INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: JAMES J. HAGERTY

INTERVIEWER: Ted Gittinger

PLACE: Dr. Hagerty's home, Conroe, Texas

Tape 1 of 1

G: Would you outline your career for us in the intelligence field?

H: Yes. Actually my career in the intelligence field doesn't really start until I came back to active duty. I was recalled to active duty at the time of the Korean War in September of 1950. My entire previous experience was in World War II, close to four years, and I was an infantry platoon and company commander. But during the interim period, between 1945 and 1950 when I was out, I joined a reserve organization, and for reasons that are not entirely clear to me I ended up as a regimental S-2 on the table of organization. This was not an organized reserve unit, so to speak, in the sense that it had full strength and so on, so to make a long story short when the Korean War started I was one of the first people that was called back and I instantly assumed that I would be going back as an infantry company commander. But it seemed that somewhere along the line someone had taken the trouble to see what I had done in the reserve, and my background at Columbia University in history and political science, and they sent me out to the Army Intelligence School at Fort Riley. And there I went through the course and apparently did well enough that they invited me to stay on as an instructor, and I stayed on for two years teaching tactical and combat and strategic intelligence. Then I had orders and a very interesting thing happened: I had two

sets of orders in one day in 1952, one said to report to Korea and the second set of orders said that I should report to USAREUR in Europe.

G: USAREUR?

H: USAREUR, yes. U. S. Army, Europe, headquarters in Heidelberg.

I went up to the headquarters and asked which was the correct set of orders and automatically assumed that I would go to Korea, but to my immense surprise again somebody apparently had checked through the records and found out that I had this particular background and they asked for me as the political intelligence officer in G-2 USAREUR. So I went over there in 1952, and went through a series of very, very interesting incidents. I was the responsible reporting officer, had to brief the commanding general, so to stay on top of the situation in the June 17, 1953, uprisings in East Germany--they are sometimes erroneously referred to as the East Berlin uprisings. Actually, as I recall, at the time by count there were some two hundred and thirty-seven separate uprisings all over East Germany. The long and short of it was that all units of the Group of Soviet Forces Germany, which at that time I believe numbered twenty-two divisions--they fluctuated between twenty and twenty-two over the years--units of all of those were called out to put down the uprisings in East Germany, and this was of course a very tense time over there. There was a particular period of time when we thought that perhaps the Soviets would use the cover of the uprising to take West Berlin and things were in quite a bit of a sweat for about twenty-four hours. As it turned out, they very meticulously went around the other side and put down the uprising.

Another interesting thing that occurred, as I recall, and it's one of those unanswerable questions that intelligence officers are asked, but in March of 1953, just before the June 17 uprisings in East Germany, Stalin died, of course. And the commanding general immediately wanted to have the political intelligence officer, who was a rather young and somewhat inexperienced captain at the time, come over there and tell them who was going to take Stalin's place. That was the question, and of course you were supposed to have an answer. I gave him my best analysis, which didn't satisfy him at all. By the way, this was General Tony "Nuts" McCauliffe of Bastogne fame, who was a lieutenant general at this time. He didn't appreciate the facts that I was giving him--he thought I was weaseling on the problem. I told him that there were three people there that were potentially successors and that of the three, Malenkov, Molotov and Beria, I thought that quite possibly Malenkov, because of his role as the first secretary of the party, would be the logical one. This is where, after all, Stalin had come from; this is where Lenin had come from and so on.

Well, what we didn't know, of course, and today in July of 1982 as we continue to hear reports of Brezhnev's failing health, I am always reminded of this: that there's always somebody back there in the woodwork that you may have heard of, but you don't know how good he is, how motivated he is and, as the Russians say, how much of an instinct for the jugular he has. And of course this was Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, who most of us had heard of but certainly didn't think would make it. And within fifteen months Malenkov was on the sidelines and Khrushchev had the ball rolling. Well, things like that made the job very, very interesting. In the course of the next several years I determined

that in order to be a really well-grounded intelligence officer that I needed further training, and I became aware of the so-called Russian Foreign Area Specialist Training program, abbreviated usually as the Russian FAST program.

G: F-A-S-T?

H: Yes. And I put in for this and in 1956 they selected ten officers out of the army, it was a fairly small group of people. They looked over your background pretty thoroughly and you had to have recommendations from your commanding general and so on. And I started off on this. It's a marvelous program. The nearest thing, if you've ever read George Kennan's memoirs and I certainly don't want to be immodest and put myself in his company, but in terms of the training that we received, in many respects it was better training than George Kennan and Charles Bohlen and the State Department specialists received back in the late twenties and the early 1930s. Because what we did, we went to what in those days was called the Army Language School out at Monterey--it's now the Defense Language School--for one year of concentrated, and I mean concentrated, eight hours a day of Russian language training program. We were in class all day and then we took the tape recorder home and worked another three or four hours every night. At the end of a year you're not fluent in Russian, but you have a pretty good handle on it. And the second year, which was perhaps the most interesting of all, was a year at the Russian Institute at Columbia where a couple of us were fortunate enough to manage to nail down a master's degree in the course of that year. Then the last two years of the program were spent in Oberammergau, Germany. Here we were in with a group of Russian *émigrés*, most of whom could speak two words of English, "Good morning," and that was it, with a heavy

Russian and Slavic accent. So we were in effect forced to speak Russian with them in class and around the campus and so on in the post. And I would say that by the end of the third year with this saturation program that we were not only fairly fluent in the Russian language, but we had been lectured to on history, philosophy and literature and military order of battle and so on. At the end of the third year we were then given sort of on-the-job training assignments, and my particular assignment was to be in charge of the Soviet mission in Frankfurt.

You may know that as a result of the agreements at the end of World War II, the U.S., the British and the French have missions that travel in East Germany and the Russians had a mission that travels in West Germany. So my job was to--sort of a housekeeping job--take care of the Soviet mission and to argue with the Soviet colonel on the phone; the *polkovnik* who became very, very bourgeois.

G: Could you spell *polkovnik*?

H: P-O-L-K-O-V-N-I-K, I suppose, *polkovnik*.

G: What does that mean? Is that--?

H: It's colonel, Russian for colonel, yes. And he became very bourgeois, as I say, and began to argue with me that he wanted orange juice instead of tomato juice from the commissary, and he really became accustomed to a standard of living which I'm sure he never returned to in the Soviet Union.

But it was good training and I found out that the ultimate test of your ability to handle a foreign language is a shouting match over the phone with a Russian colonel. That really tests your knowledge. Those are some asides anyway.

At the conclusion of the four-year Russian-area training program, we of course were sent out to different assignments and I, after a year side trek at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, I ended up in the office of the assistant chief of staff, G-2, Intelligence in the Pentagon and was in a position, or was put into a position of--in the Russian division, as they called it--of trying to put to use some of the things I had learned. One of the difficulties that I ran into almost immediately at the Pentagon in G-2 was an almost incredible lack of debate on intentions. One of the easiest things that people do in intelligence is say that we can never determine the intentions of the enemy, that all we can do is talk about his physical capabilities. In my judgment this is a cop-out because the real nitty-gritty is to determine the intentions, which are a compendium of all kinds of economics and politics and history and so on, not just the number of divisions or the number of airplanes or the number of missiles that a country has. There's far more to waging war, as I'm sure we would all agree, than just the military order of battle.

Nevertheless, I found to my amazement within a matter of a few weeks or a month there that there were two schools of thought in the Pentagon, and this began to disturb me increasingly because there was what I would term--and this is just my own phrase for it--the conservative group that said that if the Russians attack, they could get to the English Channel in twelve days; those were the conservatives. The liberals, I guess you might say, said that if the Russians attack, they could get to the Channel in six days.

I had a great deal of difficulty with this from the very beginning because this appeared to be almost an article of faith. And I remember one time after I had been there about six months and somehow or other it came around to my turn and the question was the

debate between six days and twelve days, I was asked my opinion and I said very simply, "I don't think they're coming. I don't think they're coming now. I don't think they're coming in the future," and so on. There's a cold war; we all know about communism; we're not friends, but that does not necessarily follow. And of course I was looked upon with, I suspect, not having been around at the time, something of the same type of thing that some people were looked at during the McCarthy period, as though I were something of a traitor. This was an article of faith.

Well, not to get into my personal situation too much, but it didn't take very long before I began to recognize that I could not stomach this sort of thing, and I had made some contacts in various other meetings with the Central Intelligence Agency, and some people over there offered me a position in the Office of Current Intelligence. And in June of 1962 I managed to go on loan from the Department of the Army to the Office of Current Intelligence at CIA.

G: Is that a fairly common thing to happen?

H: Not awfully, no. They have some army people in the operational end of the business over there, which I'm not at all acquainted with. But on the analysis side, there were only two people that I am aware of, myself and Danny Graham, who of course as you know later got to be the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, a lieutenant general. As a matter of fact, we were both of the same rank [lieutenant colonel--JJH] at that time. And Danny Graham at this time in 1962, I think a couple of months after I went to the Office of Current Intelligence, he went to the Office of National Estimates. But no, it's fairly rare, and of

course it usually reflects specialized training such as I had, or contacts that you make and so on.

Well, I initially, being an army officer who was put into what they call the military division there in the Office of Current Intelligence, and a very famous name happened to be my boss, Bruce Clark, Jr., the son of General Bruce Clark, who's a well known figure in the army and I believe his last position was head of army ground forces at Fort Monroe, something of that nature. Bruce, Jr. was a very bright--as most of the people were over there--and a very decent fellow to work for.

We had three branches within the military division. In effect, there was a ground forces division which was sometimes called the army branch. And I started off as an analyst in that and before the end of the year I ended up as the branch chief. There was also the navy branch and then sort of a combination of air force and missiles all put together. Then there was a third branch that began to develop about the time I left there, which was sort of S & T, scientific and technology, and sort of fell between the chairs of S & T and the air force.

The opportunity that this gave me was to get away from what I considered to be essentially a brain-washing approach on the Soviet ground forces that had pretty much entered into the estimates that would come out of the Pentagon. I was not attempting to turn 180 degrees away from the obviously very formidable stature of the Soviet ground forces, but I made a few movements and wrote a few articles in the direction of trying to perhaps get a little bit more objective picture of the total impact of the Warsaw Pact forces. For example, and this is something that the Pentagon tended to overlook, there is no

question about the fact that the Soviet ground forces pound for pound and division for division were probably the best ground force in the world. It's in their national mission, the fact that they are a ground-based nation and so on, their history, *et cetera*.

But the thing that a lot of people tend to overlook is that--and here again one has to remember the June 17, 1953, uprisings in East Germany, the Hungarian revolution, the recalcitrance of the Czechs in 1968 and so on and so forth--just about every country in Eastern Europe at one point or another, with the possible exception of Bulgaria, has indicated their handcuff volunteer status in the Warsaw Pact. And I tried to make a fairly solid case for the fact that if I were the commander of the Warsaw Pact, who was always a Soviet field marshal, and I had to go to battle tomorrow against NATO and I had on my right flank a Polish field army and on my left flank a Czech field army, I would be less than entirely sure of the reliability of those forces to fight for dear old Moscow.

If you look at the other side of the coin, we have had our difficulties with the French; the French withdrew from NATO back in de Gaulle's time, and we argue with the Germans about more money, more troops, and holding up their end. But when you get right down to it, those to me are superficial differences among us, and if the fat were in the fire, there is no question in my mind that the very nature of our whole system, whether it's French or British or West German or whatever, Italian, that they would be with us. There is no question about the 100 per cent loyalty that would be there. It's their territory and, you know, they live rather well, most of the West European countries since the days of the Marshall Plan. So I think that these are things that don't enter into many of the calculations, because the very notion that the United States and the Soviet Union are going to fight and

all the other countries in the Warsaw Pact and NATO are going to stand aside is ridiculous on the face of it. So in any event, I think these were some of the small blows that I was able to strike for having a little bit more balanced picture.

G: Looks like you're anticipating *détente*.

H: Well, I sincerely believe that particularly since the Cuban missile crisis, which of course occurred within a very short time after I went to the agency, about four or five months, I've always regarded that as a real watershed in Soviet-American relations. I think that we came dangerously close to World War III; I think, hopefully, as close as we will ever come. And I think both sides, particularly the Soviets, backed away in horror, and the sort of personal rhetoric that came into one of Khrushchev's messages toward the end there was, "My God, back off! We're pulling this knot and it's getting so tight," and so on, gave pretty clear evidence that the Soviet leaders didn't take stupid pills to get where they are in the politburo. The true truism is that there will be no winners of an all-out nuclear war.

So I think there's been a distinct backing off and an almost meticulous avoidance of anything whereby the United States and the Soviet Union will, to use Dean Rusk's famous phrase, stare down the barrel of nuclear war again. There have been a lot of corollary and auxiliary actions and so on, and them supporting this group and us supporting somebody else, but as far as us and them going to war, I just simply don't see it in the cards and I never did.

G: Speaking of the Cuban missile crisis, at the time can you recall what we knew about what kind of military aid was going into Cuba?

H: Yes, I recall there was a great deal of pressure during the summer of 1962, there were several mid-term political races going on at the time and, gosh, I can't think of his name at the moment, but there was a senator running from New York State at the time, who, by the way, was defeated, who was supposedly getting all kinds of rumors that there were offensive weapons going into Cuba from refugees supposedly coming out of Cuba. The whole thing was we were unable to verify in any way although there was a great deal of pressure at the time. The hard information that we had at that time which was gained from a number of rather classified, sophisticated means of collection, plus what is no longer a secret, the U-2 flights which had to be discontinued during the late summer months, September I think, in late August and September.

Anyway, to get to the point, [they] were mostly what could be determined as defensive weapons. They were IL-28s, they were medium bombers, and I suppose technically they could be an offensive weapon, but I think we were not in a position at that time--this was just a little bit over a year after the Bay of Pigs--and I think we were running around with a bit of a hang-dog expression at that time and feeling a little bit guilty about the Bay of Pigs thing. And [we] recognized that perhaps the Cubans had a case for being helped with surface-to-air missiles and things of that nature by the Russians.

I remember the incident very well; it happened on a Sunday evening, very late Sunday evening, and I guess I was among a relatively small group of people that were the first to hear about it. And that was simply that the U-2s which had not been allowed to fly, had not been able to fly because of the poor weather--on Sunday, the fourteenth of October one of the U-2s took off, I presume from Homestead Air Force Base down in Florida, made

its pass, came back and the film was flown back to Washington. It was reviewed that afternoon and evening, and then the word went out that we had clear evidence that there were under construction--in fact some of them were well under way, almost to completion--of, I believe the number was a total of forty-eight, if I remember correctly, something like thirty-six MRBMs, medium range ballistic missiles, and about twelve IRBM, intermediate range which could--the MRBMs had a range up to a thousand miles, and if you drew the template, which we immediately did on the map from Havana, they could cover up through Kansas City, the entire southern tier of the United States. The IRBMs, which were two thousand miles, could cover almost all of the rest of the United States except for a small tip of the state of Washington and I believe a tip up in the northeast of Maine.

Well, this put the fat in the fire. There was no question about this. This was clear evidence and we were very, very fortunate, in my view. I think the entire course of this could have gone quite awry, very possibly the thing could have blown up into World War III if two things had happened. First, if the Soviets had realized that we had detected what they were doing; this they did not. Therefore, we had the luxury of almost a full week; actually the President wasn't notified until I think either late Monday or Tuesday morning when all of the analysis had been completed and so on. From that Monday when he was notified, which would have been the fifteenth or possibly the sixteenth, until the following Monday, the twenty-second, which was the evening that President Kennedy went on TV about seven-thirty in the evening, I guess, and sort of made our position clear to the world, we had the unusual luxury of being able to, in secret, debate the courses of action that were

open to the country. Now, this of course was done at a very high level, it was the so-called EXCOM, the Executive Committee, that most people are familiar with: Bobby Kennedy and the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and their assistants and so on.

My boss at that time, the agency head and a man whom I have great admiration for, John McCone, was very, very meticulous in coming back and consulting with the analysts. Now, the way we--at least the division I was in and we were the major people that were working on this in the agency--broke the analysis down was as follows: the navy branch of the military division concentrated on the ships that were coming in, because the atomic materials and the launchers and all the rest of it had to come in in a certain type of ship and so on; this is some technical stuff that I'm not entirely up on because it wasn't my field. But they were in a position to identify the material that was coming in from Russia to Cuba. The air force people of course were concentrating on the actual erection of the sites, and during the week from the time we discovered it until Kennedy made his speech, the U-2s continued.

But the minute that President Kennedy made his speech and in effect we told the world that we were aware of what was going on, then the navy began to send planes in at what they called deck level. And there were some very, very interesting pictures, startled pictures on the part of the Russians. We identified something in the neighborhood of five thousand Russians that were working on these sites. We could tell at some of those pictures which Russians had shaved that morning and which had not, so it gives you an idea of the low-level accuracy of the picture-taking.

Now, to get back to the point of the week, the advantage, I think that--and this has of course been brought out in a number of books, but I realized at the moment, if we had had to go on twenty-four or possibly even forty-eight hours' notice, I think undoubtedly we would have taken a knee-jerk military reaction. After all, that's what the military is there for and the initial reactions were to go in and, as somebody said, perform a clean, surgical strike, which upon cross examination turned out that the air force was really not capable of quite doing it that cleanly and that surgically, and anybody who has ever been in combat and has been in to where this air force has supposedly wiped out something and notices that they can't get quite that accurate. They can do saturation bombing very well, but surgery is for surgeons.

In any event, the luxury of those five or six or seven days of secret debate away from public knowledge, away from the harassment perhaps of the newspaper people who were suspicious of what was going on, but didn't really know until Kennedy made his speech, gave us an excellent, almost a textbook opportunity to go through an estimate of the situation. And what we were finally able to do was come up with the four possible courses of action, one of course which is always there--to do nothing--and that was almost immediately thrown out.

The second thing was to make diplomatic approaches, either a stiff note to Khrushchev or a complaint in the UN, and while that was not discarded, it was recognized that that would not have any particular effect; Khrushchev would probably deny it and so on. The third thing was of course military attack, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and most of

the military quite properly, I think, were--that's after all that's what they're trained for--inclined in that direction.

But the fourth one was the one--and I think we were very, very fortunate in a) having the time, and b) having Kennedy's leadership. Kennedy had his ups and downs over the course of his short thousand days in the White House, but I really think this was his finest hour, because he left hands off completely. He did not sit in on the meetings, he let everybody let their hair down and they thoroughly explored the situation and they finally came up with the fourth and what would be the ultimate course of action. And that was to set up a blockade of Cuba, except they didn't call it a blockade. Blockade smacks of nineteenth century gunboat diplomacy.

So instead, very--I think correctly and very smartly, they termed it a quarantine, meaning that the Cubans and Castro had some kind of terrible infectious disease and we wanted to hold them off at arm's length. And of course then in the background, we did not rely exclusively on that, and as the moment of confrontation approached, we began to alert our airborne divisions, the 101st and 82nd. At that time, as I recall, we had two armored divisions at Fort Hood. We brought in a marine division from the West Coast around San Diego, and I can't swear to this, because this was a little out of my field, but I did see some documents that indicated to me that if the Cuban missile crisis had not been solved within the next forty-eight to seventy-two hours, I think very well these forces would have gone in on an orchestrated and I think unquestionably successful invasion of Cuba.

Fortunately on the twenty-eighth Khrushchev, as I mentioned before, came to his senses, realized that he had been caught with his hand in the cookie jar, recognized that

probably his original motivation for this whole thing, which was to get rich quick, because they didn't have enough ICBMs and other weapons in the Soviet Union at that time to really match us as they do today, he was putting in these MRBMs and IRBMs because in effect they were like buying Model Ts instead of Mercedes Benz, which is what the ICBMs would be back in the Soviet Union. And they got caught off base and he had enough sense to back off.

G: What kind of demands for current intelligence did this situation require?

H: Well, pretty much as I outlined before. The navy branch, watching the ships and the air force watching the missiles. But one of the--sort of the dark cloud in the background that certainly concerned me, and I am sure it concerned other people was whether this was the first move in a Soviet overall attempt to get ready for World War III. So my job was to watch the Warsaw Pact and anything in Europe that would give--"light up" as they used to say on the watch committee board--indicators of imminence of hostility. And we found not only that they did not light up but that there were negative indicators, that the Soviets went out of their way to show us that they were nothing but a bunch of peaceniks and they did not intend to carry this into World War III.

G: And you're quite sure that was deliberate?

H: Yes, I'm convinced. Well, one particular incident which now in retrospect is really sort of funny but it wasn't all that funny at the time, it was a very tense time, was somewhere in the middle of the second week after Kennedy had made his speech on television, the story I heard was that Khrushchev went to the Bolshoi, to the opera, and he apparently asked who was the highest ranking American in town. And it was some vice president for General

Electric who was over there trying to sell some electrical gadgets to Soviets. And Khrushchev rushed up to him in the lobby with all the pictures and the newsmen there and threw his arms around this guy, a startled man from General Electric, and gave him a big, sloppy Slavic kiss, and the guy didn't know what was going on. But what Khrushchev was telling us was "we're not mad at you." He grabbed the ranking American in town he could put his hands on.

So this is of course one little interesting, amusing quirk, but as I recall, all of the indicators were deadset against the things that the Soviets would have to do if they were going to attack; in other words they would have had to get GSFG, Group of Soviet Forces, back to the barracks, they would have had to stockpile ammunition, they would have had to start stockpiling POL [petroleum, oil, and lubricants] and all the rest of it, the things you need, you know, six or nine or twelve days' supplies of combat equipment. No indication of that. They continued routine training in whatever they were doing during the rest of the year.

G: This is a little off the subject, but it goes back to something you said earlier. You said the Pentagon had two schools of thought, the conservatives who were, what, twelve-day men and the liberals were six-day men.

H: Yes, [the time] it would take the Russians.

G: What were the Russians when they stockpiled? Were they conservatives or liberals?

H: Well, we don't know actually, because we never saw them do it, thank God so far, but I think that we figured that we would go with the shorter thing, that if we saw them stockpiling six days, that that would be a pretty good indicator; if they went for longer, I am

sure they would stockpile longer than that. I don't think the Soviets think they are as good as we think they are.

G: So you thought we were then fairly close to a full-scale confrontation?

H: Well, yes, it was a very touchy time and I'll tell you frankly just from a personal angle, during that entire first week I was living in Arlington, Virginia, and I was coming home every night and of course not being able to breathe a word of this to the family, and I had some very serious inclinations to pack up my family and move them up into the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York, but of course—and there were other people who thought of that, too, because we certainly didn't know that first week the way it would go, in fact we didn't know right up until the end of the second week.

G: Did Mr. McCone ever talk to you about your analysis? You said he was very good about checking--

H: Yes, as a matter of fact, I went over there a couple of times as a backup briefer and so on. I was only called upon once to talk to a couple of people in the map room downstairs in the basement, I think. But yes, he would go right to the source of the information; he was very good in that respect. He would cross-examine you and he would not try to impose his own thoughts on it at all. He was, I think, very much of a "the Russians are coming" school of thought, being a conservative Republican and so on. But I think frankly of all the people I worked under, Allen Dulles and McCone and LBJ's old friend, Admiral [William F. Jr.] Raborn, who was there for a short time and then Dick Helms, I think McCone was the most professional of the CIA chiefs in my experience. He used his people and he would give

you a tough cross-examination, but if he was convinced that you would stick by your guns, he would go with what you told him.

G: Well, that jibes with what I've heard from other people.

H: Yes. I had a conversation with Arthur Schlesinger about a year ago, who was down here as a guest speaker for us, and he told me--he asked me about McCone. He said he was very opposed to McCone, because McCone wasn't a Democrat and so on, and he said he thinks he made a mistake. I said I thought from, you know, not from a political standpoint but from a purely professional standpoint of a person who worked under the aegis of Mr. McCone, I thought he was the best one they had.

G: There is one question--there have been allegations ever since that the Russians never took all their stuff out.

H: Yes. We of course heard that, but I can only tell you what I heard from the other people. This was largely the navy's job, but the navy made a statement--I don't know, it was within six weeks, two months or something like that after the crisis; it struck me it was before Christmas of 1962--that they were absolutely convinced that the stuff had been taken out. I've heard these rumors to the effect that they stored them in mines down there and so on; I'm not that technologically qualified to talk about it, but I know that this is very, very sensitive equipment. You cannot stick this stuff in an old mine shaft and let it hang around for a few years. But in any event this colleague of mine who was in charge of the navy thing was without any doubt convinced that they had removed the material in these large hatch ships; they were particular kinds of ships. And they gave a certification of that to the

White House. If I remember correctly, it was before the end of the calendar year, it was just before Christmas.

G: Have you heard Ray Cline's story about that?

H: No.

G: He asked that question and discovered that there was a study extant of the caves in Cuba and how big they were and what you could get in them and that would not nearly suffice to hold the necessary bulk to hide very many.

Well, let's look at it from the other side for a minute. What were the effects in the Soviet camp?

H: I think, to put it very bluntly, I think this was the beginning of the end for Khrushchev. I mean, when he was fired almost two years to the day after this in October of 1964, there were a whole list of things that came out in *Pravda*, or *Isvestia*, I guess it was in *Pravda*, talking about his harebrained schemes and so on, but I think at the head of the parade was this; he made a fool out of himself. He took a gamble and he lost, and of course by this time the Sino-Soviet split was well under way; it probably goes back as far as, oh, perhaps 1958, certainly by 1960, and the Chinese were poking fun at Khrushchev and saying that the Soviet Union had backed down in the face of the paper tiger and so on. And they say that Khrushchev was heard to say, "Yes, but the paper tiger's got nuclear teeth," and so on. So I think unquestionably he did himself in by this. Things have never been quite the same. They were much more exciting when he was in charge over there. Personally, I like less excitement and the more gray-faced *apparatchiks* that we've had ever since Brezhnev and his crowd have been in.

But things were pretty wild and wooly there; one minute we were facing World War III in forty-eight or seventy-two hours in Cuba. Then about the following June he was setting up a hot line with the Pentagon and the White House and agreeing to the no-explosions-in-the-skies thing and so on. So you never knew where you were going with Khrushchev. It was either feast or famine, war or peace.

G: Did you have anything to do with reporting on the Soviet position in regard to Southeast Asia?

H: Not really. When I left the Office of Current Intelligence, which by the way I left in 1964 because although I was working for the agency I was still a Regular Army officer, and they had that dreaded thing known as the hardship tour. So I went to Korea for the year 1964, summer of 1964 to 1965, and when I returned from there, and I might say in a moment that there were a couple of things that occurred over there that were related to the Vietnam War.

But just to get the track going, I returned and I was asked for in the Office of National Estimates. That in many respects was an even more rewarding time than the office of Current Intelligence, because there were many first-rate people there; Bill Hyland, for example, who later made quite a name for himself as Kissinger's deputy in the office of the national security adviser, and I believe was with Georgetown for a while and now I believe he is with the Carnegie Endowment for Peace. He was there, and Bill was essentially an East European-Russian area man, but he moved at this time over into East Asia and began to become the man in national estimates on China.

Now, my job was in the Russian area and particularly on the military estimates, and anything connected with politics or economics that bore on that type of estimate. A very

peculiar thing happened, and it is something that is somewhat related to this institutional block that I have found so often. I ran across a little bit in the Pentagon and I ran across it here, too. They had set up by that time--the war of course [for us--JJH] had started in 1965--you had the Gulf of Tonkin situation in 1964 and by 1965 when I went back to ONE, Office of National Estimates, we had started to put ground troops in and we were well into it by that time.

Apparently President Johnson had made the decision that we were going to put in first a hundred and then two hundred, and you know the rest of the story of the escalation, a hundred thousand troops. But a very strange thing happened. They set up a Vietnamese task force which was kind of an interagency organization, and there was a very good man by the name of George Carver who was the agency's representative on that. And yet I would have had no particular occasion to have any contact with George, but Bill Hyland would have. As I recall, I do not think that Bill Hyland was ever really brought into this picture. I may be wrong on that, but my impression was that we were sort of covering Communist China and the Soviet Union, the two major backers of the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong and everything else. But there was no interplay between the two, and I sometimes have the feeling that perhaps, not so much from my side but certainly from Hyland's side--and again I'm speculating here--if there had been a little bit more interdisciplinary analysis going on on this thing--that perhaps we might not have gotten so deep into the quagmire in Vietnam.

G: So if you were in my place, you would ask Carver sometime why doesn't Hyland have more input.

H: Perhaps that's too strong a way of putting it, but I would put it the other way around as, you know, just how much was he asked into it. It appeared to me that--and again this is no knock against George Carver, who is a very fine gentleman and well thought of in the agency, but--in a sense he was sort of plucked out of his Southeast Asia desk and put into this Vietnam committee. My impression is, and I can't prove this, that the optimistic views of the war tended to be carried at this upper level of the Vietnam committee, of the Vietnam task force. As I recall about that time, it seems to me it was in 1966 or 1967, George even wrote an article for *Foreign Affairs* which gave more or less the optimistic attitude that we were winning, the light could be seen at the end of the tunnel, and all those other *clichés* that we've heard about to our sorrow over the years. I just think that a more pluralistic attitude toward the whole thing might have reached the right ears. Maybe not, I don't know.

G: Why do you think it was organized that way?

H: I don't know. I certainly was on the fringe of it. It was this idea that when you have a special situation, you get up a special task force and they operate sort of out of the context of everything else, you know, and then you have the ordinary business. But the sad part about it and the silly part about it is that the ordinary business of the Soviet Union, which was shipping SAM 2s and 3s to North Vietnam, and the Chinese were sending a little--what they could afford to supply and so on. And very much the every-day business of China and the Soviet Union--this was the only communist country or ostensibly or hopefully communist country from the communist point of view, North Vietnam, that was under attack, and neither Moscow nor Peking had much choice but to support them. But about this time the Sino-Soviet split was very, very serious, and Bill Hyland, for example, was the

knowledgeable man on that. I again don't pretend any expertise here, but in the course of my following the Soviet situation it became apparent that the Chinese were obstructing the flow of military support to North Vietnam from the Soviet Union.

G: This is what had to be transshipped through Communist China?

H: Yes, and they originally tried to send it across by land and I believe later, and now I'm really talking about things I don't know much about. But just about the time I left, the indications were that they were beginning to--because of the Chinese intransigence, not wanting the Soviet Union to be the Great White Father to the North Vietnamese, that the Soviets had to start shipping stuff from Vladivostok, which was a rather awkward way, a roundabout way of doing things. All I'm saying is that these little pieces of the rather pluralistic picture of the communist world should have been put in there, and I have some serious reservations as to whether or not all of these factors were cranked into the analysis--because of no deliberate decision, but kind of an institutional block. I mean, here was George Carver and his group over here and here was Bill Hyland and the rest of us doing our thing here, and I--

G: Let me take you back for a minute to those days and propound a thesis which you may have had propounded to you, I don't know. The thesis is that a great deal, although not all, of the vital war material including POL was coming in to North Vietnam by sea, through Haiphong. What will the Russians do if we mine the harbor or more immediately, bomb the unloading facilities and a Russian ship gets hit?

H: That's a tough question. I am inclined to think that by and large the Soviets were rather wishy-washy in their support of North Vietnam, and I think this goes back to, well, the

same type of approach almost, you might say, that Stalin had toward Mao Tse-tung back in the days of the Chinese civil war. They sort of wanted the communist side to win, but they didn't want them to be able to say in effect that they were do-it-yourself communists. And I think they were sort of on the fence.

Now, one thing that I remember very well, and I had a couple of good friends who have been Russian foreign area specialist-trained people who had gone to Moscow as *attachés* and assistant *attachés*, and one fellow, a fellow by the name of Colonel Charlie Fitzgerald, told me later that one of the interesting things about the Vietnam War was that when they spoke to Soviet military people in Moscow, the Soviets had kind of a dual approach toward the American involvement in Vietnam. The first one was, you know, traditional: you dirty capitalists, you're knocking down this poor communist nation. And then once they got that off their chest, in other words they genuflected in the direction of Marxism-Leninism theology, they would then say, "What are you learning with all those helicopters over there?" They were jealous militarily, tactically and strategically that [in] the only war that was going on in the world, we were exercising our people and our equipment and so on, and the Soviets were on the outside. So I think that this is a kind of dualism about the Soviet approach to the whole thing. Now, if that gives you a clue to your answer, which I think it might, I would say that probably it would have taken some very gross act on our part for the Soviets to be trapped into coming into the war. In other words, they wanted the North Vietnamese to win, but they weren't going to break their backs too much to help them.

G: How was the Soviet position complicated by the split with China? By that I mean--

H: Well, traditionally over the years, as I'm sure you know historically, China always regarded Tonkin, as it's called, the northern part of Vietnam--in the old days it was Tonkin--as being sort of under their shadow, just as they controlled Korea for centuries until the Japanese came along in 1905, 1910. And I think that Communist China had been communist obviously since 1949 and I think that the Chinese felt that if anybody was going to have an influence with this newly, hopefully communist emerging North Vietnamese and all of Vietnam eventually as it is today, that the Chinese should be the ones. But the trouble was that the Chinese didn't have that much industry then; they don't have it today; they're still trying to become an industrialized country. And the country that could do the most good in terms of hardware was the Soviet Union.

So the Vietnamese sort of had to play both ends against the middle, keep the Chinese happy and yet keep the Chinese out, because I think if the Chinese--you know, it's the old story, the Chinese come in, if they came in, when do they go home? They didn't want that and they needed the technology, the SAMs and the POL and all the rest of it from the Soviet Union. And then against the backdrop of that is this gradually mounting vicious warfare, rhetorical and, as you well know, in 1969 there was actually a regimental-size confrontation on the Ussuri River up there, on the border of maritime Russia and the Soviet Union and China. That Sino-Soviet split, even though there are some people--you know, David Brinkley said once, "Some people will believe anything and some people will believe nothing." There are some people that think that's all sort of a make-believe game. Well, I don't think so. I think the evidence is pretty clear that nationalism is the split between the two countries.

G: To what extent did it suit the Soviets to have us embroiled in Vietnam?

H: Oh, I think that they probably, you know, rolled over on the floor and laughed, because if there's one great military strategic *cliché* that has come down through the last forty years, it's "Don't get involved in a ground war in Asia." Again, I have absolutely no credentials as an expert on the Vietnam War. I wasn't in Vietnam; I only have peripheral knowledge of it, but it seems to me that we got into that thing for all the wrong reasons. We never seemed to realize that the French had gone in there erroneously in 1945 and 1946, tried to pick up where they left off before the war, and they had a big inferiority complex as a result of their ignominious defeat in a couple of weeks in May of 1940 in Europe. The whole thing kind of fell between the chairs.

I think it was one of those situations where, not that Roosevelt was the magic man, but Roosevelt had expressed a very generalized approach, which often angered Winston Churchill, that the days of colonialism were over. The most he would grant for Vietnam after the war that would be anything close to colonialism would be a trusteeship, and that the idea of a trusteeship would be that when the Vietnamese, as soon as they grew up, so to speak, were able to handle their own independence, it would be granted to them.

But of course the French came in and here again is another case of institutional block. In the State Department in the old days--it's not true anymore--but in the State Department in the old days the Indochina desk, as they used to call it, was a sub-desk under the French desk, because, after all, France owned Indochina, as the saying goes in colonial circles. And there were a number of people just like our old China hands that had grown up

in the days of Chiang Kai-shek and earlier over there, and people like Theodore White and so on that were trying to tell people this is going to be bad news.

But Truman was a new president; he had a dozen balls in the air, and Indochina was, I'm sure, thirty-ninth on the priority list. So when the French wanted to go in and we were thinking in great terms of the coming Cold War and the bolstering of Western Europe, de Gaulle wanted to go back in and so on, that communism was introduced as the item. And it's a sad thing in a way, because again, and I'm speaking not from any expertise but from a knowledge of world history--that perhaps if we had encouraged them in their independence, we might have turned Vietnam into a Yugoslavia instead of the enraged country that it obviously is today against us. But we didn't have the wisdom or the horses at the time to move in that direction.

And then of course the terrible situation in 1949 when China went communist and that dreadful expression that we've heard so many times: "We lost China," which is ridiculous of course; we never owned China. Chiang Kai-shek lost China. And then the Korean War and the McCarthy period and the communists were around every corner. We got into a state of national paranoia. It's not a very commendable time in our history. I think we definitely lost our cool during that ten or fifteen years right after the war.

G: Let me ask you something that you've touched on already. You said that we would have had to do something very gross to provoke a serious Russian reaction in Vietnam. How gross would it have had to be? Would we have had to--?

H: I was thinking in terms of the argument that came up against the--during the Cuban missile crisis I think we estimated there were somewhere between fifty-five hundred and six

thousand Soviet troops who were actually installing these missiles, the IRBMs and the MRBMs. Now, if--and I don't know this much about the Vietnam War, to be perfectly honest--if the Soviets had had maybe a division, maybe a field army in there in the North, and we had really gone out and killed five thousand or ten thousand of them with a saturation B-52 bombing, that might have been a horse of another color. But there was no evidence that the Soviets had anything like that up there.

G: What about an invasion of the North?

H: I don't know the answer to that. It seems to me that we never really got a handle on the war. That very suggestion I feel certain was probably made by some of our military people who were going over there and using all this rhetoric about guerrilla warfare and so on. Actually I don't think we ever understood what we were up against over there. I mean, guerrilla warfare is a very special kind of warfare. It is based on a political, indigenous force, and we did not have anybody that had any experience in that. General Taylor was considered to be a guerrilla expert and yet he was a paratrooper; that's entirely different. And even the fellow from--I can't remember his name now--the State Department that--

G: Roger Hilsman?

H: Hilsman, yes, Hilsman. He'd been a commando over in Asia; he hadn't been a guerrilla [inaudible]. Quite a different thing.

G: Chindits or something?

H: Yes, something like that. But they were dropped in and supplied from an outside base and so on. This is quite different from what the Viet Cong were. But again I am really talking out of my field. I don't want to make any pretensions of knowledge in this area.

G: Okay. Would the Soviets have been interested in participating in a peace overture to the North, do you think? Would it have suited their purpose or were they perfectly happy to see us in a--?

H: I think if we had perhaps, and again this is pure speculation, as so many people have said, if we had gone all out in the war, then perhaps if they were about to be overrun, maybe it appeared an invasion by us was imminent, then I think the Soviets might very well have intervened because they've made a habit of that over the years. When their side is losing, then they want to talk peace; when they're winning, fine. And of course we never did win for reasons that are subject to great controversy.

G: We tried on several occasions to use the Russians, apparently unsuccessfully. Did the Russians have any leverage with the North, do you think?

H: I am not entirely sure that they have all that much leverage, no. The traditional view is that Moscow pulls the strings and all these communist parties all over the world jump like Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. I'm not entirely sure that that is the case, and I think it is becoming less and less the case as time goes on.

Certainly the two classic examples are Yugoslavia and Tito. What a travesty that was; probably the loyalest communist in Eastern Europe in 1946, 1947 and early 1948 was Tito. But Stalin just didn't like the idea of a do-it-yourself communist, so he had to put his own secret police in there, he had to lean on him, and finally Tito became a Yugoslav nationalist first and a communist second. And the same thing happened with Mao Tse-tung in China. China was totally reliant upon the Soviets from the end of the Korean War until

the late fifties, maybe 1960, and then they began to feel their oats and began to go their own way.

G: This is a speculative question because you had left government service by this time: There was a lot of speculation in January of 1968 that the seizure of the *Pueblo*--I'm asking you this because you've been in Korea and presumably had done some Korea watching--was somehow not unconnected with Vietnam. Do you have any insight into that at all?

H: No, I don't have any insight into it, but I have a very strong feeling that we goofed on that situation. We were sending a ship that was engaged in electronic surveillance and we simply got too close in to the coast. I think we maybe got a little bit cocky or something. Or Commander [Lloyd] Bucher got careless or what. I don't know what the answer is, but I think we rather asked for it in that situation, and I don't see any great connections there at all.

G: You don't see any connection.

H: No, I think it's a question of the North Koreans being a very aggressive, very scrappy group of people. You know, in the course of the year I was over there, my God, about every other week the briefing for General Howze, who's a fine general, the commanding general of the United Nations command, was, "This is the three hundred and forty-seventh or three hundred and seventy-fourth incident at Panmunjom. The North Koreans are tunneling under the barbed wire and sending somebody down to knock off President Park or his wife," which they eventually did by the way, and so on.

G: Was that General H-O-W-Z-E?

H: Yes, Hamilton H. Howze, fine man. He retired while I was in Korea and he became the vice president of the Bell Helicopter Company up here in Fort Worth.

G: Oh, he did?

H: Fine man. Yes.

G: That's interesting, because it was the Howze board--

H: H.H.H., Hamilton H. Howze.

G: --that developed all that airmobile stuff.

H: That's right. He was the--matter of fact, during the Cuban missile crisis, he was the commanding general of the XVIII Airborne Corps, and if we had had to go into Cuba on the first of November, which I think is roughly the target date that was reached on paper, he would have been the chief honcho.

G: He was part of the airborne mafia.

H: Well, he got into it later in life. He was also a pilot and a very fine man. I think he lost out as chief of staff of the army, by the way, just by a smidgen. Instead they gave him the Korean thing, which was kind of a sop, because he got his fourth star out of it, but when he got a better offer he left.

G: This is as good a point as any I guess to ask you about something you mentioned on the phone the other day, which was the discussion you had about the ABM [antiballistic missile] thing.

H: Well, that was when I returned from Korea in 1965. No, I'm sorry, I guess it was the following year, in 1966. One of the things that always endeared Robert McNamara to me as secretary of defense was that he had a tendency to be very skeptical, and I think he

recognized that one of the weaknesses--and, good lord, I'm not knocking the military because I spent twenty long, happy years in the military. But again this is an institutional situation. The G-2 of the Department of the Army is not just an intelligence officer, he is also working for the chief of staff of the United States Army. And if it is policy that--I'm not saying that this is done deliberately, but if it is policy that the army needs to be expanded--and I haven't met the general yet that didn't want more tank divisions, more infantry divisions and so forth--the tendency is to build up the enemy strength, not dishonestly but to give them the benefit of the doubt. In other words, to do what I say, make the Russians look like they're nine feet tall. Now, this is not to put down the Russians; they're a great ground force and we all know that.

This is one of the places where I used to have difficulties. I mentioned to you this almost brainwashing attitude in the Pentagon that the Soviets were there and "the Russians are coming, the Russians are coming," as the expression goes. Now, the reason for that is that the same guy who's trying, supposedly as G-2, to give the chief of staff of the army an objective intelligence report is also working for the chief of staff, and the chief of staff has a chief of operations, DCSOPS as they call them and so on, and I think that the G-2 and most of the military people--I think it happens in the navy and I know it happens in the air force—are dragged along to make the worst case for the enemy capabilities.

Now, when you get over into the agency, nobody has any particular ax to grind and this infuriates the army, because the army will say, "What do those civilians over there know about the military?" and so on and so forth. Well, the thing they don't realize is that a good many of the army people are in intelligence for short periods of time; they're not all

specialists. The G-2, for example, may be the latest hot division commander out of the Seventh Army in Europe; he's in there for a year or two or three and he moves on to a corps or whatever, whereas these fellows over at the agency are actors, year in and year out, and these are some very bright cookies. These are people that--well, people like Sherman Kent and so on are recruited out of Yale and Princeton and Harvard and Columbia and so on, and these guys are pros. And furthermore their efficiency report is not being written by the chief of staff of the army; their efficiency report is being written by the director or the division commander, who wants objective intelligence.

So there's a built-in conflict there and there's a distrust; there was a great deal of rancor just beneath the surface in that sort of thing. And I personally am delighted that there is this pluralistic approach to a military estimate, because otherwise I am afraid that more often than not for presumably good reasons, but in some views suspect reasons, we can be led down the garden path. So the CIA serves a very, very valid purpose, and we should keep it, on the estimate side.

G: The estimate side. You're not so sure of the. . . .

H: The other side I will leave to people who know more about it than I.

G: Okay. You mentioned something about McNamara, which was. . . .

H: Oh, yes, I'm sorry.

G: That's all right.

H: I got on a sidetrack. He asked the agency to come up with an opinion paper or a position paper on whether or not we should go in for an ABM. This was in the fall of 1966, and I remember it very well because I was teaching Russian history at the University of

Maryland at night up in College Park, and I had to cancel my classes two nights in a row up there, because we worked around the clock.

G: You were moonlighting?

H: No, I was teaching after hours. I'd just gotten my doctorate at Georgetown and I was thinking of going into it on a full-time basis, which I did shortly thereafter.

In any event, Howard Stoertz, who was one of the really smart, really brilliant analysts--

G: Would you spell that name?

H: Howard Stoertz, S-T-O-E-R-T-Z, I believe it was spelled. He was actually my boss, he was a GS-16 and one of the sharpest guys, a real hard-nosed guy but sharp as a tack. And he and I were given this task of writing up this position paper, if you will. And there were several approaches. I don't remember everything that went into the paper, because some other people took it. We were the drafters of the paper. He worked and I worked sort of side by side in offices next to each other. And we came up with a recommendation against the ABM for several reasons.

Now Howard, interestingly enough, who is not a military person, tended to come down harder on the military hardware reasons for not going into it. I think he made a case, for example, the rough estimate, if my memory serves me correctly, was that at that time, in 1966, it would take us something like forty billion dollars to have what they call a thin ABM system, I think a dozen or fifteen cities in the country. But this brought up all kinds of invidious comparisons, you know, what if you put a ring around San Francisco but you don't put one around Portland, Oregon? Terrible political complications here. They're the

thirteenth instead of the twelfth, something like that. And the money. In 1966 if forty billion was for a thin one, can you imagine what the cost overruns, and the CPI [consumer price index] and everything else has gone up since then, what it would be today. We'd have been bankrupt.

Secondly, the point was, and the best way I can illustrate this is--and I sound like an old soldier now--the old World War II idea of the antitank gun and the tank. We had a small antitank gun and the Germans came out with a big tough tank, so we got a bigger antitank gun and they shaped the sides [of the tank]. You know, you keep going like that. So supposing we had spent this forty billion dollars on the thing, and God knows what it would have been with cost overruns and so on, and then some guy comes along with a little black box that totally invalidates our ABM system. I don't know how you do that, but it happens all the time. So then you've blown the country's economy on this supposedly womb to tomb coverage of the ABM and you've got nothing.

The third thing--and this was the thing that--and I think old Howard was a little bit annoyed with me, because I was always getting into the political end and I was supposed to be a military person--I thought that at that time we had just gotten over the--wow! We escaped the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev wasn't around anymore, but he had gotten the hotline in and Kennedy had given his speech at American University in 1963, and there were clear-cut signs that if we played our cards right that we might make what has come to be known as *détente* or at least co-existence work. I felt that that was the most compelling reason, not the technology or the money or anything else, simply that we're just pouring kerosene on this continuing thing. It was a time that we should have been going in the

other direction, because all of us without exception--and I know all the people that I worked with breathed a godawful sigh of relief when that thing was finally settled on the twenty-eighth of October, and we never wanted to get into a situation like that again.

So McNamara apparently bought the paper and we did not go into it, if I remember correctly, and by that time I was out of the government, there was a little thing--I know the Soviets put one around Moscow and around Leningrad, and I think we had one around Washington and maybe we started a little bit in New York and Chicago. But generally speaking, up until the present to the best of my knowledge, it's been a kind of a gentleman's agreement, tacit agreement, that we can't go this route.

G: Have you heard of Danny Graham's big project--?

H: No.

G: --called High Frontier?

H: Is that the thing in space? I've seen something in the paper about it, but I don't know that much about it.

G: He even has a thirty-minute full-color promotional film.

H: Really? Good for him.

G: All right, sir, have we neglected anything that you want to comment on?

H: No, there's just one other thing that sort of clicked in my head. The assignment in Korea--I was really the deputy J-2, it didn't have that title, but I was the--a navy captain was the J-2 and he wasn't really on to what was going on in Korea in terms of ground forces and so on. So I did a great deal of the work in J-2, and one of the projects that we had to do, in January of 1965 the decision was made to start sending the ROK, the Republic of Korea forces,

rotating them into Vietnam. And we did some work on that. I remember I was in charge of the study that planned the routes, because we were concerned at the time that the ROK forces, the South Korean forces, would have to sail to Vietnam and be out of range of either Soviet or Chinese Communist IL-28s. So we planned that; that was sort of a small thing that we did. It was very interesting because the old days of 1950 when the Republic of Korea Army wasn't really an army, it was just a bunch of kids that they drafted off the street--has changed very greatly, and I would say that today, next to China the South Korean Army is unquestionably the second most lean and mean and combat-ready ground force in Asia.

A good deal of that was gotten from this thing that started in January of 1965 of rotating a regiment--I guess they call it a brigade now or division in there--for six months and then bringing them back and then putting them back up on the line. I think just about everybody in their regular army, South Korean regular army, has had some combat experience in Vietnam. And from what I hear, they were very tough cookies indeed.

G: They were indeed.

H: So that was just a little sidelight on the tour in Korea.

G: Well, here's a question that's really just occurred to me; I don't know how long I've thought of it before. Do you recall any reaction when we initiated the bombing of the North with a couple of retaliation raids in February of 1965?

H: You mean that Rolling--

G: When Kosygin was visiting Hanoi.

H: Rolling Thunder?

G: Well, it wasn't, strictly speaking, Rolling Thunder.

H: Oh.

G: We retaliated for a raid on Pleiku with two bombing raids to the North, and Kosygin was in Hanoi with a delegation.

H: Yes, I thought that was very--we heard about that of course; we picked it up right away--poor timing on our part. I mean, I can't believe that we did that deliberately. I think it was the right hand didn't let the left hand know what was going on. I think probably the State Department people who were diplomatic people undoubtedly were very much aware that he was there, but they didn't say to the air force people, you know, let's not bomb poor old Alexei out of his pants while he's visiting his buddies up in Hanoi.

G: Well, of course they didn't bomb Hanoi, but there was a lot of concern at high levels that this was not the right time to do this.

H: Well, I think the Soviets--you asked the question earlier what would we have done to anger them. I think that was a pretty gross thing, even though it might have been accidental, and still they didn't react. So I think that perhaps gives you a little bit more of a clue as to the ambiguous approach they had towards the whole thing, or at least the fact that they were not ready to go to war with their own forces to save poor old North Vietnam.

G: Well, what--and this again is a little bit out of school, because it refers to developments after you left the CIA, but are you able to get any feel for what the Russians have made out of this, if anything? I understand they have access to Cam Ranh Bay now and that there is some concern that this is being built into a major Russian naval base in Asia and so on.

H: Yes. Oh, yes, I suppose it gives them a little bit more of a purchase on the thing obviously, but I have never been really concerned, and this is one of the reasons again why I always had my difficulties with the Pentagon. I have the feeling over time that they wear out their welcome and that they're going to find and the North Vietnamese are going to find over time--I think it's happened in Africa, I think it's happened--certainly it's happened in Afghanistan. I bet if you could tape some guy in the Kremlin tomorrow and get him to tell you the truth, they'd be awfully sorry that they went into Afghanistan.

G: Why do you think they went into Afghanistan?

H: I think that there's a--and this is a very broad reason--very definite growing sense of unease in the Soviet ruling class that--and I'm sure you've heard these demographic statistics that come about the beginning of the twenty-first century that the Great Russians, or the real Slavic root among the Russian people are going to become a minority, that these people of Muslim background and down through the southern tier that they've swept up over this last century or so, that these people are becoming more and more a sort of a white--you know, the Muslim religion and so on--kind of a white burning flame. I think that there were some reports that I couldn't really check on because I'm not in touch with that sort of classified information anymore, but enough gets into the *New York Times* that if you read carefully--that they sent in some troops that were largely of Muslim background in the early invasion and that they had to pull them out. They didn't want to attack their kinsmen down there. So I think that in a sense it's a different place, it's a different time, terrain is different. But I think to a very great extent there are some necessary similarities between us getting sucked into Vietnam and them getting sucked into Afghanistan. The difference being that

they don't have the nine thousand-mile line of communications that we had to Vietnam. It's right next door. But I think they will have problems, and I think they will have problems with the North Vietnamese, because to me the most important thing in the world since World War II has been the notion of self-determination. And every country whether it's communist or democratic or something in between values that more than anything else, and I think that the North Vietnamese are not going to be the patsies for the Soviets forever.

End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I

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Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of

JAMES J. HAGERTY

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, James J. Hagerty, of Conroe, Texas, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title, and interest in the transcript and the tape recording of the personal interview conducted on July 20, 1982 at Conroe, Texas, 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) A copy of 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 transcripts and tape recordings may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

James J. Hagerty 6/18/2000
Donor Date

John W. Carlin 7-6-00
Archivist of the United States Date