

INTERVIEW I

DATE: April 30, 1984
INTERVIEWEE: LESLIE HOWARD GELB
INTERVIEWER: Ted Gittinger
PLACE: Mr. Gelb's office, Washington, D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

G: It is Dr. Gelb?

LG: Yes, although I don't use it.

G: What was your position when Secretary [Robert] McNamara first contacted you in relation to what became known as the Pentagon Papers?

LG: At that point I was deputy director of Policy Planning and Arms Control in the Bureau of International Security Affairs.

G: Has that undergone a reorganization since then?

LG: Yes. It's been divided.

G: General [Richard] Stilwell is with policy I think now, isn't he?

LG: Well, it's under two assistant secretaries now: one, Richard Perle for policy and the other--oh, what's his name?--I forget, for all the regional issues.

G: I see. That sounds a little bit like the way the State Department approaches it, regional.

LG: More so.

G: Can you recall the details of that first meeting with Secretary McNamara?

LG: Well, I didn't meet with him. What happened was this: at first he spoke to John McNaughton, who was the assistant secretary for ISA, and

Gelb -- I -- 2

McNaughton proposed that Morton Halperin direct the study. Well, then McNamara had some specific current things that Halperin was working on that he didn't want to pull him off from, so McNaughton then proposed me and told me that I would do this study. And I said, "Well, what is the study?" and he handed me a list of about one hundred questions. He said, "The study is to answer these questions."

G: Who wrote the questions?

LG: They were handwritten. I didn't know at the time who had written them, at that exact time, but I found out several months later that the handwriter had been then Lieutenant Colonel Robert Gard, G-A-R-D, who was the military assistant to McNaughton at the time the questions were written and who had subsequently, at the time I was asked to run the project, become McNamara's second military assistant. As I said, there were about one hundred questions. Maybe sixteen to twenty of them were historical in nature, and the others were current, like how do we know what body counts really are? How do we know what the extent of our ability to pacify certain areas has been? Questions, tough questions, that had been asked the administration.

G: Can you recall a date on this?

LG: This would have been something like the fall of 1967 I think.

G: Fall of 1967?

LG: Something like that.

G: Were these the kinds of questions that a doubter would be asking?

LG: They were all the tough questions asked about the war, from was Ho Chi Minh an Asian Tito or could he have been made into an Asian Tito, all

Gelb -- I -- 3

the way down to the reliability of the kill count. I don't have a copy of those questions; I wish I had kept them.

G: You didn't know what--

LG: I wasn't really sure what the hell it was, no. But they should exist in the administrative file of the Pentagon Papers, which was kept in the Secretary of Defense's office. After I left I turned over all those files to the military assistant, then General Robert Pursley. What's become of them, I don't know, but all of my files were given to him.

Now what happened was this. We were given the charge to answer these questions in three months, and I was given authority to put together a team of six people to answer those questions.

G: Could you pick anybody you wanted?

LG: Yes. And the answers to the questions were--this was McNamara's guidance passed to me through McNaughton--to be encyclopedic and objective. That was the only guidance: do it in three months; [be] encyclopedic and objective; you can have six people.

G: That's a question a day I think it works out.

LG: (Laughter) Typical Pentagon.

In order to answer the historical questions--and a lot of the questions had a historical base--we were given the authority to requisition files within the Pentagon. McNamara called [Richard] Helms, then director of the CIA, and set up a contact for me with the agency.

G: Do you remember who that was?

Gelb -- I -- 4

LG: Dickson Davis [?]. And the CIA then provided us with a lot of interesting materials. Pursley called Benjamin Read, who was Rusk's executive secretary, in order to gain access to State Department materials. No one in the White House was called so far as I knew. I called people over there to tell them I was doing this and to ask for documents. But to my knowledge, no one called [Walt] Rostow or any of the political people.

G: Was there a reason for that?

LG: I just have no idea. I kept on asking, because I wanted the doors open, I wanted to get the damn thing done.

G: Some people have said that if there's a weakness in the Papers it is because there is a lack of White House material. Would you agree with that?

LG: Well, if you go back and look at the LBJ memoirs, there are only two documents seemingly of any consequence which he alludes to in his book, or cites in his book, which we did not have. Because, you see, most of these memos were sent to President Johnson from other agencies and departments, and we had I think just about all of those. We didn't have the Rostow cover memos or the McGeorge Bundy cover memos, but otherwise I think we had almost all of the documentary evidence. Or at least nobody has since produced any memos of historical consequence that we didn't have, so far.

Okay. So we get these files. I collect six people.

G: Do you remember who they were?

Gelb -- I -- 5

LG: That's tough. One was then Colonel Paul Gorman, now four-star General Paul Gorman. He was my deputy. Bill Kaufmann, professor at MIT. Then Colonel, now General Bob Schweitzer [?]. A few people from Systems Analysis who were each given to me half time, one of the worst possible arrangements one can accept for anything. I don't remember the others.

Then the files started to come in and people [began] looking at them, and it was really interesting to look back at these documents. As we started in to answer the questions, figure out a format for doing it and answer them, it was just a gargantuan task. I mean it was just frighteningly large. We asked for an extension from three months to six months, and even then I didn't know how I was going to possibly do it in six months, because I was not relieved from my responsibilities at ISA; I still had that job.

Then--and I'm not sure exactly how this happened, whether it was my idea, somebody else's idea, a group idea--the feeling was we couldn't answer those questions really without writing kind of historical essays. Go back and take these documents, string them together so that there would be a record of a background to each of these things, a history of really what happened in pacification, a history of how the decisions were made to increase our ground forces and so on. [We] sometimes quoted, in large chunks, [in] the history, sometimes summarized, with each study to have a compendium of key documents and a summary analysis section so labeled. So it wasn't like the narrative; the narrative was supposed to be just stringing the

Gelb -- I -- 6

documents together in effect. And the feeling was--and again, I can't remember really who deserves the credit for it or the blame, as the case may be--that people came in and out of the war every two years, and there was no historical memory, no institutional memory, and this could provide that kind of basis. You see, we still didn't know what answering the questions was all about. So what we were doing was trying to evolve what we considered a sensible way of doing it, and it evolved into this idea that I described, doing these essays that strung the documents together and summarized them, collected the key documents and provided a summary and analysis.

I then wrote a memo to McNamara laying all this out, just as I've done to you, and saying it would take a year to do that and a lot more manpower. And I can't remember whether the memo said, "and at that point we'll answer the original hundred questions." I think the thing took that other turn, that the questions would be dealt with in this context, that you really just couldn't give an answer to them. He sent back his checked approval for all the things I wanted to do. Again, I had no direct contact with him; it was all done through the pieces of paper, with Bob Gard and Bob Pursley, his military assistants, being the intermediaries.

G: Did it bother you that you didn't know what was wanted really with this?

LG: Sure.

G: You never got any enlightenment on it?

Gelb -- I -- 7

LG: No, nor did Pursley or Gard know any more than I did. My relations with both of them were very, very good, and we spoke candidly about what was happening every step of the way.

So then the project just mushroomed into what later became public.

G: How many people wound up working on this, would you say?

LG: Well, I did a cover memo that transmitted the whole thing to I guess it was [Clark] Clifford. I can't even remember at this point.

G: Is that the one that's in the twelve-volume set?

LG: Yes. And I think what that says is that at one point it reached thirty-six people.

G: Who kind of wandered in and out of the project as they were available?

LG: Yes. I mean, some did it for two months and would leave the study after two months, and I'd have to dig somebody else up to go do it. It was a mess. Very few were trained historians. But almost everyone who did it approached it with some gusto, and nobody wanted to be seconded to do the goddamn thing, including me. Then you'd start reading the documents and you'd get involved. Even though, with very few exceptions, people weren't trained as historians, I think they did an honest job of putting together what was available to us. No one has charged and sustained the charge that these things were a biased representation of the documentary evidence. I said in my transmittal memo that these were just the documents. We didn't do any interviews or researching of newspapers or anything like that. And I think for looking just at the documents, everyone did a fair and honest job.

Gelb -- I -- 8

G: How do you think the labor could have resulted in a better product if you had had carte blanche, if you had been able to do anything you wanted to do?

LG: Well, it would have been a better product if they would have chosen some real historians to do it. I was a very young man at that point in time. I had never run anything in my life, let alone something as big and sensitive as this, and I really didn't know what I was doing. They should have gotten historians to come spend a year or a summer or six months, whatever, to do it.

G: Where is Secretary Dean Rusk in all of this? Does he make his appearance sufficiently, do you think?

LG: In the documents?

G: In the documents.

LG: Well, he didn't write many memos at all. The very few that he did write I believe we have, at least no one has told me to the contrary. What we didn't have is what he was saying to the President in the Friday morning breakfasts. But from everything I know, from the debriefs, he was saying the same thing in those breakfasts he was saying publicly. He was not a man to change his tune with venue.

G: Right. Right. Are you satisfied that you now know what the purpose of the whole thing was?

LG: I do not.

G: You don't know what Mr. McNamara was thinking?

LG: No. Because even at the end, he told many different stories about the purpose, when the New York Times started to publish these things.

Gelb -- I -- 9

Dean--I think it was Dean Rusk--called me to say that he was shocked that I had done such a thing, that he had just spoken to Bob McNamara, and Bob McNamara said that I had done this all on my own, that he had asked only that documents be collected, he didn't know anything about these studies. But then when others called him, like Averell Harriman or Scotty Reston, McNamara told them that, yes, he wanted to create this historical record and it had been done just the way he wanted.

G: That's very interesting.

LG: So, you know, the only contact I had with him was when I dropped off his copy at the World Bank.

G: That was when?

LG: The very end of the Johnson Administration, and there were still a few studies that hadn't been done yet.

G: Did you talk about it with him at that time?

LG: Well, I tried to, but he was very distant. He didn't want to talk about it. I brought over the box with all the studies, and I again walked him through it, told him what was there. He expressed interest in it all. And then he told me to take them back.

G: He didn't keep it?

LG: No.

G: That's extraordinary, don't you think?

LG: To take it back. I don't remember whether he said--you know, these things slip out of your head--"take it back and store them with General Pursley," or "take them back and when you get the other two

Gelb -- I -- 10

or three studies done, send them on to me." I think he just said take them back and store them there.

G: So as far as you know he's never read it?

LG: That's correct, so far as I know.

G: And you have no hint or glimmer as to what's going on in his mind to this day about the Pentagon Papers?

LG: You now know what I know. There were the rumors at the time we got the question--I mean, some people in the group thought these were dirty questions to help LBJ in his re-election, that these were the questions to be thrown at Johnson. McNamara was going to help answer them. There were others who thought that he wasn't preparing them for LBJ, that he was really doing it for his friend Bobby Kennedy. But nobody knew anything.

G: And you haven't learned anything since that time?

LG: No.

G: That's fascinating. What was your reaction when the New York Times began to publish their excerpted version?

LG: Well, I knew I guess four or five days before that they were going to publish it.

G: How did you learn?

LG: I had a call from one of the reporters who was working on it to ask me a question about it: who was working on it? What was the purpose? They were things that had floated out in the paper. There had been a piece or two in Parade. You know, I asked him why you're asking these things. He said, "Oh, we're going to do an article on this." So I

Gelb -- I -- 11

called Paul Warnke after this happened, and Warnke called McNamara to tell him it looked like something was going to happen. See, we knew that some of this had gotten out because a friend of mine who was a professor at Princeton by the name of Richard Ullmann had written me a letter maybe six or nine months before the New York Times started to publish it, saying that at some meeting he had attended another Princeton professor by the name of Richard Falk had made reference to these studies. Ullmann knew all about them because he was one of the guys who worked on it part time.

G: Was that U-L-M--

LG: U-L-L-M-A-N-N. He still teaches at Princeton. And Falk talked about them as if he had seen them physically and knew what was in them. I also gave Ullmann's letter to Warnke and Clifford and McNamara, so we knew months before that something was out. Then this call to me informing McNamara, and I assumed that at the time [Melvin] Laird was also informed, several days before, but I don't know that for a fact. I thought either Clifford or McNamara had called Laird, or Warnke for that matter. And then they were published, and I guess my reaction at the time and for some time thereafter was to oppose the publishing.

G: On principle?

LG: Yes.

G: Have you changed your mind about that?

LG: Subsequently I did. Not to the idea that you just turn over the documents. I still think--not speaking as a journalist--that that kind of hemorrhaging is not in the national interest. But did they

Gelb -- I -- 12

damage the national interest? Did they hurt the war effort or whatever? I don't think so. I don't think there was any information in there that jeopardized lives or sources and methods. Nor do I think, as some claim, that the publishing of the documents was the reason for the public turning against the war. I think most people didn't have much sense of what was in there.

G: There was a terrific hue and cry when the Papers came out about the duplicity that was revealed on the government's part. Very few people have ever specifically listed what the Papers revealed that was such a heinous breach of faith on the part of the government. What was your reaction to that sort of thing?

LG: Well, my reaction, as I wrote in my book that I did on Vietnam, was that there was substantial consistency between what was being said publicly and what was being said privately, and that the Papers, rather than proving duplicity, proved that people were saying what I think they believed. And I say that as someone who became a critic of the war. One of the things striking to me was that there was far less what might be called lying than I think people imagined at the time. It should have been clear to people, but you get all caught up in it and you don't realize what's happening. Almost everybody in the foreign policy business was in favor of that war up until some point in time, others much later than some. People were saying what they thought you could do, what they thought was the importance of the area, and they believed it. I know up until 1966 or so I was a full

Gelb -- I -- 13

supporter of what we were doing. I never forgot that I was. I never forgot that I believed that I was.

G: Someone has written that it was the Tet offensive, like a lightning flash, that revealed all the doubters to one another in the government. Do you recall how you reacted to the Tet offensive?

LG: It didn't reveal the doubters to one another. I think everybody who doubted knew each other pretty well because there weren't that many in 1967, early 1968, and very few of the doubters went to the point of saying we should just get out of there. What the doubters like myself were saying, and that includes people like Clifford and Warnke and Halperin, et cetera--and Richard Steadman was very important in all this--was that we had to de-Americanize the war, turn more responsibility over to the Vietnamese, gradually but steadily.

G: Hadn't there been some moves made in that direction in late 1967?

LG: Just beginning in 1968 really.

G: And [Creighton] Abrams was being given responsibility to oversee that process?

LG: Yes, but it started very slowly. It was one of the decisions that came out of the post-Tet review.

G: Were you involved in that post-Tet review or were you up to your ears--?

LG: Indeed I was. I wrote a good many of the papers for that review.

G: Here's a topical question then, and that's this order of battle controversy that persists.

LG: I remember it well.

Gelb -- I -- 14

G: Well, I'm glad to hear you say that, because a number of us are trying to sort it out. Are you involved in the [William] Westmoreland trial?

LG: No.

G: Okay. You've not been subpoenaed then or anything of that sort?

LG: No.

G: What kind of reassessment went on in connection with the order of battle after Tet?

LG: There was always a reassessment going on, every two weeks. The different numbers would come in, and somebody would prepare a memo saying, "Here's MACV's estimate of the order of battle. Here's CIA's. Here's Systems Analysis'," whatever. There were three or four different ones. Everybody knew it. It was all out in the open. People argued about it all the time.

G: Supposedly this had been resolved in that SNIE [Special National Intelligence Estimate] of November of 1967, wasn't it?

LG: It was one resolution. I mean, when you have a fight like this it's never finally resolved. People who believe something continue to argue it, and they did, and those arguments persisted right through 1968. It came up again after Tet.

G: No more bitter than before, after Tet?

LG: Oh, they were always nasty. If I had to spend my life crunching numbers like that, I'd get very involved with the veracity of those numbers, I'd fight about it hard.

G: What did you make of this order of battle business? Is this a tempest

Gelb -- I -- 15

in a teapot? Is this a serious division over the nature of the war?
What did it amount to?

LG: Well, the papers we did at the time, and I think one or several of them are in this compendium that was prepared for Clifford to give to Johnson at the time of the A to Z review, was that no matter whose numbers you used, whether it was MACV's or Systems Analysis' or CIA's, that it still showed we had made very little headway in destroying North Vietnamese main force units, that we had made considerable headway in VC but it's hard to gauge exactly what that was. So no matter what numbers, I think that was the conclusion, and if you used CIA numbers you hadn't made much headway in VC, and if you used MACV you'd made considerable headway.

G: So at the time you did not regard this as a particularly serious [question]?

LG: No.

G: Not when you compared it with the rest of the big questions that were being considered.

LG: It was a running bimonthly--bimonthly, is that twice a month? No, it's a biweekly argument. The people who were involved in it took it very seriously.

G: Sam Adams took it very seriously.

LG: I didn't even know him at the time. I knew George Carver and George Allen and a number of those people, but I didn't know Adams was involved in it, didn't know him.

G: Did you ever talk to Rostow about this?

Gelb -- I -- 16

LG: At that time?

G: Yes.

LG: No.

G: Have you talked to him since?

LG: About the order of battle? No, never.

G: What about the war in general?

LG: Well, there's one other thing about data. This was the flow of North Vietnamese into the South, and there--again, my memory is very clear on it--there was a sharp contradiction between what MACV was reporting for infiltration and what we were getting from the same sources available to MACV, the COMINT, special intelligence. He [Westmoreland] was reporting seven thousand or whatever the hell it was, and this was what he was saying publicly. But we knew from all these other sources that they were running over twenty thousand, between twenty and thirty thousand a month.

G: This is the fall of 1967?

LG: Yes. Absolutely. There was a step-up beginning in Septemberish and running right through to Tet, a substantial increase.

G: Are you familiar with the recapitulations that MACV was doing in their order of battle and infiltration summaries up to a year later, I presume? And I'm pretty sure that those documents say that the great increase commenced in January 1968, that it went from seven thousand or so to twenty thousand in January. But your recollection is that the intelligence then showed--?

Gelb -- I -- 17

LG: Oh, I know what the intelligence was reporting because I used to do the memo every month from McNamara to the President on the effects of the bombing. Three of us used to gather every month with intelligence and Westmoreland's reports and do a memo saying here's what we bombed and here's what they're putting in. It was myself, Phil Odeen--

G: How do you spell that?

LG: O-D-E-E-N. He's now a partner here in town, Coopers and Lybrand [?]. And a guy worked for Odeen by the name of John Court [?]. And we'd sit down for a day and take the information and do up the new memo.

G: Was this NSA information primarily?

LG: Yes.

G: Okay.

LG: But we had all the intelligence information available to us. And beginning in September it was all showing a substantial increase, up around twenty to thirty thousand.

G: Do you have any insight as to why Westmoreland believed then or was saying then that it was seven thousand?

LG: I don't know.

G: You don't know? You never were called on to refute or rebut--?

LG: Oh, we did in these memos.

G: I see. Okay.

LG: And the memos I think are extant. I think they've got to exist somewhere. And the intelligence clearly still exists. It's easy enough to check.

G: Well, this is fascinating stuff.

Gelb -- I -- 18

What do you make of the suggestions that Kennedy would have--I know the historical fallacy in asking a question like this--taken another course in Vietnam had he lived?

LG: John F. Kennedy?

G: Yes.

LG: Well, as I wrote in my book, I don't believe that for a minute, I mean not for a minute. Everything that you can lay your hands on, other than a remark thrown off to Senator [Mike] Mansfield, another remark to Kenneth O'Donnell, everything else pointed in the direction of his being prepared to do whatever was necessary not to lose.

G: And that he didn't really have a choice. I think that's one of your primary theses.

LG: Yes. The way everybody looked at things, that's how they felt. For myself, looking back on the Vietnam War, one of the things I'm very glad about is that I wasn't in a position of real responsibility because I would have done the same thing they did. I know that.

G: This puts Robert Kennedy in rather a bad light I think because he is one of the few people to even dare say out loud that perhaps we ought to reconsider the whole thing. But you don't think he was very serious when he said that, do you?

LG: Well, I don't know whether he was or he wasn't. I didn't know Robert Kennedy, never met him. But when he was doing it, even he was terribly cautious in what he said. The furthest he went at that point was to say that we ought to be dealing directly with the VC in the negotiations. And then as I remember it there was a clamor about

Gelb -- I -- 19

this, people started to attack him. He backed off that statement. Or he had proposed the coalition government and then backed off. My memory is vague, one or the other, or both. I don't know whether he was sincere or not. I can't make a judgment like that.

But to look back at President Kennedy, there's just a startling difference between the early memoirs written by those who were close to him and the later memoirs. If you look at what Arthur Schlesinger and Ted Sorensen wrote about Kennedy and Vietnam right after they left government, they all said Kennedy was committed to sticking it out. They all quoted those interviews with [Walter] Cronkite and [David] Brinkley as symbolic of Kennedy's views at the end. But by the end of the sixties, early seventies, they rewrote it themselves. I trust the contemporaneous accounts.

G: How would you answer those--and I'm assuming you believe that Vietnam was a mistake in sum. A great many people who favored the war then are now saying that we gained all the things we would have lost if we hadn't fought, that two of the dominoes fell but the others have not fallen and that's because we stayed and fought. What do you think? Is there any substance to that?

LG: I really don't buy that, and I say that as somebody who used to buy it. So I can sympathize and empathize with that logic. But anybody I knew who was involved with Southeast Asia felt--and it was said back in the late forties, early fifties--that in time the Vietnamese would hold sway over into China, that they were the dominant force there. No one knew exactly what that meant, but they would be the dominant

Gelb -- I -- 20

power there it seemed clear. And I think what's happened now is just that. Withdraw all foreign influence and the most dynamic country begins to exercise paramount influence. Even here they're having a tough time in Cambodia, and the Laotians by inches [are] asserting their own independence. It's not that easy to hold sway over others for an extended period of time without a substantial military presence.

G: Do you think the Vietnamese have about reached the limits of their geographical abilities?

LG: I think so. You know, I look at it this way. I didn't want us to get out of Vietnam the way we did. We got out the worst possible way. I wanted an orderly withdrawal, not people jumping on helicopters from the rooftops of our embassy. That I think was a tragic way to end it, and it didn't have to end that way. But we got out in the worst possible way, and the Vietnamese have not gotten further than where they are today. And the Chinese have not rolled over Asia. To the contrary, President Reagan is in China today. We have a quasi, de facto alliance with the Chinese in certain respects, despite the ignominy of our withdrawal. Our commitment to the Thais I think is a real one. I think it was then, I think it is now. And I think it's recognized in the area. I know some argued that we were able to turn the tables in Indonesia because we held out in Vietnam, but quite frankly I don't see how losing in Vietnam helped us in Indonesia.

So I think, to me, the lesson of this is that in most of these countries of the world, out of the way, the events are going to be determined primarily by people who live there, whatever the application

Gelb -- I -- 21

of force, and that there has to be a terribly powerful reason going beyond dominoes to justify direct American military involvement. Not to justify American military aid, I believe in that. Not to justify advisers, I believe in that, too. But to justify direct combat involvement.

G: That brings me to a question. You make a very strong argument in your book on Vietnam that we should be more pragmatic in our policy making and less committed to ideology. But how do you get our young men to go off and fight for pragmatic reasons? Don't they have to have some kind of higher cause in mind to make that kind of commitment?

LG: Oh, there's a trade-off, but I think that a president is able to explain these things and justify them satisfactorily when the cause is justified. For example, take Central America. I think there would be no difficulty whatsoever getting the overwhelming majority of Americans and elites in America to agree that we would absolutely draw the line in Central America in the presence of any Soviet advisers, Soviet military bases. I think that could have been done at the time of Castro. I certainly think it could be done now, and to take military action if necessary to prevent those bases from being put in. I don't think the president would have any difficulty convincing the overwhelming majority of people about that. I think it's horrible for the people of Nicaragua to have to live under that kind of government, but it's not a direct threat to the United States unless you have that foreign presence. And I think we can prevent that and people are prepared to prevent that. They understand that that is a justifiable cause.

Gelb -- I -- 22

G: So to that extent at least the old consensus on foreign policy is still there, it just has to be called on?

LG: Yes, where it's justified. It's not justified when you're talking about direct involvement in essentially internal revolutions and social upheavals. God help the people in the countries involved in those things, because it's terrible, but it does not engage American vital interests. You know, you just look around the world at all those communist countries that now want to do business with us. After revolutionaries come to power, association with the Soviet Union or Cuba or whatever doesn't have much to offer them. It's hard to deal with these buggers. They really are a pain in the ass and they lie and they do all these other things, but that doesn't mean we ought not to be sensible in dealing with them.

G: Well, what role does ideology play for people who are so afraid of communist world domination as explicitly stated in Marxist-Leninist doctrine?

LG: I think communism is a bunch of horse shit and is losing adherents, not gaining it. And it's a system that doesn't work, that almost every society that's adopted it has had to adjust or just decrepitate. It is an ideology for revolution, not governance.

G: Was it Pham Van Dong that said that it's easy to fight a war, governing a country is another thing?

LG: If he did, he's right.

G: I think it was he.

Are you out of time? Do you need to--?

Gelb -- I -- 23

LG: A couple more minutes, then I really have to break.

G: Did you have a lot to do with Middle Eastern affairs?

LG: A little. Not a lot. You mean when I was in the Pentagon?

G: Yes.

LG: A little. The military sales.

G: I see. The Phantom deal?

LG: That's right.

G: Can we reserve that for another time? Because I'm very interested in that, and I don't think we can cover it in the time left.

LG: Sure. Sure. But I'll tell you who has excellent documents on that. It's Clark Clifford, and he put them in the Harry Truman Library. I mean, all the papers that were done in the Pentagon on the Phantoms were in Clifford's files that he turned over to the Truman Library, so far as I remember.

G: Well, I can understand the Clifford papers going to the Truman Library, but it's too bad that they all had to go.

LG: Here is an instance where I wouldn't be surprised but what copies go to the LBJ Library. But that's where they are, and there's pretty substantial documentation in there.

G: Why don't I cut us off here then?

LG: Okay.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of Leslie H. Gelb

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, Leslie H. Gelb of Alexandria, Virginia do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the tape recording and transcript of the personal interview conducted on April 30, 1984 at Washington, D.C. and prepared for deposit in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) The transcript shall be available for use by researchers as soon as it has been deposited in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

(2) The tape recording shall be available to those researchers who have access to the transcript.

(3) I hereby assign to the United States Government all copyright I may have in the interview transcript and tape.

(4) Copies of the transcript and the tape recording may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request.

(5) Copies of the transcript and tape recording may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

Leslie H. Gelb
Donor

Dec. 18, 1985
Date

acting Frank B. Bunker
Archivist of the United States

1-15-86
Date