philippines, he had been with us during the war, and he had a great many friends in the United States, and he was given a degree of latitude that some other ambassadors might not have been given.

O'BRIEN: Well, in regard to the ambassadorial appointments during the Kennedy Administration, a number of these people came from outside of the Foreign Service and, I would guess, offered some real discipline problems. Do you have any serious instances of ambassadors attempting to circumvent you as Secretary of State and the Department by going to the White House or to other areas of government when particular problems arise?

RUSK: There were relatively few of those instances. There were three kinds of appointments under President Kennedy, and I suppose it would be true under any President. There were career appointments, men drawn from the Foreign Service, and that usually makes up from 65 to 75 percent of the key appointments to ambassadorial posts and in the Department. Then there were professional appointments that were not career but also were not political. The appointment of David Bruce, for example, to London as ambassador was not a political appointment, although he was not a career Foreign Service officer. He was a real professional. The appointment of [Edwin O.] Ed Reischauer to Japan was a professional appointment but not a political appointment. There was no partisan party context in that sort of an appointment. Then the third category were your political appointments, of which we always had a handful.

One thing that surprised me while I was Secretary of State was that so few applications came in for ambassadorial posts from the political side. The Democratic National Committee had very few candidates that they wanted to put forward. People with political muscle did not naturally gravitate toward ambassadorial posts because in this postwar period ambassadorial posts have gotten to be hard-working jobs. They are not social sinecures any more, and many of these ambassadorial posts are distant and dull and dangerous and uncomfortable and all sorts of things. So I had a minimum of difficulty with the pure political appointment. Those usually came direct from the President rather than from any organized machinery around him, but nevertheless we had half a dozen or a dozen purely political appointments under President Kennedy. And I suspect that combination of political, professional, and career will be a permanent part of our diplomatic establishment.

O'BRIEN: Are there any important instances in which you do have real problems as far as controlling their actions? I was thinking of--well, the obvious one, of course, is [John Kenneth] Galbraith.

RUSK: Well, I told Ken Galbraith once that he went through four phases in his ambassadorship in India. He first went out there thinking that by charm and persuasion and other things that he would persuade the Indians to agree with the United States. Well, after a few months he learned that he was not going to do that, that India had its own foreign policy and that it was not going to change it because of the persuasiveness of the American Ambassador. So then he went into phase two, which was an attempt to persuade the United States to agree with India, and he discovered that that wasn't going to happen, that we lived in different places, we had different responsibilities and different interests, and that therefore we were not going to take the Indian view on every important question that came along. So then he went into phase three, which was a period of inactivity and boredom. He traveled around the country; I suppose he spent some time writing books back at his home base; he consulted with President Kennedy on matters unrelated to India, on economic and other problems. Then phase four came when the Chinese attacked India, and Ken Galbraith was in his glory because here the United States was supporting India at a time when

India was under attack. And he became very popular in India and was on fine relations with the Indian government and everything was moving along very nicely, so that at the end of that period he resigned and came on home. But he was in touch with President Kennedy about a good many things, some of which didn't even concern foreign policy, on economic questions. He did get involved in the Southeast Asia issue and recommended strongly to President Kennedy that we not lift a finger in Southeast Asia, and President Kennedy disagreed with him and made some important decisions in giving support to South Vietnam and things of that sort.

But my principal concern with Ken Galbraith was the fact that he would not use any diplomacy on his own colleagues. He at times could be very disagreeable in the way in which he would write cables, and he would express his contempt for the policy of the United States or for the Department of State or for bureaucracy and that sort of thing. I always took the view that a diplomat ought to use diplomacy in his relations with his own colleagues, and we had to rebuke Ken Galbraith once or twice for the manner in which he was conducting his business with his home government, but I was never particularly upset about it. He was always amusing. Whether or not you agreed with what he said, he usually said it in a very amusing way.

O'BRIEN: Well, I understand that language and knowledge of country was an important factor--I suspect in other administrations as well, earlier--but was an important thing that President Kennedy emphasized. Did you have any difficulty in finding, particularly, ambassadors for the new African nations?

RUSK: It was hard to find non-career people who had any genuine expertise in some of the out of the way posts. In general, we staffed our African embassies with career people. There were a few, very few, non career people there, but, in general, we called upon the Foreign Service for those.

There are advantages and disadvantages in appointing a man who has had substantial contacts with a country to go there as Ambassador for the United States. He might have involvement with business or with various activities or with

personalities, so you had to be a little careful that he might be too much involved with the country to which he was being sent. My standard of hope and aspiration was exemplified in the appointment of David Bruce to London. If we could have staffed every post with a man who was as qualified for it as David Bruce was for the London post, then we'd have nothing to complain about, but there are not many David Bruces in the world, and so we had difficulty in finding some of the top people.

President Kennedy had organized himself as a senator and as a candidate but had not until after his election organized himself to be President of the United States. He did not have any considerable number of assistants or staff or associates who could come into government with him to take over the administration of the government. His Cabinet, for example, contained a great many strangers, including myself. He did not appoint cronies to key posts. He was not an organization man when he was elected President of the United States, so that the talent hunt under President Kennedy's Administration was a never-ending process, and we looked long and hard for people outside government to come in and take over responsibilities. We found some good people, and I think we made some good appointments. Once in a while there would be some disappointment, but that was not very frequent.

O'BRIEN: The Democratic Advisory Council is particularly important here, isn't it, in staffing the State Department and, also, the foreign ambassadorial appointments?

RUSK: Not particularly. I don't--the Democratic Advisory Council, you mean, or the . . .

O'BRIEN: Yes, I was thinking of this group including Acheson and Thomas Finletter and, well, I believe Galbraith was on it as well, and a number of other people on this level, Democrats of the 1950's.

RUSK: I suppose at the very beginning President Kennedy talked to some of them; as a matter of fact, it's probably the way he got my name onto his list, in talking with people like Bob Lovett and Dean Acheson and

people of that sort. But after he became President, that group played very little role in the location of people and the recruitment of people for top positions in government.

O'BRIEN: Well, Adlai Stevenson has a good deal of influence on some of the appointments, particularly ambassadors, doesn't he?

RUSK: I would say maybe three or four out of the hundred and twenty were Stevenson men. In other words, he did not staff up the diplomatic corps with so-called Stevenson men. We used Stevenson men throughout the government, and there were many--we decapitated his law firm and brought most of them into government in one way or another. George Ball, I suppose, was a Stevenson man, and he became my Under Secretary and served with great distinction. And Adlai Stevenson in effect chose his own group to be with him at the United Nations in New York, and his influence was always listened to with respect because he'd been the standard-bearer for the Democratic party in two campaigns and was a rather remarkable person in addition to that.

O'BRIEN: Does [George C.] McGhee and Chester Bowles have a good deal of influence on some of the other ambassadorial appointments?

RUSK: Chester Bowles did; McGhee did not have much influence on that. But Chester Bowles as the Under Secretary at the beginning took a good deal of responsibility for the talent hunt that was constantly going on, and he helped us locate quite a few people that we might not otherwise have come across. And, in general, his recommendations turned out to be pretty good. There were one or two duds that came in under those circumstances, but we soon repaired that. But the Under Secretary is constantly looking for talent under whatever administration he might be serving, and Chester Bowles was very active in that regard.

O'BRIEN: I just jotted a few names down this morning in this regard. Charles Cole was a Bowles appointment, wasn't he, to Chile? I think Bowles--[William E.] Stevenson to the Philippines.

RUSK: Cole was basically my appointment. He had been a vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation. I had served with him up there, so that I think I was the one who located him. Unfortunately, we were not able to keep him. He wouldn't stay more than a limited period in Chile, but he was a very able fellow.

O'BRIEN: Right. How about Stevenson to the Philippines?

RUSK: I think that was probably the recommendation of Adlai Stevenson.

O'BRIEN: Right. [James M.] Gavin was basically a White House appointment.

RUSK: That was a John F. Kennedy appointment. Gavin was not a skilled diplomat, and he was not always in support of American policy. He wanted us, for example, to give President de Gaulle substantial assistance in his nuclear program. President Kennedy did not want to do that, and so that led to some difficulties at times. But Gavin was a personal appointment of President Kennedy.

O'BRIEN: In running through some of the Asian ambassadors, Charles Baldwin, who is in Malaya--Malaysia.

RUSK: He was a professional, wasn't he?

O'BRIEN: I think he was in and out.

RUSK: I see.

O'BRIEN: He went out in 1954 . . .

RUSK: I don't have a very strong impression of Baldwin. I have some impression that he was a solid, reasonably competent fellow but without much imagination. He didn't make much of an imprint on affairs.

O'BRIEN: [Lucius D.] Battle is a White House appointment, isn't he?



RUSK: [Lucius D.] Battle came in largely through my own efforts because I had known him during the Acheson period. He had been the right-hand of Dean Acheson in the central secretariat of the Department of State, and I'd come to know him then and had a very high regard for his talents.

O'BRIEN: Naw, this is Lucius Battle.

RUSK: Lucius Battle.

O'BRIEN: Right. There was also William Battle.

RUSK: Oh, William Battle of Virginia was a John F. Kennedy personal appointment.

O'BRIEN: How about Kenneth Young in Thailand?

RUSK: Kenneth Young was a holdover from the Eisenhower Administration. He had worked for me during the Acheson period. He is a very dedicated and honorable man but of limited ability and did not handle his job entirely to the queen's taste, and so we eventually made a change there.

O'BRIEN: How about John Everton in Burma?

RUSK: He was quiet and unassuming and probably was all right for the post in Burma because there was very little to do in Burma. The Burmese wouldn't let the American Ambassador do very much. But he did not make any particular imprint on the situation while he was there. He was a Bowles appointment.

O'BRIEN: You have some holdovers in Southeast Asia, as well-- I was thinking of Howard Jones and William Trimble-- from the previous Administration.

RUSK: Well, I've commented earlier on Howard Jones in Indonesia. Yes, he was a holdover. We kept him on there because of his very close relation with Sukarno. There were some disadvantages to that because his relations with Sukarno were almost too close and it tended to involve the American ambassador with some of Sukarno's more flamboyant political exercises. And when Howard Jones

became dean of the corps in Indonesia, it was particularly embarrassing because Sukarno would call him out to sit with him on platforms when he made some of his most violent speeches against the Dutch or against us and so forth. But Jones tried to play ball with Sukarno, and sometimes that led to embarrassment.

O'BRIEN: Now, how about Trimble?

RUSK: I don't have too much of an impression of Trimble. He was competent and did a solid job but, again, I think didn't make much impression on things.

O'BRIEN: You replace him Philip Sprouse.

RUSK: Yes. I'd known Sprouse in the old days myself. Sprouse was a career man of considerable ability for whom I had developed some regard when I was in the State Department back in the Acheson and Marshall period. He was a career man who was, I think, qualified for the job that we put him on, but was not a man like a Bohlen or a Thompson or a Riddleberger.

O'BRIEN: In terms of South America, Fulton Freeman for Columbia.

BEGIN SIDE II TAPE I

O'BRIEN: We were talking about the McCarthy period and the effect of appointment of people who in the 1940's and 1950's were associated with China, had something to do with it, and the later possible effect of this on their appointments.

RUSK: Well, I had known these men since I had been Assistant Secretary for the Far East during the Acheson period, and I knew that they were loyal and dedicated public servants, and I knew that some of the charges that were leveled at them during the Joe McCarthy period were phoney and had no substance in them. In fact, the policies of that period back in the late forties were

determined by President Truman and Dean Acheson, and I felt that it was very unfair for partisan opponents to pick out career Foreign Service men as special objects of attack when in fact the policy was the policy of the President of the United States. The debate should have been carried on at the top political level and should not have involved career men who were carrying out their instructions. So when I became Secretary I tried to overcome and disregard their past background of criticism, and so I used people like Sprouse and John Emmerson and others who had been caught up in some of that earlier controversy.

I was very much concerned about the action taken by Secretary Dulles to remove John Paton Davies from the Service. I was advised when I was Secretary that I should disqualify myself from any direct action on that case because I had been a witness in the hearings for John Paton Davies back in the early fifties. Before I left the office, however, the Under Secretary Mr. Katzenbach, restored his security clearance so that he could get jobs with private organizations that required security clearance. But I tried to rehabilitate those who had been mangled in the Joe McCarthy period in those cases where I was sure that the men were fine officers. For example, Walton Butterworth had been bitterly attacked back in those early days, and I succeeded in getting him appointed as Ambassador to Canada, despite the fact that he had been a controversial figure back in the late forties. So I especially felt an obligation not to let that earlier experience work to the disadvantage of these men who were good, capable, talented Foreign Service officers, that they had been unfairly put upon back in the Joe McCarthy days.

O'BRIEN: Did you find any latent McCarthyism in 1961 when you started doing this, criticism either on the Hill or from private sources?

RUSK: I found that Robert Kennedy was very sensitive about this kind of point. We had a similar group of men who had been strongly attacked because of Cuba, and there were times when Robert Kennedy would oppose appointments that had been drawn from the old China hands or the Cuba group, whereas my view was that they were carrying out the policies of their respective Presidents and Secretaries of State and that they should not be penalized

for having been loyal public servants at an earlier period. But Bobby Kennedy was rather sensitive about some of these charges, and I had a little trouble with him at times on these personnel issues.

O'BRIEN: Do you happen to recall any of the specific ones, of his opposition to specific persons?

RUSK: I would have to dig back in the files to look that up because I wouldn't want to speak off the cuff about matters involving other people's reputations and character.

O'BRIEN: Right. The ambassadors for the Middle East--well, there's one outside appointment there, [John S.] Badeau.

RUSK: Yes. Well, he had been a long expert in Middle Eastern affairs. He knew Egypt; he had served in Egypt a long time with the American University there. That was looked upon as a professional rather than a political appointment. And we asked him to go there to see if he could establish better relations with President Nasser. He was not able to get very far because President Nasser was more or less incorrigible during that period, but Badeau was an example of a professional man that we asked to do a job even though he was not a career man and there was no political backing for his particular appointment.

O'BRIEN: There's also appointment of [William B., Jr.] Macomber, who is not a Foreign Service officer but a State Department person. What goes into that one?

RUSK: Well, Macomber was a holdover from the Eisenhower Administration and had won the esteem of everybody that he worked for in the Department and in the Service. When I first became Secretary, several senators, including Democratic senators, urged me to keep Macomber on. He had served as Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations under the Eisenhower Administration, and they had gotten to know him very well. He was a very capable, honest, fair, dedicated man, and there was no problem at all as far as Kennedy was concerned in keeping Macomber on. And I'm glad we did because he's now occupying a very important post in the Service.

O'BRIEN: Well, passing over from some of the ambassadors to the establishment of the Operations Center, is this one of your innovations in the Department?

RUSK: Yes. It was one of the things we did to speed up our access to information and our reaction time to events. The Operations Center is a nerve center which operates twenty-four hours a day. And I always know that I could drop into the Operations Center and get the latest information on any development that was occurring anywhere in the world. The Operations Center was at the center of our communications. They maintain continuous staff and they also had facilities for housing ad hoc task forces that were set up to deal with particular crises, so that I visited the Operations Center a great deal while I was Secretary and spent a lot of time in there because we had the facilities there for teletype conferences with many of our embassies abroad.

Early in my tour as Secretary I had a briefing at the Strategic Air Command, and I saw there the fantastic communications that SAC has in getting into instantaneous touch with some sixty military headquarters all over the world. They demonstrated to me that they could flip a switch and in less than a minute would be in direct communication with some sixty posts all over the world. Well, it occurred to me that if we had that kind of communications for firing nuclear weapons, we ought to have greatly improved communications for preventing the firing of nuclear weapons, and so I put on quite a campaign to improve the communications of the Department of State.

We normally were relying upon commercial cable facilities and codes, and with our own coding apparatus, there were times when it would take forty-eight hours, for example, to get a cable to Bangkok, Thailand. I felt that was not good enough, so we put a good deal of money into improving our communications and got to the point where we could be in instantaneous communication with at least sixty of our embassies abroad, the more important embassies. We had in the Operations Center a conference facility so that we could sit down and, through teletype mechanisms, carry on a conversation with an ambassador abroad in some sixty posts. And so it was a very convenient establishment. I don't know how we could have operated in some of our crises without a facility like the Operations Center.

O'BRIEN: There's been a suggestion both within the Department and out of the Department that the Department has been very reluctant to modernize in things like this as

well as some of the other things like information retrieval. Is there any substance to this?

RUSK: Well, it's largely a function of funds. There was never any problem about the desire of the Department of State to improve greatly its communications facilities all over the world, but it costs money, and getting the money out of the Congress to do this was another thing. So the Congress helped us to a degree but did not go as far as the Department wanted to go.

On information retrieval, we did some experimentation with computers to see to what extent computer technique for the storage and retrieval of information would be relevant to the business of the Department of State. I'm not convinced myself that computers are the answer. They are helpful, but they are only an adjunct to men who know what the situation is and what has happened in the past. But, nevertheless, I think it's something that the Department will have to continue to work on because the blizzard of paperwork that's fallen in on the world makes it extremely difficult under modern circumstances to be sure that you have at your fingertips all of the relevant information that is available for the particular problem that you're working on. The problem in a crisis is that you have to act promptly because not acting is itself a major decision. Therefore, whether or not you have all the information available to you, you still have to act, you have to make a decision--to act or not to act--so the problem is increasingly going to be to be sure that at moments of crisis those who have to make decisions are well equipped with the relevant information, and that's a fantastic problem. It's going to be one that it becomes increasingly difficult to handle as the flow of information increases so significantly.

O'BRIEN: Well, that leads into another area that there's been a good deal said--and not said, in some ways--about, and that's this whole business of policy planning in terms of foreign policy as well as policy planning in terms of military political policy. What happens to policy planning under, first, McGhee and then, later, Walt Rostow?

RUSK: And then later Henry Owen.

O'BRIEN: And later Owen.

RUSK: I think it was President Eisenhower who once said that the plan is unimportant but the planning is very essential. The process of policy planning is very important because it tries to anticipate questions that might arise in the future. It tries to look beyond the end of your nose into the next five to ten years. It tries to raise all relevant questions. It tries to box the compass on alternatives. It tries to throw the light of general policy considerations onto specific decisions that have to be made on a day-to-day basis. I always felt that the policy planning staff was an indispensable adjunct to the Department of State, and I used to meet with them pretty frequently and had long discussions with them and urged them to come up with new ideas and fresh approaches.

But there was one point on which the policy planning staff and I never got together, and that is their desire to publish a comprehensive statement of the foreign policy of the United States. In the Eisenhower Administration they had a very thick document called "The National Security Policy" or something of that sort, and the policy planning staffs under me, particularly under McGhee and Rostow, wanted to bring that up to date and publish and circulate a comprehensive statement of American foreign policy for the guidance of ambassadors and officers in the Department and other agencies in the government and so forth. My problem was that a President and a Secretary of State are not going to want to give their approval to so generalized a statement of policy as would emerge from such a process. The drafts that I saw would not really answer many questions. They were at such a level of generality and vagueness that they were not actually helpful in solving particular problems, and I was afraid that if you approved a general paper of that sort everybody would sit back and relax, thinking that we now had a foreign policy, whereas policy requires constant and detailed attention daily on a fresh basis and requires an examination of all the relevant facts which could not be taken into account in a big paper of that sort. So both George McGhee and Walt Rostow were a little impatient with me and with President Kennedy for not being willing to approve a generalized statement of foreign policy.

But I thought the stimulation of the policy planning staff throughout the Department was a very important thing. I tried to make the point with every policy officer, including the country desk officers, that each policy officer was his own policy planning staff, that each policy officer was working on the future--that's what policy is, an attempt to influence the

future--and that everybody who was on a policy job ought to be thinking constantly about the projection of the problems that he was working on into the future and should try constantly to come up with fresh approaches and new ideas and analysis and judgment so that every officer would take part in the policy planning process. To what extent we succeeded in that I frankly don't know. I think we made some headway, but not as much as we should have.

O'BRIEN: In some of the minor crises that did erupt, can you remember or recall any specific instances in which you had policy officers who had thought five years down the road and anticipated and--in other words, the successes of foreign policy during those years?

RUSK: We did a good deal of interdepartmental consultation on various contingencies. This was particularly true as between the State Department and the Defense Department. Again, the process was important even though the actual results that they worked out were not necessarily those which would fit the particular problem as it arose; but the process raised a lot of questions, anticipated a lot of questions that might be overlooked in a moment of crisis. So we were pretty well equipped, I think, to know where the bugs were, to know where the difficulties would lie when crises came up.

I would be hard put to give many examples, but--well, for example, when President Johnson moved our forces first off the Dominican Republic and then into the Dominican Republic, he was operating under a contingency plan that had been prepared at the personal request of President Kennedy. And we used that contingency plan rather specifically when we decided to put Marines ashore in the Dominican Republic.

There was one field in which we did a lot of contingency planning of a more or less routine sort, and that was in arrangements made to rescue Americans who find themselves in situations of violence, revolution or disruption in foreign countries. We developed standby contingency plans for many, many countries, involving the preplacement of aircraft or the movement of naval vessels or arrangements with other governments to take care of our interests or things of that sort, and on a number of occasions we had to utilize those standby plans for the protection of American citizens abroad. But that was a very useful example of planning.



O'BRIEN: Well, in policy planning (and I'm talking here in the State Department rather than the joint policy planning) did you feel that either--well, what is the proper role of policy planning is the question: should they try to plan for a good many different contingencies or just simply focus in on some of the more important situations? In other words, I've heard the criticism that one of the problems was that there was too much planning going on within policy planning.

RUSK: I don't accept that criticism because I don't think that there can be too much planning as a process. The policy planning staff tried to work out policy papers for each of the important countries with whom we had relations, and they would work with the ambassador in the field and his staff, his country team in the field, as well as with the geographic bureau in Washington to try to develop a clear statement of American policy toward particular countries. And I went through and approved many of those specific country papers. Again, I think that the process was more important than the result because it caused the ambassador and his colleagues, as well as the geographic bureau in Washington, to think hard about all aspects of our relations with particular countries, and that in itself was a useful exercise. No, I don't think there was too much planning.

I think one thing that the policy planning staff tried to do which was very valuable was to anticipate new kinds of problems that were coming down the track. The development of science and technology was creating problems for the future that we needed to anticipate; for example, the exploitation of the deep ocean sea-beds, the exploration of outer space, the attempt to modify weather. Such matters involve enormous problems for foreign policy and our foreign relations, and it was the duty of the policy planning staff to try to anticipate some of these emerging problems before they became operational so that we could begin to have some thoughts about them before we had to make decisions about them. No, I think the policy planning staff played a very important and useful role in the Department.

O'BRIEN: Was there any resentment in the Department over the degree of planning that was done on political and military affairs within the Defense Department? I'm thinking of the group that created the DPM's here, the draft Presidential memoranda, on questions of this nature.

RUSK: I never was aware of any particular problems arising out of that, largely because Secretary McNamara was in full charge of the Department of Defense, and he and I worked very closely on policy questions. He and I agreed that we should try to multiply and encourage contacts up and down the line between our two departments, that we would not have the channel of communication between the Department of Defense and the Department of State restricted to the respective Secretaries, as was true during Louis Johnson's day when he was dealing with Dean Acheson on that basis. We agreed that desk officers on the one side and majors and colonels on the other side ought to be in regular contact with each other, that we ought to try to understand each other's problems before decisions had to be made. There was a lot of contingency planning done on a joint basis between the State and Defense Departments. We sat in on their planning, and we had officers detailed to us for some of our planning.

I also had the harvest of two decades of association between the Department of State and the various war colleges. We have now some three hundred Foreign Service officers who are graduates of the various war colleges, and that gives us a backlog of Foreign Service officers who at least understand the nature of the problem as seen from a military point of view. Similarly, there are about that many military officers who are graduates of our senior seminar and other instructional programs in the Department of State, so that I think that the Defense and State Departments have steadily increased their understanding of each other's problems. And that reduces acrimony and reduces the problems of joint action and joint recommendation when particular issues arise.

O'BRIEN: Berlin is one of the classic examples of the cooperation of the departments, isn't it, in planning?

RUSK: Yes, we had not only U.S. government planning, but we had four power planning with the British, the French and the Germans, and also NATO planning because Berlin had been accepted as a NATO responsibility, so that the preliminary planning on Berlin had gone a very long way because that was obviously one of those points which were becoming a matter of high crisis. And that preliminary work stood us in good stead when particular issues over Berlin arose.

O'BRIEN: Well, passing on to the changes that take place in the National Security Council and abolishment of the Operations Coordination Board, how do you see this as the general impact on the State Department in the general context of American foreign relations when it occurs?

RUSK: Our impression was, when we came into office in 1961, that the machinery had become muscle-bound; there was just too much machinery and too many meetings. I seem to remember that Robert Bowie, who was the State Department representative on the OCB for a number of years, once told me that he had only one half day a week that was not actually taken up by a stated meeting of some sort, and so he spent most of his time in meetings with the OCB and others. A lot of that we felt was spinning wheels, was rather useless in character, but in any event, it was a great time consumer for all concerned. We tried to work out more flexible procedures with ad hoc task forces and with regular contacts between junior officers in preparation of particular problems.

Another problem about the OCB mechanism was that it gave everybody who participated a veto in the result, so that the outcome of it could very likely be the least common denominator rather than a clear exposition of the real choices and the alternative views that were held in government about those choices. As the Secretary of State I did not feel that the State Department could operate with vetos lying all over town on action when action had to be taken, and so we tried to emphasize the responsibility of the State Department to give leadership to the entire process and to reduce somewhat the ability of other departments and agencies to block what had to be done. This was a part of the process of abolishing OCB.

O'BRIEN: Well, when the [Henry M.] Jackson Committee gets involved in this, how do you read this? Is this an undue interference in the Department and within the general context of . . .

RUSK: I had the impression that the Jackson Committee work was responsible and useful but that it did not have a great deal of influence on the way in which the Executive branch actually conducted its business. The Jackson Committee had a competent staff, people like Dorothy Fosdick and others. They were knowledgeable about the way things went on in the Executive branch. Their studies,

I think, are useful commentaries on the process and the historian will want to look at some of their studies to see how things actually worked. But I don't think we ever turned to the Jackson Committee reports to find out how to do things. I think we made our own judgments independently. And we never had particular difficulties with the Jackson Committee.

O'BRIEN: Is there any particular and immediate impact of the change in structure that takes place here on American foreign relations? Is there a vacuum in any way that's formed as the result of the downgrading of the NSC?

RUSK: Well, the NSC as such was not downgraded--President Kennedy used to meet fairly frequently with the NSC--but some of the lower machinery of the NSC was eliminated, some of the subordinate machinery. But President Kennedy was himself so active and so concerned with most foreign policy questions that that itself drew those questions up to Cabinet level so that the Cabinet members of NSC had to be very active in keeping up with the President. So we had a lot of consultation at the NSC level, particularly with the President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary of the Treasury sat in frequently; the Attorney General sat in frequently.

I always felt that NSC meetings were not the best place to talk out a question. There were too many people present; there were twenty-five or thirty people sitting around the room. And my problem was that frank discussion with that many people present was very risky because you'd read about it in the newspapers the next day. There were people present who didn't know how to keep their mouth shut, so to me the most valuable discussions were those that were held with the President with maybe three or four people present: the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Treasury, and so forth.

I tried to work out my business with President Kennedy on a very discreet and private basis rather than in large meetings. And when I had a point on which I disagreed with the President and wanted to debate him, I would always do that in private rather than in a meeting where a lot of people are sitting around as witnesses. I thought it was not appropriate for the Secretary of State to debate the President with a lot of juniors

sitting around. I always tried to maintain a complete solidarity between the President and the Secretary of State. And I think during that period there were no newspaper rumors or gossip about differences between the Secretary of State and the President, although in fact we had some.

O'BRIEN: Well, getting back to this question of staffing the State Department in the very beginning and then, particularly, some of the changes that take place during the first year, are there any strong disagreements on some of the original people that are brought into the State Department in some of the more important positions? I'm thinking here of, oh, Chester Bowles, George McGhee, George Ball.

RUSK: When President Kennedy told me that he wanted me to be Secretary of State down at Palm Beach in Florida, I pressed him very hard to announce simultaneously that Chester Bowles would become Under Secretary of State and Adlai Stevenson would become our representative to the United Nations. [Interruption]

I had known Chester Bowles as a congressman, and he was also a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation for a period, and I had great regard for his intelligence and alertness, his imagination. He had strong liberal instincts, and those suited me as far as foreign policy was concerned. And I thought that it would be a good thing to have him as my alter ego in the Department of State. In general, it worked out pretty well.

There were two things that developed that handicapped him somewhat in that job. The one was that he did not show solidarity with President Kennedy over the Bay of Pigs and he let it be known to the press and others that he had strongly opposed the Bay of Pigs. And I felt that that was and President Kennedy felt that that was not what was expected of an Under Secretary. The other part of it was that he proved not to be a good administrator of the paperwork that came across his desk. He became a bottleneck in the actual transaction of business. Papers would pile up on his desk without action, and things would sit too long, and he just was so busy that he didn't get through the day's work. I think over time it became

apparent that the administrative burden of the Under Secretary's job was not his dish of tea, and we felt that we would benefit if we made a change in that particular post. I've always liked Chester Bowles. He's a lovable man and a dedicated public servant and a very decent man, but in retrospect I think the Under Secretary's job was not the right job for him.

O'BRIEN: Well, in considering that change, I understand that, you know, it was in at least motion to make the change much earlier in the summer of 1961. What prevents that?

RUSK: Well, I was determined that if Chester Bowles left job of Under Secretary that he'd go to another job that was up to his ability and dignity and reputation, that we would not injure him by the way in which we handled the change. The problem was to find a job that he would find agreeable, and that took a little doing. President Kennedy had several talks with him, and Chester Bowles turned down one or two things that President Kennedy had asked him to do, and so it took a little time to work it out without undue injury to Chester Bowles. That was the reason for the delay.

O'BRIEN: Well, is Bowles aware that he's not working out very well in the job or he's not doing what's expected of him?

RUSK: He became aware of it when President Kennedy had his first talk with him about a possible change.

O'BRIEN: Who are you thinking of as a replacement?

RUSK: Well, I was personally thinking of George Ball, who had been the other Under Secretary for Economic Affairs. As a matter of fact, George Ball worked out very well indeed as Under Secretary. He could handle business with dispatch; he was able and well informed and energetic and had good judgment. George Ball worked out very well as Under Secretary.

O'BRIEN: Well, there's a number of other changes that come at the same time that are sometimes called with the term "the Thanksgiving Day massacre." There's a number of other shifts that take place there: George McGhee, for example, and Rostow.

RUSK: George McGhee was, I suppose, about the only man, one of the few men, that I myself brought into the Department. I had not expected to be Secretary of State so I did not myself have a group of people that I had all lined up to come in with me, but I had known George McGhee during the Truman Administration, had a great regard for him--he had handled the Greek-Turkish aid problem with great distinction--he was energetic and ambitious and highly intelligent, and so I brought him in to be head of the policy planning staff. But he was not looked upon with favor by the Kennedy cabal; he was not looked upon as a Kennedy man. In fact, he was not a Kennedy man; he had not come up that way, and so I always had some trouble in defending George McGhee against sniping from some of the lesser people around Kennedy. And there was tension between Robert Kennedy and George McGhee, for example. So we got to a point where President Kennedy wanted to insist that Walt Rostow become policy planning director, so we moved George McGhee to the Under Secretary's job and then to Ambassador to Germany.

But there comes a point on Presidential appointments where the Secretary of State at the end of the day must yield if the President is determined that he wants to make a particular appointment or wants to make a change. The Secretary of State serves with I suppose a hundred and fifty presidential appointees. He serves with that many people whose appointments are not his own, and so you have to play your averages a bit, and on the whole, I had reasonable luck with my recommendations for appointments, but I did not score 100 percent. And there were times when appointments were made that I did not particularly favor. As a matter of fact, Walt Rostow worked out very well as head of the policy planning staff, and I soon recovered from any misgivings that I had about that when the appointment was made. And he had good working relationships with McGeorge Bundy in the White House, and that was very important.

O'BRIEN: What was your reluctance about Rostow at that point?

RUSK: Well, chiefly, to me he was an unknown figure. I'd really not known much about his ability and his working habits, and he had been in and out of government, and I felt that that particular appointment was one that was particularly intimate to the Secretary. And I just at the beginning was not entirely comfortable about having Walt Rostow there, but I recovered from that fully and had the greatest admiration for Walt Rostow as it worked out over the years.

O'BRIEN: How's the Harriman appointment come about?

RUSK: Well, I think Averell Harriman was simply a natural for any particular job that was available, and Averell Harriman was one of those people who would do what the President asked him to do. If you wanted him to be ambassador-at-large, he would do that; if you wanted him to be Under Secretary, he'd do that; if you wanted him to be Assistant Secretary, he'd do that. I remember calling him once when he was in Europe to ask if he would become Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, and he said yes. Then about an hour later he called me back and said, "I told you I would become Assistant Secretary, but I forgot which one you wanted me to be." It didn't make any difference to him. So he was a man who was available to a President. He was a great public servant with a lot of ability and experience, and he had no false sense of pride or position and was willing to turn his hand to whatever chore the President wanted him to take on.

O'BRIEN: Well, there's a number of other appointments that take place in those years. How about Phillips Talbot? Is Talbot one of your appointments?

RUSK: I think he was actually brought in initially at the suggestion of Chester Bowles, although I was very enthusiastic about him. Phillips Talbot is a man of considerable ability and great honesty and dedication. He's strongly supported in his job by a very attractive and able wife. He had been involved in academic affairs before, and he had been working with young people on reporting from various countries, the world affairs reports which were circulated among many universities in this country, and had done an outstanding job with



that. I had known him a bit while I was at the Rockefeller Foundation. But he proved to be one of our best appointments.

O'BRIEN: Going around the globe for a moment on some of the other appointments, in Latin America you had some problems finding some effective people.

RUSK: Right.

O'BRIEN: What are the difficulties, let's say, first of all, with a person like [Robert F.] Woodward?

RUSK: Bob Woodward had been a very distinguished career officer concentrating in Latin America. By the time I became Secretary, he had been slowed down considerably by eye trouble, and he seemed to have lost some of his verve and his energy, but he was a very sensible man, a man of good judgment, and a man that everybody respected.  
[Interruption]

My misfortune was that Woodward was coming to the end of his strength while I was Secretary. I wanted to use him because of his expertise in Latin America, and we had rather few really top people with real knowledge of Latin America.

One of our problems in this country is that we have not developed a strong group of experts on Latin America. Even in the universities the Latin American studies are, in general, weaker than Russian studies or Chinese studies or European studies. We have not recruited our best minds for attention to Latin America, so that looking for people with genuine expertise on Latin America with top ability can be a rather frustrating experience at times, and so we've had to convert people to Latin American work from other fields. We don't have a strong generation of Latin American experts from whom we can pick and choose for top leadership in that field. It's one of the facts of our national experience that we have not put Latin America at the top of our priorities, as in my judgment we should.

O'BRIEN: Well, after Woodward goes and, of course, Martin comes in, as I understand it there's a good deal of pressure-- or do you feel any pressure--to push Dick Goodwin into the spot from people like [Ralph A.] Dungan or Schlesinger or other people on the White House side?

RUSK: There was some pressure to put Dick Goodwin in that spot, but I wouldn't have it. I did not feel that Dick Goodwin was up to it in terms of background, personality, expertise, or leadership. Dick Goodwin was an able, facile person. He was a good speechwriter, but on matters of substance he was not a man of originality or great judgment. And I don't believe that he could have given the leadership to our Latin American friends that another kind of person could have given.

Ed Martin was a man of very substantial ability. I took great pleasure later in recommending him to be a career ambassador. He's one of the best of our professional men. He was very strong on economics, and economics was very important in the Latin American field. Ed Martin's chief difficulty was that he didn't suffer fools gladly, and so he caused congressmen and senators occasionally to bristle when he was down there testifying before congressional committees, and he bore the brunt of a good many special interest attacks on the Department of State because he had served in the economic end of the Department. But he was a very competent officer, and I felt that he did us a good job.

O'BRIEN: How [Teodoro] Moscoso and Berle on the Latin American side?

RUSK: Adolf Berle was one of the elder statesmen in the Latin American field. We used him for informal advice from time to time, but he was not available for full-time appointment. His knowledge of Latin America is very considerable, and he had served in Latin American affairs, I think during the Roosevelt Administration, among other things. We called on him for advice from time to time but did not try to get him to take on a full-time job.

Moscoso was a Puerto Rican in whom we had high hopes. He, of course, spoke Spanish as a mother tongue. He was progressive, liberal, forward-looking, energetic, but was not [Interruption] I think Moscoso was impatient and let the bureaucracy get him down. He did not learn the trick of getting the bureaucracy to work for him. He tended to butt his head against the bureaucracy at times, and that's a very frustrating experience.

When people come into government from outside, particularly from business, they frequently come in with the idea that they're going to brush bureaucracy aside, that they're going to get things done, they're not going to tolerate bureaucratic procedures. Well, most of those people usually come

a cropper. The trick is not to resist the bureaucracy but to capture it and to make the bureaucracy work for you, and those who succeed in doing that are the ones who are successful in coming into government from the outside.

O'BRIEN: Is there some thinking, at least, of appointing [Arturo] Morales-Carrion to the position in regard to the ambassador to the OAS?

RUSK: There was some thought given to it but not much because he did not have the background and experience for it.

O'BRIEN: About [deLesseps S.] Shep Morrison? Is he your appointee?

RUSK: I think he was Chester Bowles' discovery. He was not mine; I had not known him before. And he was not a very successful man in that job. He did not have the personal qualities and the depth of understanding that was important for that job. That was not one of our best appointments.

O'BRIEN: Well, passing over to the international affairs side and the appointment of Cleveland, does Cleveland work out as an effective man for liaison with Stevenson?

RUSK: Yes, Harlan Cleveland was one of the ablest men we had in government during the Kennedy years. He was not a Kennedy man in the type sense; he was not one of the Kennedy cabal. As a matter of fact, he and Bobby Kennedy did not get along very well because Cleveland had some very harsh things to say to Bobby Kennedy during the campaign up in New York and Bobby Kennedy had not forgotten it. But Harlan Cleveland was a man who was willing to take responsibility, willing to make decisions and live with the results. He was a strong man in every sense of the word. He ran a good shop; he had good men around him; he was a productive officer in the sense of always being on top of the job, on top of the problem. He once told me that his rule of thumb

in what he would refer to me was that if he knew what my answer would be he wouldn't even ask me, but if he had any doubt in his mind about what my answer would be he'd come to see me. But he was one of those who was willing to occupy the horizon of their responsibility. He was not timid about accepting responsibility. And he did a brilliant job on the U.N. job in the Department and was a very able Ambassador to NATO.

O'BRIEN: Does he ever have any problems in his relations with the White House in that?

RUSK: Only at the very junior level at times, but no problems with McGeorge Bundy or with President Kennedy.

O'BRIEN: Does Williams, G. Mennen Williams, offer any problems?

RUSK: I expected some problems with him because his appointment had been announced before mine, and I didn't know what was going to happen with this energetic politician from the state of Michigan who had served as Governor of Michigan for many years and who probably had had aspirations to be a Cabinet officer with President Kennedy. But, in fact, when I got there, I discovered to my delight that Mennen Williams was a very effective and able Assistant Secretary for Africa. He was interested in the area. He had a very liberal and progressive mind. He was a good administrator. And he and his wife committed themselves toward improving our relations with the countries of Africa and worked indefatigably to do so. He was loyal to the President and to me. I never heard any rumors about any gripes that he made to the press or at Georgetown cocktail parties. He was a thoroughly good, companionable colleague, and I had the highest regard for his performance and was very sorry to see him leave the Department.

O'BRIEN: On the European side, people like, well, Finletter and Merchant and William Tyler.

RUSK: Livingston Merchant had pretty well come to the end of his track by the time I got to the Department as Secretary. I wanted him to stay on. He was a distinguished career ambassador; he had been an Under Secretary during the Eisenhower Administration; he had been my own deputy when I was head of the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs back in the Truman Administration. He was a lonely man, and I wanted very much to have him continue to work for us in the Department of State under the Kennedy Administration, but he had come to the conclusion that the time had come for him to retire, and so he refused to take on any of the jobs that we offered him. He later became our representative on the World Bank. But he had pretty well run out his string by the time I got there. I would have been glad to have used him further.

Tom Finletter was a member of that generation of New Yorkers who played a prominent role in foreign affairs in this postwar period. He was active in political life. He turned out to be a very good Ambassador to NATO. If you looked for a man for such a job you'd find a list of a dozen people that you'd want to consider; people like Jack McCloy and Bob Lovett and Arthur Dean and Tom Finletter would certainly be on the list. Tom was available. He was willing to serve, and so we grabbed him and made use of him in that particular job. And on the whole he did a very good job in NATO.

O'BRIEN: What do you look for? Now, you're talking in terms of looking, what were you looking for for people at the assistant secretarial level?

RUSK: Well, as far as I was concerned, I put a very high premium on the ability and willingness to make decisions because an Assistant Secretary has to make a lot of decisions. It has been reported that the problem in the bureaucracy is a struggle for power. This is not the problem. The problem in a bureaucracy is the evasion of responsibility. There's a great reluctance in the bureaucracy to take action, to make decisions, to stick your neck out, to take responsibility for particular actions. I never once while I was Secretary criticized any colleague for exceeding his authority. My problem was to get my colleagues to fill up the horizons of their responsibility, and so I put great premium on the ability to come to conclusions and to take action.

Then I think a second characteristic was that of loyalty

to the President. A President is entitled to have under him colleagues who follow his policy and maintain solidarity with him through good days and bad. And I always resented those who whined about actions taken by the President because I felt that whether you agree with the President or not you had a constitutional responsibility to support him, and if you weren't prepared to do that you should leave government, and get out of office. And so that issue of loyalty was very important in my mind.

Willingness to look at new ideas and alternatives, changes of policy, flexibility, was also important because we were heading into a period, as I felt at the time, of considerable change in world affairs, and it would be necessary for the United States to make some changes in its policy. So availability was an important consideration in my mind. And then the personal qualities of responsibility and integrity and dedication were also very important.

Availability turned out to be one of the important considerations. There were a number of people that you would have liked to have had in office who simply were not available, could not be had, and so whether a man was able and willing to serve was very important. For example, Henry Cabot Lodge came to me once during the Kennedy period, and although he had been the vice-presidential standard-bearer for the Republican party in a bitter political campaign, he told me that he had some more public service in his system and that he would be available if we needed him on something, provided the job was tough. He did not want an easy job. And so he made it clear to me that he would be available for a tough job. Well, therefore he went to Vietnam, which was tough enough for anybody. But one appreciates the fact that people become available because there are so many people who simply won't take the sacrifices that are involved in public service, to drop what they're doing and actually pitch in and help.

O'BRIEN: Well, in regard to the congressional relations of the Department and this post of Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, I understand you have a lot of difficulties with that, first of all with Brooks Hays and then, well, [Frederick G.] Dutton comes in. How does Dutton work out?

RUSK: The congressional relations jobs is one of the most important jobs in the Department and is a thankless job. The Department of State and the President have no money, no men, no resources, except those made available to them by the Congress. And a great deal of our foreign policy turns crucially upon the willingness of the Congress to legislate in support of that foreign policy, whether it's foreign aid or whatever it might be. But the Congress looks with suspicion upon the Department of State. The Department of State is dealing with that part of our public affairs that we can't control. The Congress and the Supreme Court and the President among them can pretty well decide what we do in our domestic affairs here at home, but when we look abroad we are dealing with a world that doesn't respond to our commands, it's a world in which a hundred and thirty other governments are also making decisions. So the Department of State is the Department of Bad News as far as the Congress is concerned. It's dealing with secrets; the Congress doesn't like secrets. It's dealing with issues of war and peace, and that's always very dangerous and people shy away from it. And the Department of State signifies to the Congress those constitutional prerogatives of the President with which the Congress always wants to wrestle. There's a tension between the President and the Congress in the conduct of foreign relations, which is built into our constitutional system, and the Department of State bears the brunt of this tension between these two branches of government.

Well, now, Brooks Hays had been a very decent and cooperative congressman--he had been defeated down in his home state--and I thought and President Kennedy thought that he would be a good man to be our congressional relations man. I went down to see Speaker Sam Rayburn to talk to him about this, and I'll never forget Sam Rayburn's reply. He said, "Mr. Secretary, you still are a young man, and you're young enough to learn something, so let me tell you something. When a man is defeated, down here he's dead. Don't ever suppose that a congressman who has been defeated has any influence with the Congress." And Sam Rayburn's judgment was that this would be a mistake, but despite that President Kennedy decided to appoint Brooks Hays as our congressional liaison man. And

Brooks Hays is a sweet, gentle, lovable man with the best of intentions in the world, with limited ability, who did not succeed in getting on top of the substance of policy. He was weak on the kinds of things that congressmen and senators wanted to talk to him about. He had an interminable storehouse of witty stories, funny stories--he was a great raconteur--but he never got himself in charge of policy questions, and so he did not work out very well. We had to make a change there.

Fred Dutton was more successful in his relations with Congress. He had been in political life out in California; he knew the political process; he was a Kennedy man; he was capable of getting on top of substantive policy questions, and on the whole did a very good job for us as congressional liaison man.

BEGIN SIDE I TAPE II

O'BRIEN: Does the White House staff, particularly I'm thinking here of [Lawrence F.] Larry O'Brien or [Kenneth P.] Kenny O'Donnell, or Larry O'Brien, particularly, and his particular relationship with Congress--does he ever come in on particular issues for State?

RUSK: Larry O'Brien was very helpful in our relations with Congress. He supported the Administration's policy and helped us with our legislative programs. I don't recall that we ever had any difficulty with him. Among the White House staff I had a great regard for [Theodore C.] Teddy Sorensen, Ted Sorensen. He was a very able and responsible officer who understood the processes of government and the position of the President and the position of Cabinet officers, was always helpful and was an astute speech writer, a good counselor, and I always valued my relations with Ted Sorensen. Ralph Dungan was a little more mercurial. Sometimes things worked out well with him, but sometimes he would go behind the scenes and try to interfere with the recommendations for appointments and things of that sort, so I had mixed feelings about Ralph Dungan. But in general, the White House staff was entirely cooperative during my period. I don't recall any real bitterness or any real fights that developed with members of the White House staff. We had a good and effective working relationship with McGeorge Bundy, and that smoothed the way as far as the White House staff was concerned.



O'BRIEN: I was thinking of one thing that you mentioned here in regard to Dungan and appointments; Dungan attempted to interfere with--and I don't understand the general context of it--but something in regard to Eleanor Dulles at one time. Was it the State Department trying to. . . . Was it Eleanor Dulles that . . .

RUSK: I forget what role Ralph Dungan played in that matter. My own personal inclination was to give Eleanor Dulles a chance to retire gracefully from government. After all, she had been the sister of a Secretary of State, and she had served well in German and Berlin affairs over a period of two decades. I felt that her public service had earned for her a decent and graceful exit from government, and I wasn't going to throw her out peremptorily or arbitrarily, and I kept her on longer than would normally be the case simply because she was a sister of my friend John Foster Dulles. There was some lifting of eyebrows in government about this, and some in the White House, I suspect, but I just don't remember the details of it.

O'BRIEN: What do you recall of your contacts with Congressman [John J.] Rooney?

RUSK: On the whole I had pretty good relations with Congressman Rooney. In the first place, I myself was opposed to the indefinite increase in the numbers of people working in the Department of State. I think the record will show that when I left the office of Secretary of State there were some three hundred and fifty fewer people in the Department of State than there was when I became Secretary. I did not believe that the solution to a problem was simply to add a lot more people, so I resisted the bureaucratic inclination to grow and grow and grow. Rooney sensed this, and, indeed, he saw it in our budget presentations and appreciated it, and so we had pretty good luck with Rooney on the normal basic funds required for the staffing of the Department of State.

Where we ran into trouble with John Rooney was on such things as USIA and the cultural exchange program. Rooney just had the bit in his teeth about the cultural exchange program and slashed it far below what the Department or Bill Fulbright or others thought was reasonable, and he gave the USIA operation

a very rough time. But on the whole he would get out on the floor of the House of Representatives and fight for respectable budgets for the Department of State. We came within a few percentage points of our requests most of the time with Congressman Rooney.

O'BRIEN: The question of Executive privilege comes up a number of times, particularly when the [Strom] Thurmond subcommittee begins to question the problem of clearances of speeches, particularly of Defense people. What's the President's feelings about Executive privilege and exempting people like yourself and, particularly, George Ball from going before the Congress?

RUSK: My experience with President Kennedy and President Johnson was that they reserved in the back of their minds the ultimate use of Executive privilege but were very reluctant to exercise it. I was always on notice that I myself should never invoke Executive privilege without the prior clearance of the President because both President Kennedy and President Johnson were very reluctant to raise this constitutional issue in their relations with Congress. I myself never refused an invitation to come to a committee or a subcommittee of the Congress or, indeed, breakfast clubs with congressmen or any informal group of senators or congressmen who wanted me to come down and talk with them about any foreign policy problem. I tried to make myself available to them at all times. Later in the Johnson Administration I did have a little hassle with Bill Fulbright about whether a particular hearing would be public or not, but I always felt it was the duty of the Secretary of State to make himself available to the Congress for any purposes for which they wanted him. So the Executive privilege never came up about my actual appearance before a committee or subcommittee of Congress.

The chief point at which it could come up would be in the revelation of documents. Sometimes congressional committees would try to insist upon seeing documents that were internal business of the Executive department and they might bear upon what advice Cabinet officers give to the President. Well, that's very sensitive material on which any President ought to be ready to invoke Executive privilege because a President ought to be in a position to get advice of any sort from his Cabinet officers without having that divulged to the Congress or to the public.

But I think during the Kennedy Administration that did not get to be much of a problem except in my case with the [Otto F.] Otepka situation. There was a case where an officer of the Department of State was feeding information to a committee of the Congress contrary to an Executive order of the President, and my view as Secretary of State was that so long as I was Secretary the officers of the Department of State were going to comply with Executive orders of the President. Otepka bootlegged personnel information to a committee of the Congress, and I had to take action with respect to it. That did not get to the point of Executive privilege, although it was closely related to the issue of Executive privilege.

O'BRIEN: Executive privilege comes up particularly in this regard to the clearances of speeches of Defense people by the State Department. What is the substance of that?

RUSK: I'm not clear that this was an issue of Executive privilege as between the President and the Congress but rather the desire of the President to be sure that foreign policy speeches were cleared by the State Department. We could have had considerable difficulty if officers of other departments and agencies of government would go out in the country making speeches about foreign policy that did not conform to the foreign policy of the President, and so the State Department had the basic responsibility of clearing such speeches for other departments. I don't recall that issues of clearance ever came up to me as Secretary. Those were usually worked out down the line at the lower echelons of the Department.

Once in a while somebody would make a speech that did not conform to foreign policy. For example, Justice [William O.] Douglas used to go off and make speeches about China and other questions that intruded upon the responsibilities of the Secretary of State. I had a private understanding with Chief Justice [Earl] Warren that if it became necessary for me to attack Justice Douglas for some of his foreign policy speech-making that this would not be interpreted as an attack on the Supreme Court, and Chief Justice Warren made it clear that he did not think that Justice Douglas was acting in his proper role as a Justice of the Supreme Court in making speeches about the recognition of mainland China.

But in general I think we had pretty good success during the Kennedy Administration in maintaining the solidarity of the government in support of established policy. I think the historian will find very few instances where officers of the government made speeches that were contrary to policy or press speculation and rumors about divisions within government on foreign policy questions. And I'm particularly proud of that as between the Department of State and the Department of Defense because there just were not issues on which the Department of Defense and the Department of State were wrestling with each other in public about policy questions.

O'BRIEN: Passing on to press relations, you have problems within the public affairs office with Roger Tubby, as I understand, rather soon.

RUSK: Well, Roger Tubby was just not up to the job. Roger Tubby was in government at the behest of President Truman, and President Truman always intervened to be sure that Roger Tubby had an appropriate post in government. We moved Roger Tubby from the press office to Geneva where he was in charge of our Geneva office accredited to the United Nations, and he served there for a long number of years.

Press relations are one of the most important responsibilities of the Secretary of State. The public has to be regularly and fully informed about what we're doing in foreign affairs, and the Secretary of State carries a considerable responsibility in helping in that process. There is a built-in tension between the press and government in the conduct of foreign relations. Inevitably government has to operate in confidence in a good many situations. There are a lot of temporary secrets in government--not many permanent secrets--but from day to day there are a number of things, such as the content of discussions with other governments and exchange of notes and things of that sort, which for one reason or another have to be withheld from public examination. The press is committed to the proposition that everything ought to be known, and so you have a very accomplished and able press corps in Washington probing constantly in the Department of State for information that can be given to the public.

The press is not interested in 90 percent of the work of the Department of State because 90 percent of the work of the Department of State is the quiet business of making agreements and ordering world affairs and achieving serenity and eliminating problems and things of that sort. The press is interested in that part of it which is controversial. [Interruption]

. . . interested in that part of public affairs which is filled with violence and controversy and disagreement and sensationalism, and that greatly complicates the problem of the Department of State in giving a fair picture of foreign affairs to the American public.

Then there have been some changes in the press in this post-war period that have a bearing on foreign policy. Television news pretty well takes care of spot news. This drives the written press to predictions, to stories about the future, what's going to happen next. The historian will discover that if he examines my press conferences over a period of eight years that 85 to 90 percent of the questions that I got had to do with the future. That put me in the position of a prophet. Now, I couldn't just answer 90 percent of the questions that came to me with a "damned if I know." It was up to me to try to respond as responsibly as possible to their inquiries, but there were times when my statements about the future did not work out because events just didn't move in the way in which I thought they would move, and that had something to do with the so-called credibility gap. But the pressure is on what comes next not on what happened yesterday or the day before, and that creates problems of explanation and interpretation.

Then in this postwar period there's been a great multiplication of specialty writers, by-line writers, columnists. Now, they make their living by writing unusual pieces. If they were to write simply what John Hightower of the Associated Press or Stewart Hensley of the United Press writes about a particular thing, nobody would read them, so they're got to find the odd angle, the special twist, the unusual development. And so there's a great pressure on the specialty writers to say something different, and this leads to a distortion in reporting which is very pronounced.

Then there are some of these specialty writers who try their best to establish special sources of information from which they can draw material that other reporters don't draw, don't get. I have had a newspaperman sit in my office and offer me good treatment in his writing if I would make available to him special sources of information. Now, my view is that that was direct bribery, attempted bribery, and I threw him out of my office.

But I adopted two rules with regard to the press that I think I never violated. One was that I would never lie to the press, I would be silent, but so far as I can recall I've never lied to the press. The second rule was that I would never say to one reporter what I would not say to another reporter who asked me the same question. Now, I might reward initiative by answering a reporter who happened to ask me a particular question, but if another reporter asked me the same question I would give him the same answer, so that I was not a source of information for your columnists or your special by-line writers on any scoop basis. I didn't have any under the rug arrangements with anybody in giving out information.

I don't think there will ever be a resolution of this tension between the press and the Department of State. I think it's built into the responsibilities of both, and I would hope that no attempt would ever be made to form a treaty on the subject because the presence of a vigorous and inquiring press is a very great guarantee of democratic process in our country.

O'BRIEN: How did your backgrounders work out as instruments of, well, educating the American people on our foreign policy and telling the press about various problems?

RUSK: In general, I held backgrounders at the request of the reporters themselves. This idea that somehow you invade the prerogatives of the reporter by a backgrounder is something that doesn't apply to me because I didn't have backgrounders except when the reporters themselves wanted one. In general, I think the background technique is a useful one, provided it is not abused. I don't believe backgrounders should be used to float trial balloons. I don't think you should use the press for devious diplomatic purposes. I think you should be honest with the press on things of that sort, but there are occasions when you can give the press for

their own information and depth of understanding more information than you could give them in a public session. I used to try to tell particularly the American press what was really involved in various issues by these Friday After-noon background conferences.

Actually, very little of foreign policy is secret. I mentioned earlier these thousand cables that go out in the course of a day. I suppose 95 percent of those are about business which could be made available to the public. The trouble is that the press is not interested in serenity or agreement. They're looking for blood, and particularly the television news is looking for the dramatic development which has an entertainment value rather than what might be important from a foreign policy point of view. And that creates a major distortion in television news.

I was blessed during President Kennedy's Administration with the fact that President Kennedy himself was superb in his press conferences. He was well briefed; we spent a lot of time with him before a press conference in getting him up to date on almost any question that could be asked. He was facile in his answers; he was humorous and had a nice style about him in dealing with the press conference; and that greatly eased the problem of the Secretary of State in having press conferences about some of the same subjects. President Johnson was not so happy about press conferences as was President Kennedy.

O'BRIEN: Well, when you replace Tubby, who were some of the people that came into consideration for that post? Did you try to get Elie Abel?

RUSK: I don't think we tried to get Elie Abel. Let me see, I think we replaced Tubby with Robert Manning, didn't we?

O'BRIEN: Right.

RUSK: Robert Manning and [James L.] Jim Greenfield served well in that capacity for a very special reason. Both Manning and Greenfield tried to educate the Department of State on the needs of the press; they were not

just there to fend off attacks from the press or difficult questions from the press. They tried to improve the understanding of the Department of State about the legitimate interests of the press in foreign policy, and I think that led us to a much more relaxed relationship with the press than had been true in some occasions in the past. But I think we were well served by Bob Manning and Jim Greenfield. I was sorry to see both of them leave, but they left when other opportunities outside came up. Both of them were completely loyal to the President and to the Secretary of State but also had a deep understanding of what was bugging the press and deadlines and lead stories and things of that sort, so, in general, I think I was well served by the men in my press section.

O'BRIEN: Manning was given rather wide access, too, to some of the things that were going on in the Department.

RUSK: Oh, yes. He had a regular flow of the cables, and I would meet with him frequently to bring him up to date on what was happening, so we kept our press people pretty well informed, even though we had to tell them that such and such would not be available to the press but they should know it for their own private information. We tried to protect our press officers against inadvertent lies to the press. We wanted to insure their credibility with the press by not letting them be trapped by inaccurate information. Now there were times when they themselves had to be silent and where they couldn't actually talk about something, but in general it worked out pretty well.

O'BRIEN: There is a concern both in the Department and in the White House over leaks to the press for various reasons. What did you do to attempt to, you know, prevent some of the more serious things, leaks that were really interfering with the diplomacy of the United States at particular points?

RUSK: That is a very difficult problem, and I think it has been, if I may say so, exaggerated. A smart newspaperman, a man like Murray Marder or Chalmers Roberts or John Hightower or Stewart Hensley, who follow the Department



of State every day and who follow the development of foreign affairs, get to be very expert. We have one of the most expert press corps in Washington that you would find anywhere in the world. And frequently these fellows can themselves guess what is going on, and when they write it on the basis of a guess, it sounds like a leak because a competent press man can often be right on the mark in his own hunches as to what is happening. We had occasions when we laid on investigations to try to find out who had leaked. That is a fruitless exercise. You never find out who leaks when you try to investigate it, and part of it is because the press is very skillful in concealing their sources.

Now, for a time we tried to require a memoranda of conversations with members of the press. Everybody else in the world who comes in the Department of State to talk about something is subject to a memorandum of conversation when he leaves. It's only the press that claims the privilege of having conversations which are not recorded in memoranda of conversations, and that's one of these overreaching aspects of the press which is sometimes disagreeable. But we soon dropped that because it was time-consuming and was futile. A man is not going to put in a memorandum of conversation that he leaked an essential element of information to a member of the press.

The press has many ways of ferreting out information. [James B.] Scotty Reston used what I might call the bedside manner. He would come in, and he would say, "Mr. Secretary, I just don't see how you carry the burdens you carry, with all the things you have on your mind how you possibly stand up under it." Your temptation is to say, "Well, Scotty, you don't know the half of it. Let me tell you the rest of it," and the first thing you know he's got a story. Or a man like [Joseph W.] Joe Alsop would come in with a bludgeon. He would come in charging you with something completely outrageous that would infuriate you, and your temptation is to say, "Well, now, damn you, Joe. You just don't know what you're talking about. Let me straighten you out." And when you've straightened him out, he's got his story. Then there are others who do a real detective job. They go from place to place, officer to officer, concentrating on one little bit or piece of information, and they will rely upon silence or a wise look or something of that sort, and by the time they see a dozen officers they've got the story pretty well put together. There are many ways in which skillful press people can worm information out of the Department of State.

Then there's also the problem that a good many officers in the Department of State are reluctant to confess that they don't know, and therefore in order to demonstrate that they do know, they say things that they ought not to say. Or sometimes you'll find an officer who wants to play the big shot. He wants to let it be known that he's the fellow who's really carrying the ball, and he will say things to the press that should not be said. But I think this is a game that is built into the system, will always be played. And the problem on the part of the press is to try to get the story, and the problem on the part of the Department of State is to keep its mouth shut when it needs to keep its mouth shut. And this will always reflect some human frailty, and there will be mistakes from time to time.

President Kennedy used to leak a good deal himself. There were times when I laid on an investigation to run down the source of a leak and discovered that it was the President who had leaked, and so I became rather thick-skinned about charges from the White House that the State Department had leaked a particular piece of information.

O'BRIEN: In terms of good reporting, particularly during the Kennedy years, who were some of the better reporters and some of the better examples of reporting, as you recall, and, you know, in terms of fairness and accuracy?

RUSK: Well, as far as I'm concerned the two ablest and most responsible reporters were John Hightower of the Associated Press and Stewart Hensley of the United Press. They had no particular fish to fry. They were serving large numbers of newspapers right around the world, and their primary object was to get the responsible truth so that they had no interest in the offbeat aspects of a problem. They were trying to get the straight story, and they were under great pressure to produce the straight news without editorial interlacing. They were protected from editorializing because they served so many different papers with so many different points of view that they could not satisfy their clients if they did editorialize, and so in terms of straight reporting, the wire services were the most reliable.

Now, in terms of papers, I think in general the Christian Science Monitor, the Washington Post, the New York Times, and others have tried to give a straightforward account of what was going on, but in the case of the New York Times and even the Washington Post there was always a premium on getting a story that nobody else had. And this is the pressure that creates distortions. Somebody will get hold of an offbeat remark or an offbeat aspect and play that into a main story in order to get his story printed. [Interruption]

O'BRIEN: The other side of the coin, some of the bad jobs of reporting, particularly in the Kennedy years. Do you recall anything that stands out in memory that was particularly bad? I've heard two that were not particularly good: [Max] Frankel on Vietnam and also, apparently, a rather bad leak or premature disclosure of the wheat agreements. Do either one of those. . . .

RUSK: I don't recall those particularly. We always had some problems with Vietnam because reporters out there develop their own policy attitudes. A distinguished publisher visited Vietnam and came back and called on me and was shaking his head about this. He said that there are too many reporters in Vietnam that are acting like the Secretary of State. He said they are developing their own policies about Vietnam and are not reporting the facts. We had a good many reporters in Vietnam who took a very special attitude toward Vietnam in one way or another during the Kennedy period as well as during the Johnson period. It's very hard to meet that because they're printed in responsible newspapers and there's a tendency to believe the written word, so you're always confronted with that problem.

Now, another thing that happens is that a good many of our papers and wire services use local stringers for reporting. During the violence in Panama, for example, our wire services were using Panamanian stringers, and it was not until about forty-eight hours later that we got some American reporters down there to begin reporting from other than a Panamanian point of view, and yet there was no indication when these stories were published by the AP and the UP that the stories were in fact written by local Panamanian citizens. The best solution

would be for American wire services to rely upon American reporters wherever they happened to be, but for economic reasons they use local stringers, and sometimes this creates a distortion that is hard to overtake.

O'BRIEN: Well, passing on the office which was directly responsible to you, that of the Executive Secretariat. . .  
[Interruption] Well, we were talking about the functioning of the Executive Secretariat during the Kennedy Administration. You had a number of people in there, Battle and later [Benjamin H.] Ben Read.

RUSK: Ben Read. The Executive Secretariat is an extremely sensitive and indispensable part of the apparatus of the Department of State. It's the primary tool of the Secretary in administering the Secretary's own job. The Executive Secretary can always open the door of the Secretary's office and come in without knocking. He has access at all times, whether day or night. He is the principal liaison between the Secretary of State and the White House, the McGeorge Bundy-Walt Rostow job. He is the custodian of the most secret communications with other governments, the so-called pen pal letters between the President of the United States and the Chairman of the Soviet Union. He is responsible to the Secretary for seeing that urgent matters are handled in time, that the bureaus come up with the answers in a timely fashion and with adequate coordination. He is responsible for the flow of papers across the Secretary's desk, so that I would say that almost even more than the Under Secretary the Executive Secretary is the linchpin of the leadership of the Secretary of State of the Department of State. I was very fortunate in having Luke Battle and Ben Read on that job because they were both extraordinarily able people and had a great sense of organization and process. I don't believe the Secretary's office could function without something like the Executive Secretary right at its elbow handling the business of the Department of State.

O'BRIEN: Did they ever have a follow-up capacity as far as the implementation of decisions at either the presidential or the secretarial level in terms of policy?

RUSK: Yes, when I would have a conference with the President I would come back and give to my Executive Secretary the decisions that came out of that conference, and it would be up to him to see that those decisions were carried out in the Department. If there was a conference with the President on a particular subject, the Executive Secretary would be responsible for getting out of the Department the briefing papers that I needed for my conversation with the President. This was not the case during the Kennedy Administration, but during the Johnson Administration the Executive Secretary provided me with the agenda for the famous Tuesday luncheons. If we had a National Security Council meeting, the Executive Secretary would know what was going to be on the agenda, would know what my responsibilities would be at the NSC meeting, and would see that the briefing papers were available. The Executive Secretary in fact was simply a part of the Secretary himself and could not be separated from him and at the same time did not inject his own personal independent ideas about policy into the process. He was a eunuch as far as policy was concerned; he concentrated solely on the process by which policy is elicited and formed. I don't know how the Secretary's office could operate without the Executive Secretary.

O'BRIEN: Did Battle and Read both keep that kind of objectivity and aloofness from getting involved in some of the philosophical as well as the political implications of policy?

RUSK: Yes. I don't recall that either Battle or Ben Read ever came in to me to make a pitch about any particular point of policy. They did not inject their own policy views into the process at all. I think that would have distorted the process very considerably had they done so. And they never came between me and Assistant Secretaries, for example. They never tried to divert the policy recommendations that came up from below. Their business was to see that the business flowed and flowed on time, and this was a twenty-four hour a day occupation. Luke Battle and Ben Read worked longer and harder than almost anybody in the Department of State.

O'BRIEN: Did either of them ever have any difficulty with the White House, any major differences with the White House or any major problems that came up at the White House--or on the other end?

RUSK: Only on those occasions when there was some problem between me and the White House, and in which case the Executive Secretary was on my side. If some proposal went to the President from some other Cabinet officer that involved an important foreign policy consideration on which I had not been heard, the Executive Secretary would just raise hell with the staff at the White House until my views were introduced into the problem, so that the Executive Secretary was the general watch dog of the process of foreign policy formulation and execution in the government of the United States. And it was a very responsible, thankless, and anonymous job.

O'BRIEN: Did the White House have any follow-up kind of function within the Bundy staff on the implementation of decisions that was visible to you, as to seeing, you know, how they were carried out, right on down to the operations level?

RUSK: Yes. When we had meetings with the President to talk about a particular problem and decisions emerged from that meeting, McGeorge Bundy and later Walt Rostow would check with the Departments--usually the Executive Secretary in my case, sometimes with me personally--to see whether in fact the decisions that had been taken had been understood and whether actions were being put in course to carry out those decisions. One of the functions of the McGeorge Bundy-Walt Rostow job was that job of follow-up to be sure that there was common understanding as to what in fact had been decided by the President. And very seldom were there any difficulties or differences on this matter. It was one of the ways in which the President could follow up himself on what he had decided to do. This never created any friction or resentment or anything of that sort; it was a perfectly normal part of the operation.

O'BRIEN: Do you see any new ground being broken in your relations with some of these associated agencies of the State Department? I'm thinking here of

USIS [United States Information Service], which is a long-established one, and then the creation of ACDA [Arms Control and Disarmament Agency] in the Kennedy Administration.

RUSK: I had associated with me a family of agencies that had a direct impact on foreign relations: AID, USIS, ACDA (the disarmament agency), and the Peace Corps. My general approach to these four agencies was to let the heads of those agencies run their own show without undue interference from me. I tried to delegate as much responsibility as possible to those semi-autonomous agencies, and in general that worked very well. Sometimes the Department of State would become restless about actions of these various agencies, and once in a while there would be some difference between my colleagues in the Department of State and one or another of these agencies which would come to my desk for resolution. But the heads of these agencies came to my morning meetings. I had frequent consultations with them and I was on the phone with them quite a lot, but in general my attitude was to let them run their own show so long as they were running it without creating problems for the President and the Secretary of State. And in general I had good success in that. I was fortunate in having able administrators of these various agencies that knew how to conform to policy and to conduct their operations in a way that was agreeable to the President.

I was particularly fortunate in having Sargent Shriver as head of the Peace Corps. He was a very dynamic leader, very stimulating, very intelligent, very understanding. And I left him for weeks on end without any interference from me at all, and I took the view that if he ran the Peace Corps in a way that would create no problems for the foreign policy of the United States that I'd leave him alone, let him do it. I would give him help when he wanted it, such as in testimony before the Congress and things of that sort, and once in a while I'd have to take up a Peace Corps problem with some foreign minister, but, in general, these autonomous agencies operated in a reasonably autonomous fashion.

Now, the USIS was the external spokesman for the government of the United States to the rest of the world, and that required daily guidance from the Department of State to USIS about what line to take, so we had in our public affairs section a group of people who were charged with giving daily guidance to USIS about policy. And that in general worked out pretty well. And I don't recall that we ever had any major incidents during the Kennedy Administration where USIS jumped the track and went

off on a different line than they were expected to take on foreign policy issues.

We had regular problems with the AID administration because the Department of State was always trying to extract more from AID than AID had. The combined demands of the Department of State from the various geographic bureau on AID exceeded the appropriations which AID had gotten from the Congress, and so the director of AID and I had to sit down frequently and make judgments about the priorities, so that we would turn down requests from my own colleagues in the Department of State simply because there wasn't the money. And there were judgments that had to be made on this, and sometimes the judgment of the AID administration would be different than the judgment of the Department of State and the director of AID and I would have to sit down and come to some conclusion on that. Sometimes the President would be involved in such decisions, particularly under President Johnson, not so much under President Kennedy.

O'BRIEN: Is there any fundamental shift that takes place in that relationship between the political and the economic policies and that relationship, particularly of AID policy, between the Kennedy and Johnson Administration? How closely would they associate with political policy? Or is there a debate that goes on in . . .

RUSK: During the Kennedy Administration we had somewhat more funds for foreign aid than we had during the Johnson Administration, and President Kennedy did not try to get into the details of the allocation of funds among different countries. During the Johnson Administration when resources were more limited, President Johnson personally got into aid allocations much more than did President Kennedy. And so there was a period when any aid allocation of more than ten million dollars had to be approved personally by the President--that was during the Johnson period-- but this was partly because of the limited resources with which we were working. The Congress kept the pressure on foreign aid and steadily decreased it, but during the Kennedy period it was much more relaxed because the resources were there and the choices were not so severe.



O'BRIEN: Well, passing over to some problems concerning the, oh, at least one of the minor offices in the Department, the problems of immigration, passports, and visas, this tends to be a sort of holdover, actually, from the Eisenhower years, doesn't it, in staffing and in these terms?

RUSK: I always attached great importance to the processes involving immigration, passports, and visas because there was a field in which the Department of State came into maximum contact with individual citizens. Entry into the United States was a great privilege which lent itself to corruption. There were many people in . . . [Interruption]

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RUSK: There were many people in foreign countries who would pay very handsome fees for a visa to enter the United States, particularly during the period when we had very severe quota limitations and a visa was very difficult to get, so that there was present there in that process the possibility of corruption, and we had to watch that very carefully. We did watch it very carefully, and, in general, we had a pretty clean record on that. As far as passports are concerned, we issued over a million passports a year.

We had in charge of the passport office Frances Knight, who was a controversial figure for some of the liberals around the country. She had been a holdover from the Eisenhower Administration. She had been associated with the Otepka point of view. She was very right wing in her political orientation but she was a very efficient administrator of the passport office. Ninety-eight percent of her work was impeccable because she did in fact turn out passports for American citizens with great efficiency and worked at it very hard. When you got around to policy questions, the other 2 percent of her job, she was rather resistant to the policy of the Secretary of State and the President, so I had one or two occasions when I had to make it clear to her that the head of the Passport Office is not the Secretary of State and had some difficulties with her about that in terms of her attitude when talking with members of Congress and things of that sort. I did not move to remove Frances Knight because

those who were trying to "get" her proceeded in the wrong way and were very awkward and sometimes disreputable in their efforts. I kept my attention focused on the fact that she was a very efficient administrator of the passport office and moved to protect her, even though I did not agree with some of her attitudes on policy questions. But I was very much in favor of the amendments to the immigration law which relieved the racial prejudices in our immigration law very considerably and testified strongly in behalf of the changes. I was always in favor of liberalizing our passport procedures and making them more available and efficient, and Frances Knight was very cooperative on that side of things.

The biggest problem we had was in issuing visas to uncomfortable people, various Communists and various people who regularly needed the United States on its foreign policy, various subversives occasionally would ask for visas to the United States, and we would have a Congressional or other opposition to the issuance of such visas, whereas the law was pretty clear as to the basis on which we would issue visas. And I had to take a certain amount of heat in issuing visas to controversial figures, but I felt that the United States was strong enough and our democracy was strong enough and vital enough to make it possible for us to absorb occasional visitors that might not like what we are doing, and so I tried to maintain a fairly liberal policy on the issuance of visas. I got into certain controversies over that.

O'BRIEN: Do you recall anything from--there are two that I was thinking of particularly, and they sort of contrast in their denials, or at least the questions. The question of Burton's visa at one time, Richard Burton, and the other one was Carlos Fuentes, the Mexican Marxist.

RUSK: Well, back in the 1920's when we denied a visa to Lady [Vera] Cathcart for moral turpitude, Punch magazine in Britain commented that "the Americans have gone to such extraordinary lengths to make themselves appear ridiculous, it would be churlish of us not to concede the success of their efforts." These things can appear to be very important, but in fact, in the overall, looking at the grandeur of the United States, it's undignified for the

United States to take a picayune attitude toward who might come to this country. We're strong enough and vital enough and solid enough to be able to take occasional visitors that cause us difficulties, so my general view was to be liberal on such questions and not to raise undue difficulties. I don't remember the details now of the Burton case or the other one you mentioned, but in general I tried to keep open the visa process.

O'BRIEN: Well, I believe there was some question of moral turpitude on Burton's part and some objection against . . .

RUSK: I think our laws on this subject are pretty antiquated. I think it's ridiculous for us to deny a visa on moral turpitude when we have enough moral turpitude to go around in our own country.

O'BRIEN: Well, there's a number of things in regard to inter-departmental matters and foreign affairs I'd like to go into. This whole question of--while you were Secretary of State, and particularly during the Kennedy years, did you feel that the foreign policy of the United States was really hampered by the fact the Treasury had such a major role in deciding questions of economic policy, and, of course, the balance of payments thing becomes such an important issue in those years?

RUSK: I would have to confess that I looked upon economics as the dismal science, and I tried to delegate economic responsibilities as much as possible to people like George Ball and [Anthony M.] Tony Solomon inside the Department. I did not feel myself expert on economic questions and therefore was reluctant to move into them on any personal basis in any great degree. I think George Ball as Under Secretary worked very closely with Treasury (as did Nick Katzenbach later on), and in general there was harmony between the Treasury Department and the State Department on international economic matters. We accepted in the Department of State the reality of the balance of payments problem, and therefore we did not try to overrun the Treasury on alleged foreign policy grounds when the Treasury came up with essential requirements that were

imposed upon them by the balance of payments situation because the balance of payments situation was a real problem for the President, and it was up to the Department of State to understand and sympathize with this real problem.

I was fortunate in having such colleagues as Douglas Dillon and [Henry H.] Joe Fowler as Secretaries of the Treasury because both of them had a good understanding of foreign policy. Douglas Dillon had been Under Secretary of State. And as a matter of fact, our Treasury Department during my years was determined to take international financial power out of the hands of the private bankers in Zurich and elsewhere and bring such matters under the responsibility of governments. That fitted the attitude of the Department of State very well, so that there was a natural alliance between the Treasury Department and the State Department on these international fiscal problems. I don't recall any knockdown, drag-out fights between myself and the Secretary of the Treasury on international fiscal problems. And I let colleagues such as George Ball handle the details of that in working with the Treasury Department.

O'BRIEN: Did you ever sense in, particularly, the Cabinet meetings and your relations with the other Cabinet members that there's any degree of friction or resentment on the part of the kind of special relationship that a Secretary of State had to a President in terms of importance and in terms of advisory capacities and in terms of influence?

RUSK: One of my problems was that Cabinet colleagues would not speak up in Cabinet meetings about foreign policy questions. They were there in the presence of the President; it was the President's foreign policy; and there was a great reluctance on the part of Cabinet colleagues to raise questions about foreign policy. This did not occur during the Kennedy Administration, but during the Johnson Administration there were two or three Cabinet officers who became opposed to what we were doing in Vietnam but they wouldn't say anything about it. They wouldn't raise a hand in Cabinet meetings and speak to it. They wouldn't call me on the phone; they wouldn't come to see me; they wouldn't write me a letter. They were

silent. Now, if the Cabinet system is to work efficiently, there ought to be a free exchange of views around the Cabinet table, but this did not occur because under our system the Cabinet is the creature of the President and Cabinet officers are very reluctant to challenge the President in a Cabinet meeting or indirectly by taking on a discussion with the other Cabinet officer involved. I regretted this because I think we could have dealt with the problem much more openly and much more fruitfully if, in fact, Cabinet officers who had any reservations gave expression to them. But throughout my term of office I came out of Cabinet meetings feeling that the Cabinet was in agreement with what was being done, and this was because Cabinet members would not speak up, would not stick their necks out.

This is probably built into the very nature of our Cabinet system, because the Cabinet as such does not make decisions. A decision is made by the President in consultation with the relevant Cabinet officers, so that Cabinet meetings on the whole are an informational review of what is being done in one field or another--consultation about legislative programs and things of that sort, exchange of information about policies of the President that ought to be known to all members of the Cabinet--but the Cabinet is not a forum for debate on important policies.

Now, when I seem to criticize some of my Cabinet colleagues for not speaking out, I would have to add that I myself did not intervene with domestic departments on their programs on which I might have had some doubts--the Interior Department or the Labor Department or the Justice Department, things of that sort. I just didn't raise my voice in the Cabinet meeting. It's just in the nature of our particular Cabinet system that Cabinet meetings are rather formal in character and are not really decision-making occasions.

O'BRIEN: Well, one of the departments that has a lot of things that run sort of parallel with State is Interior.

Did you have any difficulties with Interior over the setting of policy--I'm thinking of several areas. Certainly the oil and oil imports is one, and the other--as I understand it, there was a problem with the salinity problem in regard to the Colorado River with, particularly, U.S.-Mexican relations.

RUSK: We had an occasional wrestling session with the Department of the Interior on the setting of oil imports. We felt that we ought to give a fair shake to Venezuela and to Canada in the American market and that, both from national security and foreign policy point of view, we ought not to let the domestic producers exhaust the oil resources of the United States at a time when we could be getting at least some of those oil resources from nearby foreign countries. The Department of the Interior was under great pressure from domestic oil industrial interests, so that there was every two or three years a lively debate between Interior and State about oil imports which the President eventually had to resolve. But in general, Stewart Udall and I worked together very well, and we tried to resolve our problems without having to take them to the President.

What was the other subject you mentioned?

O'BRIEN: The salinity problem of the Colorado in regard to U.S.-Mexican relations.

RUSK: On the salinity problem, the State Department faced the fact that the United States had a bad case. We were, in my judgment, violating the agreements we had with Mexico with respect to salinity content of waters flowing down the Colorado into Mexico. The trouble was that we had a very distinguished Senator from the Southwest who was absolutely adamant on the subject, and he put great pressure on the President and on the Department of Interior on behalf of his own constituency. But this was not a case where the Department of State and the Department of Interior had a real debate between them but where both of them had a real problem with the Senate. And so we responded to that in a somewhat different way, but as far as I was concerned we were in a bad position on this salinity problem. We were failing to comply with reasonable obligations that we had toward Mexico, and I felt that we had to come clean on that, despite the Senator from New Mexico.

O'BRIEN: Last time we talked in terms of the relations between the Vice President and the rest of the Cabinet in those years and, in particular, Robert Kennedy. Would you care to go into that today?

RUSK: I don't think that I personally know all of the elements that went into the relationship between Bobby Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. I assume that Bobby Kennedy did not want Lyndon Johnson to become Vice President, and, of course, the traumatic experience of the assassination of John F. Kennedy created a cleavage between Robert Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson that never healed. It's difficult to speak frankly about a man who himself suffered the same tragedy, as did Robert Kennedy, but my impression of Robert Kennedy was that he was not a liberal, that basically he was very conservative in his point of view. This I derive from his attitude on a good many personnel problems that came up in government. He was ruthless on personnel matters. I had the impression that his liberalism was a political maneuver on his part, rooted in his own personal ambition, and that that brought about a cleavage between him and Lyndon Johnson which was never resolved.

I think the historian will want to think pretty carefully about the difference between John F. Kennedy, the President of the United States, and what later came to be called the Kennedy group, because after John F. Kennedy's death the Kennedy group took points of view on policy which were not those of John F. Kennedy. The historian will want to make a judgment on John F. Kennedy on the basis of what he said and did while he was President of the United States and not on the basis of what Robert Kennedy or [Edward M.] Ted Kennedy or various so-called Kennedy people said about these things after John F. Kennedy was killed.

John F. Kennedy rejected the advice of Arthur Schlesinger and Jerome Wiesner and Kenneth Galbraith and others while he was President of the United States, and I personally don't like to see John F. Kennedy captured by a post-mortem Kennedy cabal which took a very different point of view on the main issues which Kennedy had to face when he was President of the United States. My own personal belief is that Lyndon Johnson carried out the authentic John F. Kennedy policy, and in doing so, he encountered the opposition of some of those who claim to be Kennedy men. And this is one of the things which the historian will have to dig into with some care because it was created a good deal of confusion among the American people.

O'BRIEN: Well, in terms of the personal conflict between the two men, is there any real--well, we talked a little bit about foreign policy. There's been some indication that after Robert Kennedy took his trip to Malaysia in February he came back with certain recommendations which he made to the President in regard to Malaysia and in regard to Indonesia as well and that the President just simply turned him off and that this was a source of conflict which, of course, leads into a number of other things afterwards, including Vietnam. Did you get any insight into these at all?

RUSK: Well, Bobby Kennedy went to Indonesia to see Sukarno to try to move him away from the so-called confrontation with Malaysia. He failed to do so, but when he came back he tried to recommend a policy of accommodation to Sukarno. Well, the pressure of Indonesia on Malaysia was unconscionable. It was against international law; it was against any sense of decency in international relations; it was just not something that could be tolerated as far as the United States was concerned. Sukarno was a crook, and the attempt to play ball with Sukarno was bound to fail because he was a crook. This did lead to some division between Bobby Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson because Lyndon Johnson was not inclined to cater to this strange individual who was in charge of Indonesian affairs at that time.

But I think at the root of the relationship between Bobby Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson was the feeling on the part of Lyndon Johnson that Bobby Kennedy wanted to be President of the United States and Lyndon Johnson did not believe that Bobby Kennedy was qualified to be President of the United States. On that point I agree with Lyndon Johnson. I don't think that Bobby Kennedy had the personal qualities or the experience or the depth of commitment or the ability to be President of the United States. And I think Lyndon Johnson felt that and felt that Bobby Kennedy would nevertheless reach out for the job. And Lyndon Johnson was convinced that this should not happen.

O'BRIEN: Well, in regard to their differences on Vietnam-- of course, we're talking about the later period here--the so-called peace proposals that Bobby Kennedy brings back from Paris in, I believe it was 1966, is this a basically political kind of maneuver on Bobby Kennedy's part as you see it or. . . .



RUSK: I don't think so. I don't think Bobby Kennedy felt that he had any peace proposals from Paris. I think this was more a problem of newspaper speculation because in private contacts Bobby Kennedy did not himself believe that he had anything that was basically new in this situation. I think he let the press play with this a bit, but he didn't bring anything back with him from Paris.

O'BRIEN: We talked a little bit about the Bundy operation in various times as to its operation and its functions. As you see it, going back to, you know, the earlier stages of the Kennedy Administration, why does it develop the way that it does? Is it basically the result of the personality of Bundy, or is it the President's wishes? [Interruption]

RUSK: To start with, McGeorge Bundy is a pretty extraordinary man, a man of great ability, precision of mind, comprehensiveness of information and interest in what's going on in the world, so that wherever he was put he was bound to be a man who would have some influence on affairs. In his job as Special Assistant to the President on National Security Matters, he was at the right hand of the President and therefore had access to the basic source of power in the United States. I always found him to be a very honorable man in his relations with me and in his relations with the President that affected me. I never had the feeling that he was cutting my throat or that he was running behind me to the President to get policies changed without my knowledge. He was articulate, a skilled draftsman, and was very useful to the President in shaping up things for the President's final use. The State Department was never able to draft speeches, statements, toasts, to the satisfaction of President Kennedy--or, for that matter, for President Johnson. The State Department is not filled with articulate people, so that when we sent materials over for the President he would ask McGeorge Bundy to go over them and improve them. And McGeorge Bundy did that with great skill. If the State Department had been capable of producing finished products for the President, I have no doubt that the President would have accepted those without any complaint, but we were not able to. I searched the Foreign Service for articulate people who could do that job for us better and never succeeded in getting the State Department up to the point that I had really wanted it to be. I could not personally try to draft all these things for the President, so this had to be a matter of delegation.

O'BRIEN: Well, there's a number of people that become associated with that operation that I'm sure you had some contact with, people like Carl Kaysen and--well, let's start with Kaysen, for example.

RUSK: I always looked upon people like Carl Kaysen as an ally rather than as a competitor. McGeorge Bundy's staff was made up of people who were generally pretty able, who understood foreign policy matters, and who could help the State Department in the presentation of problems to the President and the preparation of papers and speeches and other matters for the President's attention. I would have been glad to have Carl Kaysen in the Department of State. I would have been glad to have McGeorge Bundy in the Department of State. As a matter of fact, on one occasion I tried to get him as Under Secretary of State, but the President couldn't spare him.

O'BRIEN: How about some of the others like [Robert W.] Komer and Dungan and Mike Forrestal and some of these people?

RUSK: They varied in their capacity and their weight. I think Mike Forrestal did not carry much weight. Ralph Dungan had a good deal of influence with the President and sometimes I had issues with Ralph Dungan about appointments, but I don't recall any major policy issues I had with Ralph Dungan.

I think one way to look at it is to consider the national security staff at the White House as a part of the Department of State because they and we worked together very closely. We had many joint meetings--they always sat in on important meetings that we had--and we came up with what in effect were combined recommendations to the President. I don't recall any instances in which the Department of State made one recommendation and the White House staff clearly made another recommendation, so that the heart of the matter is to be sure that the national security staff in the White House is working closely with the Department of State in the formulation of foreign policy and in recommendations to the President.

Now, there's one activity of the White House staff that was very useful, and that was in coordinating the foreign policy matters with other departments of government. In some cases it would be easier for somebody called the White House to coordinate another department of government than for the State Department to

do so because of sensitivities and pride and bureaucratic self-esteem and things of that sort, and there were times when it was easier for the Department of State to bring another department in line by way of or through the White House staff than by direct approaches from the State Department.

O'BRIEN: Did you have any real problems, though, of meddling in the State Department's business by people in the White House--perhaps Schlesinger, the one person we haven't talked about, Schlesinger?

RUSK: Schlesinger was a fifth wheel. He lived over in the East Wing of the White House with the social secretarie He was in and out of foreign policy questions. He had no systematic or consistant involvement with foreign policy issues or decisions. He was a sort of intellectual-in-residence at the White House. He would on occasion make his views known to the President or to me, but he was rather a humming bird, he would dart in and out.

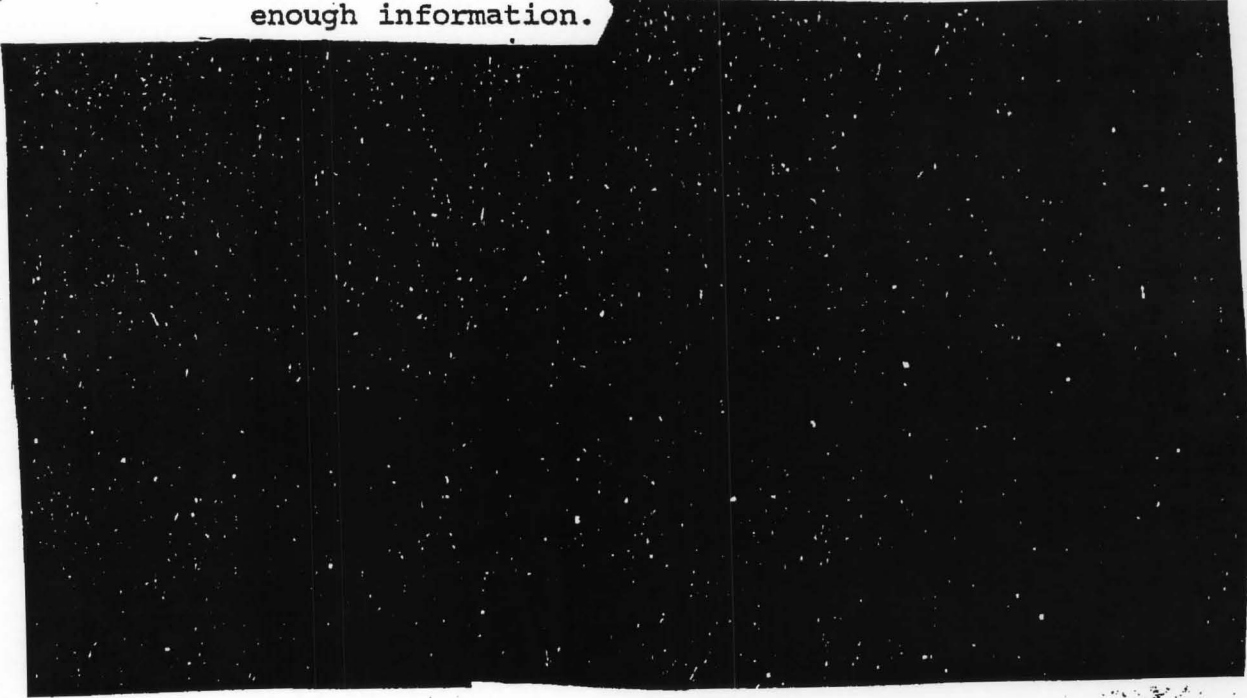
I never had any particular problems with Schlesinger. We used him at times on special occasions. For example, we used to ask Arthur Schlesinger to hold Adlai Stevenson's hand up at the United Nations when things were going in the way that Adlai Stevenson didn't like, and we'd let Arther Schlesinger try to keep Adlai Stevenson on board. But Arthur Schlesinger was never in the mainstream of policy. He was always on the outside fringes, so that he did not play a significant policy role in the Kennedy Administration. Now, he would walk in the rose garden with the President from time to time, and he would probably express his views here and there just as Ken Galbraith would do, but he was never a responsible, consistent, regular participant in foreign policy determination.

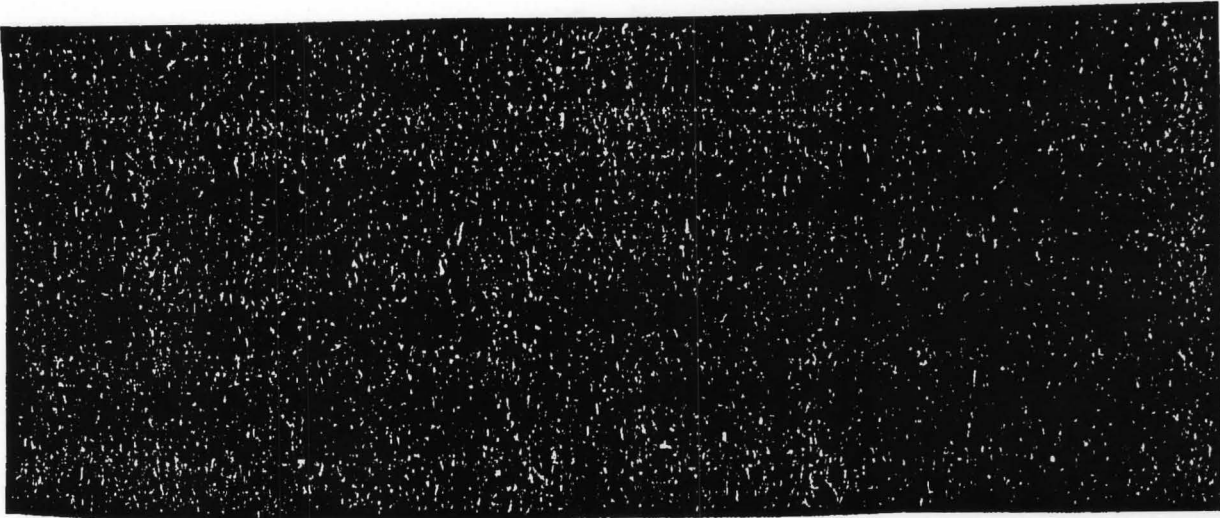
O'BRIEN: There's a number of things that come up in regard to the intelligence community--and, of course, we've talked a good deal about the Bay of Pigs and its impact on the intelligence community. Is this the major thing that goes into the creation of the DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency] in those years?

RUSK: No, I think DIA came into existence because Secretary McNamara came to the conclusion that the intelligence activities of the Department of Defense ought to be unified and this should be done in a way that would keep the Defense Department as a member of the intelligence community. So he unified the intelligence activities of his own department, and then DIA became an essential part of the intelligence community presided over by the director of CIA. But that was largely an internal Pentagon matter which Bob McNamara worked out and did not particularly involve the Department of State.

O'BRIEN: In your own role as Secretary of State and also as the State Department being a major consumer of intelligence, did you perceive, on assuming the role of Secretary of State in 1961, any problem--now I'm not talking in terms of operations, but I'm talking in terms of intelligence--of getting the information that you need to make foreign policy decisions? Does this whole network of the NSA [National Security Agency], the CIA, the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation], in a sense, offer any real stumbling blocks or problems for the Department?

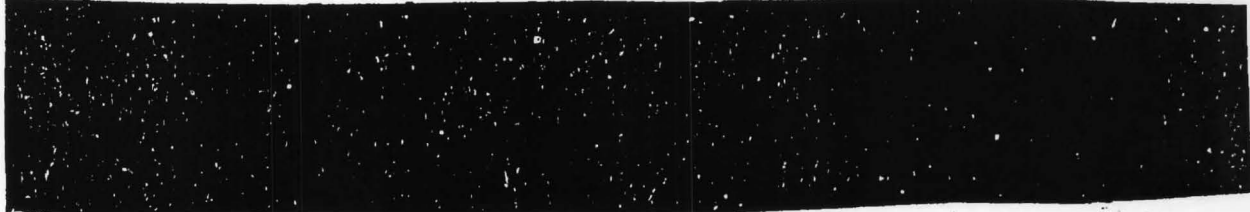
RUSK: Well, one of our problems was that we never had enough information.





O'BRIEN: In regard to Cuba, there's something that's rather interesting that's come up in the last week. ABC [American Broadcasting Company] News had a news release about a week ago which stated that the assassinated German Ambassador, [Karl] von Spreti, been active in--in fact, had departed from Cuba and come to the United States in 1962 with information regarding the presence of Soviet missiles within Cuba and had. . . . Well, the gist of the broadcast went that he had contacted intelligence sources in the United States while he was here and informed them of it, but they had given him the impression they were not too concerned. And he had made contact with Senator [Kenneth B.] Keating and then fed information to Keating. Does this . . .

RUSK: I was very much interested in that report. I saw it. I don't recall anything about it at the time. I don't recall at the time that the German Ambassador in Cuba had come to this country and had offered information about missiles in Cuba. Now, this could have happened; I just don't know. If so, it was lost down the line in the process because it never came to my attention while I was Secretary of State. [Interruption]



O'BRIEN: Well, what went into the selection of John McCone as head of the CIA? Did you get involved in that at all?

RUSK: Not particularly. I had known about John McCone when he was at the atomic energy agency, but I don't recall that I played any personal role in that. It may have been that Bob McNamara had played some role in that, I just don't know, but I remember being asked about it and I had no objections to it, but I don't recall any personal participation in it. [Interruption]

O'BRIEN: Well, in reading over the interviews as well as some of the State Department things which were made available to me, there is an indication that as early as 1961, particularly in regard to Vietnam, that the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs were suggesting that it would take a major, substantial troop effort, an involvement of U.S. troops, in order to stop the insurgency which was going on at that point in Vietnam. Do you recall anything at that point about the judgments which were made in regard to troops and some of the suggestions which were bantered around?

RUSK: The first question about troops in Southeast Asia came up in regard to Laos, because when we first took office in 1961, Laos was the scene of the greatest disturbance and the Pathet Lao and the North Vietnamese were moving very vigorously in Laos. President Kennedy looked at the situation with great care--as did all of us at that time--and we came to the conclusion that there was very little in Laos to support, that the Laotian armed forces were very weak and did not relish fighting, that the Laotians were a sweet and gentle and civilized people that didn't care about fighting, and that an effort to make a stand in Laos would be frustrated by the Laotians as well as by the landlocked position of Laos, which would be very hard to get to, as far as American forces were concerned.

I mention again that in the final conference between President Eisenhower and President Kennedy just the day before Inauguration, the only recommendation that President Eisenhower made to President Kennedy was to put troops in Laos. President Eisenhower said that he did not himself do it because he felt

this was a decision that had to be made by the next President because it was of a long-range nature. President Kennedy and I both decided that we should not try to make a stand in Laos, that we should try to go for a political settlement in Laos and create a buffer state there which would be internationally neutralized between North Vietnam and Thailand and Cambodia.

At the time we made the decision not to put troops in Laos, President Kennedy made the decision that if we had to make a fight for Southeast Asia, we should do it in Vietnam where air and sea power could be brought to bear and where lines of communication were much more favorable to us than they might have been in Laos. So we went to the Geneva Conference of 1961-62 on Laos and got the agreement which was frustrated by the refusal of the North Vietnamese to comply with it.

There was never any question in President Kennedy's mind that Southeast Asia was vital to the security of the United States. The only question in his mind was where we would make the fight if we had to make a fight, and his decision was we should make it in Vietnam. It was his decision to increase American personnel in Vietnam beyond the levels provided in the Geneva agreements of 1954. When he moved our commitment in Vietnam from some six hundred administrative-type military personnel to some fifteen or sixteen thousand American advisors working with Vietnamese units in the field, that was the basic decision to commit American force to the security of South Vietnam.

But at the time there was very little opposition to this decision. Ken Galbraith opposed it, but Bobby Kennedy was in favor of it. Secretary McNamara and I were in favor of it. This decision was taken with a minimum of reluctance on the part of the United States government to increase our stand in Vietnam. But there was never any lack of attention to this situation by President Kennedy. He never looked upon this as something to be dealt with by the back of his hand. He spent a lot of time on it, had a lot of investigations made, and really made a substantial and sober decision as President of the United States to resist in Vietnam.

O'BRIEN: Well, a little later down the road and getting to the point of August, late August and early September 1963, at about the time of the Hilsman-Ball-Forrestal telegram that went out that was reversed, there's some indication that the President had some direct contact shortly after that

which was very highly privileged and sensitive in which he gave Cabot Lodge not a go-ahead but at least an authorization to deal with any coup attempts in Vietnam. Do you recall anything about the decision that went into this?

RUSK: The written record will be quite explicit on this over these months, and the historian will want to look into that in some detail.

[REDACTED]

What we hoped for was that Diem would remove his brother, Nhu, from any position of responsibility and get him out of the way because brother Nhu was alienating large segments of the South Vietnamese population and we thought that Diem was worth sustaining provided we could separate him from his brother.

Now, on a day when the President, and the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense were all out of town, a telegram was cleared by phone to Cabot Lodge giving considerable encouragement to the coup attempt. I was called on the phone by George Ball and was told that the President had concurred in this, and therefore my freedom of action, I thought, was rather restricted at that point, particularly in dealing with something on an unclassified phone that was of such sensitivity. So I gave them my concurrence. But when the President and McNamara and I got back to town and we looked at it again, we were unhappy with what had been done, and so we sent a message to Cabot Lodge in effect withdrawing this authorization to cooperate with a coup. But meanwhile, the situation in Vietnam had developed its own momentum. The Buddhists and the students and the military were becoming consolidated against Diem, so in fact the overthrow of Diem came about through South Vietnamese efforts rather than as a result of United States activities.



O'BRIEN: Is there any indication, though, that shortly after that decision to reverse the original telegram that the President made another reversal of that and gave Cabot Lodge a kind of free hand in . . .

RUSK: I don't remember that. I don't remember that. I just don't remember that. I have the impression that Cabot Lodge was pulled back from active cooperation with coup efforts and that that continued to be the policy . . . until in fact Diem was overthrown by South Vietnamese military and students and Buddhists and that our principal concern was that if there were a coup that Diem would be saved, that he would have safe exit out of the country and would be preserved.

O'BRIEN: In 1963, is there any relationship with this to the development of or the allowance of--well, in the country plan for Laos a development of more clandestine kinds of activities in Laos as a result of the kind of deteriorating situation that's taking place in Vietnam, or is this primarily the result of Laotian conditions?

RUSK: My recollection is that we tried to comply with the Geneva agreements on Laos from 1962 and that we had pulled out the American personnel who were then involved in Laos.

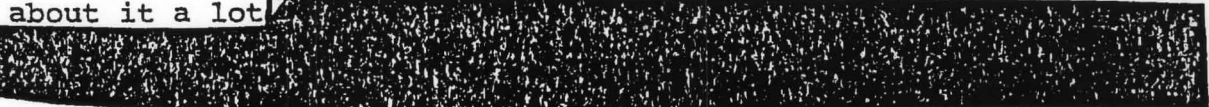
[REDACTED]

as a matter of policy I think we were prepared to clean out our involvement in Laos and let it become a neutral buffer state between North Vietnam and Thailand and Cambodia.

O'BRIEN: We're about ready to run out of tape here on this side. One final thing on the development of the counterinsurgency . . . [Interruption]

Well, does the development of the counterinsurgency program lead to an increased involvement (or the other term that could be used on the other side is meddling) within the internal affairs of nations like in Latin America or other nations as well? Does it cause you any real qualms or any questions in your mind at that point?

RUSK: During this period counterinsurgency became a kind of fad. It became stylish to think about and talk about counterinsurgency as an approach on a policy, and we were particularly thinking of Latin America under the influence of the Castro pressure. In fact, we learned that Castroism was not as much of a force in Latin America as we had supposed, that counterinsurgency was not the problem to the extent that we had thought it was, and so as far as I'm concerned, a good deal of that activity and agitation and thought about counterinsurgency was fruitless. It didn't really turn up very much that was very valuable. We thought about it a lot



O'BRIEN: Well, I'm about to run out of tape, so thank you, Secretary Rusk, for a very interesting, informative interview and, I think, very valuable interview today.