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Matloff: This is a continuation of an oral history interview with Admiral George W. Anderson, Jr., held on May 31st, 1984, at 10:00 a.m. at Admiral Anderson's home in Washington, D.C. Again participating for the OSD historical office are Dr. Roger Trask and Dr. Maurice Matloff.

Admiral, at the end of our previous meeting on May 17th we had begun to talk about area problems and crises in which you became involved as Chief of Naval Operations and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We had covered the Berlin crisis of 1961. I should like now to direct your attention to the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962. First, how did you learn that there was a crisis? How did the word first get to you?

Anderson: From the intelligence--first of all, rumors that were coming in. One of the congressmen had some sources of information, and he was asserting that the Russians were putting offensive weapons into Cuba. Then we had photographic intelligence, which came in a little bit later.

Matloff: What course of action did you favor when it became clear that the Soviets had placed offensive missiles in Cuba?

Anderson: I favored solving the whole Cuban situation--the Castro problem as well as the Soviet missiles coming in--which meant invasion. My idea was to have a major coordinated air and amphibious assault on Cuba, followed up by a large civil action program and supplies to the Cuban people--a strong program in every way to get rid of the communists in the area.

Matloff: You would have favored invasion and air strikes, along with blockade?

Anderson: Yes. Primarily invasion.

Matloff: Were these views in accord with those of the other members of the Joint Chiefs?

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Anderson: In varying degrees.

Matloff: Most of them did believe in strong action of one kind or another?

Anderson: Yes. Some believed more actively in air strikes.

Matloff: Was there a division between the civilians and the military in that Executive Committee that President Kennedy appointed to oversee the problems in that crisis? Did you detect any differences in the military and civilian views in that committee?

Anderson: Yes. I think that the military view was far more realistic, as substantiated later on during the Vietnamese War. As I often said later, "How could you expect the United States actively to support a program, anti-communist and halfway around the world, when you've already accepted Communist domination in Cuba, 90 miles off our East Coast?"

Matloff: Did you feel that the civilians were more moderate, more lenient, or weaker in their suggestions, or were they more extreme? Some writing has suggested that some of the civilians in the EXCOMM were more extreme than the JCS in their recommendations.

Anderson: We were dependent on getting our information on the EXCOMM from Maxwell Taylor, who would sit down there presumably, and report to us.

Matloff: On that score, did you feel that your views and those of the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were being adequately presented by the Chairman of the JCS to the President?

Anderson: There were some doubts in that regard.

Matloff: Did you ever have an opportunity to present your own views directly to the President during the crisis?

Anderson: Yes, the Joint Chiefs of Staff met with the President.

Matloff: Did you discuss your views, and did the other members of the Joint Chiefs discuss their views, with McNamara and Gilpatric before EXCOMM meetings?

Anderson: To a limited degree.

Matloff: I assume that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was bringing the Joint Chiefs of Staff's views to both.

Anderson: Presumably.

Matloff: A little doubt in your mind there?

Anderson: That's right.

Matloff: Did McNamara's and Gilpatric's views agree with the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

Anderson: Not particularly.

Matloff: In what ways were they somewhat different?

Anderson: Gilpatric was relatively quiet with McNamara there, and McNamara was not very communicative.

Matloff: There's been lots of writing on this crisis about the clash between yourself and Mr. McNamara over the conduct of the naval blockade of Cuba. Basically what was the difference of views between you on that score?

Anderson: I would say basically that they were suffering from the aftereffects and memories of the Bay of Pigs experience, and were determined to exercise great personal civilian control over everything, including all the details. My objective was to protect the operating forces from the intrusion of outside interference with the chain of command.

responsibilities in connection with the quarantine. He started to get very persistent, asking penetrating questions. At that time in the situation room we had people who were not cleared for the highly specialized intelligence that was involved in the selection of potential targets, particularly Russian submarines. Neither were the public affairs officers of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. So I said to Mr. McNamara, after a little talk back and forth, "I suggest we go inside" (which was a very highly secure part of the situation room, to which most of my people were not cleared, only the senior watch officers, and certainly his public affairs officers were not cleared). I explained that the submarine that was out of position, to which Mr. McNamara was referring, was sitting on top of a Russian submarine. He asked, "How did you know it was?" I gave him the information, and, of course, he and Gilpatric were cleared for the intelligence. They seemed very contented with my explanation. We went out and left. That was the substance of it.

Trask: Let me inject something here, just to read you a few lines from a book by Graham Allison, who wrote about the Cuban missile crisis. He's talking about this conversation that you had with McNamara and Gilpatric. After they asked you all these questions, Allison says, you "picked up the manual of naval regulations and waving it in McNamara's face shouted, 'It's all in there.' To which McNamara replied, 'I don't give a damn what John Paul Jones would have done, I want to know what you are going to do now.' The encounter ended on Anderson's remark, 'Now, Mr. Secretary, if you and your deputy will go back to your offices, the Navy will run the blockade.'" Is that an accurate portrayal?

Matloff: By "they," you're referring to Mr. McNamara and who else?

Anderson: McNamara particularly.

Matloff: How about the night of October 24th, 1962, can you recall exactly what was said during that exchange between you and Mr. McNamara? Apparently the issue came to a head.

Anderson: I presume so, but I don't have the dates exactly in my mind. Presumably that was the time that he, Mr. Gilpatric, and a large entourage from the Public Affairs Office of the Office of the Secretary of Defense came down to the CNO's war room, the situation room. Going back prior to that time, we had met with the President and the President said, "I understand your views, but this is what I've decided to do. It's going to be up to the Navy." My reply to the President was, "Mr. President, the Navy will not let you down." I came back to the office and Mr. Gilpatric or Mr. McNamara said that they had decided they wanted me to run the so-called quarantine. General LeMay would run the photographic reconnaissance. That was the general division of responsibilities. So I established a special watch of my most senior officers in my own office to monitor all the details: first, to keep track of everything that was going on; second, to keep the President fully informed; and third, to prevent any civilian interference with the operational side of the affair. That particular night, Mr. McNamara and Mr. Gilpatric called to say that they were coming down to watch how the so-called quarantine was going on. They came down to the war room, and I met them there. I think the incident that you are particularly interested in was when McNamara said, "Why is that ship out of line?" I tried to explain that it was carrying out

Anderson: It's a distortion of it, largely incorrect. This came out after it was decided not to reappoint me. After we came out of the situation room, I walked down the corridor with McNamara and Gilpatric, and the public affairs officers were very annoyed that they were not included. They heard me say to Mr. McNamara, "Mr. Secretary, if you'll go back to your office, we'll go ahead with our job and run the show as it should be run." The question of John Paul Jones came up. He wanted to know during the course of the discussion, I think it was before we went into the highly top secret room, what we were going to do. I said, "They have a tactical instruction, a publication on the rules of engagement, and what a ship captain would have to do if he intercepted a ship that was going through this quarantine. It's all prescribed in rules of engagement for blockades." That's when McNamara used the expression, "I don't care what John Paul Jones would like to do." It was his idea about John Paul Jones, not mine.

Matloff: Were there any differences of views about the extent of the blockade, the distance from the shores?

Anderson: Yes, there had been a difference on that. At one point, I can't recall exactly when, they wanted to bring the quarantine line closer to Cuba itself, which would in effect have put the naval ships on the quarantine line within the radius of action of Russian planes based in Cuba. I did not want that because I wanted my ships out so that they would not come under the range of the Soviet MIGs that were in Cuba. So we kept them out.

Matloff: Looking back at this whole incident of the missile crisis, what

lesson did you and the Joint Chiefs of Staff learn from the handling of this crisis about the JCS as an operational body?

Anderson: My personal view was that it would have been better to have run the whole thing from the Joint Chiefs of Staff war room in the Pentagon, rather than my running it in the CNO's war room and LeMay's running it from his situation room.

Matloff: How about from the point of view of the Navy--this is a corollary of the same question--what did you learn about the role of the Navy in operational control? Did it give you pause?

Anderson: No, I was not worried about the Navy's operation. It was excellent, well done.

Matloff: I mean the relations between OSD and the Navy in the handling of this crisis. Do you have any feeling about the Navy's operational control being interfered with?

Anderson: No, but I was always apprehensive of what Burke had told me during the Bay of Pigs operation. McNamara had tried to get his cotton-picking fingers in the details of the operations, which he was not qualified to handle.

Matloff: What lessons did you carry away from this operation about dealing with the Soviets? Did you have any reactions or impressions about the Soviet part in this crisis? any lessons about the nature of the threat? the nature of the leadership? This is the incident, you may recall, when two messages were sent to the White House, one of which seemed to be rather conciliatory, the other rather harsh. The President apparently decided to go ahead with the conciliatory one.

Anderson: One of the things that happened in setting this whole organization up was this: John McCone, director of CIA, who was very close to me, asked if he could station someone from the CIA in my outer office so that his agency would have firsthand knowledge of everything that was going on. I said, "Fine." So this chap from CIA sat in my outer office with Captain Kidd, my executive assistant, and had access to everything. He was therefore in a position to report very quickly anything that came up from the operational side.

Matloff: This was during the crisis?

Anderson: Yes. One of the amusing things was that he, of course, would promptly report to John McCone and then McCone would go to the special executive group in the White House and would report everything, regardless of its source, as if it was originating from the agency. That was amusing; it wasn't irritating to me.

Matloff: How effectively did you feel the national security apparatus operated during this crisis? Did you think it worked well--not only the Navy part of it, but all the decision-making? You might want to compare it with the Bay of Pigs, for example, which is usually regarded as quite a fiasco.

Anderson: I think it went pretty well, considering all the facts. You can't take a Ford designer or salesman and make him into a national strategist overnight.

Matloff: Had he learned something between these two operations?

Anderson: I think he learned that he was going to get more involved in the details, as much as he could.

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Matloff: Why did the system work better than during the Bay of Pigs?

That came before your coming into the CNO job. That was early in the spring and you came on in August.

Anderson: I had a little bit more experience, the civilians had more experience, and, of course, the Chiefs had more experience. One of the things, as I mentioned, was setting up my senior officers in my own office to keep the President and the White House fully informed. It was on a continuing basis.

Matloff: What did you think was the decisive factor in Khrushchev's retreat? Any thoughts on that score?

Anderson: I think Khrushchev finally realized that he was engaging the United States in a direct confrontation in an area where he could not possibly win because he was doing it, you might say, in our own back yard, where in fact the United States had tremendous naval superiority and prominence of force close to our own base areas, and he was operating halfway around the world. He realized that he was on a bad wicket.

Matloff: How about the impact of the handling of the crisis on your own subsequent relations with the Secretary of Defense? Did you find that there was a change after this?

Anderson: Subsequent relations with the Secretary of Defense were primarily dominated by the so-called TFX problem.

Matloff: Rather than anything that happened during this crisis?

Anderson: Yes, except the President was highly complimentary of the Navy, as well as of the other services, for their performance during the missile crisis.

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McNamara did not want any particular acknowledgment of the Navy's effectiveness during that time.

Matloff: Was this expressed in any way?

Anderson: When I was being detached as CNO, the President decided that he'd have me up at the White House to be awarded a distinguished service medal. McNamara was very reluctant, didn't want any part of it, and insisted that there be no mention in the citation of the performance of the Navy during the Cuban missile crisis.

Trask: Then there was no mention in the citation?

Anderson: No mention.

Matloff: Let's go to the Indochina involvement, another crisis area which was coming up during your period as CNO. It had come up before and was to go on after you left as well. What was your attitude toward our involvement in Indochina?

Anderson: I made a trip to Indochina and there was an introduction of Marines into Thailand. I went up and visited the Marines in Thailand and the officer in charge, Brigadier General Simpson, told me that he was taking the flag that they had and was sending it back to the Marine museum as a memento of the campaign. I said, "What do you mean, 'the campaign'?" There's no campaign here." He said, "The expedition." I replied, "The expedition, all right." To get those Marines, they had to go around the peninsula and then up, involving a great increase in distance away from our own base areas. I felt that if they were going in, they should go in on the shortest line of communication into Vietnam, rather than up into Thailand.

Matloff: Was this fairly early in your tenure as CNO?

Anderson: That was toward the end of it.

Matloff: Were you and the other JCS members in complete agreement with the SecDef on the ways and means of assisting South Vietnam to defeat the Viet Cong? Were there any differences of views?

Anderson: My personal view was that if we were to go in, we should go in with the idea of winning. The way to win was to go in and fight the war basically in North Vietnam, rather than fight on the territory, as I used to describe it, of the poor bastards that we were trying to defend. Fight it on the other fellows' territory.

Matloff: Were the JCS in fairly general agreement with that view?

Anderson: I would think so, except perhaps General Taylor.

Trask: Does this mean that at that point, you're talking about 1963, there was a debate about the nature of our military involvement and there were people saying at that point, "We're not doing what we need to do to win here," which, of course, was a big debate later on?

Anderson: Without benefit of having the minutes of the meetings I couldn't describe just what it was.

Matloff: Were the JCS consulted by Kennedy on the question of sending more military advisers to Vietnam? He increased the number. Were they asked for their views on that question?

Anderson: Yes, there was some discussion of that. The reporting of that went back through the Secretary of Defense to the White House.

Matloff: How about on the question of Diem? Did you ever meet him?

Anderson: Yes.

Matloff: Did you have any impressions of him? It looks pretty clear from the records that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were generally supportive of Diem.

Anderson: I would say that they were.

Matloff: In the State Department, Rusk was, but many people were not.

There was apparently a difference of views, except for Rusk.

Anderson: My recollection is not sufficient to answer that.

Matloff: How about the domino theory, did you believe in that theory, which was fairly prevalent in those days?

Anderson: Yes.

Matloff: In 1963 it appears that the American officials were rather optimistic that Americans could end their military role by 1965. Can you suggest what might have been the basis for such optimism?

Anderson: Our experience in training Koreans indicated to the military that with proper arrangements and training facilities we could train South Vietnamese troops, and that they should be the ones who would really fight the war, with the advice and strategic guidance of the United States. Of course, at that time, as previously when I had been down with Admiral Radford in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the French were very jealous of their prerogatives in Vietnam. That was not as prevalent in my tour of duty as a member of the Chiefs as it had been previously.

Matloff: Looking at the whole experience in Vietnam, in the longer perspective of time, really after you left the CNO post, how do you view it? Did we fail in Vietnam? If so, what kind of failure was it, do you think?

Anderson: I think basically that we didn't fight the war correctly. As I was mentioning earlier, we were concentrating all our bombing and fighting in South Vietnam rather than carrying the war to the enemy's territory, north of the DMZ. I remember meeting in New York with some friends, when I was ambassador in Portugal and had come back to the United States, with Tom Gates and so forth, in the Union Club in that city. These were naval reserve officers of World War II, people that I had known. They asked about Vietnam and I said, "We should be fighting in North Vietnam rather than in South Vietnam. The ravages of war should be on their territory rather than on the territory of our friends."

Matloff: Would this then indicate in your mind the failure of national policy? of military policy?

Anderson: National policy.

Matloff: How about the factor of American public opinion? Was that taken sufficiently into account?

Anderson: I said at the time, "How can you expect the United States people to support a war half way around the world in Southeast Asia, when we've already accepted Communism into Cuba? The first thing we should do was to go in and clean out the mess in Cuba."

Matloff: How do you evaluate the role of Kennedy in handling the Vietnam issue? how he handled it and whether you thought it was being handled effectively or not? Was he aware of all the problems, military as well as political?

Anderson: Kennedy had too many civilian advisers, each an individually self-appointed expert on the situation.

Matloff: How about the Secretary of Defense, who became more and more involved?

Anderson: More and more involved, and less and less capable.

Trask: Since Kennedy's death a lot of people have speculated that if Kennedy had remained president he might have decided somewhere at that point to get out of Vietnam. Do you think there's any basis for that?

Anderson: Either to get out or to change the way he was fighting it.

Matloff: That is Gilpatric's view.

Trask: Do you think Kennedy was really thinking along those lines?

Anderson: I don't know enough about that.

Matloff: Gilpatric felt that Kennedy would have reduced the commitment, as time went on. How would you evaluate the JCS role in the handling of this crisis? Should there have been any changes? Were you satisfied with the role played by the JCS during this crisis during the period you were CNO?

Anderson: I think that the JCS should have been in more frequent, direct contact with the President. The second point is: people talk about the importance of having qualified people as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and heads of the services. It is equally important to make sure that you have a Secretary of Defense and his assistants fully qualified for the jobs they're occupying.

Matloff: Were there any other important crises or area problems during your tenure as CNO that come to mind and on which you might want to comment?

Anderson: One of transcendent importance was the problem concerning the selection of the TFX.

Matloff: I meant in terms of an area crisis. Let's come to the question of the buildup of ships and personnel. What was the effect of the Kennedy-McNamara defense policy on the Navy buildup program? Did you feel that it pushed it or did it impede it in certain respects? What aspects of the buildup program, for example, did you consider most important, and why?

Anderson: I think the important thing was that within the funds that were going to be made available to the Defense Department, and therefore to the Navy, that the Navy as a professional military organization should have been the one to determine how those funds should be apportioned within the total that was available to the Navy, rather than being done by McNamara and his whiz kids.

Matloff: What led to the clash over the B-70 bomber with McNamara? Do you want to elaborate on that? Then we'll go on to the TFX fighter.

Anderson: The view that I had was that it was up to the Air Force to justify its own programs and not to have the Defense Department rely on the Navy trying to interfere in the Air Force programs. We in the Navy had a responsibility to look out for our own budgets, our own weapon systems, rather than getting involved in those of the other services.

Matloff: What were the issues involving the TFX, the F-111?

Anderson: The issue there was the very strong determination that McNamara would select the airplane best suited to meet the common requirements of the Air Force and the Navy. The requirements were considerably different--ours to operate from ships, theirs to operate in a wide variety of situations which involved land basing.

Matloff: What was the upshot?

Anderson: I would say that they had a very good procedure in the Navy and Air Force selection group of professionals, good people on both sides, who reviewed each proposal, and made recommendations up through the service channel. They consistently recommended one design and one manufacturer over the other one. It went up to the final stage of selection to the Office of the Secretary of Defense through the civilian secretaries, Zuckert of the Air Force and Korth of the Navy. We didn't hear anything about it for some time. Some weeks went by and suddenly I was told by the Secretary of the Navy, "I'm sure you're going to be happy. We've decided to award to General Dynamics. I think you will be pleased because Grumman is associated with General Dynamics." I said, "Thank goodness for Grumman." Grumman was an experienced aircraft designer, but, unfortunately, Grumman did not have too much of an impact with General Dynamics supervision. General Dynamics was the larger organization. One of the colleagues in the Air Force, General McKee, was told this, and he asked, "Who made that decision?" Zuckert, the Secretary of the Air Force said, "I made the decision." McKee said, "Look, they don't let you make even little decisions, much less one of such importance, involving billions of dollars." This was true. So actually the decision was made by McNamara and company, perhaps in consultation with Johnson, who was Vice President. What they did was to select the wrong airplane, the wrong design, and the more expensive one. It was a bad decision that violated the principles that they had established. One other factor there was that instead of going for standardization, which was

something the services were well used to, they followed a precept of McNamara's, of "commonality," the term they used. But standardization is what you want. It was a wrong decision and a more expensive one. I sat down with my Deputy Chief when I told him what the decision was and asked, "What are we going to do about these 111's if and when they are delivered?" He said, "Perhaps the Air Force can use them as strategic bombers," which is what they have really done since.

Matloff: One more question on personnel for the Navy. I know your predecessor almost immediately had gotten into the problem of volunteers versus the draft for the Navy and had pushed for the draft. Did that question come up again during your tenure as CNO?

Anderson: It doesn't strike a chord with me.

Matloff: Some general questions about Cold War policies--this was still the period of containment, in effect we've been in containment for decades now. Did you believe that containment was a realistic policy, as you understood it? This is the policy that came in with the Truman administration, and has been more or less the policy ever since.

Anderson: I felt that under the circumstances containment was as good a policy as you could have.

Matloff: How about military aid as a tool in the Cold War? On the basis of your experience, how effective do you view military aid?

Anderson: It's of great importance. I thought so then, and I still feel it's very important. I also feel very strongly the importance of covert action, but particularly, of course, the security of it, lack of publicity of it.

Matloff: What was your view toward arms control and disarmament as CNO and member of the JCS? The specific issue that I believe came up was on that treaty to ban nuclear testing. That question came up in 1963 and there was apparently a difference of views with the Secretary of Defense over the terms of a treaty to ban nuclear testing. In the writing on this question some have indicated that the JCS were being put under pressure by the administration to go along with some kind of test ban treaty.

Anderson: I would say yes.

Matloff: Did you feel there was undue pressure?

Anderson: Not undue pressure.

Matloff: Do you recall the nature of any disagreement with the Secretary of Defense on the terms of the treaty?

Anderson: Without having the benefit of documents available to refresh myself, no. I can't comment.

Matloff: About your perspectives on OSD management and organization, as a result of your experience as CNO and JCS member, how do you see the roles of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and of its Chairman and the relations with each other? any need for change in structure or working relations? What is your general reflection on this question?

Anderson: When the services disagree on a matter of importance, it's of such importance to the country and national security that the decisions must go up and each side present its views for decision by the highest civilian authorities, usually in this case by the president as commander in chief.

Matloff: Do you feel the need to make sure that those views get presented to the president?

Anderson: I very strongly feel that they should be presented in an unadulterated form and not in a language of compromise.

Matloff: How about the relationships between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense? Do you see any need for changes in the structure or in the working relations at those levels, on the basis of your experience and reflection?

Anderson: We in the Navy had what was known as a bilinear system. The business side of the Navy, procurement, inspection, awarding of contracts, and so forth, was handled by the civilian sector. That was not my responsibility as CNO. I think that was a good system. The Air Force and the Army had everything come up in a monolithic system. The Chiefs of Staff of the Army and the Air Force inherited that system, which had everything. I felt that it detracted from the Chief's ability to focus intelligently on both sides of the aisle and that it would have been better if the whole Department of Defense had adopted a bilinear system rather than the monolithic one, putting it all under the CNO and the Chiefs of Staff. The Chiefs should address themselves to the forces and the requirements, and the fulfillment of the business side to implement those requirements should be handled by the civilian sector. The other point, which I've indicated before, is most important-having fully qualified people who understand the military situation in important positions of authority, as civilian secretaries of the services and in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Matloff: How would you characterize the styles, personalities, and effectiveness of some of the top officials in OSD and the Joint Chiefs of Staff with whom you came in touch? You've already indicated in some cases what your impressions were. How about Secretary of Defense Forrester?

Anderson: A very fine man.

Matloff: How about his effectiveness as Secretary of Defense?

Anderson: I think that he was a very effective Secretary of Defense at the time. He was under tremendous pressures in various areas and at the end of his time he started to break down and lost his effectiveness.

Matloff: Would you want to add to your impressions of McNamara?

Anderson: Intellectually arrogant.

Matloff: Any other Secretaries of Defense?

Anderson: I thought Tom Gates was an excellent Secretary of Defense.

Matloff: How about Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric?

Anderson: I liked Gilpatric. He was reasonable to talk to. But he was under McNamara and didn't have any authority.

Matloff: How about JCS Chairmen with whom you came in contact? Any judgment about Admiral Radford to whom you had been a special assistant?

Anderson: Outstanding. He maintained very fine relationships with the civilian Secretary of Defense and with the President. Every Monday morning he would meet alone with the President of the United States, after which the President would meet with Secretary of Defense Charlie Wilson.

Matloff: How about General Lemnitzer?

Anderson: Fine, honest, a very fine man.

Matloff: An effective Chairman in your view?

Anderson: As effective as one could expect, being under McNamara.

Matloff: General Taylor?

Anderson: First of all, he's a very intelligent man. He was very much dominated by the Secretary of Defense, very opinionated, not very objective in viewing requirements for the other services, very strong for the Army.

Matloff: Even as Chairman, you found that?

Anderson: Yes.

Matloff: On your colleagues in the JCS--General LeMay, the Air Force Chief of Staff?

Anderson: Very strong Air Force Chief of Staff. I got along very well with LeMay. We had certain differences, naturally, but I respected LeMay. I think he respected me. I liked him.

Matloff: On the Army side, you had two--Generals Decker and Wheeler.

Anderson: Both fine people. General Wheeler especially so.

Matloff: How about Secretary of the Navy Connally?

Anderson: I liked John Connally very much. It was a great misfortune for the Navy when he decided to run for governor of Texas.

Matloff: He was an effective Secretary?

Anderson: Yes. The thing about Connally was that he recognized his own limitations. When anything involved the operational side of the military, he would take Chief of Naval Operations Burke or me along with him. He studied his lessons and handled the cases very well.

Matloff: In Defense, did you have any dealings with Harold Brown, who was then the Director of Research and Engineering?

Anderson: They should have left him back in nuclear physics someplace.

Matloff: In Defense, or out of Defense?

Anderson: Out of Defense.

Matloff: Why do you say that?

Anderson: He was an intensely intellectually arrogant individual. I think that he is a person of tremendous talents, but not in the operational side, and that he tended to get in the operational side too much.

Matloff: How about Charles Hitch, the Assistant Secretary of Defense, the Comptroller?

Anderson: I liked Hitch. Of course he was a very strong advocate of centralized control in the Department of Defense on money matters.

Matloff: Any other individuals that occur to you in the national security apparatus that impressed you along the way, or perhaps that didn't impress you? any other officials in OSD, possibly?

Anderson: I think Zuckert was a weak Secretary of the Air Force.

Matloff: As you think back on the presidents under whom you served, any comment on the styles, personalities, and effectiveness? This would include Kennedy, of course.

Anderson: I liked Kennedy very much. I think that Kennedy, when he was killed, would have been a great president from that point on. He suffered very much when he came in in some of the assistants that he had. I think that he was weak in the selection of people to do the important work for him. He was very much dominated by Bobby Kennedy, his brother.

Matloff: Did the Secretary of Defense consult you on your successor?

Anderson: Not directly, no.

Matloff: Do you recall the circumstances of your departure from the post and the assumption of the ambassadorship to Portugal? How and when did you learn that you were not going to be reappointed, that you were going to be given another post?

Anderson: I had been down to a Navy League convention in Puerto Rico as the principal speaker. I gave a very straightforward, good talk extolling the concepts of military integrity and civilian control. We recognized the importance of civilian control in our organization, and yet we did not like the abuse of civilian control, the confusion of management and leadership. While I was at the talk, Korth, the Secretary of the Navy, who was there, was called out of the room to answer a telephone call from Washington. This was a Friday, and Gilpatric was calling, saying that the President had approved my not being reappointed. The Secretary said that he would get in touch with Admiral McDonald, who was over in Europe or in the Middle East. He then wanted to know where the secure telephone was and was taken to the office of the district commandant. There were two telephones there, a black telephone, and a red phone. Korth was fascinated by the color of the red telephone but he didn't realize that, when a red telephone was hooked up any place in the world, it rang in the Navy flag plot, and the duty officer was required to listen to the conversation. Here was the Secretary trying to get in touch with Admiral McDonald in London, telling him to come back and not to let the CNO know that he was being called back. So

the duty officer immediately called his boss, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Griffith, who called Captain Kidd, my assistant, who called me down in Puerto Rico and told me that they were going to come see me on Sunday morning at the quarters to say that I was not going to be reappointed. That's how I learned about it. When I came back to Washington, I arranged to have someone go up to New York to meet Admiral McDonald, who was coming back in civilian clothes, and brief him on the situation in Washington, which my Vice Chief, Admiral Wicketts, did. Then Gilpatric and Korth came to the apartment quarters to tell me that the President had decided not to reappoint me as Chief of Naval Operations. I said to Korth and Gilpatric, "In other words McNamara fired me." They were a little bit astounded, and Gilpatric said, "Yes."

Matloff: On that score, there has been lots of writing about the incident, and some of it may not be correct. Let me pose for you a quotation. This is from the book called The Chiefs of Naval Operations, which you may have read, edited by Robert Love, put out by the Naval Institute in 1980. There is a chapter in there by Lawrence Korb, who is the present Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics. Korb wrote an essay on your career, a very nice and favorable essay, actually. This is a statement that I will quote to you--see what your reaction is. About your controversies with McNamara, he says that you were ultimately vindicated, but he faults you for accepting the ambassadorship. He writes, "This lowered the political costs that the administration had to pay to fire him and prevented him from carrying his case to the public as an

authoritative private citizen. In 1963 the armed forces in the nation needed a symbol and a spokesman." Would you care to comment on that one?

Anderson: In my opinion, when the President of the United States asks anybody, particularly a military officer, to take a position, his responsibility is to take it. It's also a responsibility of the military officer, particularly a chief of service, to respond to Congress, to answer questions to Congress. You've got to go out and form that dissent, whether it be justified or not. I was offered an ambassadorship to Portugal. I found out later that McNamara greatly opposed it. When McNamara was asked about it, he made a remark, "It was to one of those African countries."

Matloff: You were the first CNO to have attended the National War College. You went in 1949. Do you feel that that institution has fulfilled its purpose in smoothing service rivalries and preparing for top positions in Defense?

Anderson: I do, yes, not perfectly, of course, but I think it is a very fine institution and carries out its mandate very well.

Matloff: Do you see any need for changes in the Defense educational system on the basis of your experience?

Anderson: They call it the National War College.

Matloff: Now it's the National Defense University.

Anderson: I think they made a correct change there. I think that it performs a very important role in the totality of the Defense educational system. I would prefer to see the services send their officers who are to go to the National War College first to their own service colleges, which would be properly the Army War College and the Navy War College, where

they are more indoctrinated in the strategy and tactics of their own service operations. Those graduates would then go on to a second year at the National War College, for example. The National War College would get at the wider implications of total national power.

Matloff: To take you back to the general question of the clashes between McNamara and the military chiefs. Apparently they were not only going on with the Navy, but were also going on with the Air Force, and there were some differences with the Army, too. In retrospect, do you think the scope and intensity of the Secretary of Defense's clashes with the military chiefs were sharpest with the Navy?

Anderson: I go back to where they asked me to oppose the Air Force.

Matloff: There were differences with the Air Force too, but it would appear in looking back on it that they were particularly sharp with the Navy.

Anderson: That's right.

Matloff: If you feel that way, how do you account for it? Why should there have been that sharpness of differences? Was it a question of styles of leadership? Was it possibly personalities? Was it the Navy organization, that you mentioned earlier? Was it the nature of the issues that were coming up? To what would you attribute the basic nature of the reasons for it?

Anderson: The lack of understanding on the part of the Secretary of Defense and his principal advisers on naval matters and the importance of maritime strategy.

Matloff: Do you feel vindicated in the light of what has transpired since in Defense and as a result of the positions you took in the Navy at the time, when you were CNO?

Anderson: I think so, yes--Congressional action on the TFX situation; their concern over the Vietnamese War and the involvement of Secretary of Defense McNamara in the Vietnamese War; the continual failure of McNamara in important aspects of work of different types. I think this also indicates what I tried to say before, the importance of the President's selecting a suitably qualified individual as the Secretary of Defense. McNamara was certainly not a Bob Lovett, or a Marshall, or a Forrestal, but those individuals contributed to the evolution of the organization of the Defense Department, without being so radical in personal characteristics.

Matloff: Where would you look in our society to find such individuals, if you had the power to make the choice?

Anderson: I think there are very fine people in the defense industries. Dave Packard was an excellent man in the Department of Defense. In my opinion, you need somebody who has demonstrated ability in civilian industry in one form or another, who is best qualified, because so much of this involves evaluation of new systems and the production of them.

Matloff: In McNamara's case, he had come out of the automobile industry.

Anderson: Yes, but he'd been a failure. Ford was very happy to get rid of him.

Matloff: Looking back on your role as CNO and member of the Joint Chiefs, what do you regard as your major achievements during your tenure as CNO? Of what are you most proud?

Anderson: I set two objectives when I was CNO. The first year was to make everything we had work to its best effectiveness. The second year it was that every person in the naval establishment was important; to enhance people's pride and stimulate their contribution as individuals, regardless of what the job was. I think I more or less handled that pretty well.

Matloff: How about conversely--what would you regard as disappointments, or perhaps uncompleted tasks that you would have liked to have finished?

Anderson: I think that I probably could have done better with the Congress, have had better relations with them, and certainly have subordinated my own feelings and maintained a better relationship with the Secretary of Defense.

Matloff: About your role as ambassador, did you become involved in NATO problems there in any way?

Anderson: Portugal was a member of NATO. It was a colonial power in Africa. We were trying to enhance the position of Portugal as a member of NATO. In Washington the Afro-American ultra-liberal anticolonialists wanted to get rid of Portugal in Africa. So that was a problem, a continuing problem, that I had--in fact, not so much a problem with the Portuguese, but a problem back in Washington.

Matloff: Did the Office of the Secretary of Defense get involved in any way with this problem?

Anderson: No.

Matloff: Did you have any dealings with OSD while you were ambassador?

Anderson: Not particularly.

Matloff: Or any other national security problems that came up, possibly?

Anderson: The supply of aid and making sure that the military aid that was rendered to the Portuguese was applied only to NATO and not used by the Portuguese in Africa.

Matloff: You had some dealings with OSD on this question?

Anderson: No particular problem.

Matloff: Did the experience that you had in JCS prove useful in this capacity?

Anderson: I think my total military experience was very valuable in becoming the ambassador to Portugal at the time.

Matloff: Is there any question that I should have asked you, other than those I have, that you might like to comment on? any point that I should have raised that I have not raised that you think was of importance in history, particularly Office of Secretary of Defense and national security history?

Anderson: I think that the question of respect of the civilian secretariat for the people in uniform is most important. We've had a great variety of secretaries of the Navy, and basically our relationships with them have been excellent. At times we've had problems with individuals, but basically we felt that the secretaries of the Navy who left the Navy were very understanding of the Navy. They learned a lot and they left with respect of the military. In some cases, people have come in and left the office of the Secretary of the Navy with practically no respect. Korth did not have respect. Connally did. Gates did. I think people have respect for Lehman, the Secretary of the Navy now.

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Matloff: Thank you very much for sharing your recollections and observations with us.

Anderson: I hope you understand--I've said several times, not having any documents here--I could be a little more accurate, if I could refer to the documents.

Matloff: We're thoroughly cognizant of that.

Anderson: My remarks about certain people like Taylor, or Korth, or McNamara-- I hope any quotations from me will be submitted to me for review before they are published.