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U. Alexis Johnson Papers

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U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 1

(1a)

This is U. Alexis Johnson, Ural Alexis Johnson. This is March 19, 1965. I am sitting here in my residence in Saigon, Vietnam this evening after dinner and am undertaking an experiment which I hope will be of interest and use to my grandchildren. I am not quite sure how far I will get with this or how it will turn out, but nevertheless I want to make this experiment.

I have often thought that I wished I knew more about my own grandparents' life. Actually, I know very little about them or my great-grandparents. I am doing this not for my own immediate family, for my children. I am doing it rather for my grandchildren. Perhaps at some time they might be interested in knowing a little bit more about their grandfather, and if so I hope that this record will be available to them. My grandparents had nothing similar available to them, and perhaps in this way I can pass on a little bit to my own grandchildren. We often speculate about this question of immortality. I remember in one of my philosophy lectures in college it was said that the only real immortality is what we pass on. Somehow each of us, as we live in the world for good or for bad do things, accomplish things that have an effect that somehow, little or great, large or small, passes on down through the ages. Perhaps this is the way that we achieve immortality. For those of us who have been fortunate enough to have children and families of our own, our immortality perhaps passes on through the chain of human life, human affairs, that has been our privilege to pass on.

I have now been some years in this world. I've done some things good and maybe some things bad. Perhaps I have contributed my own little bit to my own immortality, that chain of immortality which passes through all who live. I've had a fairly interesting life and, I feel, a fairly satisfactory one. Each of us of course in this life have our own ego. We each have a certain self-satisfaction in what we've done. There is a certain amount of self-centeredness in each of us, and somehow or the other we don't want to see all of this lost. People have often said to me, "The career that you've had, you ought to write a book or you ought to write your memoirs." I've never had any intention or desire to do this, because I have no illusions whatsoever about my own place in affairs, and I know of nothing that's more boring than the memoirs of worn-out diplomats. However, my grandchildren may perhaps wonder what kind of a grandfather they had. They may perhaps wonder what kind of a life he led. They may perhaps wonder what he did and why he did it. Therefore I have decided on these tapes--and I hope there will be several tapes--to put down a few of my own recollections because I have lived during a very stirring period in world history, a very stirring period as far as my own personal history is concerned. I have no doubt that my grandchildren will be living in even more stirring periods. However, just in the event that they may be interested in what kind of fellows their grandfather and their grandmother, those who were behind them, are, I am making these tapes beginning here in Saigon. I'm not an old man yet, although I do have certain memories. Perhaps this is the time to do it before my memories become too blurred or they become too romantic. Of course each of us, as we think over our past, tends to blur over the less favorable aspects of what we have done, remember the more favorable aspects. It's our human tendency to make each story in its telling sound a little bit better

each time. Perhaps I am just old enough to have something worth saying, and perhaps I am young enough still to have fairly clear and I hope reasonably objective memories. Therefore I am beginning these tapes with the thought that some day, my grandchildren may find them of interest.

At the present time, my oldest grandchild is Brad Zerbe, the next one is Craig Zerbe, the next one is Dean Alexis Zerbe, and the next one is Patricia Maria Mojdara. I am sure and I hope and expect that there will be more as the years go on. But as Brad is the oldest one, I particularly commend this tape to his keeping to use in whatever way he thinks best and insofar as they are interested in doing so, making this available to his cousins.

In the books you may look up and see that I was born in Falun, Kansas on October 17, 1908. I know that I was born at home; this was not the day that people went to the hospital. You may wonder what kind of a place Falun might be. If you will look up on a map of Kansas you will find it just about twenty miles south of a place called Salina, Kansas. At the time I was born, Falun was a town--village I should say, rather, of about 100. My father was cashier there of the Falun State Bank. You can say that he was a banker. As such he was of course one of the prominent men in the community, and this was a farming community. In those days, you had these little towns scattered all over the United States, but in the Wheat Belt of Kansas each village was located in convenient driving distance by horse for the surrounding farms. Falun had a bank, it had a hardware store, it had two grocery stores, and at various times it had a barber shop. When automobiles came along, it had a primitive repair shop. Also very importantly, it had the elevators. Elevators were the places where people brought their wheat and their grain to be sold. My maternal grandfather, whose name was Forsse,

Olof Forsse, had one of the elevators in town. There was another one owned by the farmer's union. Later his son, that is, my uncle Gus Forsse, took over the elevator. The two elevators, which also sold coal, the hardware store, the grocery store, and the bank were the center of town. There was also a grade school and later on a high school about which I will speak. I was back there some years ago, and Falun is still just about the same size.

Falun was a Swedish community. As far as your own ancestors are concerned, on the Forsse side your great great grandfather, that is Major Forsse as he later became know, Major Eric Forsse, came to the United States from Sweden in the late 1840s. I remember my grandfather telling me what he had heard from his father, that is your great great grandfather, about the trip. They took some four months by sailboat from Sweden to New Orleans and then they took a boat up the Mississippi River. They caught cholera on the trip, and his sister died on the trip and his mother almost died. But they eventually made it to Illinois and settled around an area that is now known as Galesburg, Illinois. Your great great grandfather, Eric Forsse, formed a volunteer company during the Civil War and fought during most of the Civil War on the Union side. Your great grandfather, Olof Forsse, enlisted as a young boy later in the war. When I was a small boy he used to tell me about his experiences on Sherman's March to the Sea. All these things were very real and very close to us.

After the Civil War they moved to Kansas and settled on homesteads around the area of what was now Falun with a great many other Swedish people. Your grandfather Olof Forsse was fairly active in local politics and for a considerable time was sheriff. Your great grandmother, my mother Ellen Forsse, was born while he was sheriff. She in part grew up in the jail in Salina, because the sheriff's family lived in the jail and took care of the prisoners.

On the other side of your family, that is the Johnson side, they came over right after the Civil War and settled around the same area. In Sweden their name was Carlson, but for reasons I'm not entirely clear [on], when they came to the States they changed their name to Johnson. Your great grandfather . . . great great grandfather, isn't it; I'm getting mixed up in my generations here . . . my grandfather Johnson for most of his life owned a livery stable in Salina and bought and sold horses. He was very, very fond of horses and always kept very fine horses. His wife's name was Naeslund. I just don't remember right off hand where they came from in Sweden. However, your great grandfather Carl Johnson, my father, was born in Salina. Your great grandfather and your great grandmother later, of course, were married and became my parents. They were married about the time that my father moved to Falun and took change of the small bank that had been founded down there. Thus as far as my side of the family is concerned, they were pure Swedish and I come from pure Swedish stock.

The community in which I was born, Falun, still used Swedish a great deal, and my grandparents tried very hard to teach me Swedish. I remember going to summer school in Swedish for a time. But very foolishly, I always felt that this was the old folks' language. I was an American and I wanted to be American and speak only American.

Now to go back to Falun. We had one of the nicer houses in town. Neverthelessby anything that you now know, it would be considered very primitive. We had no running water inside the house. We had a privy some distance outside the house and we had a cistern that caught some rainwater, which we would use for our weekly baths. We had a well on the property, but its water was very, very bad. I used to have to carry water from my Uncle

Gus Forsse's place, which was across the railroad tracks, a distance. Oh, I don't know, it's hard for me to remember now, but several blocks as you would term it in city terms. We used to have to carry water from there for most of our household uses. We of course had no electric lights. We had a horse and buggy, a stable in the back where we kept our horse. I well remember the horse. My father was very, very fond of good horses and kept good horses. He drove very well, my mother also drove very well, and they were very fond of fine horses. We also had a dog, a Llewellyn setter, black and white dog, which I called Boo. During my early life in grade school, I was always nicknamed Boo by the people that knew me at that time because I used to go around the village calling for Boo. Boo was my inseparable companion. When we went for a drive in the horse and buggy, Boo always ran under the buggy and kept pace with the horse and buggy wherever we were going.

My father was not only the banker--it was a one-man bank--he was also the counselor for all the people around there. He sold insurance, and we used to drive around the countryside urging farmers to take out hail insurance. This was not just to make money for my father, but it was to give the farmers some security. I also remember my father used to keep track of new developments in agriculture and used to go around urging farmers to take up new and better methods. As a banker to whom the farmers had to come for loans, he had a great deal to do with improving the agricultural methods of the area. He was also trusted by everybody around, and they used to come to him to make up their wills, settle their wills, and settle their disputes. So my father in his small way in this small town was very much a respected and central figure, although he certainly was not wealthy. As a matter of fact, we had very modest means.

My mother Ellen had gone to music school, had educated herself in music and was a very fine musician. My father also sang very well. One of my earliest memories is going with them to Lindsborg to Bethany College where they used to practice "The Messiah." The Messiah Chorus at Lindsborg is very well known; I think it's still very well known. It's a group of about five hundred really fervent,faithful believers who are also fine singers who sang "The Messiah" with their own symphony orchestra at every Easter. At Easter they had a great musical festival to which they invited some of the great artists of the world. I remember Galli-Curci, Heifetz and others that I heard in this little town of Lindsborg. One of the remarkable things is that this small, you might say materialistic, narrow Swedish farmers' community took this enormous interest in music. Although I myself did not inherit any musical talent, it is one of my most cherished heritages, this love of music, real fervent practice of music, and real deep religious faith with which these people attacked "The Messiah." [One of] the great stirring experiences of my life is hearing this "Messiah" sung in this concert hall in Lindsborg by these five hundred voices [with] the symphony orchestra and the organ, and sung not just as a piece of music but sung out of a deep religious faith. I should have mentioned that in Falun the other center of the village was the church. This of course was a Lutheran church, this being a Swedish community. I went through my Lutheran catechism and was confirmed in the Lutheran church. Pastor Norden, as I recall it, was our pastor there. Pastor Liljedahl from Salina used to occasionally come down and preach.

To go back to the Forsses: my only real associate as a young child

was my cousin Verna, the daughter of Gus Forsse who as I mentioned lived across the track from us and who had the well that had fairly good water, and who also kept cows. I used to go there every evening to pick up the milk in a tin pail and bring it back over to our place. Verna was just about my same age. We were very close together as small children and also through grade school. Verna was just a year ahead of me. She skipped a grade somehow; I just can't remember how now, but I remember it was a source of considerable rivalry. Verna and I were very close companions as long as I was in Falun, and I still feel very close to Verna. She subsequently had brothers. I remember Earl and Lloyd and Darrell, but they were considerably younger and I did not have too much to do with them except Earl. I had a sister born seven years after myself, R'ella, who was also born in Falun, so there were just the two of us in our family. When we were small, the discrepancy in the ages between R'ella and me were such that I was not too close to her. Verna was really my companion, and Verna and I have many tales to tell about each other.

I remember once when we were very, very small--I guess we must have been six or seven--we decided that we liked each other so well that we wanted to get married. However we had heard that in Kansas, cousins could not get married, but they could get married in Oklahoma. So Verna and I, having a vague idea that Oklahoma was south of us, set off down the railroad tracks hand in hand to find our way to Oklahoma to get married. As I recall it, we had only got about a half mile down the tracks before we were recovered.

My mother taught me at home for my first two grades. Of course we had a very small, two-room schoolhouse there, and my mother kept me at home and taught me at home for the first two grades. So I did not go to school until

I was in the third grade. At that time I entered the grade school, and there were two other boys in my class, Milton Nelson and Elmer Lindquist. The three of us went all through grade school together and also through the first year of high school. My teacher was Miss Brodine, who I will always remember. She had four classes in the one room, and then there were four classes in the other room. It was an eight-grade school with four classes in each room, and the high school was upstairs in this old frame building across from the church.

When I had reached the eighth grade, my parents, wanting me to have some better schooling, sent me to Salina to live with my grandparents, Grandfather and Grandmother Johnson, and I went there to junior high school. As I recall it, it was around the eighth grade. I went up, and this must have lasted about six months. I remember I had some manual training there. My memories are not too distinct on this. I remember I used to take the train--we called it "the plug"--up on Sunday evenings to Salina, and then I took a rocking, four-wheel streetcar from the station down to my grandparents' house. I stayed with them and went to school for five days, and then took the early morning freight--I used to ride the caboose, I remember--on Saturday mornings back down to Falun. I started my first year of high school in Falun and then as I will subsequently relate, we moved to California.

I well remember when my Uncle Gus Forsse got the first automobile. It was a Rambler, and you got into the rear seat by climbing up some steps in the back. One of my early memories is driving to Salina, which was about twenty miles away and a real adventure. It used to take us most of the day by horse and buggy. This was the place of course that was closest [for] a doctor and [for] some of the aspects of what were then civilization. I

remember coming back from Salina with my Uncle Gus and my Grandmother Forsse late at night and getting caught in a rainstorm. Of course, the roads were all just dirt roads that got very muddy and very slippery during a rain, and [I remember] our having a flat tire. We always had at least two or three flat tires on any twenty-mile trip of that time. Getting a flat tire in the rain, my Uncle Gus trying to change the tire, and the lightning streaking down as it only can in Kansas, it was very frightening for a young fellow.

My father, early on, took me into the bank to help him. He had one of the early manual adding machines or posting machines, and I can remember his teaching me to use the posting machine. I used to help him keep the accounts in the bank by doing the posting on the posting machine. This was one of my early experiences at beginning to work. I'm sure he must have paid me some very nominal sum; I can't remember exactly how much. I remember always trying to find some way to earn money. For a time, I remember, I was agent for the St. Louis Post Dispatch and used to go around town and the surrounding countryside trying to sell subscriptions and delivering the St. Louis Post Dispatch. However, I can't remember doing this very long, so I assume that it was not very successful.

During this period also I remember my father and my Uncle Gus, who were the real moving figures in town, trying to bring electricity into town and working very hard at this. I remember when electricity finally came into town and the great day that we had electric lights in the house as well as a very small light on the street outside.

My father was also very interested in the school and during this period was trying to bring about what became known as a consolidated school or a union school--in order to consolidate the small schools that were scattered

around the countryside, all within walking distance of the farms, and to bring in a high school. This did not achieve final fruition until after he had left there, but he was very, very interested in the school.

My father was also a very fine penman. He knew Spencerian writing, and when a diploma or something of this kind was to be written, they always called on my father to write it. He also taught penmanship at the school and tried to teach me penmanship. Whereas I am not a good writer, you can see in my handwriting the tradition or the remains, if you will, of this early teaching of Spencerian penmanship.

(1b)

I vaguely remember the coming in 1914--I would have been six years old then--of the First World War. I have a vague memory--I can't recall how I got there, I can't recall how we came back, but I remember that I was out in Salt Lake City with my mother, visiting her sister Ida when World War I was declared in Europe. I remember nothing until after we got into the war in 1917, and then I well remember the fervor and the recruiting drives, the hanging of the Kaiser in effigy and the boys going off to the war, as well as the liberty bond drives and the great friction in the community. It being a Swedish community, there was a great deal of sympathy for Germany at the time. I remember my father having great arguments and great arguments raging in the community over our entering the war, and my father trying to support the government and our policy at that time against a great deal of opposition from some of the older people. Nevertheless, we entered the war, and this boy and that boy went off to the war.

Then comes one of the traumatic experiences, I think you might call it, of my life, the coming of the great influenza epidemic. My own memories of this go back to when my father first became ill. Then my mother became

ill, and then my sister R'ella and I became ill. It was during midwinter. We had nothing but the coal furnace in the house. I remember my absolute panic when my father became delirious and just could not speak coherently. I have vague memories of my mother going down, as sick as she was, to tend the furnace and try to keep some heat in the house during the midwinter. And then the doctor. I cannot remember the name of the doctor, but I have vague memories of the doctor coming by, two o'clock, three o'clock, or four o'clock in the morning, utterly exhausted, and telling us that so-and-so had died that day and so-and-so was expected to die tomorrow, and a sense of real panic. For a small boy it was a very traumatic experience. Happily, all of us recovered, although everybody was very sapped by the experience. A very considerable number, of course, of those that we had known died during that period. Doctors really did not know what to do about it, and the mortality was very high in the community.

However, this led to the real turning point in the life of my family and the life of myself. My father and my mother were worn out, exhausted, and in obviously very, very poor health. They made the decision, poor though they were, to take a vacation trip out to California. As I recall it, this must have been 1919, 1920. Let's see. I think we had our worst of the flu epidemic in 1919, and it must have been about 1920, after they had recovered sufficiently to get on their feet, that they decided to take a vacation trip to California. We took the train, and this was a great experience in my life, the first time I had ever been on a long-distance train. We took the train and went out to Los Angeles. My memories of this are not very clear, except I do remember Los Angeles, I do remember our going down to San Diego. I remember my father buying a Scripps-Booth automobile in which we drove around the area and spent what must have been some weeks

or months.

Then I well recall our going up to Seattle and visiting another one of my mother's sisters up there, Jennie Lagerstrom was her married name, and taking a trip by boat on the inland passage up to Juneau, Skagway, and all those small ports along the inland passage, and then coming back to Kansas. I can't quite remember the details; of course, the only way we could have traveled at the time was by train. But the Scripps-Booth automobile in San Diego, being in the zoo in San Diego, and the inside passage up to Alaska, are very clear memories to me.

And then going back to Kansas. I remember that after this trip, my parents returned to Kansas determined to sell out the bank and move out to California.

(Break in recording)

I've spent some time on these early days in Kansas because I've never really lost my sense of wonder at two things. First, that I, as this little, somewhat scared, shall I say shy, boy, living out in this little village in Kansas, have moved to being involved in world events as I have. And secondly, the enormous changes that I saw. As I have pointed out, during the time that I was living there, during the early days I well remember no running water in the house; a long journey out through the back yard to the privy through the snowdrifts in the wintertime; no electric lights; no automobiles; only getting around by horses; nothing in the nature of any paved road of course; a doctor a day's journey away by horse; although we did have the railroad, which was somewhat faster--it ran once or twice a day. As I have often pointed out to my audiences abroad, we were really an underdeveloped country. And my wonder at the developments that I've seen since then. Of course, Orville Wright had

flown his first airplane before the First World War, but we out there knew nothing about it. Such things as airplanes, paved roads, electric lights, radio, all these things were still to come. And I do well remember the coming of these things.

I guess it must have been after the war that my father got the first radio in the bank to listen to the market quotations. I recall it was a very complicated instrument, and we used to work very hard at it in order to get it tuned in, listening through the earphones, other people standing around wondering at it and also wanting to know what was going on. As I remember it, it was a Westinghouse station in Pennsylvania, must have been in Pittsburgh. I should remember the call letters that we tuned in to. It seems that this would be a long ways for us to receive it in Kansas, but as I recall it, it must have been that first early station that we used to listen in to, and perhaps later, then one in Kansas City; I just cannot remember for sure. But this was a great thrill and a great adventure, listening in to this radio, this great big, complicated machine that none of us really understood. We little knew what was coming in the world of radio and electronics.

We got our first automobile, it must have been, oh, shortly before the end of the First World War; I can't remember the date. I remember our first car was a Chevrolet Baby Grand, and I well remember that it had a leather clutch that made it exceedingly hard to shift. As a small boy--let's see, I must have been ten or eleven years old by this time--I used to experiment with driving it and finally did learn to drive it reasonably well. Having learned to drive shifting with this leather clutch, I have never had any trouble driving since. It was really very cranky. You started out in low, and then you would put in the clutch and you would have

a mighty grinding of gears. Hopefully you would get it into second gear. If you couldn't do so, then you had to stop and start all over again. I remember my father taking my grandmother Johnson in Salina for her first automobile ride and her not taking to it at all. This business of rushing along at 20 or 25 miles an hour was, she said, not for her. A good ten or twelve miles an hour behind a horse was fast enough for her. Sometimes I feel the same way. These days when we are going back [and forth] across the oceans in 600-mile-an-hour jets and talking about supersonic jets, I sometimes feel like my grandmother Johnson: 600 miles an hour is fast enough for me, and I'm not sure that I want to go any faster. I know that you grandchildren will be going much faster than that, and you'll probably be going out to the moon and to Mars, but you will never get any greater thrill than we did driving behind the wheel of our first automobile.

As I recall--as I mentioned--we came back from California. My father and mother decided that they wanted to move out there. I remember we got our second automobile, and this was indeed a very grand one, one worthy for the banker in the town. It was the first sedan--in fact, it was a four-door sedan--the first sedan of any kind in the area, and it was an Auburn Beauty Six. It had been shown in an automobile show in Salina. My dad took a fancy to it and somehow managed to buy it. We had this car for many, many years, as I will recount later.

It was during this period I must have gone up to junior high school at Salina. Then I remember starting in high school at Falun. This was on the second floor of the grade school. I do not remember my teachers very well, but I do remember going through most of the first year of high school on the second floor of this old frame building across from the church. Sometime close to the end or during my first year of high school,

father finally managed to sell the bank and to sell the house. My mother and my sister went out to California ahead by train. Then my father, his brother, Uncle Fred Johnson, and I drove to California in this Auburn Beauty Six. As I recall it, we took about three weeks on the trip--this was about 1922. We had a very, very large book that pointed out exactly which way to go. You drove so many miles to this windmill, and then you turned left and drove so many miles until there was a big tree on the right hand side, and then you turned right, and on down this way through Kansas and Oklahoma and Texas. I remember before we got into El Paso, Texas, we broke a spring. As I recall it, we had to wait some ten days to two weeks for a new spring. Then we went on across New Mexico, Arizona, and California. We were some three or four weeks on that trip.

When we arrived out there, my mother's sister Ida, who had married a man by the name of Bengston who had run the grocery store there in Falun, Ida Bengston [and her husband]--we always called him Bing--were already living out in California down on 48th Street in Los Angeles. We rented a house very close to them, and I went to Manual Arts High School. This was a very frightening experience for me. Having come from a class in which I had my two classmates, Elmer Lindquist and Milton Nelson, into a school with several thousand students with many of the mores and habits of those of a large city, I felt completely lost. As I recall it, I finished up my first, freshman year of high school at Manual Arts.

About that time, we moved over to Glendale, buying a house at 957 Coronado Drive in the Rossmoyne district of Glendale. My father had established a connection with a bank over in Hollywood that had been newly established. As I recall, it was the Hollywood National Bank.

I started in to school at the Glendale High School, which was then on Harvard Street, across from the Glendale Presbyterian Church. However, I had not been there very long before I fell very ill. My troubles were diagnosed as just about everything in the book. I remember we went to many doctors. The x-rays showed that I had TB, I also had heart trouble, and I also had ulcers. I was quite ill and was finally forced to drop out of school. I can't remember quite how long I was ill, but as I recall, it was six or seven months and I missed approximately a whole year of school. I was treated by a number of doctors, finally by somebody down in Los Angeles who was a combination chiropractor, physical therapist, and all this type of thing, and who finally brought me around. I remember I felt--and I think my parents felt--that I was very close to just not carrying on. Looking back on it, I'm not sure what was wrong. I am inclined to think that a large part of it might have been psychosomatic and the wrench of leaving my familiar surroundings out in Kansas, going to Manual Arts, where I was exposed to a different kind of experience, and then to Glendale, where I again felt a stranger and felt unsure of myself, I'm sure must have contributed to my condition. In any event, I made a complete recovery.

During this time in high school, I remember that I made several trips back to Kansas. One time--I guess it was the first time--my father and I drove back in an old Dodge to Salina, and I worked that summer out on the farm of my father's brother, my Uncle Adolph, out near Smolan. I learned to milk cows. Well, I had milked cows before that, but we had a large number of them to milk, as I remember it. I also learned to drive. I plowed with a big four-mule team with a big two-bottom plow. I also worked in the harvest, worked at shocking wheat and with threshing.

Then I went back to school, as I recall it. The school had then moved down to Broadway and Verdugo and was called the Glendale Union High School, beautiful, modern new building. I quickly adjusted myself there and greatly enjoyed my years there. I became fairly active in debating. I don't recall quite how I got into that, but I got into debating and I got into journalism. I think I was the editor of the Explosion, as I recall it, our weekly newspaper. I was also a member of the staff of the Stylus, which was the yearbook. In general I enjoyed my journalism, English, history, and particularly the composition courses, and began there to get the rudiments of writing, which of course has been of very great use to me throughout the years, as well as the rudiments of public speaking. One of the teachers I remember with particular affection was Elmer Worthy, who was a journalism teacher.

I can't recall quite how it worked out, but I remember that after I had been there for two years, I ran for president of the student body and came fairly close to winning, but I fear that I really was not a very good politician.

One of the casual things--it seemed casual at the time--that I did was to take a class in typewriting, and I became a fairly good typist. This stood me in very good stead throughout my years in college and, as you will hear later, helped me support myself during a very critical period.

At high school I formed fourvery close friendships that have remained with me throughout the years. One was with Glenn Cunningham, the other was with Ward Foltz. On the girls' side, one was with Margaret Dolan and the other was with Ella Jo Covington. We became particularly acquainted during what were then known as the "desert trips." Park Turrill, who was head of the chemistry department, used to organize a trip into the desert for

the Easter week vacation. Ward and Glen and I were already acquainted. My father with great courage agreed to loan me the Auburn, and we drew Margaret and Ella Jo as our companions in the car. We had a convoy that went through the desert, starting out at one end of Death Valley and ending up at the other. We took some four or five days through Death Valley, as I recall it, carrying our gasoline with us, of course, sleeping in our bedrolls or on our blankets on the rocks at night, and in general sharing a very enjoyable experience that gave me my first real taste of the West, which I have always enjoyed. Margaret, Ella Jo, Glen and I, together with Park Turrill and his wife and his brother Gardner Turrill and his wife, subsequently explored much of the desert and the mountains of California, climbing such peaks as Telescope Peak on the edge of Death Valley, climbing Mount Whitney long before there were any trails up there, and exploring much of the desert, which then only had trails on it and was not too well traveled. This group, the five of us, have remained in close contact with each other throughout the years, and it has been one of the links that I still have to my high school days in California. Glendale was a good school, and I feel there for the first time I really learned how to study and really learned the joys of studying and began to get my feet on the ground and have some idea of what I wanted to do, although the Foreign Service was still a long way off in my mind. However, I had had my first contact with the Foreign Service there. I think it was on our first trip out to California, I remember my father wanted to go over to Mexico. The border was closed at that time; however, he knew a man named Charlie Eberhardt whom he had gone to school with, who was said to be a consul general. We made some contact, I don't remember how, with Charlie Eberhardt, who was then in southern

California. He wrote something out on a slip of paper, we drove down to the border, we showed the slip of paper to the guards on our side of the border and then to the guards on the Mexican side of the border, and they let us drive on across. This greatly impressed me; somebody who by writing something out on a slip of paper could get us across the border obviously was somebody. Whereas I didn't think about it until later years, this was my first contact with the Foreign Service and one of the small bits and pieces that led to my finally joining the Foreign Service.

During this period, my father became associated with a newly established bank in Glendale called the American National, which was down at the corner of Brand and Colorado. Going back to my experience with working with him in the bank in Falun, I used to work after school hours in the bank, for which he gave me some modest spending money. This gave me some of my first experience in banking and in business. During this period also, very early which I was in high school after we moved over to Glendale, I had my first automobile. I remember my father bought me a Model T; as I recall, it was a 1917 or a 1918 Model T coupe, which was my own car. This got me back and forth between the house and the school--it was the only way, really, of getting back and forth--and I used to literally or figuratively take the car apart every weekend. This gave me my first taste of automobile mechanics. You know, in fact, your grandfather is a frustrated automobile mechanic. I still love to mess around, you might call it, with automobiles, although they have become all too complicated and it takes entirely too much in the way of specialized tools now for me to do very much with it.

At Christmastime I used to work delivering packages for the Post Office. I remember one Christmas, I can't remember quite why, but I got

myself a Packard Twin Six to deliver packages. This was an old, broken-down automobile, but a wonderful car, and I spent about all I earned at Christmas trying to keep the car operating and got rid of it as soon as Christmas was over. However, it was a lot of fun to drive at the time. I taught my mother, your great-grandmother, to drive with the old Model T, and it really became very much a part of my life.

I'm getting down to this end of the side of the tape, so it's time, I think, to turn over and on the next side to start myself out in college at Occidental. I should first start with the summer before I went to Occidental when I worked selling magazine subscriptions house to house down in San Diego. I will now turn the tape over.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 2

(2a)

I cannot now remember quite how it came about. If I remember, I got--you might say--roped into a scheme during the summer between high school and college of selling magazine subscriptions to a magazine called the Pictorial Review; that was a woman's magazine. If I sold so many subscriptions, I would get a scholarship--as I recall it, it was several hundred dollars--to help me through college. I joined a crew of fellows who went down to San Diego to work San Diego for the summer, selling these subscriptions. I'm sorry to say I wasn't very successful. As I recall it, I just about earned my expenses. We lived in the YMCA down there, got up early in the morning, mapped out our routes and started out door to door. And this is a very discouraging experience unless one is really a born salesman. I usually could meet people and get along all right with them but when it came to closing the sale, I just didn't seem quite up to it. I did learn that the better sections of town were the poorest places to make sales. In the poorer areas of town, it was much easier to make a sale. Perhaps that's the reason they were poor.

I remember one of my associates who--one of the fellows who was working with me; he later became a missionary as I recall it--went down in the Naval Base area, San Diego being, even at that time, an important Naval Base, and talked the sailors into buying the magazine or entering a subscription for the magazine, with some vague words about it possibly . . . At least, he gave them the impression that it was some kind of "Police Gazette" which was the racy magazine of the time, and was able to sign

them up for their subscriptions. Happily, he was out of town by the time these sailors received their first issue. As I recall it, he received a scholarship. I'm not quite sure what the moral of this might be, but it's an interesting sidelight to salesmanship.

In the fall, I entered Occidental. There were three of us from Glendale that were classmates of mine also in high school: John Scribner and Bill Bogen. We arranged a car pool to drive from Glendale every day over to the college, which, as I recall it, was an eight to ten-mile drive. My first class in the morning, I'll never forget, was French; every morning at eight o'clock, I had that French class to look forward to. I didn't take too well to French. I had a difficult time with it. This always started out my day in not too good a fashion. Naturally, being young, naturally, being busy, we shaved our time very close and used to drive over there at just about the top speed that our cars would permit.

During all those four years, we only had one accident in which I was involved. I was riding outside on the running board of Bill Bogen's car. He was driving that week. Another car hit us, and it swung around. We both swung around, and I got my foot caught in the bumper of the other car and [was] dragged down the street quite a ways. It shook me up. I was taken to the hospital but, luckily, I turned out to have no broken bones.

In our freshman year, all three of us were pledged to the Psi Delta Chi fraternity, which, at that time, was a local fraternity at Occidental and more or less--oh, should I say--the group that were fairly serious about their studies. I enjoyed my association with Psi Delta Chi very much through my years, although, of course, living at home, I never lived

there. I did enjoy the associations I made there, and some of them still continue.

I remember one of the aspects of my initiation when I and another fellow were taken out--oh, I suppose seventy-five miles or so--outside of Los Angeles, out in the desert during the middle of the night, blindfolded and everything taken away from us. We were left to find our way back. Through very, very happy chance, a car--probably the only one during the night--happened to come along that was going into Los Angeles and we got back to the fraternity house before those that had taken us out there had arrived back.

At Occidental, I began my association with Arthur Coons, who was at that time my economics professor; later became President of Occidental and has remained a lifelong friend.

When I entered the school, I had vaguely in mind going into law and then, also taking accounting so as to become both a lawyer and accountant. Throughout my four years at Occidental, I continued to work after school at the bank, doing anything that would be useful there; primarily, at times, being a teller, other times, doing the bookkeeping and at other times, being a messenger. By this time, in 1927-1928, my Aunt Ida, who was always very fond of me and who was not very well off herself, had saved up her money and bought me a new Model A Ford. This was the apple of my eye. It was the year the first Model A came out, and I had this Model A roadster. With this, I not only went back and forth to school, but I also used it as a bank messenger.

I remember going over to Hollywood to pick up accounts that my father had kept from his Hollywood days and also going down to the Federal Reserve

Bank in Los Angeles to pick up money. I used to carry, oh, tens of thousands of dollars all by myself, in the back of this Ford, driving very fast. These days, it would be entirely foolhardy. I suppose it was a little foolhardy at the time, but I never had any difficulty.

During spring vacation, I used to get together with, again, my old friends of Ward Foltz and Glem Cunningham and Margaret Dolan and Ella Jo Covington. We used to take trips out into the desert and out into the mountains.

I also engaged in debating throughout my years at Occidental. My principal debate partner being Henry Shimanouchi, a Japanese student, who later became prominent in the Japanese Foreign Office and is now in the Japanese Foreign Service. However, I was, because of my work, having to work every day after school and otherwise being occupied with school, I was not especially active on the campus and was not an especially well-known student. I tried to do my studies and work hard at them. I was not an especially good student, although as it turned out at the end of my four years, I could have then been Phi Beta Kappa except for that D which I had in my first year of French. French was hard for me, and I remember, also, geology was hard for me. However, in later years, the Phi Beta Chapter at Occidental gave me the honor of electing me to Phi Beta Kappa. It is something I cherish very much.

During one summer, I went up to the San Joaquin Valley, together with another fellow; got a contract for loading melon cars out at Los Banos, which is not too far from Fresno. We got $5 a car loading melons in crates into refrigerator cars and working some fourteen, sixteen hours a day. We were able to load two cars a day. I've never been in better physical shape than after that summer. At the end of that particular

summer, Bill Bogen's brother and--let's see--Bud Bogen was his name--Bud and I went into the Sierras south of Lone Pine and followed the ridge trail for about two to three weeks, as I recall it. About two weeks, it was, hiking about 150 miles along the ridge trail; climbing all the peaks along the way, up till shortly opposite Yosemite Valley. Then we came out on the east side of the mountains again and thumbed a ride back to our car that we had left near Lone Pine. It was a very fine summer indeed.

Another summer I went back to Kansas and worked again with a threshing gang, as well as on my Uncle Adolph's farm. For the moment, I just can't remember . . . No, that accounts for my summers, doesn't it, while I was in college. The summer before I entered college, I worked at selling the magazine subscriptions. Another summer, I worked at San Joaquin Valley. Third summer, I worked back at Kansas. I guess that's right. You'll have to pardon my memory. I'm just talking from memory and don't have any notes here.

My last two years of college, I majored in economics and liked the subject very much and became an honors student in economics, which meant that I could pursue independent reading without going to class for a good part of my studies. I enjoyed that very much. You will read in your history books that at this period--1929--the great stock market crash came. In 1930, the Depression followed this, and by '31, the economic situation of the United States was very desperate indeed.

During this period, my father's bank--the bank that he was in--went broke, along with hundreds, thousands of banks all over the country; and my father lost all the money that he had been able to save during the years that he'd worked so very hard. Thus, instead of being able to pursue my plan of going on to law school and then taking accounting to fit myself for

a life of big business, I saw that this would not be possible. However, I had my last year of school.

One of the professors that I had had had interested me again in the Foreign Service, and I had written to the State for information about the Foreign Service. I also--together with Bill Bogen, my friend--had become interested in the Air Force, and both of us made applications to go into what was then the Army Air Corps. We were both accepted. However, at the last minute, they changed the requirements so that instead of having one year of training and then being able to decide whether or not you wanted to go on, they changed the requirement so that you had to remain two years in the active reserve. This changed my mind about the Air Corps because I wasn't quite sure I wanted to make it a career, although I did want to learn how to fly; so I turned down the appointment which I received. Bill Bogen went on with his appointment; at this point, I might note, he graduated in the Air Corps, stayed several years in it, and became a very fine pilot and then after he left, went to work for Western Air Express. And in 1935, October, 1935--I believe it was October--flying a night passenger plane between Los Angeles and Salt Lake, he ran into a mountain and was killed along with all of his passengers.

Your Uncle William, William T. Johnson, is named in memory of William, or Bill Bogen, my very good friend. Because Bill, our Bill, your Uncle Bill, was born not too long after Bill's death. Bill's brother Bud, Bud Bogen, who I mentioned had climbed through the Sierras, also went into the Air Corps, became a test pilot for Douglas and was killed flying the first Douglas experimental four-engine bomber prior to World War II, when Douglas was

trying to get the contract for what later became the Flying Fortress. Thus both Bill and Bud were killed, and, at least at the moment, I'm still alive.

Having decided to make a try for the Foreign Service and having studied the literature, in the fall of 1931, after I'd graduated from Occidental, I and another graduate, Perry Ellis, set off for Washington, D.C. to go into the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, with the idea of taking one year's graduate work before trying for the examinations for the Foreign Service. We drove in my Model A. There was another--I took somebody along--I can't remember quite who at the moment. I took somebody along to help out with expenses, and we drove from Los Angeles to Washington. At Washington, I found a room in a boarding house, enrolled in Georgetown and began work. I took some courses at the Georgetown Law School in commercial law and American law; then, took some courses at the School of Foreign Service, as I recall it, in diplomatic history and a seminar in international law from James Brown Scott, who was one of the grand old men of international law in the United States. He had, for many years, been a solicitor--that is the principal lawyer at the Department of State--and was teaching then at Georgetown.

This small seminar in nationality law made a very deep impression on me, because James Brown Scott was a very fine, very fine lawyer and a very fine man. My associates were very able individuals--my classmates in the seminar.

I had gone back to Georgetown to take graduate work with some trepidation, having heard about Harvard and Yale and all the famous Eastern schools. I was not quite sure how I would stand up in this, which was at the time, I think, the only Foreign Service school in the United States.

However, I found that I had received a good education at Occidental and that I was able to hold my own with the others in my class.

It's during this period that I first met your grandmother. I cannot quite remember the exact date. I remember that I think it was sometime in October, 1931. It was at this time the landlady who was running the boarding house said that this girl who had used to live with her was coming back from California and would I drive down to the station to meet her. I agreed, not too enthusiastically, to do so. We met this girl that came from California. Somehow or the other, she seemed to have something special as far as I was concerned. We quickly became good friends, and then we grew to love each other very much. I was, at that time, still studying for the Foreign Service. The Depression was on, and I was hoping -- there was not much hope of my getting an appointment as a Foreign Service Officer -- but I was hoping that I might get an appointment as a clerk while I was waiting for Foreign Service appointment, if I was able to get one.

The rules were that you could not get an appointment such as that unless you were single. This faced us with a great dilemma. Your mother and I very much wanted to get married, but we didn't want to jeopardize my opportunities in the Foreign Service. Therefore, on March 21, 1932, the first day of spring, the marriage anniversary of my father and my mother, and your grandmother's father and mother also, we went over to Baltimore and were married by a minister in Baltimore, however, keeping our marriage secret for the time being. So that's the anniversary and the story of our marriage.

I continued my work at Georgetown through the end of the term in 1932. By this time, even though my parents had been giving me some help, it was quite evident to me that they were in very serious financial diffi-

culties. And thus, I dropped any thought of continuing on in school and sought a way of supporting myself and also supporting the wife that I had married, but with whom I was not yet able to live.

During the time that I was in Georgetown, I had tried to help in my support by taking on whatever jobs I could, primarily in typing. I mentioned that back in high school I happened to take typing and became a fairly proficient typist. In the University of Georgetown, I advertised and received opportunities to do typing for people who were doing theses; one, in particular, turned out to be fairly productive. It was the Turkish First Secretary to the Embassy. He was working on his doctor's degree. I not only took on the typing job, but taking the material from which he was working, did much of the work in composing his thesis and worked up a thesis for him on which he finally got his Ph.D.; as I recall it, I received $150 or $200, which was almost untold wealth at the time, as far as I was concerned.

When I got out of Georgetown, I saw that I was not going to be able to continue to pay my board and room at the place that I was living. I, therefore, got another place at which I got my board and room in return for taking care of the furnace and helping to clean and helping in the kitchen. In the meantime, I advertised for and tried to get other jobs doing typing and things of that kind. I went down to the employment offices and registered. And being a fairly hotshot, as we call it, typist, they'd give me a test, and I would get pretty much at the head of the male typists. So when somebody came in for a job for a male typist, I would get it. In this way, I got temporary jobs addressing envelopes and addressing cards at the Wilkins Coffee Company, I remember; American Railroad Association; and American Trucking Association; and at the Ford Motor

Company.

The Ford Motor Company, very similar to many large government bureaucracies, they didn't have money to hire a typist, although they needed one; so I was hired as a car washer. So you will find your granddaddy carried on the payroll back in 1932 as a car washer, even though I was actually, at the time, doing typing.

It was while I was working at the Ford Motor Company that the Bonus March on Washington took place; you will have read in your history books about the desperate situation, these bonus marchers; General [Douglas] MacArthur, who was then Chief of Staff of the Army, being ordered to disband them in Washington and driving them out of Washington. They were camped right across the street from us at the Ford Motor Company; and when tear gas was used to disperse them, we were driven out of the building.

It's hard for anybody who lived during that period to recall, to--let's say--explain to somebody else exactly what it was like. The United States seemed to be going downhill very, very fast. People were wandering in the streets literally hungry and starving. People were on corners selling apples. People were getting fired every day from their jobs. People were losing their homes. It was a situation that was very, very desperate. The factory chimneys stood cold and idle. And by the fall of 1932, at the time of President Roosevelt's election, the country was in a very desperate state and very close, I would say, to revolution. I've always felt that Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and what he undertook, really prevented what could have been a disastrous revolution in the United States. People were in a desperate frame of mind, looking for any possible way out.

Roosevelt, as you know, was elected in the fall of 1932 and came into office in March of 1933. By this time, one of my temporary jobs, I

had obtained through an employment agency, was with Call Carl, a garage chain in Washington. They had hired me, as these other jobs had hired me, to do some temporary jobs of addressing envelopes or typing out cards or something of that kind. Somehow or other, I don't remember quite how, they liked me; and though poor though they were, they took me on, on a permanent basis, at the princely salary of $60 a month which seemed pretty good to me at the time.

When the day that Roosevelt was inaugurated, the great bank holiday, or the closing of all the banks of the United States, was carried out in order to prevent further panic, this caught many of us, such as myself, without any money and [with] no way of getting any money. We felt in a very desperate strait. However, we had faith in Roosevelt. Roosevelt really helped us restore confidence. I don't think any of us who were in Washington, or even in anyplace in the United States at that time, and heard his words that, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself," will ever forget them.

This began to turn the United States back. One of his early acts was the formation of what became known as the NRA, the National Recovery Administration, establishing certain minimum wages, and establishing regulations for work and so on. As a result of the NRA, Call Carl, if they were going to keep me in the office and keep me working as I had been working, had to raise me to what became an executive class, that is, a managerial class. They had to call me an assistant office manager--which in fact I was--and raise my pay to $70 a month.

During this time, your mother had been living with her parents out in Hyattsville. She had been working at whatever jobs she had been able to find; worked as a nurse, I remember in a nursing home; worked in stores,

and the two of us were trying our very best simply to sustain ourselves.

With the raise in salary I received, from $60 to $70 a month, and with the formation of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, which was something else that Roosevelt had established, your mother got a job at the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. And on the strength of my raise, and on this, we decided to have ourselves a full-scale church wedding which we did on May 6th, 1933, at Foundry Methodist Church, where we were married by Reverend Frederick Brown Harris and announced our marriage and got ourselves an apartment and set ourselves up as a family.

However, we found things fairly rough going. I, for a time, was on the night shift; that is, working from, as I recall it, from ten or eleven at night to eight o'clock the next morning at Call Carl. Your mother was working on the day shift at the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. And then things got fouled up, and she got on the night shift there; I got on the day shift at Call Carl; and all in all, we found itnot too easy to live a normal life.

By this time, by the fall, your mother was also carrying Judith and she worked as long as she possibly could, but it was quite evident that when our first child came that she was not going to be able to work. Andthus we tried to save up a little money out of the $150 or so a month, I think, between us, that we were making, because we knew that we would soon have to go back to my $70 a month.

(2b)

During this time you could get a streetcar pass in Washington that would take you any place on a streetcar all around Washington for one dollar a week. We would get one of these passes, and then we would work out a sleight of hand to work it out between us so that we could both use it.

But I remember the time came that we couldn't even afford the streetcar pass. I had long since sold my automobile, my old Model A, which I had driven almost a hundred thousand miles, because I was not able to keep it operating.

Back in Glendale Dad's bank had gone broke, and Dad was out of a job and he was also looking for a job. So I could not look to my parents for any help, although I knew that they would do everything that they could in case of a dire necessity.

Although we never in any literal sense really starved, we were hungry, and we didn't have any money to buy any clothes and were really having a hard time getting along. I will always remember the night that your own mother, Judith Ann, was born; it was a Sunday, January 28, 1934. It was a Sunday evening, and it had been a very mild Sunday, and your mother and I went out and took a little walk outside the apartment where we were living. Then she said she felt your mother coming, and so I took her over to the hospital, to the Columbia maternity hospital on Washington Circle, about 22nd or 23rd Street. It's still there.

I was due on duty that evening. I left your mother there and then got the call that Judith was born and rushed back to the hospital. By this time the weather was beginning to turn, and turn very rapidly only as it could in Washington. By the time I got out of the hospital--as I recall it was about one o'clock in the morning--it was a real raging blizzard. For the next thirty days there was nothing but ice, snow and blizzard; it was one of the worst blizzards in the history of Washington. We at Call Carl in the garage business, an all-night, 24-hour-a-day garage business, were

just absolutely swamped beyond all belief with cars frozen and stalled. It was far more than we could handle. So trying to help keep the office going at Call Carl, trying to get over to see my wife and your mother, left me with a very, very strenuous time. I'll never forget those days.

Throughout all of this I entirely forgot to mention that back in the spring of 1932 I had finally taken the written examinations for the Foreign Service, and to my great surprise, having passed them. As I recall it there were some fifteen hundred that were taking it, and only a small number who passed. I really had not expected to pass, I was under such a great strain working at nights and really not having my mind on it. The examination was so very hard I felt that the cards were really stacked against me. However, I did pass the written, and subsequently was called on for the oral examinations, as I recall it in the fall of 1932. I could not be more surprised to find that I had passed them. I say this very honestly. In the oral examination I was not able to answer really a single question they asked me outside of my name and background, and I suppose what they were really looking for was to see how I would respond to what were seemingly impossible questions. In any event, I had passed my written examination and I had passed my oral examination. As I recall, there were fifteen of us that passed the oral examination. But at this time, with the Depression having set in, all appointments were cut off and there were no new appointments being made to the Foreign Service and no sign as to when any would be made. It was about this time that I had gone to work at Call Carl.

It's now Sunday, March 28. I have been dictating on this tape occasionally in the evening and have got to this point this evening. As you see, I'm trying to keep fairly a chronological record, but things keep occurring to me that I perhaps forgot to mention. As they do so, I

will not try to keep to strict chronological record, but rather will deal with them as they occur to me. You'll recall that I mentioned that while I was in high school when we moved to Glendale I became ill. I don't think I said at that time that perhaps one of the reasons was that I was overdoing things a little bit. I had taken a job carrying newspapers in the morning, a morning paper, which I had to get up at dawn to get out and get delivered before school time. And then being interested in music and what this offered, I'd taken a job also down at the Philharmonic Auditorium in the evening ushering at the Philharmonic Auditorium. As I recall it, I got--I don't recall that I received anything. I think I just received my admission by ushering. I used to take the electric cars, the Pacific Electric, from Glendale down to Los Angeles and usher and get home fairly late at night, twelve o'clock or so. Then I had to get up in the morning to carry my papers and also do my school work. This is one of the things that possibly contributed to my breakdown at that time.

I might at this moment just say a word about your great-grandmother, my mother. She was, and still is as a matter of fact--she's still living--a very, very remarkable woman. She, in our family, I would say really had the drive. Perhaps whatever degree of drive that I have, I have inherited that from her. My father was a very fine man, a very well-liked man, a very competent man, but he didn't have quite the same degree of drive as my mother had. Your great-grandmother, my mother, throughout her life was always very, very driving, ambitious, but not in any offensive way whatsoever. She felt that people were brought on this earth to use their talents to the very best of their capabilities, and to do any less was a fault or a sin.

She taught music throughout her life. Even now, at eighty-three years of age, she's still carrying a full class of piano pupils in Washington, where she's living in an apartment of her own. Many of these pupils are from foreign embassies there. She takes a great deal of interest in them, and she's not only a teacher, but she's also a friend and a counselor. She's a very intense woman, and I hope that she stays here long enough that you will get to know her. She has really been the pushing force in my life. I've never felt that she pushed me, I shouldn't say that, but she's a woman of great intelligence, a woman of very strong personality, and a very fine-looking woman. Even now, at eighty-three years of age, she looks, carries herself, walks with a brisk step, has a figure of a woman of thirty-five or forty years of age. I've always been very proud of her, and you have a right to be very proud of her.

I'm also proud of my father. He was a good man and a fine man. Nobody could have had better parents or better balance in parents than I have had.

Now to go back. I believe I said that I had taken the Foreign Service examinations while I was working at Call Carl back in 1932. We'd been married. I believe I also told you of Judith's, that is, Brad and Craig and Dean Alexis' mother's birth, and this brings us up to about 1934, I believe. By this time we were having a hard time paying the rent in the apartment that we had on 19th Street in Washington, and we'd moved out to live on the second floor of a house out in Hyattsville. At this time my mother, your great-grandmother, and my sister, R'ella, drove from California to Washington to see us. Let's see, R'ella then must have been about seventeen I guess, sixteen or seventeen. For the first time I saw her as a person and was really stunned to see what a beautiful, young, and attractive girl she was, and for the first time we really became

acquainted. When I had left in 1931, when I had left Glendale, she was just a small child, and she had now grown to be a young lady.

I continued working at Call Carl. The Foreign Service seemed further and further away. I got a raise or two; as I recall it I got up to $125 a month and was thinking about what I was going to do in the future. I talked to an accounting firm there and was planning, if I could arrange my schedule to take accounting, with the idea of going into business. Because even though I had passed the Foreign Service exams, it just didn't seem very likely that I would get an appointment. If the Depression continued on and no appointments were made, they would probably wipe us out and take on some younger men.

In 1935, I believe it was, when Judith was about a year old, my father and mother paid the way of my wife, your grandmother, Patricia, and Judith out on a trip to California. I believe that this was during the summertime. My father, during the meanwhile, after the bank had been lost and he'd lost almost all his money, worked at various jobs and this time got a job, as I recall it, with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Welfare working with welfare recipients. He was not making very much money, but my mother was also teaching piano and they were gradually managing to recoup themselves just a little financially. They had sold the house on Coronado Drive in Glendale and moved to a smaller house down at 527 North Orange, if I remember rightly, in Glendale. Pat and Judith went out and paid them a visit and then came back to Washington.

It was in October, the early part of October, 1935, while I was at the office one day, that a friend of mine, Harold Jones--he later died as a Naval officer on a carrier out on the Pacific, and he and I had been

together at Occidental and he was also working in Washington--called me up and said he had seen in the New York Times a list of appointees to the Foreign Service and my name was on it. I couldn't have been more surprised or more excited. I called up the Department of State, and they said, yes, I was appointed and I would be hearing very soon from them. This, of course, opened up untold vistas to me. Not only was I obtaining my appointment to the Foreign Service, but I was also going to get the princely sum of $2500 a year. This seemed like untold wealth at the time.

A few hours only had gone by, as I recall it, and the telephone again rang and asked for me. It was Dr. Stanley Hornbeck on the other end of the line. Dr. Stanley Hornbeck was the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs in the Department and just well in the upper regions of my comprehension at that time. He asked me if I would come down to see him, and I said of course I would do so. I couldn't get down there fast enough. I was ushered into Dr. Hornbeck's office, and he congratulated me on my appointment to the Foreign Service and asked me if I would like to study Japanese or Chinese. Well, this thought had never occurred to me whatsoever, but I was very flattered by being asked. Even though French had been very hard for me and, in fact, I got a 35 on my French examination when I had taken my examinations for the Foreign Service, I said, "Yes," but I didn't know whether I was quite up to it. Well, which language would I be interested in? I hesitated a moment and said Japanese. I'm not quite sure, but I thought maybe Japanese might be easier than Chinese, although I knew nothing about either of them.

I expressed some skepticism as to whether I would be able to learn the language, and he said, "Well, go across the hall here and see Bill Turner," who was a Foreign Service officer who had studied Japanese. I

I went in and saw Bill, and Bill asked me to say "sayonara." I said "sayonara." He asked me to say "konnichiwa," and I said "konnichiwa." He immediately assured me that I was a natural for the study of Japanese. I went back to see Dr. Hornbeck and said I agreed to study Japanese. I might say that one of the bribes offered was that if I passed my examinations in Japanese, I would be given an automatic promotion. We came in at that time in the Foreign Service an Unclassified C. Then you moved from C to B to A, and from there to Class Eight. I would be given an automatic promotion at the end of the year to B, and then I would be given another automatic promotion to A. Well, this was sufficient bribe for me to take the gamble. Dr. Hornbeck said, "Go back and you will hear from me."

Well, in a couple of days I heard from the Department. I can't remember the exact sequence of dates, but I recall that I was finally sworn in on a Wednesday. I called your grandmother. We called the packers to come in and get our few things, and I found myself leaving for Japan on a Friday. We took the train out to Los Angeles by the Southern Pacific and visited my parents there. I found myself, in spite of this munificent salary that I was supposed to get, broke and unable even to buy any clothes, and I negotiated a loan of a couple of hundred dollars in Glendale to buy my clothes. We then got on the ship, as I recall it it was the President Coolidge, in Los Angeles, went to San Francisco and took the ship via Honolulu to Japan, landing in Japan, in Yokohama, the latter part of October or the first part of November.

A couple of other Foreign Service officers who were appointed about the same time then joined us. One was W. Garland Richardson. John Emmerson, with whom I had been in school with at Georgetown, came out, but he got appendicitis in San Francisco and had to stay behind. Beppo Johansen, Dave Caldwell,

Bill Yuni; we were also all going out to study Japanese. Then I remember there was Ed Rice going out to study Chinese. Beppo is now dead, Dave and Bill Yuni are out of the Service, and only "Dick" Richardson is still in the Service at the present time. We landed in Yokohama, were brought up to the Imperial Hotel, were frightened by the prices and moved over to the Sanno Hotel, and then began looking for a house. At that time nobody helped you in these things, you just got a taxi and went around looking for a house. We immediately started studying some Japanese in order to get us around town. With this very, very little Japanese, these very few words, getting around town dickering with taxi drivers and dickering with house owners, we very quickly learned some Japanese because we had to learn it.

We finally got ourselves a house out on Shirokane Sankocho in Shiba-ku. We were very fortunate in running into a bachelor who wanted to turn the whole house over to us with its furnishings. Having no furnishings of our own, this was a godsend. As I recall it, he sold us the entire furnishings for some four or five hundred dollars. I borrowed the money to pay for the furnishings from Gerry Warner, who had previously been in the Service and had joined us in Tokyo, also to study Japanese. We quickly settled down to a solid routine of studying, with tutors who came to the house. As I recall it, I had two tutors a day, and we worked twelve or fourteen hours a day. When I went out to Japan, I weighed about 145 or 150 pounds. Changing from the strenuous physical life that I had been leading in Washington to the sedentary life of studying, together with a Chinese cook that we had inherited, I quickly shot up to, as I recall it, about 185 pounds and found myself very quickly out of my clothes. Ever since that time I have hovered around 185, up to 215, back

and forth, but never below 185 pounds.

The course of study was for two years. We not only studied the language, but also were required to study history and culture and the background of Japan. In the summertime we went up to a place called Nojiri-ko, Lake Nojiri. I can't remember quite how we arranged all this, but we took our tutors along with us and had a summer house up there. I and another fellow rented a sailboat, and I had my first experience with sailing at Nojiri and became a fairly good sailor and have always been very fond of sailing since then. We worked hard. When we were up at Nojiri we got up at dawn and worked until two or three o'clock in the afternoon, and then took the rest of the afternoon off for sailing, hiking around, other exercise. Studying out there at the same time--I think he'd arrived very shortly before myself, was an Army student, a captain by the name of Maxwell Taylor. You will hear of him later during my account.

Our principal tutor was Naganuma-san Naganumanaoe, who was one of the great pioneers in the teaching of foreign languages and did up the program for teaching Japanese by modern methods.

In the spring, as I recall it, of 1936, my sister R'Ella came out to pay us a visit. We gave a little party for her when she first arrived. We invited the bachelors and others in to meet her, and when the party broke up that evening, Gerald Warner, who I had mentioned as one of the bachelors, a Foreign Service officer, said that he was, "Going to marry that girl." And he made this good, they being married that summer in Karvizawa.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 3

(3a)

It has been a week since I finished the last reel, and a week in which much has happened. I'm trying to keep this account fairly chronological, but I might at this point interject an event that took place this last week that has kept me from working further on these reels.

On Tuesday morning, March 30, 1965, just about ten minutes of eleven, a very large bomb, that is an explosive charge of several hundred pounds that was contained in an automobile, was set off just in front of the Embassy here in Saigon. I had a very lucky escape. I could well have been seriously hurt or injured, but I escaped fairly well. I heard some shooting outside the Embassy. I turned to the window to look out to see what was going on. I saw people running. As I couldn't see very well from my window, I opened the door to go into the next room where I would be able to see better. Just as I opened the door the explosion went off, and it was a very big one indeed. The door stood between me and the window and took all of the broken glass that was projected across the room. The door itself was pretty much chewed up by broken glass. The glass went clear across the room and chewed up the wall on the opposite side of the room, and the frame of the window went out across by my desk. If I had been sitting at my desk, I would certainly have been killed. If I had still been standing at the window, I would certainly have been very cut up, and like many of my colleagues, I might wellat least have been blinded. However, I was fortunate enough to have the door between me and the window.

I looked out on the street after the explosion and saw large numbers of people dead, obviously dead or badly wounded. Well, I won't go into all

the details here. We had some fifty in the building wounded. We had two of our American and three of our Vietnamese employees killed. The three policemen who were guarding the Embassy were killed, and it was a scene of great disorder and a very real disaster.

However, everybody pitched in, and by working the rest of that day and that night we managed to get the Embassy reopened again by the following morning. I was very proud of the staff. They stood by me. Nobody asked to leave. Everybody that was not in the hospital, everybody that was able to work reported to work the next morning. The Viet Cong murdered many more Vietnamese than they did Americans, and I doubt that they gained very much from their attempt.

What they had done was to drive a car loaded with several hundred pounds of explosives right up against the Embassy and then set the fuse. When the policeman tried to get them to move it--he of course didn't know what was in the car--they shot, he shot, and the policeman and the man that was driving the car were killed. Two of his accomplices were arrested, but the other two policemen were killed, either in shooting it out or in the explosion. It was one of the biggest things of its kind, I think, in the history of our diplomatic service. I very fortunately just got a few cuts on the face, which didn't disable me, and I was able to continue to work. Messages have flown in from all over the world about it, and I feel that we handled it reasonably well. The President and the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense, everybody, has congratulated us on our coolness and calmness and our ability to get back to work as quickly as we did.

You know, all of us are to a certain degree self-centered. This tape I'm making for you is heavily centered around myself. What I tell young Foreign Service Officers coming into the service is that one of the first and

most important qualities for them to have is humility. I've tried to cultivate the quality of humility, but I think I also have my share of ego. What I am telling you in these tapes I hope you don't feel is from a sense of ego, although I must admit it is there, but rather to give you a sense of some of the things in which I have participated from my own personal point of view. I hope that they don't sound too self-centered. I simply want to talk to you as if I had the opportunity to sit down and chat with you and tell you how things looked to me and how they looked when I was working at them, insofar as I possibly can. I'm not trying to write any history.. I have no notes in front of me. I've never kept a diary. I've never kept any of the papers on which I've worked. So what I have to say in general throughout this is subject to the vagaries of a person's mind and memories. I'm not trying to write exact dates or give you exact dates. I'm simply trying to give you a flavor of what things were like.

I think that on my last tape I ended with the birth of Stephen in Tokyo, on December 18, 1936. I believe I told you there that we were living out in a foreign-style house in the Japanese area out in Shirokane Sankocho and that I was studying Japanese. I went out on a two year assignment for the study of Japanese. I'm not sure whether I told you, I think possibly I did, that in the summertime we went up to a missionary resort area over on the west coast of Japan near Niigata called Nojiri-Ko, that is, Lake Nojiri. The first summer up there we had a very good time. The second summer up there, in July, that is July of 1937, what became known in Japan as the "China incident", that is the invasion or reinvasion by the Japanese of North China, broke out. The very small embassy back in Tokyo was very promptly swamped with the work that was involved, and so we language officers were called back to Tokyo to handle coding and decoding. In those days

this was a very tedious manual job, and we worked long hours at it until our eyes danced, decoding the many telegrams going back and forth.

In those days I suppose the work that eight of us did all day would probably be done in fifteen or twenty minutes by the modern machines that we now use . I don't know whether or not it's an advantage that we're able to exchange more words faster than we were previously. Sometimes I think it's an advantage, other times it seems to me a disadvantage. But nevertheless, we worked the remainder of the summer coding and decoding, and thus fell behind in our Japanese language work. However we were given a little extension and took our final examinations towards the end of the year. As I recall it, it was very shortly before Christmas. We were four bachelors and four married men who were studying. The four bachelors, as you might expect, received their highest grades in the oral language, and we four married men received our highest grades in the written language.

The study of Japanese was very interesting. As I told you, I am no linguist. This is not any false modesty; language is really hard for me. But I became very fascinated with the Chinese characters and with the intricacies of Japanese. I will not attempt to dwell on it here, except to say that I did fair in the language. I was not a particularly good student in either the writing or the reading, but I did satisfactorily and passed my examination.

Upon passing my examination and getting my promotion from Unclassified B to Unclassified A, I was assigned as a Vice Consul to Keijo,Chosen. This was the Japanese name for the area. Korea was then, of course, a Japanese colony under full Japanese rule and we had a consultate general there. The Japanese name for Seoul was Keijo. The Japanese name for Korea was Chosen. As I recall it, we arrived there shortly before Christmas. There was an

old-time Consul General, O. Gaylord Marsh, who was in charge of the office, and I was the only other American. We lived in the very beautiful and the very historical old compound that had once been the compound of the legation in Korea back when we first established relations in the early 1880s. Then after Korea got its independence in 1946, it was again the place where our embassy was established. We had the house that in the postwar years was known as the guest house. There was a large old rambling Korean palace that was the Consul General's house, and then alongside of that was a smaller house which was our house, and which subsequently became known as the guest house. I understand in recent years that it has been torn down or destroyed. The office was down towards the gate. It was a large compound--as I recall it about three acres or so--that was a real little oasis inside the city limits of Seoul.

In addition to the Consul General and myself, while we were the only official American community, the foreign community consisted of a British consul and a French consul and a number of American missionaries who primarily were engaged in educational activities around there, as well as in medical activities. One of the missionaries was Horace Underwood, of the Underwood Typewriter family, whose father had founded what was then known as the Chosen Christian College, and whose son Horace is now heading it. Another very close friend of ours was Dr. George Rue, who was the doctor out at the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital, and we know him very well. There was a little club alongside the consulate, and then there was a little missionary club that had a bowling alley not too far from the consulate. On Saturday evenings we used to down there to bowl. This is where your grandmother first got her interest in bowling, and I might say myself also. It was one of the few diversions that we had around there. We had no automobile, but there was a rickshaw, an old-fashioned rickshaw in the consulate. I hired

a runner for this rickshaw, and we got around town primarily by this rickshaw.

The Consul General, Mr. Marsh, was one of the few men I have known whom I thoroughly disliked, and I found it very difficult to work for him. He was a man of a very narrow mind, just enormously self-satisfied and egotistical, and I found my first service at a foreign service post extremely trying. He used very rough and vulgar language and was always, as we say, chewing me out, and he would call your mother in and tell her that he didn't like the hats that she wore. He would tell us that he didn't want us to associate with the British consul, and in general I found life very, very unpleasant under him. I know that he put in a very unsatisfactory report on my performance, and I was very discouraged with the service and was really seriously thinking of quitting, because I didn't see how I could take it. However, he went home on leave for a prolonged home leave, and I was left in charge of the office. Then, shortly after he returned, I was temporarily moved to Tientsin, so this served to relieve the situation somewhat.

Our primary problems in Korea , Chosen rather, at that time were the numerous American missionaries who ran schools and churches throughout the country. As I recall it, there were several hundred--well, more than several hundred, there were seven or eight hundred, as I recall it. One of the primary educational systems of Korea at that time was that established by the missionaries. The difficulties arose between the missionaries and the Japanese. Japanese policy at that time was to try to make Japanese out of the Koreans, and all true Japanese were required to go to a Japanese shrine. The controversy revolved around whether this was "worshiping or paying obeisance" at the Japanese Shinto shrine.

The Koreans, being nationalistic, didn't want to do this,

and those who were Christian found the support of missionaries in saying that to go to the shrines to pay what the Japanese called obeisance was bowing down before false Gods, and therefore un-Christian and contrary to their conscience. This caused great controversy all over the country, great controversies between the Japanese Government General and the missionaries. Missionaries were continually getting arrested or getting into trouble of one kind or another over this, and one of my jobs was to try to smooth things out and to get them out of jail and get them out of trouble. This was our principal activity.

When I went there I knew nothing whatsoever about consular work. I learned it out of the book and from the old-timers, or the old-time Korean employees, particularly two men: one by the name of Sin, sounds just like S-I-N, an old Korean patriarch type who knew the work backwards and forwards; and another younger man by the name of Yun. Yun kept custody of our consulate during the war, and then after the war went to the United States and is now living in San Francisco. Yun-En-sook was his name, a very fine young man.

The Japanese system there at the time was a pure police state. [There were] a large number of police and secret police and informers. The Japanese were very nervous about the Koreans. They were very nervous about Americans and American relations with Korea, and thus we lived very much in a police state atmosphere. We never went outside the compound that a policeman wasn't following us. We had one particular policeman assigned to watch each of us. He used to occasionally come into the office, and I used to talk with him. They kept very, very close track of us. One policeman that was assigned particularly to me was from the Gendarmerie or the Kempai Tai. I became fairly well acquainted with him and worked things out so I went out

to the Gendarmerie headquarters, and we used to go horseback riding together. They had some very fine horses they had imported from Australia. As long as hehad to watch after me and I couldn't do anything about it, we decided to make the best of it. During the time I was there a college mate of mine from Occidental, George McCune, who was working on his thesis on Korean history, came out with permission to use the archives in the consulate. The archives that we had there and the books that we had there were there from the very beginning of the office, which was a legation, and we photographed all the old records, most of which were handwritten in ink in the old ledgers. I became very fond of George. He spoke fairly well, well, he spoke very good Korean, and of course I spoke some Japanese. So we had considerable fun going around, one pretending not to understand the other language and then switching. George and I made a trip into the north of Korean, up north of Manpojin near the headwaters of the Yalu River, and took a boat down to where the Japanese were then building the Suiho Dam. We did this by some trickery involving eluding the police and had quite an adventure out of this. The boat going down the Yalu, we were on that for two days I believe, was a large sampan type with an airplane motor and propeller at the back to propel it over the rapids. We were kept inside in the cabin, and the Japanese guards with machine guns sat up on top. This was still the time that they were having considerable trouble with bandits along the border.

We got down to Suiho, where the dam was being built. I had given a visa to the chief engineer there to go to the United States to study the Boulder Dam. He received us very hospitably, but within a few hours after our arrival the police finally swooped down and said that they were sorry, I just couldn't stay there overnight, and I had to go to some remote place up in the mountains. We did so. The next morning I wanted to go to

the Oriental Consolidated Mining Company at Unsan, the last remaining American gold mine in Korea. I chartered a bus to make the trip, and when the police came to get on, I said I was sorry, I just couldn't take any more passengers. If they wanted to go along, why, then they could share in the expenses. So, after a lot of palaver, they agreed to share in the expenses. Of course, they didn't identify themselves as police, but I knew who they were, and they knew that I knew who they were.

All of this area was some of the area in which some of the most severe fighting of the Korean War took place. As you will later hear, I had some role in this back in the State Department, so that when we were receiving all of these reports, I was able to visualize the area from first-hand observation.

While our life in Korea was relatively simple and unhurried, it was still under the stress of essentially a very hostile Japanese atmosphere. It was very much a police state atmosphere. In later years when I went to Czechoslovakia, I said that, "This is just about where I came in." A communist police state or fascist police state or any other kind of a police state operates pretty much the same way, so Czechoslovakia didn't come as any big surprise for me.

In August -- August 8, 1938 -- your uncle Bill or William, William T. K. Johnson, William Tillman Kim Johnson [was born]. We gave him the name of Kim, K-I-M, because he was born in Korea and, as you know, he still uses the William T.K. The William comes from my very good friend, Bill Bogen, of whom I spoke previously, who in the meanwhile had been killed piloting a passenger aircraft. I spoke about him on the first reel.

In the summer of 1939, the Japanese were pressing very hard in North China, particularly pressing hard on the British and they had established

their blockade around the British concession in Tientsin. At that time the British and the French still held extraterritorial concessions, that is, areas of the town in which they had complete sovereignty and ran. The Japanese were trying to drive them out, and so the Japanese erected barbed-wire barricades around the concessions and searched everybody going in and out and, in general, tried to make life as miserable as they could for the British, as well as for other foreigners.

It was June of 1939, I believe, that I was temporarily detailed for duty up to Tientsin, because as a Japanese language speaker, they thought maybe I could help in dealing with the Japanese up there. This began one of the adventures and traumatic experiences of my life. Still to this day I very much think of my service in terms of before and after Tientsin. When I arrived there, the situation was very tense. I made contact with the Japanese, and in particular with the Japanese commander up there, General Homma. I got to know General Homma quite well. Just as a footnote, he was in command of the Japanese troops who had charge of the attack against us in Bataan, and was later at the end of the Second World War hung by us for the Death March, Death March of our prisoners out of Bataan. I've always felt very badly about this, because Homma, to my mind, was one of the few Japanese Army officers that I have met that I felt had the instincts of a gentleman. I never felt that this punishment was really justified. I know General Eichelberger felt the same way.

The difficult part of Tientsin, the reason that it sticks so strongly in my mind, is that about a month after I arrived there, as I recall it, it was in July, the great North China flood hit. This was, up to that time at least, said to be the greatest flood in the history of North China, and I can well believe it. Tientsin is built on completely flat ground, and it's flat for miles and miles in every direction all around. The weekend the

flood hit, most of the staff of the office had gone away up to Chinp Wang Tao, and there were only a few of us left in town. The flood came in fairly slowly. It started creeping in on the edges of town and moved up inch by inch, and in about twenty-four hours was up to about six feet over most of the town. We worked frantically trying to extract our files and office equipment from the area in which they were located. The office we had was on a low spot. We tried to move them to a higher spot. We worked sloshing around in the water and running our cars as long as we could run them, and then they were finally drowned out. Then we finally got a hold of some boats and worked most of the night.

I was living in the Astor House Hotel at the time. I remember getting in very late at night, going to sleep. When I woke up in the morning the water was up in the lobby. I looked around for some way to get to the office, but obviously there was no traffic moving on the street except a few boats. I was unable to round any of them up; however, there was one street not too far from the Astor House that was paved with wooden blocks, asphalted. These blocks came up in great chunks, a large number of blocks held together by the asphalt, and one of them floated by the hotel. I got on it, and I don't remember quite what I used as a pole, but anyhow, I poled myself down to the office on top of these asphalt blocks.

By this time there were quite a number of people that were drowned that were also floating around, and it was very hot, late August, late July-early August sun, and this became quite unpleasant, of course. Then the graveyards around Tientsin--you know the Chinese bury very shallow with these large wooden coffins, and these coffins had burst out of the ground and they were floating around through the streets. Tientsin was also a very

major port for the shipping of eggs to the United States, dried eggs. There were hundreds, thousands of tons of this in the warehouses. This became released in the water, and of course the water, all together with all the other filth, became one gigantic rotten egg, with the sulfuric fumes floating up from it, that literally took the paint off walls. I won't go into all the details, but a lot of our Americans were in a lot of trouble.

Let me say, by this time some of the Chinese in the office had gotten a hold of a boat for me, and I went by this boat, with a Chinese sculling it of course, and made my way over to the Japanese concession to get in touch with the Japanese and see if I couldn't arrange something in the way of handling the refugees and so on.

(3b)

It took me a long, long time. Of course, all the phones were out; you were not able to get in touch with anybody. I finally got a hold of Homma and the command and had a very unsatisfactory talk with them. By the time I started back, it was getting dark. The Japanese were nervous, as the guerrillas were coming around town and closing in on the town by boats.

I had several very narrow escapes, particularly during this period. This one day, as I was coming back late in the evening, I saw a boat with some Chinese in it bump into a boat with some Japanese soldiers in it. This infuriated the soldiers. They took out their oars and beat the Chinese over the head and knocked them out of the boat. And then as the Chinese came up, they beat them again until they stayed down and took over their boat.

One evening when I was coming back--we had no lights, of course, or anything. The Japanese were commandeering any boats they could find. We

were going along quietly down some dark street in the Japanese area, when all of a sudden my boatman, the one in front--there's one in front and one inback--was knocked back by a very heavy blow into the boat, and some fellows began shouting in Japanese. It was some Japanese, I don't know who they were, whether they were just out stealing or out for a lark or soldiers trying to commandeer boats. Anyway, they were beating people up and killing them. I used the very, very best Japanese I knew how to tell them who I was and they stopped, and we gradually drifted away. It was absolutely pitch black. I couldn't see a thing of what was going on, and I must confess I was as scared as I have ever been.

We had a Marine, a U.S. Marine detachment stationed in Tientsin in the British Concession at that time. They had considerable canned food on hand, andthis was what really saved us. I used to get over there once a day--of course, moving entirely by boat--to get a meal of some cold canned beans, or something of this nature. But this gave us the food that we needed to stay alive. Our people who had gone up to Chinwangtao had been unable to get back. So the few of us who were left there were left in charge of things.

In the meanwhile, refugees were streaming in from the country. People would perch on top of their mud houses; then, when their houses would settle, they would try to build rafts or try to find some way of getting themselves into town. The Japanese encouraged them to go into the British Concession and then wouldn't let them out. The thought being that they could starve out the British. We thus got a great mass of starving Chinese refugees in the Concession, which made things very, very tense and very uncomfortable. I tired to negotiate with the Japanese, on behalf of the British, of some way of releasing these people so they could get out to the railroad and take the train to Peking. By this time, the train to Peking was operating, although it wasn't operating to the north. However, the Japanese refused to work out anything.

However, I was able to work out an arrangement for the Chinese employees of our Consulate and their families to get out. This was a very complicated arrangement. After it was all worked out, I got them all on boats down at the Consulate and put armbands on them in order to identify them. And then we set out for the railroad station, which was over in the Japanese area. Just short of the railroad station was a little high ground leading up to a bridge which went across the river over to the station. We got out on this dry ground,and on this dry ground most of the starving -- oh, I don't know, twenty, twenty-five, thirty thousand, I suppose -- Chinese, who were literally starving, were huddled on this high ground. At the other end of the bridge were the Japanese with their barbed wire and their bayonets. These refugees were packed in absolutely tight.

I started out with my group of Chinese office employees to try to press my way through this group, to get myself and them across the bridge over to the station. When the refugees saw what was happening, they begin to press forward and press forward on the barbed wire; then the Japanese began to bayonet them and I found myself caught in a very, very tight situation. A Chinese mob, a starving Chinese mob, under those circumstances, is not pleasant and I had a hard time working my way out. However, with only some bruises and some cuts, I finally managed to fight my way through. And I got most of my charges -- that is, the Chinese who were working in our Consulate -- with only a few injuries-- over to the railroad station and got them out, up to Peking.

It was during this period that the war started in Europe, but to us in Tientsin: British; French, I would say; even Germans and Italians alike; as well as Americans -- the war in Europe seemed very remote and of very small incident in our lives compared to what we were having to deal with in Tientsin.

I should say that because the land was so flat, the water just didn't drain away and stood there. I worked between the British and the Japanese trying to get some way to drain the city, but was not able to work out anything. Finally, the British built a dike around all of their Concession and put pumps to work to pump the water out. And the French did the same in their Concession; and the Japanese did the same over in their area. Of course, a piece of utter stupidity, as far as their common interests were concerned, but this is the way we often find people.

We had moved our office over to one of the upper floors of what was then known as the Leopold Building. As I recall this, it was a seven or eight story building. You could stand on top of the building and see nothing but water as far as the eye could reach in every direction. It was just like being at sea. By fall, the pumping was beginning to work, and water was gradually being pumped out of the Concession.

I was ordered back to Seoul, as I recall, around October or November, and was replaced by Bill Yuma. I had been there about six months, but it was a very, very vigorous six months. And I suppose one might say, good training for what was to come later.

When railroad traffic was reopened, your grandmother came up from Seoul and went up to Peking and spent a little time there. I joined her, and we had some time in Peking. I'll not take the time to go into details here but simply to say that Peking, at that time, was one of the glorious cities of the world, if not <u>the</u> glorious city of the world. I hope that by the time you're hearing this, that you're grown up, it'll be possible for you to go back there. Because the scope, the imagination that went into that city is something that is difficult for most Europeans or Americans to imagine.

Your grandmother had spent the summer in Korea, while I was in

Tientsin, with Judith and Steve and Bill over at the summer resort called Wa Chin Po, which is just north of the 38th Parallel, I believe now, in the North Korean area. I don't recall too much of significance for the winter of 1939-40, back in Seoul.

Then in the summer of 1940, I was transferred to Mukden-Mukden, Manchuria. It was called by the Japanese Ho Ten, and Manchuria was known as Manchukuo. In 1932, the Japanese had set up this puppet state in Manchuria called Manchukuo with Henry Pu-yi who was the last Emperor of China as the Emperor of Manchukuo.

We had refused diplomatic recognition to Manchukuo, but of course we had had a Consulate in Mukden, as well as in Harbin, during the Chinese period, and the Japanese permitted us to continue the consulates. We, in Mukden, had sort of a semi-diplomatic relationship with the Japanese at Hsinking. That is, we did what official business there was to be done with the Japanese in the capital, which was at what they call Hsinking. My boss in Mukden was one of the finest men I have ever known, and the finest in the Foreign Service, Bill Langdon. It was a most welcome and delightful change from Seoul.

When my transfer came, your mother was already down at the summer place on the beach, and the plan was that she would join me in the fall. She came up, as I recall, at the latter part of August,[or]the first part of September. Our community in Mukden was even much smaller than it was in Seoul, and the Japanese were even more nervous and rigorous up there than they had been in Korea. Your mother joined me, your grandmother, I should say, the latter part of August, first part of September. And in July, you'll recall -- or your history books will tell you -- that the Japanese had joined the Anti-Commintern Pact, the tri-party pact between

Japan, Germany, and Italy. Yes. This brought about a very tense situation in relations between the United States and Japan. And your grandmother, your mother, and uncles had only been there a very short time when the order came to evacuate all Americans, particularly official American dependent families, out of the Far East.

It's now Saturday, April 17, 1965. It's been about two weeks since I have dictated on this tape. It's been a quite active two weeks. Last Saturday, a week ago, I went over to Hong Kong by commercial plane to meet your grandmother before she left to return from the States. I believe I told you previously she had spent some time at Bangkok; then she joined me at Baguio in the Philippines; and then when I came back here, she went to Hong Kong and she's been over there about four weeks, staying with our good personal friends, the George and Rachel Jones, whom we had known since we were both young in Korea. I went over to Hong Kong on Saturday, leaving here around noon, getting over there in the afternoon. Sunday and Monday, we spent time together, and I'd had a chance to play a little golf.

On Monday evening, we--George and Rachel and your grandmother and I--went out to the what they called the Eagle's Nest, the new Hilton Hotel over there; spent a lot of money, but didn't enjoy ourselves very much, because it was a fairly poor show. I came back here on Tuesday; and on Wednesday afternoon, the Prime Minister asked me to join him on a trip up to the Montangard country here in Pleiku. I went with him up there on Thursday morning, leaving early; he dedicated a new institute that we had helped build there for the Montangard people. We went through a Montangard ceremony, which I'll not take time to detail here. I came back on Thursday afternoon.

Friday morning, I went up to Danang and the Danang-Hue area where our

Marines have just landed; spent a good part of the day visiting our Marine battalions, which were just deploying out into the countryside there. Spent Friday night with our consul in Hue, who had a small party for me there. Then on this morning, after spending some time at Hue, went back to visit the Fourth Battalion of the Marines, who were just in the process of landing. And then, on back to Danang and back here to Saigon, arriving a little before two o'clock this afternoon. Found a lot of work to be done. Have finished that up and have come home; just had dinner, and am back here dictating to you this evening.

I've played back the tape to find out where I was when I last stopped off, and find that I was just at the point of the order to evacuate our families, back in the fall of 1940, from Manchuria. Before covering the evacuation, I might just say that we had a very interesting old Chinese house in Mukden, which your mother, Brad, might faintly remember. It was a large, single-story place, built around two courtyards. There was no central heating; we had to heat each room individually; and there was a corridor, or I should say a patio-type of arrangement, running between rooms. When you wanted to go from one room to the other, you had to go outside, and this was fairly rigorous during the very severe Manchurian winters. However, your mother, Brad, never got to live through a winter there. We had just been in the house a few months when the order came to evacuate.

I took your mother--that is Judith, along with Bill and Stephen and your grandmother--down by train to Chinwangtao in the northern part of China, where the ship Mariposa was to put in to pick up the evacuees. We arrived during the daytime, as I recall it; went to a hotel, inn sort of a place, being run at Chinwangtao, by an American Negro. As I recall, it was a very

attractive place. We spent the evening there together, and together with Bill Langdon, the Consul General, and his wife Laura.

However, this left the office in Mukden entirely uncovered. So I was not able to spend the night. But leaving your mother and Bill and Stephen at the hotel, I set off across the country to get back to catch a late night train, as I recall, that came through about one or two o'clock in the morning at the Chinwangtao junction, to get back to Mukden. One of the most poignant experiences of my life was leaving your grandmother, and your mother and her brothers there in Chinwangtao, late in the night; and then, setting off through the north China countryside by rickshaw, with a rickshaw puller and a pusher, going through the moonlit night across country--for, oh, I don't remember, it must have been three or four hours across the trails--through the dark villages, with the dogs barking, and going back to catch the railroad train at the Ching Wang Tao junction. I felt very much alone; I felt very lonesome, and I suppose it would be proper to say, very sorry for myself because we could see the storm clouds of war rising--although we didn't know when it would quite break--and I didn't know when I would ever see my wife or--your grandmother, my wife--or any of my children again.

It is hard, at the times that you're living, to recapture the emotion of those days, because time and distance has shrunk so very dramatically. Remember, at this time the clippers were just beginning to fly across the Pacific to Manila, but all of our travel, all of our mail, was still by steamer; at the best, it took weeks and even up to months to exchange letters. And Manchuria and the United States were still very far apart, as far as time and distance were concerned.

I went back to Mukden, and Bill Langdon later joined me there. And

your grandmother and Judith, Bill and Stephen sailed for the United States by the Mariposa. They passed through Japan, as I recall it, and your mother set off for the States at a time when I was earning--let's see now--I was not earning over $3,000 a year. We had no special allowances of any kind. She was setting off for the West Coast of the United States to find a new home without me, and not knowing when we would ever again be joined together.

We went through the winter of 1940-41. Some of my most dramatic memories are going down to meet the courier on the train, as it came through about three or four in the morning, with the temperature 25, 30 or 35 degrees below zero, and feeling very cold and lonely. Bill Langdon and I did a little hunting together during that winter. Manchuria, of course, is the home of the pheasant; we hunted the pheasant, and we also hunted the bu, as it was known in Chinese, the Siberian bustard, as it's known in the English books; it's a bird that's not known in North America. We used to get out occasionally hunting, even in spite of the cold, and spent a relatively pleasant time together, considering that we didn't have our families.

I had abandoned the house in which we had moved; Bill Langdon and I were living together in a house in what was known as the Standard Oil Compound. Subsequently, Langdon was transferred, and Kenneth Krentz took his place. The two of us were together up to the time that war broke out. We had a third nominal American, man by the name--or boy, I should say--by the name of Lewis--Franklin Lewis. His mother was American; his father was Japanese. And he did the clerical work in the Consulate. However, he was not a person whom we trusted very deeply or of whom we were very fond.

Mail was very slow, as I mentioned, even up to months to exchange; and the one way that we kept, at least one-way, contact was the radio station KGEI in San Francisco, which was a short-wave radio, which received messages from families in the States to be sent out to families in the Far East. I remember its broadcast hours were very inconvenient for us; that is, it used to broadcast at very late night hours as far as Manchuria. I had a small Zenith short-wave set, and used to sit up very late at night trying to tune in KGEI to get whatever messages your grandmother had sent to me. I, of course, had no way of sending anything back, except by mail, but I was able, somewhat, to keep in touch with her in that way.

In the summer of 1941, July as I recall it, the United States froze Japanese assets in the United States, following the Japanese move into what is now Indochina. The Japanese in turn froze our assets; we ran out of money, and this also cut off all steamer travel between the United States and Japan, and accordingly, cut off all mail. Thus, from July 1941 on, the only contact I had on my side was your grandmother's messages through KGEI; and I tried to get letters out, but, as I recall it, I was not able to get any letters out to her after July of 1941.

Ken Krentz and I felt that this, of course, meant war, although, we did not know when it was going to come. One of our colleagues was the British consul and vice consul there, as well as a French consul and his wife. We, that is the British and ourselves, set up a system whereby we would listen to KGEI until one o'clock in the morning, as I recall it, when it went off the air. The British consul and vice consul would then begin to listen on the BBC to hear what news they could get from there, the thought of both of us being that war was inevitable and by this means we might find out when it came.

Relations with the Japanese, of course, became very tense; for the first time in my life, I slept with a gun under my pillow. There were many threats against us, and we never quite knew what might happen. We had a little amusing incident, if you will. We had some rifles, Springfield rifles, remaining from the old days, in the Consulate. And Krentz and I decided to see whether or not they would shoot. So we took one of them home with us, and with some of the old ammunition, and standing in my bedroom, opening up a small pane--there was a small pane you could open up in the big double windows--opening up a small pane one evening, we decided to see if we could fire the rifle. I pointed the gun out to the ground outside, where it wouldn't hurt anybody; and while Krentz was watching to see when there was no traffic on the street, when he gave me the signal--we turned out the lights--when he gave me the signal, I pulled the trigger. There was the most frightful explosion. If you've ever tried to fire a big rifle inside a room, you will realize it, but I don't recommend it. I heard crashing glass and was somewhat stunned by the sound. As it turned out, the rifle had gone off perfectly all right, but the sound being confined to the room, it had broken a number of the windowpanes and, in general, had done considerable damage to the windows as well as to our nerves. We never again experimented with firing a rifle from inside of a closed room.

Time marched on, with the tension becoming ever higher and conviction on our part that war was not long or far away. We tried to report, get all of the information, that we could, working with our colleagues.

In the meantime my British colleague, Dudley Cheke, and I kept our listening vigils on the radio. About four o'clock in the morning of December 7 I heard Dudley pounding up the stairs shouting to Krentz and me

that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor and war had started. Needless to say, it took us no time to awaken, and Dudley did not have any details to add -- simply reporting the flash that he had heard over the BBC. On my last return to Japan, having been taken through Pearl Harbor by our Assistant Naval Attache at Tokyo and thoroughly briefed on "its impregnable" defenses, I was confident that the Japanese could not have successfully attached Pearl Harbor; but nevertheless, I was satisfied that the war which we had been anticipating for so long had finally come.

It so happened that we had brought to the house the larger part of our files, in anticipation of having a courier take them to China to be shipped back to the States. Our first action was to open up the cases and to put the servants to work burning the files in the furnace. We then set out for the office, which was in Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank Building, to destroy the few copies of telegrams we had there and our more sensitive code books. We deliberately did not destroy the "Grey code book" which was an old code that we used for traffic that was not sensitive. In the meantime we expected the Japanese to burst in on us at any moment, but nothing happened. Having done everything that we could at the office and there being nothing else to do at home, we speculated on the absence of any Japanese or Manchoukou police and what action they might take toward us. This led me to suggest and Krentz to agree that we should take the initiative for whatever advantage it may have and I would go down to police headquarters to see the Japanese Vice Chief of Police. He immediately received me very courteously and, when I said we were closing the office and were planning to leave, he expressed surprise to which I replied that this was customary when two countries went to war with each other. Seizing the unexpected opportunity, I said that we would like to take the noon train north to Harbin and Manchouli at the Soviet border, for which we would require a police travel permit. He said he could

see no objection to our doing that and wrote out a permit, but said it would probably be well for me to also see the Kempeitai (military police). Exultant at our good luck so far, I went to the military police and was promptly and courteously received by the commander, who also obviously had no instructions, and agreed there would be no objections to our leaving for the Soviet Union by the noon train. I then rushed back to the office, but learned that Krentz had left for the house, so started out to return there. En route I saw Krentz's car coming towards me and that it was filled with police who were holding him. I, of course, stopped and they immediately grabbed me and returned with both of us to the house, putting us together on the sofa in the living room.

By this time there were 30 or 40 police in the house (all of whom were Manchoukou) rummaging through everything they could see and occasionally pointing their guns at us and shouting "codes." It was for this we had saved the grey code book, which we handed to them to their great delight. In the meantime, they would run outside to look at the chimney out of which paper ashes were pouring and run back inside to look at the living room fireplace which was peacefully smoldering; but they eventually discovered the cook and other servants in the basement busily burning papers. Their reward was a heavy beating from the police. In the meantime the hours passed with our being forced to sit on the sofa, occasionally being threatened with weapons but never actually being struck. As night came on, they finally agreed to our going upstairs to occupy one bedroom, leaving the door open. From the sounds it soon became apparent that they had discovered and had broken into our small store of liquor and their mood became very ugly. We could also hear our servants screaming as they were beaten. Needless to say, we had no opportunity to sleep with the lights on and drunken police stomping in and out of the room all night. The next morning the mood was even more ugly and

we were, of course, also without food. During the course of the day as our situation seemed to become more desperate, I addressed a note to the Vice Chief of Police, saying that I felt that unless he soon took charge there would be developments that he might regret and gave it to one of the police who seemed to be more sober and reasonable, without too much hope that it would really be delivered. However, late in the afternoon the Vice Chief appeared, together with a few Japanese plainclothesmen, all of whom lashed out vigorously both verbally and physically at the police and agreed that we could occupy our upstairs bedroom with the police stationed downstairs, except occasionally to check on us and that the cook could prepare some food.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 4

(4a)

In a few days, Yamada San, who was our one Japanese employee in the office--all the rest were Chinese, except one Korean, Park--Yamada San and Park showed up at the house and discussed with us and with the police the problem of paying off the help at the office and other practical problems.

Yamada San appears in this story some four years later, but he showed enormous courage, in coming to see us, and great loyalty to his employers. I had no question that he was a patriotic Japanese but he was also loyal to us; and I have most fond memories of Yamada San. They let him in. They let us talk about these things; and we had some--I can't remember; did we have the money with us; I can't remember--but anyway, through him, we arranged to pay off the employees in the office--at least pay them something--and we had some money left over that they permitted Krentz and I to keep. The police said they had no money to take care of us so we would have to buy our own food and buy the food for the servants; and the police said that they would go out and make what purchases we needed, using our money.

Yamada San helped us through this period, together with Park. The police chief apologized most profusely to us for the ill treatment that we had received, promised that everything was now going to be all right, and, as I said, set up a fairly reasonable regime that kept us in our room, of course, but still allowed us to get some food and remove the danger of these undisciplined police who were getting drunk on our liquor.

Within a few days the chief of staff of the Kwang-Tung Army came down from Hsinking to see us and again, to apologize. Then another officer came.

I can't remember. We had quite a . . . mayor of the Japanese . . . well, vice mayor. All the puppets were Chinese in the principal positions. The Japanese were actually the ones who were running it. The vice mayor came over, and we just got apologized to all over the lot. However, we always never got any answer from our request to be able to see the protecting power, the Red Cross, or to communicate with Washington. We explained to them our diplomatic rights and privileges, but this only produced "So des ne's" and "So des ka's." We never got any place with that.

However, they had taken away our radio, of course, our short-wave radio, but they did bring us a little Japanese radio on which we could receive the local broadcasts. They also permitted us to receive the local newspapers; in them, we saw, first time, Japanese pictures of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Although we had recognized that we, of course, were at war, we were incredulous that the Japanese had been so successful in reaching Pearl Harbor and even more incredulous that they had succeeded in sinking any ships there.

However, from the pictures that we saw, we were finally convinced that this was the case. With the radio, we found--even though it was a fairly small radio--we found that by turning it way up, that late at night, we could hear Manila. And we used to put pillows around the radio and hover with our ears right up against the speaker, listening to Manila during this period, with the voice going in and out. Sometimes we could make it out; sometimes we couldn't, but we could tell that Americans were still there.

I'll never forget the night that we were listening to it [and] we heard them say that they were leaving the city; we heard "The Star-Spangled Banner" played as the station signed off. It was, of course, a very poignant moment for us.

In the Japanese press, I was, of course, able to read sufficient of it to understand what was going on, and by the radio, we, of course, heard of the sinking of the Repulse and the Prince of Wales and the Japanese advance down to Singapore -- down through Malaya into Singapore.

The war seemed to be going very badly, as far as we were concerned, and our spirits were very low. We had no communication, of course, with the outside. We had heard nothing but the Japanese version of events. We had no way of communicating outside, and we were concerned that we might well be forgotten. We assumed that negotiations for some kind of exchange of diplomats would--as is normal under these circumstances--go on, but we, having no diplomatic status and being in an unrecognized country, we feared that we might be forgotten and there was no way of Washington even knowing whether we were alive.

As these visitors came to see us on occasion, they would, in their polite Japanese way, always ask us if there was anything that we wanted. And we would speak up very vigorously that we very much wanted communication with our government, or at least with our protecting power; and this would always put them off.

War having started in December, we had a fair supply of coal in the house and for the first month or so, were able to keep the house fairly warm. However, we then ran out of coal, and the police didn't seem to be able to get us any and we found ourselves frozen in in a Manchurian winter. The only way we could keep warm enough to keep alive was simply to stay in bed. We had a fairly good supply of books. I had some of my books there; for the first weeks, or even months, both Krentz and I did a good deal of reading, but then we found, both of us, that it was very difficult to keep our attention to reading. Recognizing that we might be in for a long siege,

we laid out a plan for ourselves, under which we would sleep so long, we would read so long, and then we would talk, and then we would play some records on the Japanese radio-phonograph that we had. Then in the evening, we set aside a certain amount of time for playing poker, three-handed poker, with Frank Lewis. This became fairly boring but we tried to maintain for ourselves a regular schedule, so as not to permit ourselves to deteriorate.

We complained very vigorously about not being permitted any exercise. Finally, they permitted us to walk out in the yard and then walk into the adjoining compound, which was owned by the Consulate but upon which we had no buildings. I should describe the situation: We had this one compound with a brick wall around it. Then, next to this with a gate through it, was this empty compound of, oh, probably three acres or so, belonging to the Consulate, also with a brick wall around it. Then next to that was the French Compound, which was also empty with a brick wall around it. Next to that was the British Compound in which the British were interned.

We having protested that very vigorously, they first let us out in our own yard; then they permitted us to walk in the neighboring compound; that is, our own compound. Two policemen would go out with us, each one of them following us, and we'd walk round and round and round. The policemen would finally get bored and would stand over in the corner, and watch us while we did our walking.

The French Consul and his wife were Alsatians. I wish I could at the moment remember their names. Nominally, they had adhered to Vichy. Actually, they were very strong pro-Allied. They had been interned during the first week or so. Their radio had been taken away from them, but then they had been given some conditional freedom; and they had--I learned this later, of course; I'll describe how--got a White Russian to build them a cigar-box

radio. They, from their house, could see that we were walking out in our compound, and his wife, who is a very spirited woman, walked across the street and slipped into their compound. I saw her do this. She did this several times. We didn't make any contact. Then, gradually, we worked it out so that Krentz would lure the guards over into one corner of our compound. I would walk along the common wall with the French Compound; she would walk on her side of the wall and we--keeping our heads down, of course--would talk across the wall.

In this way, within not too many weeks after we were interned, we were getting news directly from KGEI. They were picking this up on their cigar-box radio and passing it on to us. The British, in turn, would write messages on a blackboard that they'd hold up to their window and she could read from her compound. She would read their messages--and some of them were for us--and pass them on to us. Thus, we established communication with the British, and we also got news from San Francisco in spite of the guard that was maintained over us.

One occasion--this, as I recall it, must have been later in the spring--getting impatient with the difficulty of talking across the wall and not seeing each other, she climbed a tree which overlooked our wall. She was up in the tree, and I was talking with her while she was up in the tree when suddenly, I heard the voice of the Japanese police who were in charge of us who occasionally came to visit us right behind me. I froze, of course, and she froze. I kept on talking, as if I'd been talking to myself, turned around and tried to act nonchalant. Well, apparently, he obviously never noticed what was happening. However, it was a very scary moment for us.

The American missionaries and a few American civilians who were left--they were mostly Maryknoll missionaries that had been working up in the

Fu-hsien coal mine areas--had been interned in their little club, which was almost directly across the street from us. We would occasionally see them poking their heads out of the windows, but through the French Consul and his wife and their servants, the servants over there, we also established a chain of communication with them.

Previously, I've said, in reading war stories and war novels, that I couldn't understand why a man, having been taken prisoner and done his duty, didn't relax and just permit events to take their course. You read stories of the determined efforts people made to escape, the risks they took to escape. This all seemed wildly romantic to me. However, after three, four months internment, after spring, particularly, had begun to come, both Krentz and myself found that we were less and less able to concentrate on reading. We became more and more restless, and we spent far more of our time discussing various schemes whereby we might escape. We had to be very careful in this, not to let Frank Lewis--the other man who I said we didn't trust--overhear this, but we found ways of talking to each other and found that we were devoting more and more time to the possibility of escape.

We got to the point that we started talking through the French about it, and the French, through one of their servants, established contact with what was then known as the Eighth Route Army. This was one of the Communist armies in China which had some positions, not . . . oh, several hundred miles from Mukden, but they also had agents working in Manchuria. [We] established contact with them through the French and were gradually trying to work out a way which we could escape.

I know this sounds crazy, but it just became an obsession during all of our waking moments. We had several hundred miles of territory, under the control of the Japanese, to cross. Of course, our faces were very much

against us. However, the guards had fallen into a pattern in which we estimated that if we could get away, we might have about a six or seven-hour start. Of course, this depended not only on our getting away, but also getting concealed under the hayload of a Chinese farmer's oxcart and gradually making our way across the country until we could reach Chinese lines, which were then Chinese Communist lines. We spent a great deal of time on this, and it seemed to be developing fairly well, when, for the first time, we read in a Japanese newspaper about negotiations for an exchange; then our interest became very heavily aroused, of course, over the possibility of an exchange. We were still concerned that we might not be included even if one was organized, for we still had no contact whatever with the outside world. We were not permitted to see anyone or send any messages. Every time we had any contact with the Japanese, this is the one thing that we consistently complained about.

Finally, one day in the spring, a truck drew up in front of the house, and out of it, Japanese. They hauled off some equipment. We were curious as to what it was all about, of course. They came in the house and said, in effect, "You've been complaining all this time about not being able to communicate. We brought a recorder here and we will make a recording of your voice which will be broadcast over Hsingking radio, so that you can communicate outside." This greatly concerned Krentz and myself, although this was in the days before any real exploitation of prisoners. Nevertheless, we recognized the problem. If we said we were all well and happy, it could obviously be used by the Japanese as propaganda; if we said we were very unhappy and badly off, they probably wouldn't broadcast it. They permitted Krentz and myself to confer with each other, and we decided that we would take the risk and make the broadcast, being very careful of what we said.

So they brought the equipment in, and we made a recording. I tried, both of us tried to keep a narrow line between saying everything was rosy and the Japanese were the finest of prison keepers and saying things were so bad they wouldn't broadcast it. This was in April, as I recall it. There's a story connected with this that your grandmother should tell, but as she is not here, I will have to tell it.

This was in April that we made this recording. Your grandmother, together with Judith, Bill and Stephen were living in Laguna Beach in California. It was in June, I believe, that a neighbor of hers, on occasion, had invited her over to listen to the radio. She had never taken up the invitation, but this particular June evening she walked down on the beach. Something compelled her to do so. She went to their home and the radio was on. A number of other guests were also there. The host was fiddling with the dials of the radio, and she just happened to hear the voice: "Hsingking, Manchukuo," and she said, "Oh, get that. That's where my husband is." So he tuned it in; within moments the announcer said this was Hsingking, Manchukuo, that they would now hear the prisoner's hour, and the first voice would be that of U. Alexis Johnson, Vice Consul in Mukden.

Your grandmother,of course,almost fainted and she heard the recording of my voice and, for the first time, knew even that I was alive. She received scores of calls from all over the United States and Canada, for I had given them her address. They each, of course, had a little different version of what I said, so she was very happy that she had heard it directly. I cannot explain this. I simply pass on what happened. Perhaps your grandmother had some sixth sense that I'm not inclined to credit her with, but maybe there is such a thing.

As I've indicated, we had a considerable number of Japanese visitors

and saw much more, in the way of Japanese, after the war broke out than before. We were very heavily quarantined before war broke out. After war broke out, it seemed something to do when you came to Mukden to go see the Consul General and the Vice Consul in their cages, so to speak, while they were in Mukden. The Chief of the Foreign Section and the Vice Chief of Police also used to come over about once a week or so. I'd had a fairly decent relationship with him before the war, although it was, of course, strained. After war came over, after we'd gotten things straightened out with the police, and things were on a fairly even keel, he used to come by to check on us, of course, and sit down and talk. I found this a very strange experience.

He would -- I remember very particularly one conversation which was not untypical -- He said, "You know, we just never can win this war. The American Navy is just too good." And I would say to him, "Well, I don't know. You seem to be doing pretty well. You sunk the Prince of Wales and the Repulse. You captured the Philippines; you've captured Singapore. The war seems to be going pretty well, as far as you are concerned." "No,no, the American Navy is too good." I would say, "Well, what I've seen of the Japanese Navy before the war and what it now seems to be doing, it seems to be doing pretty well." And he would come back, "No, the whole thing is hopeless."

This was when Japan was, of course, still at the height of its [victories], flush with its victories, and while he as Chief of Police was arresting thousands of Chinese, and even some Japanese, for having what were known as dangerous thoughts. He also used to tell me what a bad fellow he thought the German Consul was. He said he'd go over to see him,and the Consul

would keep him waiting or he wouldn't see him; in general, he thought the German was a pretty bad fellow. Whereas, before war broke out, when he came over to see us at the office, I'd always received him and tried to treat him with some courtesy, even though we were not politically very friendly with each other at the time.

Oh, there are scores of incidents. I won't try to bore you with all of them. However, a little color . . . another incident.

By the time spring came and the Japanese said they still had no money to buy us any food or take care of us or do anything for us, and we were in fairly desperate shape. So working through the Chief of Police, we started to sell off our furniture and sold off various pieces of our furniture in order to get money. The police would take the furniture out and sell it and bring us or send the money back to us, I think, fairly honestly. The best money we got, or I mean the most money that we got, was the selling of our extra beds that we had, by the police, to the principal White Russian redlight house in the town. We got a very good price indeed for the extra beds that we had, and we sold the other beds on future delivery--that is, the beds that we were using--on future delivery, on the expectation that we might some time be exchanged.

There were all kinds of rumors about exchange. It was on; it was off. The Japanese would bring us rumors about it. But finally, as I recall it, in June of 1942, it was finally announced that . . . We were finally told that we would be exchanged and we would be permitted to take one suitcase with us.

Another commentary on Japanese character at this time: the Chief of Police and the Chief of the Foreign Section gave a party down at one of the geisha houses for Mr. Krentz and myself before we left. You would have

thought we were the greatest of friends, in peacetime, and simply friends going off on a trip. I should say that throughout our period of internment, they would keep raising with us their concern over the fact that we were separated from our wives and their concerns about our physical condition because of this; they made offers to do something about this and were always somewhat baffled when Krentz and I would always turn it down. This night they had got in some White--well, relatively, I suppose you would call them, relative to their profession--good-looking White Russian girls, and were very disappointed when Krentz and I wouldn't take advantage of their favors. Nevertheless, they tried to do their best by us, and we had a good dinner.

The next morning we were taken down, of course under police guard, and put into a railroad car; and there, found our British colleagues, as well as our American colleagues and British colleagues from Harbin. And we were all put in this single car, on which we went down through Korea. We had a fairly tough time on food, but they did the best they could by us. We were interested when we took the ferry from Pusan over to Shimonoseki, that the ferry--with which we were very familiar--did a great deal of zigzagging. We asked what it was about. They said there were American submarines in the area.

I should have said that when we left Pusan, they kept us down below decks, but after we got at sea, they let us come out on deck, and we were able to walk around the deck. Twice, while I was walking around the deck, Japanese slipped up to me, people I had never seen before, and said, in Japanese of course, "You're an American?" I said, "Yes, I'm an American." And they'd say, "You're going home?" And I said, "Yes." They'd read about the exchange, of course; and they would say, "Well, I hope you have a very

safe and pleasant journey;" and then they would simply slip away. These are some of the anomalies of Japanese character which was very difficult for us to understand.

We went by train from Shimonoseki to Kobe, and at Kobe we were put in the old Tora hotel. The food was pretty slim there. As I recall it, we were there about a week; then, we were put on a train and taken up to Yokohama; and put on the Asama Maru, which was one of the former Japanese passenger liners across the Pacific. We were all put on the Asama. One of the last to be put on was "Chief Myers" the head of the Standard Oil Company there, who was carried up on a stretcher. "Chief," I just saw the other day in the papers, died. "Chief" was a great man. In any event, he had been very severely crippled and was in very bad shape by torture from the police. We were all put on the ship. I was put in a steerage cabin. As I recall it, we had one, two, three, four, five, seven, nine of us in the cabin; three of us below the water line, and the ship cast off and then to our anguish, anchored once we got out into the bay.

We stayed in the bay for several days, with rumors just flying back and forth among the passengers and none of us really knowing what was happening. It turned out later that our government was insisting that some additional passengers be included. The Japanese were balking at this, and finally, well, apparently, they were included and finally, we did set sail, to our enormous relief.

The ship was terribly crowded, of course. We had primarily fish and potatoes to eat and had two meals a day. We were very short of water and, of course, we were down in the steerage and lived a not very luxurious existence.

(4b)

At Yokohama, of course, our Embassy staff, consular staffs in Japan, as well as some missionaries and other Americans were put on board. Well, we finally did sail from Yokohama, but we were not told where we were going or when.

We sailed from Yokohama to Hong Kong, anchored at Hong Kong for a day or two, as I recall it, while we picked up some other passengers. Then we went on to Saigon, went around Cap Saint Jacques, went up the Saigon River, not as far as the town. I don't know exactly where we were, but we anchored in the Saigon River, while a small steamer brought around our personnel from Bangkok. They were loaded on board, and then we went to Singapore, although we couldn't see Singapore; we were anchored way off shore out in the roads. By this time, of course, we were all making our acquaintance with each other again,and it was quite obvious that some of our officers and some of our personnel had found the frictions of internment fairly difficult. Some were speaking to others and some would not speak to others. In this connection, may I say that Ken Krentz and I never had a cross word with each other, even though we were confined under these very close [conditions] all this time. We always got along very well with each other.

I should have said that when it came time for us to leave Mukden our suspicions or our fears with regard to Frank Lewis were well founded, because he refused to go with us and stayed behind. I don't think that it was so much that he was a conscious traitor as it was that he was simply a very confused man, with very torn loyalties as between his Japanese father and his American mother.

As I recall it, we were at least four or five days -- don't hold me

exactly to this, to any of these exact dates--anchored off Singapore. The Contaverdi, an Italian ship which was carrying internees from Shanghai, joined us off of Singapore. It was, of course, exceedingly hot, and we had no water really to take any baths except salt water. We were all smelling pretty high by then. From Singapore, together with the Contaverdi in sight--we sailed close together--we went through the Sunda Straits. We could see in the Straits some of the wrecks of some of the Allied vessels that had been in battle with the Japanese there not many months before. From the Sunda Straits we cut directly across the Indian Ocean to Lourenco Marques and Mozambique in Portuguese East Africa, arriving there, oh, July sometime. I can't remember exact dates.

To back up a little, we were all of course extremely concerned about two things: first, we were concerned about American submarines not being able to identify us. Our ships rode with full lights at night and they had red crosses at both ends, but a big Japanese flag in the center. Our concern always was that some submarine might come up and see the Japanese flag and let go. As a matter of fact, sometime after we got home a submarine captain showed me a picture of our ship taken through his periscope. He said he'd come very, very close to torpedoing us, because we were far off the course and schedule that he'd been given. His first impulse when he saw the flag, just as we feared, was to torpedo us, and then he'd seen the red crosses, come up closer, and identified us as the exchange ship. However, it was a reasonably close call. Our other concern was that something would happen to the exchange arrangements and we would turn around. We passengers spent most of our time, a great deal of our time, talking about what we would do under this circumstance. Of course, the Japanese were equally aware that we had this in our minds. We tried to lay all kinds

plans as to how we might be able to take over the ship if it would turn around. Needless to say, we watched the sun and the stars very closely for any sign that we were turning. However, we kept on our course.

The whole spirit, of course, on the ship was very, very tense. Down in the steerage we ate off of benches. I can't remember quite how it happened, but I remember one of the Japanese stewards--of course, they were all Japanese police and guards, but they were acting as stewards--threw a glass of water in the face of an American woman. We who were in the room all stood up as a man to go after him, of course, and within seconds there must have been twenty-five, thirty Japanese, anyway, that appeared at every door and all around all the walls with bayonets and knives. Well, we saw the situation and naturally felt that discretion was the better part of valor, and we all sat down again. But I merely cite this as indication of the tenseness that appeared on board. Actually, we passengers talked much less among each other than you might expect. We were each pretty much lost in our own thoughts and in our own memories.

Let me say, going across the Indian Ocean we didn't see a single thing except one ship. I'll never forget, a British freighter flying the British flag. Of course, we couldn't see the flag immediately. One day we saw this steamer way on the horizon. It was a small steamer, just a tramp freighter. It came up towards us, and as it got within sighting distance of us it of course saw the Japanese flag, and it turned and went off just as fast as it could in the other direction. It was the only sign of life we saw that whole long trip across the Indian Ocean. It's a big, big ocean, I can tell you.

Coming into Lourenco Marques was a great thrill. As we came into the harbor there were just dozens of Allied ships lying in the harbor. As we

came in they broke out their flags, they broke out their whistles, and the crews lined up on deck and shouted, and we went down through this line of ships. It was a great moment, of course, because up to that moment we could have at any time turned back. When we got on shore we learned that the ships were in port because of a German submarine outside that had bottled them up there. Any ship that ventured out was being torpedoed. Thus, it was not so much a symbol of Allied might as it was of Allied weakness. The German submarine threat was then at its height. The Japanese had come from the United States in the Swedish steamer, Gripsholm. The Gripsholm tied up at the dock in the center, with the Asama Maru on one end and the Contaverdi at the other end of the Gripsholm. The arrangements for the exchange were worked out so that they put a line of freight cars down the side of the dock. One line of passengers walked off the bow of the Contaverdi onto the--Well, let me see now, it gets a little complicated. Anyway, it was worked out so that we all walked off simultaneously, with the line of freight cars between us.

We spent several days in Lourenco Marques. We were able to get on shore after the second day. It certainly seemed like heaven to us. When I'd heard of Portuguese East Africa I thought of a hellhole, but actually Lourenco Marques was a very attractive place, very much like Southern California. As we came on the Gripsholm, they had an enormous buffet lunch laid out for us, hams and turkeys and eggs and all the things that most of us had not seen for a year or more. After the fish and potatoes that we'd had on the Asama Maru, we all really made wolves out of ourselves, I'm afraid.

I should have said also that while interned, Manchurian cigarettes were so bad that I, for the first time in my life, gave up smoking and had

not smoked for about three months. However, with American cigarettes available in the Gripsholm, I thought I would take one after dinner. I did take one, and then I took one after lunch, and pretty soon, I fear, I became the same old chimney that I've always been.

On the Gripsholm I was assigned a two-bunk, first-class cabin. My cabinmate was Chick Parsons. I'll speak about him later. He became quite a famous guerilla during the war in the Philippines. Well, I might as well tell it now. He was a Navy Reserve officer, but also honorary Panamanian Consul General in Manila. Trading on his honorary Panamanian Consulship, he managed to get himself exchanged. When he got back to the States, he went back to Australia. He went back in on a U.S. submarine back into the Philippines and was an active guerilla throughout the war in the Philippines. His is quite a story.

On the Gripsholm we all went to work hard writing our reports, trying to think up all the information that would be of help to them at home. We set sail from Lourenco Marques, making our only stop at Rio de Janeiro, and from Rio de Janeiro we went into New York. I should say that when we reached Lourenco Marques some of my colleagues had their orders to go to China. I felt very jealous, as I was of course full of beans and ready to fight the war, but nevertheless was glad to be able to go home and to see my family, Our trip was fairly uneventful from Lourenco Marques to New York. We arrived in New York, as I recall it, the latter part of August. This is the end of this tape, number two.*

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*Discrepancies in tape numbers here and throughout these transcripts occurred with the transfer of the recorded material to another set of tapes.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 5

I ended the last tape with my arrival in New York on the Gripsholm on the exchange from Manchuria, Manchukuo, and from Japan, when I came home during World War II. I had recounted our arrival on the Asama Maru in Lourenco Marques, Portuguese East Africa, that is Mozambique, our getting on the Gripsholm, our trip by the Gripsholm from Lourenco Marques direct to Rio de Janeiro and from Rio de Janeiro to New York. We saw little sign of the war until we were a few days out of Rio, when we saw a ship burning. It was obviously abandoned and had been burning for some time. And then as we came close to New York we saw blimps overhead, and that was our first and only sign of the war.

Your grandmother, my wife--I'm still talking to my grandchildren--met me in New York. She had left your mother and Bill and Stephen in Laguna Beach in care of my grandmother, your great-grandmother, and had come to New York to meet me. We found ourselves very busy. We on the ship, we officials, found ourselves very busy in New York clearing the people who were on board the ship. I worked a good part of the first day we arrived, and then I got off the ship and walked down the dock and there was your grandmother waiting for me at the gate. There was a little Time magazine item at the time that said that we didn't speak, we just looked at each other and then we embraced. I suppose that that is true, because it was a very emotional moment for both of us. It had been almost three years since we had seen each other. We were still young, we were still--well, we always have been very much in love with each other--and three years absence was a long, long

time. But we were finally reunited after a trip virtually around the world and during the time of war.

We spent a day or two in New York and then went down to Washington. In Washington they told me to go on out to California and take a little leave and they would tell me my next assignment. As I had mentioned, some of my contemporaries on the ship were taken off at Lourenco Marques and told to proceed back to China. Although I was very anxious to see your grandmother, that is my wife and my children, I was also anxious to do what I could in the war, and I thought I could make a contribution. So although I was torn between seeing my family I also was somewhat envious of those sent back to free China, that is to Chungking to carry on the war there. Some more of my contemporaries were assigned back to the war when they arrived in Washington. After I was debriefed and talked to all those that were interested in talking with me, your grandmother and I took the train out to California, waiting for my assignment. Let's see, I arrived in New York the end of August and I spent part of September, and it must have been around the latter part of September or the first part of October that I arrived in California.

In California, of course, I had a reunion with my own father and mother, with your great-grandfather and your great-grandmother. Not having seen them for some years, it was naturally a great joy to see them again and to be able also to get together with them. And in California, of course, I saw your mother, Judith, and Billy and Stephen. They had left as babies from Ch'in-huang-tao. The last time I saw them was when I said goodbye to them in Ch'in-huang-tao as they were getting on the ship, the Mariposa, to go back to the States. They were now almost three years older and of course considerably grown up, as children mature very fast and change very fast at that period. We were a little bit strange to each other, but we

very quickly got acquainted. I went with your grandmother down to Laguna Beach and stayed in the house down there with her and the children, and had a very fine time. However, the war was going on, and I felt very impatient to do something about it and get back into the war.

I waited until, oh, let's see, middle part of November I guess. I'd been there thirty days, and I still hadn't heard anything from the Department. I finally telegraphed to them and asked them what about it. I was beginning to get a little worried as to whether or not I was still in the Foreign Service, and they said, "Just enjoy yourself and still keep patient." In the middle of December I finally got my orders, and to my intense surprise I was assigned to Rio de Janeiro. It was explained to me that the purpose of my assignment there was to help to look after the problem of the many Japanese who lived in Brazil and were considered a source of danger. My tickets were sent to me and reservations were made. Finally, about--well, let's see, it must have been about the middle, about December 14 or 15--we were given a priority to leave from the Los Angeles by Pan American Airways to go to Rio de Janeiro. We little knew what we had in store for us.

As I recall it, we were supposed to be down at the airport, and this was the airport in Glendale, about three-thirty in the morning. We stayed all night with my parents in Glendale, and they drove us down to the airport during the middle of the night, getting your mother and her brothers, Bill and Stephen, up--of course, they were very cross at being gotten up--getting down to the airport in the middle of the night, and being checked through. As I recall it, it was the Grandview Airport; anyway, it was the airport there in Glendale. There were very severe security precautions, and after we got into the airport and were in part checked out, your great-grandmother and great-grandfather, my father and my mother, were told that

they couldn't go any further. So we said good-bye to them at the gate. This was the last time that I saw my father because he died before I--well, it was simply the last time that I saw him.

We were checked through, and finally just about dawn were put on the airplane, which was a DC-3, which was the biggest, the most modern airplane at the time, and set off about dawn from Los Angeles for Mexico City. The flight was exceedingly rough, and before we had been gone very long, your mother and your two uncles, Bill and Stephen, and your grandmother were terribly sick, and they remained sick all the way to Mexico City. We made several stops en route--I can't quite remember where--but finally we arrived in Mexico City late in the evening and went to a hotel. We were due out at the airport again in the morning at some frightful hour, I can't remember what it was, but four o-clock or so in the morning. Your mother and your uncles again were roused out of a sound sleep. They were just beginning to recover from the illness on the plane. We got out to the airport, and they said that Stephen and William Johnson would have to be off-loaded. This was the day of priorities; you had to have a priority to ride on an airplane. Well, we had some hassle about this, and we finally got them on. That day we went to Guatemala City, which was not quite as long a flight. But still it was very, very bumpy air, and everybody except myself were quite sick.

We stayed all night in Guatemala City, and the next day we went on to Panama. At Panama there was one room in the hotel which your mother and your grandmother took, and the two boys and I finally found a place down in the native town which was not very attractive. We had considerable trouble getting out of Panama. I can't remember all the details, but there was a problem of reservations and priorities. We finally left at dawn on a morning and flew to Lima. We got into Lima late at night and a very good friend of

mine, John Emmerson, and his wife were there. They met us, we went to the hotel, and we put the children to bed. Then your grandmother and I went out with John and Dorothy Emmerson to a dinner at their house. I can't quite remember all the details, but we had so much to catch up on. John had been a language student with me in Japan. We talked until very, very late at night, and then we got back to the hotel just about in time to get our children up and get them started on the way to the airport again.

That was quite a day, this following day. Your mother and I had literally not gotten to bed, and the children were very tired. We flew from Lima, still in DC-3s of course, in a DC-3, down to Arequipa, as I recall it, in Chile. And them from Arequipa we flew across the Andes to La Paz. The plane, of course, was not pressurized, and there was a system of tubes in which you were supposed to suck oxygen when you got to the very high altitudes over the Andes. The children were not able to suck the oxygen, and they became unconscious. The plane got very cold, and we felt very miserable indeed. We landed at La Paz, and then we were supposed to go on to a place by the name of Cochabamba. I don't recall that there were any passengers other than ourselves. In any event, there were not more than two or three other passengers. The weather closed down on us very badly. The plane flew lower and lower as we got closer to Cochabamba. Finally the clouds closed in entirely, and the pilot turned around and came back to tell us that he was not able to land at Cochabamba and instead was going to land at a place called Orura, which was a mining town very high up in the mountains, as I recall it twelve or thirteen thousand feel altitude.

Just about dusk we landed at Orura on a gravel field. There was nothing to be seen for miles around. There was just the gravel airstrip there. The town was many miles away. The pilot went into a little shack and

telephoned, and finally, after a considerable period of time, an old Model T Ford came rattling up from town and took us and the crew into town. All of you, mother and the children, were very sick. It was spitting snow. We had come up from the very hot weather at Lima, and it was very, very cold and the wind was blowing. We felt very miserable. We drove into town and went to the one hotel, which was entirely filled. They sent us to another spot, which turned out to be a red-light house, but which had a vacant room.

The children and your mother were then very sick, very cold, and feeling very low. [With] the pilot helping me, we got them into a room and put them down on some pretty dirty bedclothes and put them to bed. They were very hungry; we hadn't had anything to eat for some time. The pilot and I went out in the town; it was then dark, late in the evening, and finally found a grocery store open. I bought a can of asparagus soup. I paid two dollars and a half for it, as I recall. We brought this can of asparagus soup back to the place where we were staying, and the pilot and I built a little fire out in the courtyard and heated up the soup. I borrowed a spoon and took it around to your grandmother and your mother and your two uncles and raised them up, and they were groaning, and gradually spooned some asparagus soup into them to try to revive them a little.

I thought then, and I still think, that I've never seen any place more miserable than Bolivia. Flying across it [there was] not a sign of anything green. When we'd come down at these airfields--we stopped very frequently--there would be a few slack-jawed fellows, soldiers, holding guns with burlap wrapped around their feet. Really, it looked like terrible human degradation.

We got out of Orura the next morning. I remember we were glad to flee from there. We got out to the airport and got in the airplane again and took off down through the lowlands of Bolivia, making stops every seventy-five or hundred miles. It was really a milk run. We got down into the lowlands, and we stopped in these clearings in the jungle. We would make a pass over the field to chase the cattle off the field and then we would land. There would usually be a group of Indians around with one or two Bolivian soldiers, and this would be all there would be. We would unload a little freight or load a little freight, and by that evening we got to a town on the border of Bolivia and Brazil. Oh my, I'm sorry, I just--I'll think of it--I just for the moment can't remember the name.

There Pan American had a neat screened little guest house that really seemed like heaven to us after what we had been through the last two days. We slept there that night and the next day took a little Lockheed Lodestar from--oh, I'll rememberthe name, I'm sorry I can't remember it now. We took a little Lockheed Lodestar across Brazil to Sao Paulo and finally arrived in Rio just a few days before Christmas. Or was it the day before Christmas? Anyway, it was very close to Christmas. The whole family were pretty well done in by then. Although I didn't get air sick, the sleeplessness and the job of taking care of the family while they were sick on the plane had also pretty well done me in.

I can still remember your Uncle Bill, who had been very fond of airplanes while he was sitting on the ground at Laguna Beach looking at them fly over, being so sick, so sick, and then gradually feeling a little bit better. He would poke his head up off the seat and look out the window,

and as he would look out the window he would see some clouds. He had by this time learned to associate clouds with bumping and bumping with his becoming sick, so when he would see these clouds he would utter a groan and lie down and try to close his eyes and go to sleep again. They were a very, very miserable family indeed. It's a far cry from the air travel that we know today and that you will know when you're listening to this.

It took us some six days of flying from Los Angeles to Rio. As I recall it, we spent two or three days also on the ground at Panama, so actually our entire trip was about eight or nine days. It was not the months that it had taken my great-grandparents to come from Sweden to New Orleans, but still it seemed like a very long trip.

We checked into a hotel. As I recall it, we stopped at the Copacabana Hotel in Rio, and I immediately reported to the embassy. Jefferson Caffery was Ambassador at the time. I went down to the embassy, asked to see the Ambassador and was shown into see Jefferson Caffery, Jeff Caffery, as he was known, a very famous and justly a very renowned man in our Foreign Service. He harumphed a little bit and asked me what I was down here for. I said I'd been sent down, as I understood it, to help look after the Japanese in Brazil. He gave a harumph at that, and then allowed that he didn't think the Japanese needed much looking after and said, "You know, this fellow Walter Donnelly down here"--his economic counselor--"is having a lot of trouble with his officers. He's had some three or four officers," as I recall he said, "in the last few months as his assistants, and nothing seems to work out. Go down and see Walter Donnelly and see what you can do." So with some trepidation I went downstairs and asked to see Walter Donnelly, who received me very kindly. He said that he was looking for somebody to be his immediate assistant and would I take it on.

Of course, I had no choice but to say that I would.

I should say that the embassy at this time had expanded very dramatically. In Brazil we had the Rubber Development Company, War Shipping Administration, the Proclaimed List or the blacklist group, the Board of Economic Warfare. We had a whole host of wartime agencies that descended on Brazil, and it was Walter Donnelly's job to try to look after them. He had been long associated with Jefferson Caffery, and Jefferson Caffery looked to him.

So, as I recall it, I immediately took the desk outside his office as his assistant and sat down to try to figure out what it was all about. In the meantime we were looking for a house or an apartment, and finally found a house not too far from the American school out in Ipenema. As far as my work was concerned, having come from the little one-man post in Korea and the little two-man post in Manchuria, being plunged into the maelstrom of our activities in Brazil was entirely outside of my experience. However, I sat down at the desk and tried to do what I could. We had quite an all-star cast at that time. In addition to Jefferson Caffery as Ambassador, John Farr Simmons or Jack Simmons as he was known, was counselor at the embassy; Walter Donnelly was economic counselor, as I said; Ed Miller, who later became assistant secretary for Latin American Affairs, was in charge of the Proclaimed List section; Herman Baruch, the brother of Bernard Baruch, was at one time head of the Board of Economic Warfare; Maurice McAshan, brother-in-law, or the son-in-law I should say, of Will Clayton, was head of the Rubber Development Corporation. We also had Rich--oh, what was his first name? Anyway, of Rich's Department Store of Atlanta [and he] was also at one time head of the Board of Economic Warfare.

Let me think of some others. There was also Red Dowling, Walter Dowling, who later became ambassador to Germany; Harold Tewell, who was later chief of personnel and was a very good friend of mine; and Elim O'Shaughnessy who was quite a well-known character, shall I say, in our Service. I also remember Don Bloomingdale; he was a special assistant. He was of the Bloomingdale Department Stores in Brooklyn, I believe it was. He later on committed suicide in Ethiopia. Herman Baruch was one of the most impressive looking, gracious and stupid men that I've ever known. He was very vain. He later became known, even down there, as "Monkey Glands" Baruch. He was attractive to the ladies, or felt that he was attractive to the ladies. He had that tall, very patrician, Southern manner and would make a very fine impression, but contrary to his brother he didn't have really a sensible brain in his head. He was known as a doctor. He had graduated as a physician. We had a pretty wild time down there.

The Washington government were trying to get out various critical materials, rubber, quartz crystals, and various other products, that were important to the war. There was a great deal of disorganization in Washington, and this was of course reflected in Brazil. However, Walter Donnelly tried to bring it all together, and he ran things with quite an iron hand. My job as his man Friday sitting outside of his office was to help him to do so. I got my first experience in running a big organization of diverse individuals from Walter Donnelly and from our experience in Rio, and I learned a great deal from it.

Although I was very junior in the embassy, I became acquainted with Ambassador Jeff Caffery, partially because we discovered that we each liked to walk. And thus I came to know him better than most of the officers in the embassy, except Elim O'Shaughnessy, who worked directly with him. Being

young and enthusiastic and having read about staff meetings, I promoted a staff meeting, after some weeks of work, for Ambassador Caffery to have the staff in and to talk to them. This was a real shambles. He didn't know most of the people in the room, he didn't know how to act towards them, and the whole thing was an experiment which I never repeated again. Caffery was essentially a very shy man, but a superb technician as a diplomat. He was not liked by the staff, he was not liked by the Americans in Brazil, but he did a great job for the United States during the war in Brazil.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 6

This is U. Alexis Johnson. This is Side 2, the second side, of Tape Number Three.

I was just speaking of Jefferson Caffery, who was our Ambassador in Brazil during the war, and the great job as a diplomat that he did. In these days of popular diplomats--diplomats are supposed to get out among the people, and diplomats are supposed to be all things to all people--I think it's important to remember that the first job of a diplomat is to deal with the government. This Caffery did exceedingly well. Getulio Vargas was the dictator of Brazil at the time. He was not at all sure of what side he was on. We needed bases in Brazil very badly, and Jeff Caffery got the bases and got the privileges that we needed in Brazil to carry on the war. This transcended any questions of his popularity among his staff, or among the Americans, or among the Brazilians.

He was very laconic in his dispatches, and I learned brevity from him. He would get a long dispatch, or instruction rather, from Washington; he would have an hour or two-hour meeting with Vargas, and his report was usually: "I saw Vargas with respect to telegram number so-and-so; he said he couldn't do it; I told him he had to do it; et cetera, et cetera," he would put in the telegram; "He finally agreed." It really contained the essence of everything that needed to be said.

When I started this tape, I said that it would not be entirely chronological, and that it would not be history as history is written, but rather something for your grandchildren. This evening it's May 2nd of

1965; and as I was coming upstairs after dinner, I thought that I would want to record for you a letter which I received, or which was written by your great-grandmother--that's your great-grandmother Johnson--on March 21, 1965, which was her fifty-eighth wedding anniversary and was also our thirty-third wedding anniversary. She tells in this letter, very briefly, of her marriage, back on March 21, 1907. She says, in the letter here, that, "The first day of spring is March 21, our day of being married. It was a hot, windy day in Falun, very dusty. I really didn't notice that. I was really busy, the last one to be dressed, as I was really needed to finish the last touches. We were married in my home"--that would have been in her father Forsse's home--"because we had your father's pastor from Salina marry us at four o'clock. We had a big dinner afterwards, and fed all the gang of people, friends, not invited, who "shivareed" us till early morning, beating on the aluminum machine building, enough to hear like the drum beat."

I don't know--I'm interrupting here--I don't know whether you know of the shivaree. This was an old custom in Kansas. I think it was somewhat a Swedish custom that after a couple were married, their friends would stand outside the house, beat drums, beat gongs, and ring bells and keep it up most of the night, until the couple came out and treated them.

However, to go back to your great-grandmother's letter, she said, "I would not allow any liquor, not did your father want it served either. I think my father did serve beer when I didn't know it, as he didn't think about liquor the way I did. Swedish people were not opposed to it like I have always been." That is your great-grandmother's marriage, back on March 21, 1907, fifty-eight years from the time that I'm reporting this message to you.

Now, back to Brazil. In May, 1943, your Aunt Jennifer was born. I'll always remember the morning that she was born. Your grandmother was being cared for at the Maternidade Arnaldo De Moraes -- I always remember the name--very close to the beach down at Copacabana. In accordance with the--well, I'm not sure it was a Brazilian custom--but anyway, the doctor permitted me in the delivery room, and I was with your grandmother, my wife, throughout the time that she was having Jennifer. Jennifer was born, was very healthy. And after she was born, and your grandmother went back to her room, I walked out onto the street; the sun was just beginning to rise, and I walked down to Copacabana Beach--as the sun was rising--and walked along Copacabana Beach. This remains very vividly in my mind. During this period, with all the death, the destruction that was going on throughout the world, birth was still going on, and the new life, to which I had contributed, had come into the world. The eternal mystery of life, the eternal mystery of human existence and human endeavor, impressed itself upon me at that time. Perhaps more than many . . . Well, more than it had for a long time. I am a very pragmatic type of individual. I take things as they come. But I do have my romantic moments, and that was one of them.

I was working very hard. Bill, and Stephen, and Judith were going to the American school in Rio, which was very close to our house; as I remember it, almost across the street. They were learning Portuguese and were developing very rapidly. Jennifer was also growing rapidly. I remember, at this time, we had a visit from my sister, R'Ella, and her husband Gerry Warner, who were down in Buenos Aires, who came up to visit us in Rio. My work involved the whole gamut of activities connected with our

wartime activities down in Brazil.

I remember, during this period, one time the Department assigned me to Manaus, which was up on the Amazon River in the interior of Brazil; but Caffery would not let me go, and he protested the appointment. The Department agreed that I would stay.

In the late spring of 1944, one night at home, I received a telephone call from your grandmother, with the absolutely devastating news to me that your grandfather, my father, had died. He had had a very minor operation for a hernia--well, I shouldn't say minor--but it was a relatively minor operation. He had had this hernia for some time; long postponed being operated on; finally gone to the hospital; had had it operated on by a friend of his, and was getting along very well. In fact, he was supposed to come home the next day. My mother had been to see him that evening at the hospital, and he was feeling very cheerful and feeling very healthy. Then, during the night, the nurse called her and very baldly and very coldly simply told her that her husband had died. This was a very heartless way of treating her, but I suppose that's the way hospitals are. I don't know why they need to be that way. In any event, your grandmother, my mother, reached me by phone and gave me the very, very sad news.

Donnelly and the people in the Embassy just could not have been kinder. They arranged my travel as I recall it with General Walsh, who commanded the Air Force units along that part of Brazil and who was down in Rio. I got a ride with him in a plane back up to Recife. Then at Recife, he got me on a Liberator bomber that was going back from the China-Burma-India theater back to Miami, and I rode in the hold of this bomber back to Miami.

I arrived in Miami in the middle of the night, at the Miami airport. I had no priority--it was essential to have a priority to get on an airplane at that time--and didn't know how I was going to be able to get to Los Angeles. I wandered around the airport, making some queries, but not getting very far. Finally, saw one fellow standing all by himself under a sign called "National Airlines." I went over and explained my problem to him, and I'll never forget National Airlines. He said he could act as if I did have a priority and put me on a plane, but I would be subject to removal, of course, at any stop that we made.

I got on this National Airlines plane at Miami, oh, it must have been around dawn. We flew from there to Jacksonville, as I recall it; and then we flew up to Memphis; from Memphis, we flew back down through New Orleans, and from New Orleans we flew over into Texas. We changed planes several times, and each time this fake priority that he had given me stood up. When we landed, I snuck down in my seat and pretended I wasn't on board and waited for somebody to come in and take me off, but I managed to stay on a plane all the way to Los Angeles. As I recall, it was an eighteen or twenty-hour trip. After having some twenty hours on the military planes up from Rio--oh, it must have been more than twenty hours--I was, of course, pretty exhausted. But I did get to Los Angeles.

Very shortly after I arrived, your great-grandfather's brother, Fred, arrived by train from Kansas City, and we had the funeral for Dad. He was buried in Grandview Cemetery in Glendale. Dad was a fine person. He really didn't have a mean bone in his body. He lived a clean life, and he lived a good life. Dad had a tremendous facility for liking people. He always got along so well with people, and people liked him.He had one of the most remarkable facilities I've ever known for remembering names. Even though

it may have been twenty or twenty-five years since he had seen somebody, he was able to go up to them and call them by name. This, of course, is very flattering. Dad genuinely liked people, and they responded to him.

Dad worked hard through his life. He had a considerable facility for the banking business. As I recounted previously, he lost his bank through no fault of his own, and lost everything that he owned at the time. Dad went back to work. He worked in the Welfare Department of the County of Los Angeles. Together with his work and your great-grandmother's music lessons, they gradually accumulated some money again. Dad bought a few houses and was gradually building himself back up again. I've always felt very deeply about Dad. It shook his pride, I know, very deeply to lose his bank and have to go back, really, to working for wages, but he never made the slightest complaint about it; he always maintained his dignity. And I loved him; I loved him very, very deeply.

He died very prematurely. Dad lived a very clean life. He didn't smoke, and he didn't drink. He liked food and was a little bit heavier than he should have been; however, Dad died very prematurely. Let's see--he was born 1880 and died in 1944--he was sixty-four years old, but still in very good health. He died from an embolism. It was simply a blood clot that formed while he was lying in bed. The blood clot reached his heart, and he died, probably without ever knowing what had happened to him. It was really an accident. Dad should have lived on many more years than he did.

I tried to arrange the modest savings that Dad had accumulated. He had not left any will. It was very strange. After all the wills he'd drawn for so many people, after all the tangled estates that he had helped straighten out, Dad had not left any will, and his affairs were in some

confusion. I shouldn't exaggerate this. Dad would make little loans to people; he would buy this or do that, and didn't keep too complete records. I stayed on in Glendale for about a week, and finally arranged for a lawyer to take care of the estate. Then I arranged for what Dad had to be put into a trust fund, Security First National Bank trust fund, for your great-grandmother. This was one of the wisest and best things that I have done. It has enabled her, through the years, to not worry about her funds. They've gradually accumulated and grown, and she's had the security of knowing that she had whatever money she needed--although she was not wealthy--without having to concern herself with it, without my having to concern myself with it. It worked out very well indeed.

While I was in Glendale, I received a telegram from the State Department asking me to come back to Washington before I went back to Brazil. I took a train back, as I recall it. It was very, very hard to get planes. So I took a train back to Washington. Hotels were almost impossible to find. Merle Benninghoff, who was then in the Department, and his wife put me up in their house. The Far Eastern Bureau of the Department wanted to discuss assigning me to one of the military government training schools of the Army. These were known as the CATS Schools, that is C-A-T-S, the Civil Affairs Training Schools, who were training officers for military government in the Far East. There had been some discussion between the Department and the Army on this proposition. It was not very clear as to whether I would be a student, or whether I would be a teacher. It was really the first experiment in exchange of personnel between the Department and the military. However, I said that it would interest me, and it was agreed that I would be assigned to the school at the University of Chicago.

I made my way back, by plane, down to Rio de Janeiro; packed up our effects; then, we flew from Rio back to Miami. We couldn't get on the same plane. Your grandmother, together with Judith and Jennifer, were on one plane, left one day, and I left with the two boys the next day. As I recall it, it took about three days from Rio up to Miami; and we managed to meet in Miami. We then took the train to Washington. I spent a few days in Washington. And then we all got on the train to Chicago. I stopped in Chicago, and your grandmother, together with the four children, went on to Los Angeles, again for a prolonged separation. Neither one of us knew how long it might be. This was our second long separation. Our third, if you count the time that I was in North China, when your grandmother, my wife, and the children were down in Korea.

I went out to the Civil Affairs Training School at the University of Chicago and reported in. They knew I was coming, but they didn't know what to do with me anymore than I knew what to do with myself. So it was agreed that I would be part student and part teacher. I, of my own choice, decided to live with the students. There were about seventy or eighty, ranging from lieutenants to colonels in the Army, as well as personnel of the same ranks from the Air Force--I should say the Navy, there wasn't any separate Air Force at the time--from lieutenant through captain. I would attend classes insofar as I saw fit, and I would be called upon to lecture and to contribute what I could to the school.

I found this very rewarding. Living with the students, I found the time that we spent after class, eating and in our rooms and talking, was probably the most useful time. None of them had ever been in the Far East, and of course, they were avid with their questions. We had two

classes of students. We had the younger students, who were sincerely interested in learning what they could and trying to look forward to what would face us at such time as Japan might surrender. Then we had the older group, the lieutenant colonels and colonels, who were very bitter about Japan, very emotional about it. I've always called them the "shoot-all-the-yellow-bellied-bastards" school. And they thought all this business of military government and how you're going to run a country after surrender was all a lot of nonsense. You simply told them what to do and pointed the gun at them, and they did it.

As the class went on, it was this latter group, who took the emotional approach to things, that changed more substantially than the first group. I found that after the war was over and they got to Japan, this was the group that swung all over to the other side. The Japanese almost could do no wrong. They saw them through rose-colored glasses. In this respect, they were very similar to the Japanese. It's been my observation that emotional people--and I rate the Japanese as among the most emotional people I've ever known--emotional people will swing from wild extremes of romanticism and . . . Well, I should say from romanticism to wild extremes of cruelty, on the other side. The pendulum can swing back and forth very rapidly with such people. It does with many Americans, and it does particularly with the Japanese, and other emotional people, such as the Germans, who have this romantic, emotional streak in their nature.

While I was there, I also lectured at Northwestern University which had a similar school--as well as the University of Michigan; and then, before I left again for the Far East, I lectured at Stanford. As I said, I think I'm really the first guinea pig on this exchange, between State and Defense, of personnel and of students. From this experiment has to some

degree grown the large amount of exchange that we now carry on with State Department students at the National War College and at the three service war colleges, and Defense students at the senior seminar, the Foreign Service Institute, and the whole regime under which we now have very much closer relations. However, I was a guinea pig at the time, and it worked out. I gained value from it, and I think the students that were there gained value.

I was--oh, I guess it was January--I was asked to go back to Washington. I went back to Washington, and they discussed with me an assignment to the Philippines, as soon as we invaded the Philippines, the thought being that we would re-establish a consulate there. I, of course, agreed to this, and from Washington, went out to Stanford, did some lecturing there; then went down to Los Angeles to see my family and my mother.

By the end of February or first part of March--I forget the exact dates now--I went up to Travis Air Force Base outside of San Francisco, and there joined Paul Steindorf, and Rody Hall, and Dick Richardson, who had been assigned also to go out to the Philippines. At Travis, we got on what was my first four-engine airplane, a C-54. From Travis, we flew to Honolulu; Honolulu to Johnston Island ; Kwajalein; Guam; and then on into Leyte, which we had taken shortly before. By the time we arrived in Leyte, our forces were entering the outskirts of Manila after we had made the landing on Luzon. We stayed a day or two on Leyte at Tacloban and then flew on up to Manila, in which fighting was still going on, with the instructions to open a consulate in Manila. The city was, of course, in great disorder, great destruction all around; heavy shooting and bombardment was still going on. We finally, together with the command there, found a house

which had been the old German Consulate, which was relatively intact. Of course, we had no light or water, but we did have a shelter over our heads. We set about opening up a consulate in this house.

The day of my arrival, I was standing in a chow line with some other officers, waiting to get food; an officer turned to me, seeing that I was in uniform but didn't have any insignia on, saw that I was a civilian, and found out who I was. He was in charge of handling the repatriation, out of Santo Tomas and Los Banos, of our civilian repatriates. He asked me if I could help him, and I of course agreed to do so. So the next day I went over to Santo Tomas and worked out a system for processing the repatriates out of Santo Tomas, which I kept at until the time of the surrender of Japan, about which I will talk later.

The Army, of course, was utterly baffled by all these people who claimed all these strange nationalities, and marriages, and children. And I was quickly able to help them out; we worked out a processing system under which we'd have a questionnaire. The CIC would go over it. I would go over it and talk to the people; and my initials on the bottom of this questionnaire constituted their visa into the United States, their ticket into the United States, or any place in the world that they were destined to go, and was the only paper that they had. I processed thousands of people in this way. I expected someday to have some come-back on this, but never had any problem with it. Naturally, I was very much sought after, as it was known that I was the ticket to wherever people wanted to go. It was not too hard with the original inhabitants of Santo Tomas, many of the nationalities. But it became more difficult as people came in from outlying areas with complicated problems of children, and wives, and other relatives. Well, this is the end of Tape Number Three.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 7

(7a)

This is U. Alexis Johnson, and this is his Tape Number Four. It's now Wednesday, May 12, 1965. I finished off Tape Number Three, telling of the processing of repatriates from Santo Tomas, Los Banos, in the Philippines during the war.

Santo Tomas was the former university there, and the Japanese had taken it over to use as an internment camp for American and other enemy nationals--their enemy nationals--during the war. People had lived there for more than three years. And as the war drew to a close, the Japanese became shorter and shorter of food; the situation became more and more desperate and the condition of the camp was very, very bad when we went in there. Many people were dying; other people were in very, very poor health and in general you found that when people get in that kind of condition, either the best or the worst of them comes out. And there were many feuds within the camp and of course, there were the collaborators with the Japanese, the enemy. Trying to sort all this out was a very difficult job. In general, it becomes very difficult to try to sit in judgment on one's fellow man under such conditions; for the most part, we had to ignore what had gone on. There were heroes and villains, but the villains really could only be punished by the ill-repute in which they were held by their fellow man, their fellow people in the camp. There was little we could do, coming back in, to try to correct the wrongs and injustices. On the whole, people had behaved exceedingly well, and I do not want to exaggerate that aspect of things.

The destruction of Manila was very severe. When I first went in there, the fighting was still going on, particularly in the old city; and the Japanese were still holed up in the legislative building and the 105s were strung across the river, simply pumping shells into the legislative building until it collapsed of its own weight. We were also still pumping shells in to the old city. However, in general, the city was secure. However, the Japanese, being cornered, had fought like cornered people and fought very desperately indeed; and it had taken a very, very heavy effort to get them out.

I saw a little of this fighting, but was not directly involved in the greater part of it. While I met General MacArthur and his wife, and some of the staff, I did not become well acquainted. First, they were a very closed corporation. Second, I was quite a junior officer. But I did have my first acquaintance with this group with which I was going to have so much to do over the years to come. I had my first acquaintance at Manila.

August, when we had the first news of the bombs at Hiroshima and at Shimonoseki, and then the surrender of Japan, was, of course, the transcendent event. We had been building up in the Philippines for the massive invasion of Japan, and this event, of course, meant that it would not be necessary. Let me say that as far as the atomic weapons were concerned, the atomic bombs, I knew absolutely nothing about them until I read about them in the paper. However, for the first time, I understood why, when we were in Brazil, we were getting these insistent demands for finding and sending by air what was called "monazite sand"--M-O-N-A-Z-I-T-E. We got our first request and we had to look it up in the dictionary to find out what it was; and people who were looking for it were almost as puzzled as we were as to why we would need such quantities of it. It did

produce thorium, which had a limited use, so far as we knew, for mantles in gasoline lanterns. But we couldn't see why we should need so much of it! And then when we sent it, there was always a big argument as to whether it was monazite sand, or not monazite sand. But, for the first time, I learned why we had been so interested in it: of course, it was for use in the Manhattan Project, which produced the atomic weapon.

The evening that news came of Japan's surrender was probably the wildest in Manila's history, in some ways even beyond the time we went in there. Anybody who had a gun shot it; I understand there were more people killed that night than had been killed since we liberated the city. Shells were falling all around; shots were ripping through the air, machine guns, cannons, rockets, just about anything they could shoot. I literally crawled under the bed for a while, while it was at its height.

The next day, Sutherland, who was Chief of Staff, asked to see me. It was known that I had been in Korea and he got me together with General Hodge, Commander of the 24th Corps, who was due to go to Korea. I talked with Hodge for a short time. He showed me his instructions and his orders, and I was absolutely appalled because it was quite clear that he'd been given no separate instructions for Korea. The instructions that he had been given for Korea were precisely the same as had been given for Japan. That is, local officials were to be kept in office until new arrangements had been made and all things which were quite evident would irritate the Koreans. I spent almost all night talking with him before he took off. He saw the point; I saw the point, but it was then too late to have any changes made. As I recall it, we did talk to Sutherland, but he was unwilling to ask for any changes from Washington. So our whole venture

in Korea got started off on the wrong foot from the very beginning, by the very unrealistic orders that were given Hodge for the 24th Corps.

The Headquarters had asked, and in turn, the Department of Army at home had asked State to furnish one Foreign Service Officer to go with them into Japan, to deal primarily with the questions of civilian internees, prisoners, that type of thing. The State Department came back out to Paul Steindorf who was in charge of the office, and said it would be either Dick Richardson or myself, and State left it up to him to choose. Well, he wasn't about to choose between us. So Dick and I drew cards. And for the first, and perhaps the last time in my life, I won at a gamble. I drew the high card and was thus assigned to go into Japan at the time of the surrender.

So, the end of August, I took off one morning in a C-46 for Okinawa. I arrived in Okinawa, late in the afternoon, to a scene of enormous confusion, at least as far as a poor individual such as myself was concerned. Although I had orders and priority one to go into Japan, I had a hard time finding anybody who could do anything about it; and finally, in the evening, got a hold of an Air Force operations sergeant, who said that he would get me on a plane that night to go on in. I had had nothing to eat. I walked a couple of miles and found the mess hall that I was able to get into and got something to eat. Went back out to the air field. And, oh, I suppose eleven or twelve o'clock at night--I was tired and dirty--the sergeant said, "Come on." And he got into a jeep and drove down this long, long line of scores and scores of airplanes, with a flashlight, looking at tail numbers; finally, grunted and said that this was it. It was another C-46. I was never too fond of C-46s. And I threw my duffle bag in and

climbed up inside. A couple of fellows were asleep on the floor. I pulled out my blanket and rolled up in it and went to sleep myself.

After some time, we finally started off, and as dawn came I looked out the window, hoping to see some sight of Fuji, some sight of Japan. But there was nothing but clouds. There were--oh, I forget, I suppose--eight or ten other fellows in the plane. They were all sleepy, and you couldn't talk in a C-46, in any event, so I didn't make any effort to talk. We finally started down and as we broke through the clouds, I could see some paddy fields, but I couldn't see anything of Fuji, which I thought somewhat strange, although I was not quite sure where Atsugi Field was. I knew it was near Yokohama and we should see something of the mountains around Yokohama.

We finally broke down through and finally straightened out for a landing, and as we straightened out, I saw there were quite a few jeeps on the field. This looked strange to me, because I knew we had only gone in the day before, and I couldn't imagine how we'd gotten jeeps in there this soon. However, I was tired and weary and wasn't thinking too much about it. And we finally got on the ground and taxied out and the door opened up. The jeep pulled up and I said--well, I can't remember quite what it was I said--but, "Is this Atsugi?" And they said, "No, this is . . ." Oh, what was it? It's the name of an air field in Luzon in the Philippines. And I said, "My God, where am I?" And they said, "You're in the Philippines. Where'd you think you were?" Well, what had happened was: we'd got on the wrong plane in Okinawa; and there, instead of being in on the surrender of Japan, there I was back in the Philippines again.

I did a little article for the Foreign Service Journal on this. Well, I wasn't too far from Manila; as I recall it, twenty or thirty miles.

I called up the Headquarters and people who handled priorities and told them what had happened. They said, well, they couldn't get me out again until twelve or one o'clock. I had about three, four hours. I was caught in a real dilemma. Should I call up the office, the fellows at the office, and admit that I was back in the Philippines again and thus go in and get a shower and some breakfast, or should I stick to my pride and not admit what had happened? Well, I swallowed my pride and called them up; they came out and got me and I got a shower and some breakfast. And I started out all over again that afternoon; got through Okinawa, fairly good during the course of the night. And this time just shortly after dawn I did see Fuji and did come into Japan.

I was again in a C-46. As we were approaching the coast, a couple of Navy fighters, feeling very exuberant, started making passes at us. Oh, as I recall it, there were three or four of them. They'd get ahead; get along side of us; then come down directly for us in a fake diving pass, and then just before they would reach us, two of them would go under us, and two of them would go over us. And this would toss us--their wake, their prop thrust--would toss us around like a cork. Well, our pilot, a youngster of course, thought this was great fun. So he started trying to elude them and then he started diving, and well, we had a fairly hairy time before we straightened out and did get on to the ground at what was Atsugi.

There was an old Japanese bus there. Buses, cars, the old charcoal burners, were really worn out, took us into town, into Yokohama; and I was taken down to the old Grand Hotel, which looked very familiar, and was assigned a room with some water--the first time I had had running water for some time.

Yokohama was, of course, terribly destroyed. The whole center of the town was entirely gone, just the Grand Hotel, the old Hong Kong-Shanghai Bank Building, the Port Building, and a few isolated buildings that were standing. There wasn't a single Japanese of any kind to be seen any place. It was completely deserted city. I drove up next day in a jeep, got into a jeep, and drove up to Tokyo to make contact with the Swiss up there, who had been protecting our interests. I had a very difficult time recognizing landmarks. This was before any of our people had gone up to Tokyo, before we had occupied it at all. Again, the streets were absolutely deserted. I knew that the Swiss were in the old Canadian Embassy, and I finally located them. From our embassy clear across town, our old embassy clear across town, you could see clear over to St. Luke's Hospital . . . . Well, in any event, it was just flat, and the area between Yokohama and Tokyo was just flat with just an occasional chimney, or an occasional safe, sticking up out of the ruins and with nobody to be seen. It was, again, a very eerie feeling.

I made contact with the Swiss, got such information as I could on civilian internees that were left. Incidentally, the man I made contact with was Dr. Juno Swiss, who I later met in Geneva. We became friends with he and his family. The time your Aunt Jennifer had difficulty with her back, there in Switzerland, Dr. Juno was a very, very great help to me.

I have an incident to tell, in connection with my stay in Yokohama, that illustrates something of the Japanese character, loyalty, if you will. I was up in my room. I believe it was about the second or third night I was there. I was up in my room and an MP came up and said, "Jap

woman down there wants to see you." Well, there were no Japanese in town, and I couldn't imagine who in the world would want to see me. But in any event, I got up and went down. And here was Kiyoko-san--Kiyoko Matsuzawa. Kiyoko had been our children's nurse when we were in Tokyo. She had gone with us to Seoul. She'd gone to the States with us in 1939, when we went home on leave; then had gone back to Japan when we went to Manchuria. Well, no, she had gone back before that. After all, we'd taken on Miss Kim as a nurse at the time Billy was born. But we had lost track of Kiyoko-san entirely.

Kiyoko was carrying a box of apples with her. From my questioning it turned out that she had fled the city. She had been in Tokyo when the big fire bombings had started; had gone up to relatives' home in the northern part of the country, and was staying up there when the war ended. They were, of course, in poor shape. She had heard on radio that I had come in along with the Headquarters, and hearing that I had come in, she'd got this box of apples--people were starving at that time. She had taken the train down to Tokyo, walked from Tokyo down to Yokohama--the trains were not running--into what was a real unknown, as far as Japanese were concerned at that time, and traced me down to the Grand Hotel. It was an act of enormous courage, and I was, of course, deeply touched.

She didn't ask for anything then, nor has she ever again asked me for anything. It was simply a friendly gesture on her part. I have tremendous admiration for her. I might say that Kiyoko has done very well indeed. She was a very unusual Japanese woman. Entirely on her own, she got some concessions in PXs in Japan, as our forces moved in, for selling Japanese goods. She started a woman's magazine and has made a very fine

financial success. She is a very fine, very exceptional Japanese woman, one of the finest types of her people.

Well, it was decided that I should get out to the camps--I can't remember--this had been about two, three days--to run down what civilian internees I could and to be of what help that I could. It was about September, oh, three or four, I suppose it was. I'm sorry I have no diaries or dates on any of this. I was given a C-47 and crew and set off for Nagoya, first, then Osaka, then Nagasaki.

This was before any of our troops had come into any of these areas. The plans were, as far as prisoners were concerned, the Japanese would take responsibility for delivering them down to ports and we would send in Naval task forces to the ports, to pick them up at the ports. So it was just myself and the plane crew, C-47 bunch, a couple of young fellows as crewmen who were not at all happy at setting off into the unknown of Japan.

We flew around Osaka, and there was a big building standing in the center of town, and some fellows, who we could see were Americans, came out on the roof of the building, and waved shirts, and so on. We could see that they were prisoners. We knew that they had moved into town; we didn't know where they were. We flew around until we found an airfield we could get down on and landed. As we landed, a bunch of Japanese came running out, Air Force people. My crew drew their guns. I told them to hold their guns, we couldn't use guns in a situation like this. The Japanese, of course, were scared. My giving them a few words of Japanese relaxed them a great deal. I told them that I wanted a car to go into town. They promptly produced a car, and I drove into town and made contact with our fellows at the new Osaka Hotel.

I've never been more proud of Americans. Here were these fellows who had been prisoners all these years, some treated very badly. When the surrender came, the Japanese had simply opened the gates. These fellows, instead of going on a rampage, had moved into town. They'd established themselves in the Hotel. They had set up a Japanese liaison office. They had set up a motor pool. They had an officer-in-charge of quarters, and they were all organized. They were truly professional soldiers and the finest of their profession was coming out.

I spent that night there. The next day, got a Japanese car, Japanese driver, of course, and drove down to Wakayama, where we were embarking prisoners. I made contact with the Navy task force down there; helped them settle a couple of cases; and then, drove back to Osaka. From Osaka we flew down--over Hiroshima--didn't land there at that time--on down to Nagasaki, where the next task force was due to come in. We flew to Nagasaki, but were unable to find any field at which we could land. We finally landed, as I recall, at some, oh, thirty-five, forty miles. It was off the peninsula, back up on the island before we could find a field. Went through the same experience there with excited Japanese, being able to talk to them, being able to get a car.

And I took the plane crew along with me this time, leaving the plane on the field. No, I didn't either. No, I left them on the field and went by myself. That's right.

Oh, the roads were very, very bad. It was a several hours' drive from where we landed into Nagasaki. On both sides of the road, coming out of Nagasaki, were demobilized soldiers, none of them with arms, but the officers still carrying their arms, and also, lines of refugees. For the first time since I had got into this, I really had some qualms of fear,

just thinking how helpless I would be if any in the group should turn on me. However, the feeling didn't last very long. Because, I don't know, I suppose I somewhat instinctively recognized that when the Japanese surrendered, they surrendered. And they surrendered fully, in a sense that is very difficult for a Westerner to understand.

I drove down into Nagasaki; finally found a pier. And as I got down on the pier, a group of our Navy ships came steaming into the harbor. I stayed down at the end of the pier and the ships put over some of their landing boats and a barge; and they came roaring up to the pier, surrounding both sides of the pier. The first fellow that stepped off the barge was Captain Rend, who was in command of the task force, and who had been our Naval Attache in Rio de Janeiro when I was there. His mouth dropped. He thought he was making an assault landing, and he finds a striped pants diplomat down on the pier to welcome him! In any event, I was glad to see him, and he was glad to see me. I was particularly glad to see him, as, now having been out three, four days with no change of clothes, and no bath, or anything, he invited me out to the ship; I spent the night on his ship, sleeping between clean sheets, and getting myself a bath and getting my clothes laundered.

Well, I made some other stops around Japan, making contact with prisoners and contact with people who were processing prisoners, and doing what I could to assist. It was quite a unique experience to go unaccompanied and unarmed and be the first man into so many of these areas of Japan. Of course, Nagasaki and Hiroshima have all been described so often, I'll not seek to repeat it, except to say that it was beyond any imagination of mine; that destruction was beyond any imagination of mine, up to that time at least.

I had what was known at the time, and still is, a fairly hairy ride back from Nagasaki. We took off . . . I got back out to the field where we'd left the plane the previous day. Then we flew down to Nagasaki. The boys wanting to take a good look at it, flew at about forty, fifty feet altitude, lifting our wings over the chimneys that were still standing, while trying to raise some of the ships in the harbor to get a reading on the weather. They couldn't raise any of the ships. So we flew down between the ships, below mast height, weaving in and out between them, trying to attract some attention. Finally, we aroused a ship and got a weather report that a typhoon was on its way in, but nothing very accurate was known about it.

We started back to Atsugi. A couple of hours out, we began to hit the weather and then we hit it really hard. We bounced around so badly that everything in the cabin was thrown up to the roof at times. We dropped hundreds of feet at a time. We really were afraid our wings were going to come off. We got in such terribly violent turbulence. There was no real radio landing aids at Atsugi. There was some sort of radio homing beacon, but that was all, and of course, our maps. We had no other radio navigation. Our maps were very poor. The kids were not too experienced pilots; and I could see those mountains looming up through the clouds, or, my mind's eye could see them looming up through the clouds, or our wings coming off. In any event, we really got tossed around. Somehow or the other, the boys made it; and we broke out just over the field at Atsugi; literally kissed the ground, when we got down on the ground again.

We found out that of nine planes in the squadron that were in the air that day, we were one of only two that avoided crashing. All the rest either broke up, or crash-landed. But we got back all right.

(7b)

Back in Yokohama, Sutherland, Chief of Staff, asked to see me and said General MacArthur suggested that we open a Consulate as soon as we could in Yokohama. I said I would be glad to pass it on to the Department, but if we were going to do so, we would have to have our Consulate building. I had just been over to see the Swiss caretaker there who had told me that General Eichelberger, Commander of the Eighth Army, was planning to move in that afternoon. It's obviously a good choice for himself as a home. I don't blame him at all for it. So I told Sutherland we would have to have the building and Eichelberger was moving in that afternoon. Sutherland said he'll take care of that. He immediately put headquarters MPs on it, so not only Eichelberger, but even myself, nobody, could get into the building at all. And thus I saved the building.

Later, I became very, very good friends of "Bobby" Eichelberger. He was one of the great generals and one of the fine gentlemen of the Army, and we often used to joke how I foiled him on getting the building.

I was asked this time. . . Oh, I have a couple of amusing incidents. It was about this time it had been announced from Washington that George Atcheson was being assigned as political advisor to SCAP -- that is, to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers -- which was the occupation title for General MacArthur. Just shortly before, Dean Acheson, who was then Under Secretary of State made a speech making some allusions to the fact that the United States was going to have something to say about how the occupation was run, which touched a very sensitive chord in MacArthur and his staff out there. So Dean

Acheson's name was in very bad repute. The only name they knew was Acheson. So they asked me, "What about this fellow Acheson coming out?" First, MacArthur didn't feel that he needed any political advice; second, if it was going to be anybody giving him political advice, it certainly wasn't going to be Dean Acheson. I explained that George Atcheson and Dean Acheson were two quite different people and their names even being spelled differently and this mollified them somewhat.

They then asked me to go over to Korea, at the time Hodge was moving into Korea with the 24th Corps. My status during this whole period was a little anomalous. In a technical sense, I had really been relieved by the State Department and assigned to the Headquarters. So in a sense, I was working for them; and in a sense, I was working for State. In a sense, I really didn't have any real boss and was able to freewheel in a way that was useful to get things done. In any event, they asked me to go over to Korea and I, of course, said I would do so. And I had another hairy ride.

I went out to Atsugi, and found the plane I was going to go on was another one of those C-46s, which had a very bad reputation at that time; it was all loaded with drums of aviation gasoline to take over to the field over in Korea to help fuel planes which were due in over there. I was the only passenger. The pilot and the co-pilot were, again, young kids who hadn't shaved or washed for a long time. We took off in some fairly bad weather. We started down the coast of Japan with a ceiling of about a thousand feet, I suppose, and kept along outside the land weaving down the coast until we got down along the inland sea, when the weather finally closed down on us completely. We then circled in a tight circle to try to gain enough altitude to clear anything around us; for-

tunately, we did so and then took off on a dead reckoning course for Korea with nothing but clouds below us. We got over what was supposed to be Korea, or assumed that we were over Korea, and it was still absolutely clouded in. So we started gingerly down through the clouds, as gingerly as you can, trying to take account of the peaks that were supposed to be in the area and finally broke down into a valley. God, I don't know how we did it but we come down between mountains into a valley, broke through with, oh, I suppose, a thousand foot ceiling or so. They didn't know where we were. I didn't know where we were. And so, we wandered around up and down the valley, trying to read our maps. Finally, I began to recognize a few landmarks, and recognizing the landmarks, was finally able to steer us into a landing at Seoul. It was a pretty hairy ride. I should have said, also, that you know how careful we always are instructed to be in smoking, taking off and landing with gasoline and so on. The crew, coming back into the cabin, were smoking all the time and dousing their cigarettes on top of these drums of hundred-octane gasoline. I had a picture of us going up in a puff of flame, but we didn't.

I got into town--the 24th Corps had been landing for a couple of days--and found General Hodge; made contact with him and some of his officers. That evening had one of the stirring experiences of my life. It's hard to describe it.

I stood with General Hodge on the balcony of the Government General--what had been the Government General Building, the Japanese Government General Building there--and watched retreat being played by the American troops. During the years I'd been there as a Vice Consul dealing with the Japanese, the thought that someday Korea would be independent, or

beyond . . . Let me say, the thought that someday American troops would be in the courtyard of the Government General Building in Seoul was beyond my wildest imagination. I just could never . . . Well, it just had never crossed my mind, at all. I just couldn't possibly believe it. Nor could I believe that Korea was ever going to be independent.

When we were living in Washington, there was a Korean fellow, who was a member of the Foundry Methodist Church there, Syngman Rhee, Dr. Syngman Rhee, who had this idea that Korea might be independent sometime. But all we political realists knew this was utterly crazy and thought him a little daffy as well. However, Korea did become independent, and it became independent very heavily through the devotion, you might say, of Dr. Rhee, who unfortunately outlived his time, stayed on too long in Korea.

But standing at that balcony and watching retreat played by American troops in that courtyard was one of the most most moving experiences of my life.

I got back to the old Consulate and found the thing pretty well cleaned out. I made contact--I can't remember--with some of the old palace people and went out and borrowed some pots and pans and so on, out at the palace; found our old cook. By this time, Merle Benninghoff who was due to be the permanent political advisor there, had come in, and we got these pots and pans out there. We got my old cook back. We got C-rations off the Army; the cook did marvels with the C-rations and we began to live somewhat as gentlemen again.

I stayed on in Korea, oh, about a month, as I recall it, until the middle of October--or was it towards the end of October?--and I got a telegram from the Department assigning me to return to Yokohama to be number

two in the Consulate General. Bill Turner had been assigned to be Consul General, to reopen the office. I was assigned as his number two and was instructed to return there to get the office going. I immediately went back and got down to Yokohama and started dusting the place out, and getting some help in trying to get the place going, and waiting for Bill Turner. And then word came that Bill was not coming. I understood that Bill just didn't feel it was a proper assignment for him and talked himself out of it, and by default, I stayed on.

Talking to young Foreign Service Officers, in particular, Foreign Service Officers who come to me to complain about assignments, I always cite this incident. I point out that I was not particularly happy in going back to Yokohama and taking on just what seemed to be the drudgery of the consular work, and particularly being number two, but I agreed to to do so without protest. I was a FSO-7 at the time I went back there. Through reclassifications and promotions, when I left there four years later, I was an FSO-2. I did myself more good and my career more good there than at any job I had before or after. Bill Turner has long since retired and retired without ever achieving a chief of mission job. So what I say is, "Take the assignments as they come and make the best out of them."

I also cite the fact that when I returned from internment, I was envious of the fact that many of my colleagues were being sent back to China and would be engaged directly in the war back there. As you heard, I was not. I went on to Rio; then I came back into the war on up through the Philippines on the Japanese side. So I was never over on the free China side. All my colleagues, who were over on the free China side, became

embroiled in all the controversy over our policy in China during the war and after the war. All of them were most viciously tarred by [Senator Joseph] McCarthy and others of his ilk, and none of them have ever been able fully to live it down. Some have left the Service. Some are still in the Service. But it has stayed with them throughout their whole career, entirely unjustly so, may I say. I think our government has lacked a lot of courage in rehabilitating these people. It's not to the credit of anyone that they have not been fully rehabilitated because they were all loyal American citizens. Yet the fact remains. As far as I was concerned, it was simply my good fortune, in taking the assignments as they came to me, that I didn't get involved in this controversy, through no wisdom of my own whatsoever, but simply through taking the assignments that I was given at the time. Although, if I'd been given my own choice, I might have chosen assignments that would not have been as useful to me.

When I returned to Yokohama, it was just me, that's all. I had no secretary, no help, nothing of any kind. I borrowed a corporal from the Army who helped me with rehabilitating the building, getting it cleaned up and put in some kind of shape. I did my own typing and wrote out my own dispatches. I didn't have anything, of course, in the way of supplies, yet. I'd asked for them to be sent out from the Department, but I simply had the old paper I found around the place. I located a Red Cross girl who was also a secretary and persuaded her to leave the Red Cross and hired her as a secretary. This is Katy Harrington. She's now Katy Ryan; has always been a very, very good friend of ours. Katy and I and the corporal worked at getting things straightened away. Everybody was very, very fine in helping. Engineers gave me what help they could. We got the furnace going again. One of the big jobs was getting the flag up on the big flagpole there. It

was a very, very high flagpole, one of these double-step things, and the lines had been pulled through it so we couldn't get a flag up. The engineers worked at it a while. Then the Navy came up from Yokokusa, and they tried it and couldn't make it. Finally, I got a Japanese who just put a rope around himself and shinnied up the pole and put the rope through. And we finally had our hoisting-of-the-flag ceremony.

Oh, I might say that during this time I was living with the Eighth Army staff over in their billets. The Eighth Army, by this time, had moved in. General Eichelberger; Clovis Byers, his chief of staff; George Jones,G-2; a host of people who had become very good friends of mine were the Eighth Army staff. It was a grand organization. They made me completely welcome and couldn't have been more helpful. I decided to try to do something for Christmas. By this time, Christmas was drawing nigh. With the help of the Navy, I got myself some whiskey,some good whiskey, off a Navy ship. The QM major at the port got some reconstituted milk and cream and some fresh eggs, and between us we managed to get all the fixings for eggnog. In the meantime, I had liberated a searchlight mirror out of a cave in Yokokusa -- which I still have -- to use as a punch bowl. I put up a notice in the Eighth Army Officers' Billets, inviting people for Christmas morning, and sent a few word-of-mouth invitations to people up in Tokyo that I had known.

Well, I've never given a party like that. This was the most successful one I'd ever had. Oh, we also got hold of a Christmas tree and some of the fixings for that. The major and I and the corporal spent most of Christmas Eve mixing up gallons and gallons of eggnog and getting it all ready for Christmas morning. Well, everybody came. And the people who had been drinking moonshine and poor liquor all these years, down through the islands, just

didn't appreciate a good smooth eggnog, or didn't quite appreciate what it could do to them; a lot of them drank somewhat more than perhaps they should, although nobody misbehaved themselves. As I recall, I had invited people from ten o'clock to twelve o'clock Christmas morning, and it was about four o'clock Christmas afternoon before the last of them left. The Consulate Building, you see, was still in good shape. All the furniture was there with the Christmas tree. It was the first little taste of home, or something like home, that most of the people had had in a long time and seemed to be much appreciated. I still have people remind me of this party.

Well, the work grew rather rapidly. One of the first big jobs were the fifteen or twenty thousand persons of Japanese ancestry born in the States who were in Japan during the war and who were now for the most part, naturally desirous of regaining their American citizenship rights. This required a very careful screening of all of them and what they had done during the war and the setting up of quite an elaborate mechanism to get information on them and to screen them. By this time, I had started to build up a staff. A few of these Japanese, Kashiwabara San particularly who was formerly in the consulate down there showed up and one of my prizes was Mrs. Yuki Otsuki who was an American of Japanese ancestry who happened to be there during the war and was very experienced at the work.

I mentioned, back in Mukden, Kenji Yamada, who had been so loyal to us at the time war came. One day this very thin fellow came into the office and introduced himself as Yamada-San. He had stayed in Manchuria all during the war; then made his way on foot after the surrender down through the Russian lines, down through North Korea, through Korea, and had got back to Japan. He was in bad shape, of course, physically, but I was delighted to see him and immediately employed him; and he was one of my most faithful

and useful people in the Consulate.

By this time the Department had also started to send me out help. Harold Tewell, who I had known in Rio, was then Chief of Personnel. We were beginning to take new officers into the Service, and Harold sent me out quite a series of new Foreign Service Officers to help me in Yokohama and also for me to train. So I quickly built up quite a large office that became very active. In addition to our work with the Japanese, of course, we had birth registrations for--well, the birth registrations came later, I should say--but passports and other work on behalf of the occupation forces. This grew so fast, I finally set up branch offices down in Kobe and Osaka--well, Kobe-Osaka, one office--Nagoya, Fukuoka, and I sent officers on trips down to Okinawa as well. The first officer I sent down there was Douglas Overton, who has remained a very close friend, who is now Executive Secretary of the Asia Society. Doug, although he was sent down just for consular work, came back with a story of considerable mismanagement and considerable discontent down there. On the basis of what he told me, I sent in my first reports to the Department of Okinawa and this led to a few reforms within a fairly short time. I've maintained a strong interest in Okinawa since that time.

Well, in the early part of the year of 1946 one of my very good freinds, closest friends and colleagues and classmates, came in with me into the service, Beppo Johannsen was assigned over from Tientsin, where he had been with his wife Penny. Penny, incidentally . . . Her real name was Lucy. Penny had been a teacher in the foreign school at Seoul, and was Judith's teacher there before Beppo met her. They were subsequently married while Beppo was stationed in Harbin. Then after the war, they were sent out to Tientsin, and then they were transferred over to Tokyo. They were the first American family to come to Japan after the war. None of the Service or State Department

families, had yet come in. Then in April, as I recall it, the first families came out, and your grandmother, Pat and Judith, Stephen, Bill, Jennifer, all came out, as I recall it, on the General Megs, which was the first transport carrying dependents out. Naturally, after our long months--well, it was over a year--of separation, it was certainly good to see them again and to settle them down.

Very shortly after they arrived, Beppo, who was working up in Tokyo and living down in Kamakjra, got a heart attack while he was riding on a very very crowded train from Kamakjra up to Tokyo. He went to the hospital and seemed to be getting along all right, but then very tragically died, very prematurely died of a heart attack. This meant they were very short-handed up at Tokyo. George Atcheson was political advisor, but he had only a very limited staff up there. With Beppo's death, I began to commute to Tokyo every day to do the job up there and also to keep the wheels turning down in Yokohama. So this turned out to be a very active period for me.

I was able to be of a little help to Penny, that is Beppo's widow, in getting a job in Tokyo and subsequently in getting her compensation for the very untimely death of Beppo which helped put her two children, Rolph and Karen, through school. They're a fine family.

It was about this time that George Atcheson was killed. I had not known George previously. He had a reputation in China as being somewhat a hard taskmaster, but he's one of the finest officers I know of in the service and became a very close friend. George, along with Colonel Larr, Colonel Russell, a couple of others, were going back to the States to discuss the beginnings of some kind of a peace settlement for Japan. Instead of going in MacArthur's plane, which they should have done, they went in a converted B-17 bomber into which you had to crawl into from the bottom. The pilot turned out to be very

incompetent; instead of refueling as he should have at Johnston Island on their way to Honolulu, he overflew Johnston Island and on a flight which it was theoretically impossible to make, ran out of fuel some miles off of Honolulu. They crashed into the ocean and most of the passengers, George Atcheson among them, being unable to get out of what was really a death trap of a plane, died in the plane. It was a very tragic loss to the Service and probably set back by, I would say, a year or two our work on a Japanese treaty and a Japanese peace settlement.

About this time people began getting interested in getting married; Americans were marrying Americans in Japan and then Americans marrying Japanese. There was really no way they could do so under a Japanese law; I worked out a system under which the Consulate could participate to get them legally married. At least, I always have claimed that they were legally married under Japanese and American law. This took a lot of work, but I finally worked out a system.

This turned out to be a unique experience in some ways because some time later a law with regard to GIs marrying foreigners was passed; and it had a little joker in it which permitted them to bring a Japanese wife back to the States if they were married before a certain date. Previous to this, Japanese wives, as aliens ineligible for naturalization, were not permitted to return to the States and hence, the Army refused them permission to marry. However, this law was passed primarily for the benefit of brides of GIs in Germany, without realizing the effect in Japan. Somebody got onto the law about two weeks before it was due to expire, and we had a tremendous flood of marriages. We married some seven hundred couples, as I recall it, seven or eight hundred, it was, in about a two weeks' period. This was quite a scene. They were lined up in the Consulate when I'd get up in the

morning at six o'clock. Some of them . . . I remember two cases in which the blushing bride had to be rushed off to the hospital to have her child. I stayed open till midnight of the last day, and the last man we married came in on the arms of the MPs. He'd been caught speeding but they'd permitted him to come in to get married; then they took him away to the guardhouse.

During this period, I was also working on the repatriations of Germans back to Germany, and other Europeans who were caught in the war; and generally trying to undo the dislocations that war caused us.

This is the end of this side of the tape.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 8

(8a)

This is Side 2 of Tape Number 4 by U. Alexis Johnson.

During this time in Japan, I was primarily on the fringes of the occupation as far as policy was concerned, but, of course, observed it very closely. This is one of the great events of history; one that it's very difficult to write about; one that it's very difficult to record. There were so many anomalies in the situation. Of course, the overriding figure throughout the occupation was that of General MacArthur. In many ways, he was a man that repelled Americans, at least his ego, his egocentricism, the sycophants with which he surrounded himself. The whole atmosphere of his headquarters and those that were immediately around him, I would characterize as very unhealthy. Somehow you felt that they were a power unto themselves and that he felt himself to be a power unto himself, something above and beyond his country in some ways. Outsiders were looked upon with considerable suspicion. Moves that Washington made or directives that came out from Washington were always looked at from the standpoint of what they would do to the image of "the General," as he was known.

Yet, he was, of course, a genuis. He had a command of language, personality, beyond that of any American, I would say, of his day. As far as the Japanese were concerned, there just could not have been a better choice. His imperial demeanor--I might call it that--the court with which he surrounded himself, the adulation which those around him saw that he received, all fell very well into the Japanese tradition of

of the emperor. The Japanese understood this; they appreciated it, and they responded to it. Nobody else could have done the job in the same way that he accomplished it.

Yet, you had strange trends throughout the occupation. You had what many of us felt were social experimenters, reformers from the United States who were brought out there during the occupation and found in Japan a pliable and receptive vehicle for their ideas and the power to impose their ideas. Mac Arthur went along with these things in a very strange way, very difficult for us to understand. On the other hand, he had many very strong conservatives, particularly those immediately around him and he was a blend of, you might say, liberal and very strong conservative. It was very difficult to analyze what his motives were except that he seemed to consider himself above and beyond the common ken. Of course, one of the things that--well, let me put it this way: the great solid accomplishment of the occupation was that of land reform in Japan, which was worked out by a man by the name of Wolf Ladajenski. This was soundly conceived, carefully worked out. It has lasted and has had a very beneficial effect upon Japan as it moved into the future.

On the other hand, the constitution that MacArthur wrote--I say this advisedly; he and Courtney Whitney did most of the writing of it--the Japanese perfectly well realized that it's a document written in English, in which there was little or no consultation with the American or Japanese governments. It was delivered to them and they were told that this was the way it was going to be. The constitution,with its renunciation of war and its renunciation of armed forces, showed a lack of realism that was just not to be expected of a man of MacArthur's stature. And it is the one element

that's left behind in the occupation that, up to now, has caused very serious difficulty for both ourselves and the Japanese. All one can say is that it was starry-eyed beyond the eyes of any dreamer, even at that time, except for MacArthur.

However, MacArthur was a man, as I mentioned, of enormous charm. I remember, throughout the years there, various groups would come out from the United States--congressmen, senators, newspaper publishers, not unsophisticated people at all--and they would have a long lunch with MacArthur. And going into the lunch, they had fire in their eyes; when they came out, they were almost invariably starry-eyed about the great man. MacArthur was not particularly admired by those who were not in his immediate entourage. General Eichelberger, I know, particularly, found him a difficult man to work for. General Eichelberger always referred to him as the man who walks on water. This is understandable, as throughout the war and throughout the occupation, MacArthur was very careful to see that everything was in the first person; that is, they were <u>his</u> troops, it was what <u>he</u> had done, <u>my</u> Air Force, <u>my</u> command, which left no room for anybody else. And for a ambitious man and able man, this was very galling indeed.

I remember Eichelberger and his staff were particularly galled on the first 4th of July parade up in Tokyo, when MacArthur stood in the reviewing stand and had General Eichelberger and his staff do the march past in front of him on foot.

We became somewhat personally acquainted with the MacArthurs. Your grandmother knew Mrs. MacArthur, Jean MacArthur, quite well and their boy, Arthur, was about the same age as Bill and Stephen and they used to see considerable of each other. Mrs. Mac Arthur, Jean MacArthur, is one of the finest and most gracious women I've ever known and just could not

have been a more ideal wife for quote, "the General," unquote, as she always called him. MacArthur's name will crop up again during the Korean War, which occurred after I returned to Washington; also, lastly, it will crop up in 1961, after I had returned to Washington a second time.

We had a happy time in Yokohama. They were a very happy four years. I was busy, but not overwhelmed. The work I was doing, I enjoyed. I have always enjoyed consular work. Dealing with people, dealing with their problems, being able to do something about them has always a great satisfaction, in many ways. I tried to run a good office; and the young officers that were sent out to me for training, I tried to instill with my own concepts of public service. As I used to tell them, there are two kinds of bureaucrats in the world. There is the first type of bureaucrat who, when presented with a problem, immediately and instinctively seeks some way of finding a way of saying, "No," in order that he can demonstrate his power and his authority. The second type is the type who immediately and instinctively tries to think of some way that he can help the person meet the problem. I like, at least, to feel that I'm in the second category and that I've helped instill some officers in the service with the sense of satisfaction that comes from being in the second category. It doesn't mean that you ignore laws or regulations, but it means that you try to work out human problems for human individuals in the best way you can to relieve theproblems in the world.

We travelled considerably in Japan at the time. I was able, when we wanted it, to get a private railroad car, and we took trips all over Japan by railway car, as well as by automobile. Your mother and aunt and uncles were growing up. They were all attending school, in which I took considerable interest. I helped establish the first school after the

war in Yokohama, and was president of the PTA, as I recall it; and at my instigation, we obtained the Calvert system to begin our first instruction there. mother and aunts and uncles were all healthy. They had a good time and enjoyed themselves very much.

One of the problems, of course, was--and one of my regrets is--that Yokohama became so much, at that time, an American city. There was very little in the way of contact with the Japanese, and we were not subjected to the same Japanese environment as would be desirable. We lived more or less in an American community and an American ghetto. We had, of course, our Japanese friends. We kept close track of Countess Watanabe who was the godmother to your Uncle Stephen; also Kyoko San who had been the children's nurse, when we were in Japan and Korea before the war; Suzuki, who was liaison officer for the Japanese; Governor .. I'm sorry. I can't for the moment think of the Prefectural Governor in Yokohama, and a few other Japanese. But we simply didn't have the type of contact that would have been desirable.

While I was there, I was offered the job as Deputy Chief of Personnel in the Department, or at least, inquiry was made of me concerning it and I didn't show any great enthusiasm.

In 1949, however, I was finally ordered to return to Washington to become Deputy Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, and in the fall of 1949, we sailed on the President Wilson. We had a beautiful suite with three bedrooms, lots of room for everybody, and were treated royally on the ship. It's one of the nicest trips we have ever had. So, after almost five years abroad, I returned to the United States.

When I got back to Washington, I was asked to serve on the

selection boards for the Foreign Service. This, I believe, were the second selection boards, and I spent several months at this, only taking up my job as deputy director at the beginning of 1950. John Allison was Director of the Office.

It was about this time that we started serious work on the Japanese peace treaty, and John Foster Dulles was brought into the department to work on this. I did some work with him on it, but finally, John Allison was taken off his job as Director of the Office and put full time in working with Mr. Dulles on the treaty, and I became Director in the early part of 1950, as I recall it.

The Office of Northeast Asian Affairs was concerned with Japan and Korea. When I first came in, one of the early questions or problems that we had was the question, that had been going on, of withdrawal of the American forces from Korea. I well remember that the Department, the State Department, raised serious questions about the wisdom of doing so. But finally, the Pentagon military view that it was foolish to keep our forces in Korea prevailed, and they were withdrawn. I don't have the date in front of me but this was close to the time that I was coming in and part of it, after I came in. This, of course, contributed to and in fact led to the later tragedy of Korea. To this tragedy, it is often said, Dean Acheson, in his speech about our area of interest in the Far East, contributed. But the fundamental fact was that the withdrawal of troops was the factor that undoubtedly led the Soviets to believe that we were not prepared to fight for Korea. The speech that Dean Acheson made only, you might say, underlined what had already become a fact, or appeared to be a fact, at the time.

After working many months, in June of 1950, I finally gave into the

let's say, requests of Stephen and Bill to take a weekend off and take them and their Boy Scout troop out on a trip in the Blue Ridge Mountains. As I mentioned, I'd done a great deal of climbing around the Sierras in California when I was younger. I thoroughly enjoyed the mountains, and I wanted to get out and spend some time with my sons. So on a weekend, I went out with them. I guess we left on a Saturday morning. We went out into the Blue Ridge area, the national park out there and climbed around the hills there, slept that night in pup tents and on Sunday morning, took another climb up what I call hills. They're called mountains out there. We were coming down from this hill that we'd climbed, and a forest ranger came up to me and asked if my name was U. Alexis Johnson and I said it was. He said, "Come with me." And with some surprise, I asked him what I had done, and he said, "Nothing I know of, but the chief ranger wants to speak to you as urgently as possible." So we went to a forest hut where there was a phone and got in touch with the chief ranger by phone; he said, "The State Department has been trying to reach you all night." Well, this baffled me. I couldn't quite imagine why the State Department was trying to reach me. Nevertheless, through this field phone, I tried to reach the State Department. I finally did so and got the office of the Assistant Secretary, who was Dean Rusk but the connection was very bad. I could hear that there were people in the office and that something was going on, but I couldn't quite catch what it was. So I called your grandmother, who was at home, and she said that the State Department had been trying to reach me and I should attend a Security Council meeting in New York at one o'clock that afternoon. It was then about ten o'clock, ten or eleven o'clock or so and in a couple of hours I was supposed to be at the Security Council meeting.

Well, I thought she'd just gotten things all messed up because there couldn't possibly be a Security Council meeting in New York on a

Sunday, and if there was, it couldn't possibly have anything to do with me. Nevertheless, I decided that I'd better get back to Washington. The rangers offered me a light plane that they had nearby, but, as none of the boys were old enough to drive and I was the only driver, I had no choice but to get in the car and drive back through Sunday traffic all the way to Washington.

Got to Washington; dropped the boys off and went directly to the house. And when I got in the house, your grandmother told me, and I heard for the first time, that North Korea had attacked South Korea.

I quickly changed my clothes, went to the Department; it was several days before I again got home or was able to change my clothes. Many different accounts of the Korean War have been written by many people from differing vantage points. I will not attempt, in this account to repeat them all, or to set forth any history of the Korean War; but I was in on it from--after a few hours--its very beginning. I kept what I think is the most accurate and complete history of the war, from the vantage point of Washington, which is contained in the files of the Department. I left all my files behind me when I left there, and to my own knowledge, many of the memoranda that I wrote, many of the meetings that I participated in, I made the only record that was maintained at that time.

As I noted, at the beginning of the war, I was Deputy Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs. John Allison, who was the Director, was, at the time of the outbreak of the war, in the Far East with Foster Dulles. He came back, but did not stay long in the job, and I assumed the position of Director of Northeast Asian Affairs, and then subsequently, became Deputy to Dean Rusk. I was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs; remained in it throughout the Truman Administration and

on across into the Eisenhower Administration. I'm sure that I'm the one man that had a consistent and intimate relationship with it from its very beginning until the armistice was signed. Thus, I will not attempt to recount all the history, but to point out some of the outstanding problems and events insofar as I saw them.

I was closely and intimately associated with all the developments, including all our meetings with the Joint Chiefs of Staff; most of the meetings with the two Presidents, both Truman and Eisenhower; all of our meetings with the Allies, the so-called Sixteen, that we met regularly in Washington; and thus had, I believe, a better, longer, and more consistent view than anybody else associated with it.

When I left the Department--I left the Department in 1953-- I left a full file case, not only of every telegram, every message connected with the war, which involved a matter of policy, but I also left my own memoranda of all the meetings in which I participated. This, I hope, is still in the Department of State; if I were to write a real history of it, I would have have to refer to these files. Obviously, I do not have them with me. Obviously, I'm not trying to write a history, but simply to give some of my own impressions and some of my own recollections.

The decision to intervene in Korea was one of the most courageous decisions that an American government has taken. President Truman deserves full credit for the decision. It certainly was not an easy one to make and it certainly was one that was not necessarily popular at the time. Yet, it served as one of the great historical turning points in American history. I often tell audiences, and people who want to talk about Korea and the Korean War, that whereas we Americans have many frustrations and many arguments over it, there's one thing of which I'm sure; and that is

that the planner in the Kremlin, whoever it was that planned the Korean operation, never received any medals for it. It was the most colossal mistake made by the Soviet Union in the postwar period. Without the Korean war, the United States would never have developed its defenses as it did; NATO would have remained largely a paper organization. And if the Soviet Union had sat quietly, the European countries and the United States--which were at that time maintaining a very, very low level of defense--would have gone blithely on their way until the Soviet Union developed the atomic weapon and until the Soviet Union had developed overwhelming military power; when they would have been able to have dictated their own terms with regard to Europe and much of the rest of the world. However, the Korean War awakened the United States and awakened Europe to the menace of aggressive, Soviet, Communist power and caused us to begin, at that time, the long strides that we made towards redressing the balance of defense forces.

As far as the Soviet Union was concerned, they set out to take South Korea, using the North Koreans as their puppets. They put much treasure into it. The Chinese, of course, put much treasure into it. The Koreans suffered much. North Koreans suffered much, as well as the South Koreans. And when they finished, they were, as far as Korea is concerned, exactly back where they started from, but with an immensely stronger, in physical sense and in political sense, more united Western world. This was not any gain for them.

The Korean War was my introduction to the big time, if you want to call it that, in government. Previous to that, of course, as Consul General in Yokohama, I'd had some association with some of the senior people in the government but essentially, my job was a relatively minor one.

As Deputy Director of Northeast Asian Affairs, I was just one of many of the same level in the Department, not known to or not knowing the senior officers. However, the Korean War suddenly thrust me into the forefront of the big time.

One of my early discoveries was that even through people were in senior positions, they were not able to answer questions any better or any quicker, particularly, than I was. And I discovered that people, on the whole, were--to my surprise--were not much brighter than I was, even though they had big names and big positions. I don't say this in deprecation of them whatsoever; simply the fact, as I've sometimes said, people whatever they are, or whoever thay are, or whatever positions they occupy, I was surprised to find to be just about as stupid as I was as far as having good answers to the problems facing us.

I started out, of course, as low man on the totem pole. I participated in meetings; it was up to me to keep a record of them and gradually it turned out that Dean Rusk or Dean Acheson, who was Secretary, and others would turn around and say, "Alex, you write up the telegram," or "You write up the record," or, "Write up the instruction." And after a very confusing meeting, I would seek to do so. And what I produced seemed to usually meet with a reasonable degree of acceptance. So I gradually became more and more involved in the senior mettings of the government on the subject.

One of the things that the Korean War produced was a restoration--well, I shouldn't say a restoration--really, the foundation of closer and more effective working relationships between the Department of Defense and the military services and the Department of State. As you know, during World War II, theDepartment of State was really not very effective, nor really very much involved in the great decisions. However, with a Secretary

of State such as Dean Acheson, and Dean Rusk as Assistant Secretary of State, and with the very complex, intermixed, intertwined political and military problems presented by the Korean War, out of necessity, and also out of capability, the two departments grew very much closer to each other. They quickly developed, during the Korean War, the custom of meetings, informal meetings, between senior officers of State--Dean Rusk was normally the one that led them--and the Joint Chiefs of Staff at which, we would have informal discussions of the problems that we faced and try to reach some common point of view to recommend to the Secretaries of State, Secretary of Defense and to the President. These meetings took place very frequently, sometimes several times a week, sometimes only once or twice a week, but they gradually became established as an institution which has continued until this day and which I picked up when I came back in 1961 as Deputy Under Secretary.

During this period, I became well acquainted with General Bradley, who was then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and one of the grandest men I've ever known. He's a man toward whom I had then and still have real affection.

(8b)

General Vandenberg was Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Collins, J. [Joseph] Lawton Collins, Lightning Joe, he's sometimes called, was Chief of Staff of the Army, and Admiral Fechteler, I believe, yes, Admiral Fechteler was Chief of Navy Operations. General Marshall was at the beginning of the Korean War the Secretary of Defense, and then later Bob Lovett. In the Department I quickly came to know, of course, the Secretary, Dean Acheson, and became more and more closely associated with Dean Rusk, for whom I grew to have a great deal of admiration. I had a

a great deal of admiration also for Dean Acheson. I also sat in in the early days with some of the meetings with the President, and later on, sat in with all the meetings with the President up to the end of President Truman's term and through Eisenhower's term until the armistice, the Korean Armistice was signed.

Also during this period I became well acquainted with Foster Dulles, who was then working on the Japanese treaty, and had many discussions with him on the Korean War. I was one of the advisors, although my role was not too great, to the Japanese Peace Treaty out in San Francisco in 1951.

One of the statements often made with regard to the early days of the war is that General MacArthur and his staff immediately perceived the danger; well, in fact even before the North Koreans had attacked they had anticipated the attack and immediately perceived the danger. All I can say is from everything I saw, and I think I saw most of it, this is absolute nonsense. The Headquarters out there did not foresee the attack, and when the attack came they were very slow to react to it, very slow to appreciate the consequences and the possibilities inherent in it and very reluctant to act.

Another statement that is often made about the war and an argument that rages is over the so-called "sanctuary" that the Chinese enjoyed after they came into the war. There were many, many discussions about this, but the facts of matter were that we also enjoyed an air sanctuary in South Korea. Our planes were concentrated on a very small number of fields. The enemy had several hundred medium range jet bombers in Manchuria which could be brought to bear at any time on South Korea, as well as on our bases in Japan. They were not brought to bear, and we enjoyed a sanctuary in the South as they enjoyed a sanctuary in China. Our air enjoyed virtually

undisputed superiority over Korea. The situation was ideal for air interdiction. There were only three main lines of communication, but air was never able to interdict those lines of communication. Due to the deterioration in our armed forces after the Second World War, we only had a very limited amount of air. If our air had been used against Manchuria or against China, it would have meant a dilution of the air that we were using in Korea.

We had many discussions of this with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Vandenberg of the Air Force. And after most thorough discussions it was always decided that the military advantage, not the political advantage but entirely apart from political problems, remained with our abiding by, or let's say accepting, the tacit rules that had grown up with respect to the war. Of course, the war was very remarkable in that regard. We tacitly did not cross the Yalu River, and tacitly the enemy never sought with its air to come south of our lines. At times there used occasionally to arise discussions of the use of atomic weapons, but the military conclusion always was that there was not a military target that was suitable or appropriate for the use of the atomic weapons which we possessed at that time.

Another major factor that will long be debated and the historians will argue about is the whole question of Chinese intervention in the war. Much has been written on this, but in my own mind at least, I cannot help but feel that the headstrongness of MacArthur is what led to the Chinese intervention. In the very first days of the war we in the State Department--well, let me say that it originated with George Kennan, who was then Chief of Policy Planning--said that if we approached too closely to the Soviet borders, the Chinese borders with American forces, that we would stand a

serious danger of intervention by the Soviet Union or by China. This was written into the very early directives in the very first weeks of the war, while we were still trying to hang on down around the Pusan perimeter.

When the war turned in our favor and we started north, these directives were called to the attention of General MacArthur. However, nobody in the government, the Joint Chiefs of Staff nor anybody else in the government at that time, really had the, shall I say the courage to tell MacArthur, "You should go no farther. You should go so far and no farther with American forces." His attention was called to the directives. His replies always were, "The time for the Chinese to intervene is long since passed. They cannot successfully do so." And in effect the doctrine that the theater commander shall be given his head to do what he thinks best under broad directives prevailed. MacArthur did push American forces up to the Yalu River, in spite of these directives and in spite of his attention being called to them by Washington, and the Chinese of course did intervene.

It can be argued as to whether they would have intervened in any event, but certainly the pushing of non-Korean forces to the Yalu was a strong factor in the intervention of the Chinese. With the wisdom of hindsight, my own feeling is that we should have issued at that time categorical directives with regard to the deployment of American forces. Of course, the debacle at the time the Chinese came in was also contributed to by the fact that there was a very unsound command structure, with the Tenth Corps over on the Japan seacoast of Korea being independent of the Eighth Army over on the Yellow Sea coast of Korea. There was very little and very poor coordination between them, very little appreciation by the soldiers who were directing the war of the political factors that were involved.

After the Chinese did intervene we had the great debacle, the great

retreat. Without at this moment having the records in front of me and being unable to cite chapter and verse, my own clear impressions at the time were that General MacArthur and--well, let me put it this way, General Walker really lost control over the battle and General MacArthur really lost his head in the whole situation. We had considerable exchange of telegrams over a complete evacuation of Korea. There was real panic in Tokyo, and we made plans for the withdrawal, an entire withdrawal from Korea. The death of General Walker and General Ridgway coming into the situation turned the situation around and stopped the rout and stabilized the situation in spite of the command in Tokyo is the way I must put it, not unkindly, but as the way I saw it at the time.

Then along came the proposal for armistice discussions. I refer to only two aspects of that. I well recall that the atmosphere at the time armistice discussions were agreed to was that there would very quickly be an armistice. I remember in our meetings with the Chiefs, the Joint Chiefs, we on the State side urging that they not stop doing anything that they otherwise would do, even though the armistice discussions were going to take place. Nevertheless, they had an understandable--I don't criticize them for it, I might well have taken their position at the time if I were in their places--reluctance to sacrifice American lives if there was going to be an armistice in a short time. Looking back with the wisdom of hindsight, the great mistake we made was in not entering in to a heavy offensive at the time the armistice discussions started. Our failure to do so and our willingness to accept the stalemate dragged out the armistice months and months past the time that it should have been reached, and the end result was the sacrifice of many more lives than would have otherwise been the case.

A big issue with respect to the armistice with which I was closely

associated was that of the prisoners. The question of the prisoners didn't emerge until after the armistice negotiations had gone on for a considerable period of time. I credit Chip Bohlen with raising this issue and very properly so. Chip, with his memory of the forcible repatriation of Soviets back to the Soviet Union after World War II, raised the issue of the forcible repatriation of Chinese and Koreans back to the other side, Chinese and Korean POWs back to the other side if and when and armistice was reached. It was during this period that we were beginning to get agitation, particularly in the Chinese camps in Korea against being returned to the other side, and we had severe disciplinary problems in the camps.

The issue gradually emerged, and discussion started with proponents on one side saying, "They were caught in arms against us, we have no obligation towards them, and we simply turn them back to the other side." Arguments on the other side were that we were engaged not only in a military war but also a political war, and the forcible repatriation of those who didn't want to go back would be a blot on our record and would be a great handicap in future wars, any possible future wars in which we were seeking to induce defections. There was a great deal of discussion on this, but we had very little information. It was finally decided that Ed Hull, General John Hull, who was then Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, and I should go out and discuss the thing in Tokyo and also go over to Korea and see what we could get in the way of facts.

We made the trip and came to the conclusion that there were large numbers of both Chinese and Koreans who would strongly resist being returned to their original side. We came back and reported to the Armed Forces Council, this included the Chiefs, the Service Secretaries and the President, and reported the facts to them. It was made very clear to the President that

most of the rest of the armistice was pretty well near agreement by this time. If we insisted upon what came to be known as "voluntary repatriation" it would probably take much longer and be much more difficult to get the armistice. The issue of the Korean War had by this time emerged in the political campaign in the United States, and Truman was being charged with failure to bring the Korean War to a close. The issues were presented very clearly to the President. There was a meeting of several hours, and he listened very carefully. As the issue emerged, it was clear if he insisted upon voluntary repatriation he would probably not be able to get an armistice within a reasonable period of time.

Implicit in all this were the effects that it would have on his own political future. If he accepted what had up to that time been the accepted principle that you return all POWs regardless of their own desires to the side from where they came, he could probably have an armistice in a fairly reasonable period of time. The issue was a moral one on the one side; it was an international political one also, and increasingly an issue that could have profound effects on his own political future. As you know, Truman decided in favor of voluntary repatriation. To my own mind this is one of the greatest acts, I would say the greatest act of political courage that I have ever witnessed on the part of any president. I had great admiration for Truman before this, but I grew to have even greater admiration and still have greater admiration for him because of this decision. It was a decision that took real moral courage.

Truman was not a complicated intellectual type of person; however, he was a person who reacted from basically decent instincts. He was a man that you could not help but admire, in spite of his own intellectual limitations. He would always listen carefully to all arguments on both sides of a question

and invited argument and discussion, and when the discussion was over, he would state his conclusion in a clear manner that all could understand, which was very different, as I will get to later, from Eisenhower. Thus the conclusion that Truman reached on the repatriation of prisoners cost him the election, won the victory for Eisenhower and carried the war over into Eisenhower's Administration. It provided the issue upon which Eisenhower probably owed his victory and the issue which he made the principal issue of his campaign.

Another great issue, of course, was that of MacArthur and his dismissal in--when was this?--1952. I will not seek to go into all the details of that either. I don't have the records in front of me. But I want to say that fantastic though it may seem at this time, fantastic though it may have seemed at that time to many people, there was really very great and serious concern over the very clear insubordination of MacArthur to the President. There was a real concern that he would seek to chart a course of his own, he would seek to do things, or he would do things in the Far East that would commit the United States. These would be things that he had been ordered not to do, but nevertheless he would do in order to commit the United States to a larger war, against China in particular. Whether this was wise or not, whether it was wise at that time to enter into a larger war with China, was beside the point. The point was that he seemed to moving closer and closer to insubordination of the most serious kind.

When the President made the decision that he did, he really had a feeling that he had to move within hours to prevent MacArthur taking steps that could have committed the United States to lines of action which MacArthur had been explicitly directed not to commit it to. They were really very, very tense moments. With the wisdom of hindsight, perhaps the fears in

Washington were overly exaggerated. Nevertheless, those fears did exist, and it was felt that action had to be taken immediately.

I was involved in much of the discussion and some of the background leading up to this, and my own views were asked. I supported the decision that was made, although I felt it unfortunate that the decision was communicated to MacArthur in the way that it was. However, this was due to a mechanical breakdown in communications that was not foreseen at the time. MacArthur was a great man, a great American, and a great soldier, and he did deserve to be treated with greater consideration than was shown him at the time.

It was after MacArthur's return and the so-called MacArthur Hearings in the Congress that I became most closely acquainted with Dean Acheson. Having been intimately acquainted with all the events of the war, and having most of the files, I took charge, together with Butch Fisher who was then legal adviser, of preparing the Secretary for these hearings, in which, of course, he was most heavily attacked and in which he was called upon to defend the Administration. I sometimes worked all night getting documents together, getting summaries prepared, getting briefs repaired, and making up suggested talking points for the Secretary. This was very satisfying. We didn't have to write out statements for him; we didn't have to write out speeches of any kind for him. We would simply give him the pertinent facts, putting down dates and actual events, and then putting down suggested talking points. We would join with the Secretary, he would go through these papers, and then we would go through dry runs. He would take the talking points, and talking from them would make an extemporaneous presentation, which we would then criticize and suggest changes. He would make notes, and then he would go to the Hill.

He made a brilliant presentation, and he was a most satisfying man to work for. Although he rubbed many Congressmen the wrong way and he rubbed many Americans the wrong way--he imparted a feeling of a certain intellectual arrogance that did not set well with some Americans--he was one of the most brilliant Americans of our time. The great lines of foreign policy that he laid outwith Truman and for which he was in such a large degree responsible were : the Truman Doctrine with respect to Greece, the Marshall Plan, the NATO concept, the Point Four Program, the foreign assistance programs. All of these were in large part the product of Dean Acheson, of course assisted by many advisers, but he took a great deal of the responsibility. In my mind Dean Acheson is one of the great Secretaries of State without any question. He was entirely a different man from Truman; Dean Acheson was the intellectual aristocrat, Truman was the common man from Missouri. Yet they each respected the other, and they complemented each other in a most excellent way. Although Acheson was by far the superior intellectual of Truman, he always showed great respect to him, not only in public when they were together but also in private. Acheson had a real respect for Truman, not only as a President, but also as an individual.

Dean Rusk was the man of ideas. He had a fertile imagination and a fertile mind that was always seeking to find ways out of things, seeking new lines that no one else had thought of. Nine out of ten of his ideas didn't stand up to the test, but the tenth one would often be very brilliant. During this period of MacArthur's intransigence and the difficulty of holding our allies together out in the Far East, Dean did a particularly brilliant performance. We used to, at least once and often several times a week, have a meeting of the so-called Sixteen, countries who had contributed forces in Korea.This was a meeting with their ambassadors in Washington.

They would often come to these meetings with fire in their eyes with regard to the latest statement that MacArthur had made or the latest action that MacArthur had taken, and these meetings could be very tense indeed. Dean would go into a meeting and sit and talk and talk and talk. You could see the whole atmosphere gradually relaxing, and the ambassadors would go out greatly relieved.

As I've told Dean since, sometime after they got back to their chancelleries and were drafting their telegrams, they would try to figure out exactly what he had said. I would get calls from them saying, "Now, what did Dean Rusk say on this?" or "What did Dean Rusk say on that?" He had a great facility for talking around points when he wanted to deliberately, smoothing things over, without ever actually having too much substance. In fact, it wasn't possible to have too much substance. It was very, very hard to defend some of the things that MacArthur was doing, but Dean had the facility of soothing these people over. Then, after it was all over, I often had the job of trying to interpret what he had said to them without doing violence to what had been said.

In 1951, when Livy Merchant left as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, I was tremendously surprised to be asked to take his position and became Dean Rusk's deputy. I remained his deputy as long as he was in the Department, and then when he left became John Allison's deputy. Then when the change of administrations took place, I became Walter Robertson's deputy, staying on in the Department exactly four years to the day from the time that I had come in. Four years was then the statutory limitation on a Foreign Service Officer being able to remain in the Department.

The next tape I will begin with the new Administration of Eisenhower's and the ending of the Korean War, or the ending of the Korean War and the

finishing of the negotiations for the armistice. This is all on this tape.

This is the end of Tape Number Four by U. Alexis Johnson.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 9

(9a)

This is the beginning of tape number five by U. Alexis Johnson. It is July 5, 1965.

I have returned to Saigon the last few days from a trip to the United States where I saw Patricia, my wife, my mother, my son Stephen who came down from Montreal, my son Bill who is in Washington. Then I went to the West Coast to San Francisco, where my daughter Judith and her husband Mace and their three sons were spending the summer, where Mace was taking a course to become a stockbroker.

As I said at the beginning, this tape is addressed primarily to my grandson, Mason Bradshaw Zerbe, or Brad Zerbe. Brad, I saw you when I was out in San Francisco, and it was certainly satisfying to see how well you were growing up. I told your mother -- she's the first one I've told of making these tapes -- that I've addressed these tapes to you for safekeeping as my oldest grandson. I'm not sure what line you're going to pursue as you grow up. I'm not sure what your interests are going to be, but it seemed to me appropriate that you should be the addressee of these tapes. If your interests are not along the line of foreign affairs and the history recorded in these tapes, I trust, as I told your mother, that you will see that they are disposed of to one of my other grandchildren, or to some institution or wherever they would be of greatest utility.

I'm very proud of you, Brad. I'm also proud of Craig. And for the first time, I saw my grandson, Dean Alexis. He is named of course after Dean Rusk, with whom I've worked for so long and, I'm proud to say, after

me as far as his second name is concerned, that is Alexis, Dean Alexis Zerbe. Whether his name will mean that he will be interested in these affairs or not remains to be seen, but perhaps he is the one that will be able to make best use of these.

As I come down now to later years and more intimate contact with national affairs, the statements I"ll be making with regard to personalities and events become more sensitive, in the sense that I do not want, during their lifetime, to reflect upon or injure people. However, if something of this kind is to have any value, it should be a frank and personal assessment. History is a matter of personalities and individuals, as well as nations, reacting upon each other, and I hope, while not being unkind, to be able to give my own reflections upon some of the personalities.

I don't know whether I should embargo, so to speak, these tapes for a certain period. I'm inclined to think that I will not do so, but rather leave it to the good judgment of my grandson, Brad, or to whoever he turns over these tapes to make their own judgments as to when the information should be released or whether it should be embargoed. Not that anything I have to say will be a great sensation, but nevertheless my purpose is not to injure people. Each of us are what we are, and unless established otherwise, I'm always inclined to accept the good faith of the people with whom I'm dealing, unless I have reason to doubt their good faith. This has seldom been the case as far as Americans with whom I'm dealing. I've often said that most Americans, given the same set of facts, will usually come out about the same place. The problem is getting these facts to them. The positions I've been in recent years, of course, I've had exceptional access to the facts, and I feel that I would have been able to reach the judgments that most honest Americans would reach if they were in the same position.

I ended off the last tape shortly before the change of administration from Truman to Eisenhower. Before the election, Dean Rusk had resigned to accept the position as president of the Rockefeller Foundation, and John Allison came in to take his position as Assistant Secretary. John remained until the change of administration, when he was appointed ambassador to Japan. As I had been so deeply involved in the Korean affair and John was not the type to try to get into things too much, I remained substantially in charge of Korean affairs and the Korean War insofar as the Far Eastern Bureau was concerned while John was there. Then the change of administration took place, and Walter Robertson, an investment banker from Richmond, Virginia, came in to take his place.

Walter had served out in China during the war between the Communists and the Chinese Nationalists. He had been on the truce team up at Peking, on the Marshal mission, and had had considerable experience in China, but otherwise had had no experience in Far Eastern affairs, or I should say in diplomatic affairs. Walter was known as a strong supporter of the Chinese Nationalists, and it was my understanding, or my impression, that he was brought in by the new Administration, by Eisenhower and by Dulles, in order to damp down some of the more vigorous critics of our Far Eastern policy. Walter is one of the finest Southern gentlemen I've ever known and I'm very fond of him, but nobody would ever accuse Walter of having too much flexibility of mind. Walter had an abiding hatred of communism in general and the Chinese Communists in particular, and his only approach to most of the problems that involved the Chinese Communists and communists in general was one of implacable hatred. This is all well and good, but it did not make for much adroitness or flexibility in policy to meet changing conditions. However, I had great fondness for Walter Robertson, and although I had

difficult times with him and found myself often in disagreement, I found that I could disagree vigorously with Walter. This didn't affect our relationship at all.

As history has recorded, Eisenhower came into office largely on the--well, not largely, but one of the major issues upon which he came into office was that he would go out to Korea and see for himself and would bring an end to the Korean War. As I previously pointed out, Truman could have well brought about an end to the Korean War if he had been willing to sacrifice the principle of voluntary repatriation of prisoners of war who did not want to return back to their original countries. However, with great courage he had refused to do so and thus possibly changed the outcome of the election. Eisenhower,as I understand it,got involved in the idea of the trip to Korea largely on the spur of the moment,without too much thought. He went to Korea, he saw, but didn't come back with much in the way of ideas.

Dulles had joined him, Dulles and Humphrey, and I don't remember [who else]. I remember those two. They took a cruiser, and on the way back to the States, prior to the inauguration, for the first time began to lay out some of the broad foreign policies of the Administration. I knew not too much about this, of course, at the time.

When the Administration came into office, I expected that they might have some radical ideas on how to end the war, but discovered they really just didn't have any idea as to how they were going to bring it about. Dulles, through the Indians, let it be known that we were likely to take much more vigorous measures then we had if the war were not brought to a conclusion, and I know that Dulles always felt that this was one of the things that brought the war to a conclusion. I've always had considerable doubt about it myself. I think that the Communists were simply waiting to see what

we would do on the prisoner issue. It was a matter of very difficult principle for them to accept, and hoping that we would change they held on for a long time. But seeing that we would not change, they finally decided to enter into the armistice, without too much regard for the threats that Dulles had made through India. Although I had the principal working level operational responsibility on Korea, I was not able to get any guidance out of Secretary Dulles, nor even to get any feel as to what the Administration really expected to carry out. The negotiations were still going on at Panmunjom, questions were arising daily that had to be answered, instructions had to be given to our delegation out there, and I found it very difficult to do the drafting and get any idea of really what the Administration wished to do.

Bedell Smith, General Walter Bedell Smith had been brought in as Under Secretary of State. I had had a slight acquaintance with him at the time he was First Army Commander in New York and later as chief of CIA, but I did not know him well. However, I quickly found Bedell a man to whom I could go and a man from whom I could get answers, a man who was much closer to the President than was Foster Dulles. He could pick up the phone and call the President, or who could go around and see the President at any time. I found Bedell a very stout ally. Bedell was not an intellectual man, of course, he was an impulsive man and a man of action, and I found him initially quite easy to work with.

However, Bedell could also be a very difficult man. One of the most severe dressings down I've ever had was from Bedell Smith, and one of the most abject apologies. I remember he had not been in office for very long when he called me up to his office one day and in his good first sergeant manner said, "You blankety-blank, blankety-blank Johnson. You're the damnedest

freewheeler in the Department of State." In an effort to get things done, I'd just gone ahead and done things, and he really gave me a very severe bawling out in his good first sergeant manner. I didn't feel too happy about it, but took it and went back to my office and inside of thirty minutes, he called me back up to his office and apologized most profusely to me. From that time on I never had any difficulty with Bedell, and I must say, wnile I didn't admire his first action, I did admire his second action.

During these days there would occasionally be questions that would come up that we would have to go over to the White House, and it would usually be Bedell Smith and myself, Walter Robertson on the State side, one or two of the Chiefs on the Joint Chiefs side, and then so-called "Engine Charlie" Wilson as Secretary of Defense and of course the President. These sessions would often be late in the afternoon or late in the evening. We would go over to the Oval Office, and here the President would be pacing around the office and "Engine Charlie" sitting over in the corner. We would start to lay out the problem. The President would get impatient, with his mind not too much on it, and get up and pick up a golf stick and go wandering around the office swinging his golf stick. "Engine Charlie" Wilson, with not the foggiest idea of what it was all about, would from time to time utter certain non sequiturs. Secretary Dulles usually didn't talk very much. It was usually up to Bedell Smith to present the issue. There would be a long desultory conversation with opinions tossed back and forth, and then it would usually end up with, "Alex, why don't you draft the message?" I would go out of the room without the slightest idea of what conclusion had been reached, because most of the time no conclusion really had been reached. After drafting the message, taking it to the

Secretary, taking it over to "Engine Charlie," and taking it over to the Chiefs, the real negotiation would then take place.

I was really astounded at what I felt was a complete lack of any depth of understanding on the part of Secretary Wilson. It was incomprehensible to me how a man with as little grasp of affairs as he seemed to have rose to the position that he had had. I also didn't feel that the President had much grasp. I could like him as a man, but it was very difficult to have much respect for his grasp of affairs. My feeling was that he was pulled and hauled by the people around him. At almost any meeting or conversation that we had Secretary Humphrey of the Treasury would usually raise the question as to how much it would cost. This seemed to be a theme that he would bring forth at every occasion, as if costs alone were the sole determinant of our policy. This period was a very disappointing one to me. I was, of course, deeply involved in the whole Korean affair, and I just didn't feel that the Administration had a grasp of the problems or the issues involved and didn't have any clear policy or thoughts of its own with respect to the war.

This is now the evening of Wednesday, July 7, 1965, and I will interject at this point something in the way of observations upon current events and current happenings. For the past two days we have been exchanging--we, I mean Ambassador Taylor and myself--messages with Washington with respect to our future here. I came out here at the request of President Johnson, together with Ambassador Taylor, on the understanding that we would probably be here about a year and then other arrangements would be made. The President was deeply grateful, said that he was, I think he was, at the fact that I had taken the position of Deputy here to Maxwell Taylor. The appointment of the two of us was a

real political stroke. On the one hand appointing Maxwell Taylor, who formerly was the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Chief of Staff of the Army and with a very distinguished combat record, appeased those who wanted to see a strong policy. Those who wanted to see the diplomatic interests represented here were appeased by my appointment, and we came out here together as a team.

We have not been able to accomplish what we hoped to accomplish. We feel that we have accomplished some very substantial things: organization of our total effort, preventing a competition between various American agencies, organizing better working relationships with the Vietnamese. But nevertheless, the Viet Cong have in spite of all our efforts continued to gain in strength. We replaced here Cabot Lodge, the son of the famous Senator, Henry Cabot Lodge, and a man who was in the Senate in his own right. He was also a candidate for nomination as President, and he still is very ambitious politically. Just a little over a year ago I came out here on an Air Force tanker, arrived here on a Sunday morning, as I recall it. It was the end of June, June 27th, June 28th. Cabot took the same plane back to Washington, and this is just a little over a year ago that this happened. Maxwell Taylor followed me out about a week or ten days later, as I recall it. I was just back to Washington this last week and received confirmation in my talks back there with the Secretary of State and others that they planned to honor Maxwell Taylor's request for leaving here within a very short time. I said that if I were not selected as his replacement I also hoped to leave here, as I did not feel that I could work satisfactorily with another man in the same position, and this was agreed. We have now received word from Washington that Cabot Lodge is again coming out here as ambassador. This is a source of some astonishment

to us, and is very hard to interpret. It's an obvious political move on the part of the President. I fear that on the part of the President it means that he feels the situation here, the future of the situation here, is such that it's not going to reflect credit on the Administration and, therefore, he desires to share it with a prominent Republican such as Cabot Lodge.

As for Cabot Lodge's part, he probably feels that he can make a success of it and make a name for himself here that will enable him to go on further in political life. This may be unfair. Cabot is undoubtedly a very conscientious and a very patriotic and loyal American, and he understandably might feel that he can do better than we have done here. He was a popular ambassador here, but not a very successful one. Nobody in the mission, even General Westmoreland or the others, know anything about this yet, although they will tomorrow. The announcement will be made very shortly. This is going to be a big blow to the morale of the American mission here, for Cabot Lodge, in spite of all his fine qualities, just didn't use his staff and just didn't work well with the Americans when he was here. Many who are here now were here during his previous service. I'm not sure what the reaction is going to be here in Vietnam nor in the United States. However, I'm certain it's going to be a subject of lively debate.

A message on this asked me to stay on for a transition period, which I have of course agreed to do. Both the Secretary and the President in this message praised me very extravagantly and promised me another post of my choice, insofar as it was in their power to do so. I am of a very mixed mind about this. I'm very torn. This has been a tough job, a hard job. Three times they've tried to kill me here. The radio in Hanoi has

named me along with Taylor and Westmoreland as their three principal targets of assassination. Living under the threat of attack, being killed, I must admit creates a certain amount of tension, no matter how well one may try to conceal it. This over a period of time creates a certain amount of stress and strain.

On the other hand, it's a tough job, and I think this is one of the most important jobs that we have in the world. I regret leaving a job that's unfinished. I personally feel--perhaps it's egocentricism--that if were given the opportunity by myself I could do the job that needs to be done here. I'm not sure. The situation is difficult, many things beyond our control, but I would have liked to have given it the try, in spite of the dangers and in spite of the considerable possibility that I might not succeed. I think Taylor feels somewhat the same way, and although he said he wanted to leave at the end of the year both of us in our hearts really regret leaving a tough job unfinished. I will discuss further on and in its proper place the genesis of our coming here and my experiences here, but I wanted to inject this, you might say somewhat immediate note at this point in the tape.

This morning I had another experience. I left early this morning with General Westmoreland, COMUS-MACV - Commander of the United States military assistance command here. We went out in an aircraft here to see B-52s; these are our biggest and heaviest bombers, coming from Guam to bomb an area of the jungle north of Saigon here in which we felt that there were some VC--Viet Cong that is--installations and personnel. This was a considerable experience. The B-52s, of course, come from the Strategic Air Command, that is, SAC. While I was serving in Washington I was often briefed by SAC on its potentialities for bombardment, both

nuclear and conventional, abroad. I little thought that one day I might be sitting less than two miles away from a B-52 target. There were more than twenty-five planes dropping over a thousand tons of large bombs. We were in a small plane orbiting the area a couple of miles away at about five thousand feet altitude.

It was a very awesome sight. The B-52s were flying at some twenty thousand feet altitude. The first ones we could not even see, but precisely at the moment, precisely at the place indicated, their thousand-pound bombs began to explode, seemingly coming out of nowhere. Subsequently we picked up a few of the planes. We were able to see a few of the planes, but they were simply shapes in the sky. The technical skill that went into having these planes fly more than some five thousand miles round trip and reach this very small spot of unmarked jungle is really very impressive. However, the problem in the minds of all of us who have been working on this--we've been working at it many weeks--is whether we had really hit important Viet Cong concentrations or installations. The whole problem of the war, both on the political and the military side, is identifying and locating the enemy. If we were able to do so, we have all the means at our disposal for dealing with him. However, we still have not been able to carry out this essentially intelligence task.

After this interjection I turn back to 1953, the change of the administration and the Korean War. I know that Foster Dulles felt that his threats, the threats that we were able to make that we would enlarge the war, had a large share in bringing about the armistice that was finally concluded. My own feeling is that the death of Stalin and our calm show of determination that we were not going to change our minds with regard to voluntary repatriation of prisoners had the larger share in it.

The other side decided that there was finally no shaking us on this. On this I think the Administration was entirely right, and they finally agreed to conclude the armistice.

(9b)

It was not a very satisfactory agreement in its details. We set up the so-called Neutral Nations Commission, with really not neutrals involved in it--Sweden and Switzerland and Poland and Czechoslovakia, neutrals on our side, but by no means neutrals on their side. However, my own view on the armistice was that the details of it were not so important as the fact that we intended to retain our forces in Korea. I felt that it was very unlikely that the armistice would in fact be broken as long as American so-called plate glass remained in position. That is, the real controlling factor in the armistice was the fact that the renewal of the war would mean war with the United States on a larger scale. The armistice has now endured for some twelve years, and I think that it will endure.

It was an example, of course, of the way in not to carry out a negotiation. The public atmosphere at Panmunjom, the requirement that each side felt themself under to engage in recriminations against the other side, the glare of publicity, was definitely not the way to carry on a negotiation of this kind. Also, we made a big error in not pressing ahead at the time the armistice negotiations were undertaken. I well recall that we urged on the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Department of Defense at the time that they should not stop doing anything they otherwise would seek to do. However, the atmosphere was that if the next day, and this next day went on for more than a year, there were to be an armistice, it was not justified to call upon Americans to sacrifice their lives. However, our unwillingness to engage in a real offensive operation at a

time we were able to do so undoubtedly greatly lengthened the time that it otherwise took to obtain the armistice.

Now a few general words with regard to this period. As a general observation, Foster Dulles was one of the nicest to me, kindest, most thoughtful men that I have ever had the pleasure of being associated with. However, he was also a very ambitious man who had very firm, very definite ideas on how he felt the foreign policy of the United States could be operated and run. He felt that he had a very pliant and, if I may say so, not too intelligent instrument in President Eisenhower. He felt that to run things the way he wanted to run them it was necessary to do a certain amount of domestic appeasement, that is, appeasement of domestic opinion. This was, of course, the McCarthy period, with the attacks upon the Foreign Service and upon the State Department, and it's my own impression that Dulles felt that if he could appease these attacks he could carry out policy in the way that he felt that it should be carried out. Having observed Dean Acheson in the Department and seeing how deeply immersed Dean Acheson was with the peripheral problems, such as security and attacks upon individuals in the Department, he felt that he would be able to delegate these responsibilities and devote himself, as any secretary of state ideally should, to the larger issues.

One of his first moves was to bring in as under secretary for administration a man who had been president of Quaker Oats, and who had no experience in the government, and turn over to him the administration of the Department. He felt that he could divorce himself from what were seemingly these trivial Department concerns. There was also, of course, the fact that the Administration had come in on an economy program. Traditionally over the years the House always cut State Department

appropriations deeply, then the State Department made an appeal to the Senate and the Senate restored them, and in compromise it came out about as it should. I well remember the day in a staff meeting in which it came out that this new man, having no experience in these things, had somewhat innocently pointed out that the State Department was going to be cut by so much; as I recall it, it was around 20-25 per cent. Foster Dulles was absolutely horrified. He had never expected things were going to come out this way, and he found that he had to get into it personally.

On the security side, a man had been brought in from a committee on the Hill who had a gumshoe approach to the problems of security and brought about almost a reign of terror within the Department. He was later ambassador in Ireland. He had a very, I would call it, nasty mind, and I mean this in a smutty sense. One couldn't talk with him very long without realizing this, and there was going to be a real purge of the Department. Again Foster Dulles found that this wouldn't work. He well knew many members of the Department. He well knew those of us in the Foreign Service, and his efforts again here to appease sentiment on the Hill he found greatly interfered with what he was trying to do.

As a general observation, Foster Dulles was very able when it came to the broad questions of foreign policies. He was very sound. But when he sought to play domestic politics he was never at his best. I remember his first statement, or speech, to the staff of the Department when he came in, calling on them for positive loyalty to the Administration, as if we in the Foreign Service and the Department of State were not prepared and always had been prepared to give full loyalty to our chiefs. This deeply shocked many of the members of the Department, and Foster Dulles never did establish a really sympathetic and effective working

relationship with the larger number of the people in the Department. As I said, my own relations were always good. I always found him very kind and thoughtful, but this grew in large part from the fact that we had had a relationship before he came into the Department. On the executive or management side, Bedell Smith did a great deal to make the Department a tighter and more effective organization, and much of our organization that continues down to the time I'm speaking this is due to Bedell Smith.

During the summer of 1953 the question of another assignment for myself came up. The question was raised of my accepting the post of ambassador at Amman, in Jordan. While having no great enthusiasm for it, I accepted. However, Walter Robertson was not willing to let me go in the time that they needed somebody there, and so I was never forced to turn it down. Then finally I was offered the post of ambassador in Czechoslovakia, Prague. Going behind the Iron Curtain did not have much in the way of attraction; however, going to Europe, getting away from Far Eastern affairs, on whose policy I was more and more concerned with respect to Walter Robertson and also with Foster Dulles, getting some background on Europe where I had never served, very much attracted me. I accepted, and of course as a very young, very junior officer; I think I was one of the youngest career officers ever appointed to the position of ambassador. Let's see, in 1953 I would have been forty-five years old. Subsequently we've appointed young ambassadors who are younger ambassadors, but at that time it was a very young age at which to expect to obtain ambassadorial appointment and I was naturally flattered by it. So I accepted the appointment to Prague with some trepidation and some concern, but nevertheless looking forward to it as an interesting experience.

Thus had I also particularly looked forward to it as an opportunity

to get out of Far Eastern affairs for a time. I served up to the last day of the four years under which at that time under our legislation we were permitted to serve in the Department and then I began briefings on my job in Czechoslovakia. I was startled to learn after I had accepted the position that I had a really tough job ahead of me. There had--well, perhaps this isn't the time to go into it, but I'll go into it after I arrive in Czechslovakia. Nevertheless, let me mention that it involved a question of an American who had been sentenced to prison in Czechoslovakia, who had escaped from prison, and then was in asylum in the embassy.

One of my first jobs, and in fact my most important first job, was to try to get him removed from the country, with nobody having any real idea as to how it would be possible to carry this out.

Before leaving I took a little leave, and in the Ford station wagon I'd bought in 1949 when we came to the states you uncles Stephen and Bill and I took a trip out to Kansas, to Salina, to Falun where I was born, to meet my cousins and their cousins and to show them just a little bit of the kind of life from which I'd come, as well as to renew my own acquaintance with my relatives. It was a very stimulating and interesting experience for me and in many ways a very sobering one. I remember my uncle out there took me to see some of my Dad's old friends;my Dad had worked there. One of the people we met was the old judge of the county court there. When we were introduced he had some difficulty understanding exactly who I was and what I was working for, but I will never forget the great surprise on his part to learn that a boy from what he felt was a good family like Carl Johnson's family was working for those so-and-so's in the Department of State.

It was a good and sobering experience. Of course, he had been

heavily influenced by the amount of adverse publicity that we had received, by the sensational and utterly irresponsible and vicious correspondents, such as Fulton Lewis, who were listened to out there and who did so much to damage the United States, to damage the reputation of the United States and the government, both within the United States and outside the United States. I had never quite been able to understand the nasty-mindedness of some of these correspondents and columnists, who were seeking only their own personal aggrandizement and who nevertheless have such an influence over public opinion in the United States.

We returned to Washington and packed. We left Judith, your mother, at her school at Western Maryland, Westminster, but the others, your Uncle Bill, Uncle Stephen and Aunt Jennifer, all set sail from New York on the America and had a very pleasant voyage across. We landed at Le Havre, in France. Our car was unloaded there, and we drove across France and across Germany on our way to Czechoslovakia. It was December, late December, and it was snowing. I'd never driven in Europe before. We finally arrived at Nurenberg after a somewhat difficult trip because of the weather at Nurenberg and stayed overnight. Well, we stayed the first night at Metz, in France, and then our second night at Nurenberg. The next day we set out with a military police escort in a heavy snowstorm for the border and to drive on in to Prague. One of the members of the embassy had met me there. We drove up to the border, where the barbed wire was stretched out on both sides, the great steel bars were lifted across the road, the soldiers surrounded us with their machine guns and their dogs and generally looked upon us with great suspicion. It was rare that people crossed the border at this time.

We spent some time clearing across the border, then we drove

through other checkpoints and through the barbed wire, the watch towers, the dogs and in general the atmosphere of deep oppression. I'll never forget your Aunt Jennifer, before we'd arrived in Czechoslovakia, continually asking me about the Iron Curtain, what was the Iron Curtain. After going through this grim and dark experience in crossing the border Jennifer turned to me and she said, "Daddy, I understand." In West Germany the lights and the gaiety and the music of Christmas was of course everywhere. We crossed into Czechoslovakia and it was all dark and somber. We drove through the very grim city of Pilsen, and by the time we arrived at Prague it was dark. Most of the city was blackened out when we drove through the dark streets up to the embassy residence, which had lights and a Christmas tree. The servants were all out to meet us, and it was a very emotional experience for us.

Driving through the dark countryside, as well as crossing through the border, I must say my heart sank, and it would not have taken very much to cause me to have turned back. I thought ahead to the especially difficult and almost insoluble problem I had with this person who had sought asylum, the fact that our relations had really deteriorated almost to the breaking point with Czechslovakia, and it was with a very heavy heart that I entered on the job. I had wanted to get away from Far Eastern affairs, but this seemed a very tough one indeed.

Shortly after my arrival, I don't remember, I guess it was after the New Year's holidays, I presented my credentials, my first credentials as ambassador to Zapatsoky,who was President of Czechoslovakia at the time and a former shoemaker. This was done with a great deal of ceremony, and I entered into a discussion of the problem with this asylee at the very time of the presentation of my credentials. We went through the

formal ceremony and then adjourned for the usual informal discussion or talk and I raised it at that time. The person in question was a fellow by the name of Jan Hvasta, who was of Czech origin, had subsequently been naturalized in the United States, returned to Czechoslovakia after the war, was an employee of our consulate down in Bratislava, then subsequently quit as such and remained on in the country. He was arrested for espionage, of course the usual charge of the Communists, was sentenced to some five years in prison, appealed his sentence, and on appeal his sentence was raised to ten years. Then he of course was imprisoned.

Some years after he was sentenced, one day some Czech refugees appeared across the border in West Germany and said that they had been prison mates of Hvasta. Four of them had broken out of prison and escaped. During the course of the night they had become separated from Hvasta and did not know what had happened to him. Not too long before my arrival in Prague, Hvasta had one day shown up at the embassy, the chancellery, and walked in. It appeared that after the escape and his inability to maintain contact with the others, finally in desperation he had got in touch or he had knocked at a peasant door. They had given him some shelter, and for some eighteen months he had remained not in the house but out in the countryside, sheltered and fed by these people. He finally in desperation, after some negotiations with the people and someof their friends, had made his way to Prague, walked in the gates of the embassy and said, "Here I am, an American citizen. I want to return to the United States."

The embassy realized that he had been observed by local employees when he entered, and therefore there was no chance of smuggling him out of the country. Therefore, they had tried to get him an exit visa.

The Czech government reacted with considerable violence, as was to be expected, saying that he was an escaped criminal and should be turned back to them. They were able to cite our own regulations and our own law books to show that American embassies were not entitled to give asylum to such persons. However, it had by somewhat tacit agreement been accepted that the matter would be left in suspense until I arrived. Hvasta was being sheltered in the embassy chancellery which was this old palace that had been built in the seventeenth century. Members of the embassy staff were assisting in his feeding. They were taking him out for walks in the garden, were putting him back in his room and locking him in so that the police could not get at him, and the whole situation was in a state of suspense at the time I arrived. As I mentioned, I took the matter up with the President immediately on my arrival, of course without any immediate result. Then I took the matter up with the Foreign Minister when I called on him and only received violent denunciations for sheltering a criminal. I took the matter up with the Prime Minister but did not get very far with him, and thus the tension was rising with respect to Hvasta.

I had little in the way of bargaining material. In fact, I had no bargaining material. In our efforts to obtain the release of an AP correspondent who had been arrested some time previously, the United States had really used up all the bargaining material that it had at its disposal, and thus I was forced to rely entirely upon my wits and whatever powers of persuasion that I had. The Czech government took the position that they could do nothing about permitting him to leave the country or commuting his sentence, which was my suggestion, unless and until he was back in their custody. Hvasta knew, and of course I knew, that the government was desperately anxious to learn who had given him help and shelter during the

period that he had been outside. As he had undergone considerable torture before he was sentenced, we could well expect that they would subject him to severe torture to learn who had assisted him. This he was determined not to do and threatened to commit suicide, to jump out of the fourth story window of the room we were keeping him in, rather than be turned back to the Czechs. In turn the Czechs were threatening to invade the embassy to take him out unless we turned him back to them.

Twice during the period of my negotiations with them they gave me ultimata. The first ultimatum I didn't take too seriously. The second ultimatum I was seriously concerned about and spent the night at the embassy door waiting for them to break in to take him out. I found great personal difficulty. Here was my first job as an ambassador, and if they broke in it was clear of course that relations between ourselves and Czechoslovakia would be broken off at the minimum, and I would have been a failure at my first post. Also, getting to know Hvasta I became personally attached and had a personal involvement in it. His room overlooked my office, and while I sat at my desk I could feel his eyes boring into me, in effect saying, "What are you doing to help me out of this?"

We rocked back and forth, with the State Department saying in effect, "Why don't you do something to settle this?" In effect the Czechs were saying, "If you don't turn him back to us, we're coming in and getting him." I finally arranged another interview with the Prime Minister, Prime Minister Siroky, in which we had a very tough conversation, in which each of us took off our gloves, However, the ultimate result of that conversation was that I agreed to recognize the Czech authority and jurisdiction with regard to the matter by turning Hvasta back to the Czechs for a period of not to exceed twelve hours, during which period

they would commute his sentence. They in turn would give me consular access, that is, permit a member of the embassy staff to be with Hvasta throughout the time that he was in their custody. The Prime Minister told me to work out the details with the Foreign Minister.

I immediately went back to the office, drafted a memoir which set forth this understanding, went to see the Foreign Minister. The Foreign Minister exploded with almost rage, insofar as he was capable of rage. He was a very mousey type of man, afraid of his shadow, who rejected having anything in writing. The question then, not having anything in writing, was:should I go ahead? I discussed the situation with Hvasta, who was very reluctant. However, I decided that this was the only way out of the impasse, and somewhat against his better judgment I persuaded Hvasta to go along with it. The arrangements were worked out for a member of the embassy staff to take Hvasta to the Ministry of Interior the next morning.

The next morning I had Jack Imes, one of my trusted secretaries of embassy, drive out of the embassy with Hvasta to the Ministry of Interior, little knowing what might happen. To make a long story short, they spent some five to six hours at the Ministry of Interior. They made some attempt to separate Imes from Hvasta but did not insist on it. The papers were done up, his sentence was communted to expulsion from the country. Jack Imes drove with Hvasta from Prague over to West Germany, and about two o'clock in the morning called me from West Germany to say that they had safely arrived on the other side. I've always had a somewhat soft spot in my heart for Prime Minister Siroky since that time.

U. ALEXIS JOHNSON

Tape 10

(10a)

Prime Minister Siroky was rough and tough, and long-time member of the party. Although I strongly disagreed with him, he was a person that I respected as a man of his opinion. I relied on his good faith, which is a very dangerous thing to have done. Nevertheless, experience demonstrated that I was right in doing so. As it succeeded, I received a telegram of congratulation from Secretary Dulles, from others, and was looked upon as a very fine diplomat doing a very exceptional job very early in his first post. If on the other hand the thing had turned the other way, of course I would have been finished and well realized it. In this day when it is said that ambassadors have no power of decision and rely entirely on instructions from home, I think an occasion like this, when we have to rely on our own judgment, our own reading of personalities, indicates that we are far from being just messengers on the other end of the wire.

Hvasta wrote a number of articles with a ghostwriter which were published in the Saturday Evening Post in which he slides over this very crucial period, in which he was given asylum in the embassy and in which all the embassy staff did so much for him and in which his release was obtained, as being somewhat matter-of-fact. As a matter of fact, it was far from matter-of-fact. It was very, very touch-and-go as to whether or not we would be able to get him out of the country alive.

As a postscript to this story, sometime after relations were re-established between Czechoslovaki and Yugoslavia, I was telling this story to the new Yugoslav ambassador. He in turn recounted to me a very similar

tale with respect to an experience that he had had with a Yugoslav in Budapest, in Hungary. He had worked out precisely the same type of understanding, oral understanding, that I'd worked out with Prime Minister Siroky, the only difference being that when he delivered the man to the Ministry of Interior he was physically separated from him, and the man was hung that night.

Czechoslovakia was still very much in the throes of the Stalinist period when I arrived there, and I found the Czech government entirely unwilling to have any real discussion with an American ambassador. The Foreign Minister, David, was a very, very timid man. Of course, I could well understand this. Of his predecessors, one had either been murdered or committed suicide, the other one had been executed, and thus he was very careful in what he said. The only occasions I was called to the Foreign Office was for something very unpleasant. He would usually read to me from a notebook or hand me a piece of paper on what he had to say. I would go listen to what he had to say or read through the piece of paper, and then I would start making some comments on it. He would look down through his notebook to find some comment that seemed somewhat appropriate to what I had to say, and after one or two tries at this, he would usually say, in effect, "Please don't argue or discuss about it. Just send this back to your government and give me your reply in writing." He was really very unwilling to engage in any sort of meaningful discussion.

The only man with whom I was ever able to have any real discussions was the Prime Minister, Siroky. He was a rough, tough Slovak, and although he always mouthed the Communist line, he did so in a fairly able way and enjoyed--seemed to enjoy--having some debate. These would only take place at a reception or some event of that kind, at which we'd get off into a

corner and go at it with each other. I enjoyed these sessions, but except for the Prime Minister I was never able to have any real discussion. I found the Czechs dull. I found the government extremely subservient to Moscow. I found I was always perfectly safe in predicting to Washington that nothing would ever happen in Prague until it had happened in Moscow, and it would usually be several months later.

When Khrushchev came in I sensed that the Czechs found this very disturbing,to the Czech regime,that is,They found Stalin somebody they could understand. The line was clear and clean, and they didn't have to do any thinking for themselves. With Khrushchev and the larger amount of autonomy that they were given, they felt very uncomfortable. As far as the people as a whole were concerned, they were very pleasant, they were very friendly to the United States in a very cautious sort of way, but I must say that they didn't seem to be a people of much courage. I shouldn't say this entirely in deprecation; they had been through a great deal in their history, but they had managed to survive by not taking extreme positions.

There was a story at the time of the Hungarian revolt that the Czechs told on themselves. The Hungarians--or the Poles it was that said, according to the story, "The Hungarians are behaving like Poles, we Poles are behaving like Czechs and the Czechs are behaving like swine." I remember that after somewhat of a thaw took place and we were able to have a few relations at the so-called cultural level, after 1957 I believe this was, I was for one reason or the other invited up to the movie studios by the director of the studios to see some rushes of some films they were presenting. They showed me a couple of cartoons that were fairly good. Then they showed us a film of modern Czechoslovakia, in which the officer in the Army and the girl and duty all conflict with each other and of course duty wins out. Then they

started showing the film, very surprisingly, that they had made of the good soldier Schweik who is really a representative of Czechoslovakia and who they. . . . Well, let me put it this way: good soldier Schweik defeats the best of the Austrian Army, has by his deliberate as well as his feigned stupidity.

The wife of the director of the studios, who was sitting next to me, leaned over as the rushes on this film started, and she said, "You know, this is really the way that we are." This was very typical of Czechoslovakia. No false--well I shouldn't say false, no romantic heroics like the Hungarians, but good common sense, bourgeois in many ways, not taking any chances, carefully weighing the way things were going before deciding to commit themselves. Of course, it's very notable that in 1939 when the Germans came in, there wasn't a lieutenant or sergeant in the army that fired a shot. And during World War II the only real resistance that was put up was by Czechs who had been trained in England and were parachuted back into the country.

Nevertheless I liked the Czechs. They were nice, civilized people, but not a people for whom you could have much respect for their courage. We perhaps shouldn't criticize them. I don't know how we would behave under similar circumstances. But the idea or the romantic illusions that we Americans have of the Czechs fighting so valiantly for their freedom through the centuries was certainly not very well founded. They had, since the Thirty Years War in the seventeenth century, been subjected to outside domination, and they had learned to accommodate themselves very well to it, including accommodation to the Soviets. In justice to them, of course, it must be recognized they felt that they had been betrayed by the West at the time of the Munich agreement, and in many ways they had. However, this doesn't change the fact of their behavior.

Thus I found my service fairly dull in Prague. It was a police state

with all the trappings of a police state: the tappings of the telephone, the putting of the microphones in your room, including under your bed, the police chasing after you wherever you went, all these trappings of a police state which many Americans found very difficult to accept, but which I found very similar in most ways to what I had experienced in Japan before the war as well as in Korea and Manchuria under the Japanese. Police states all operate pretty much the same way, and whereas it's very unpleasant, one has to maintain one's sense of humor in order to survive in them. Their mode of operation, of course, is very much the same. I saw this well demonstrated with respect to our servants. Their mode is to simply create deep suspicions between them.

For example, with our servants they would call the maid in once a week and question her as to everybody who had called, telephone calls that were received, whether my wife and I were speaking when we met at breakfast, whether my wife had had her period or not, who had called at such and such a time and so on. Then they would call in the butler, and under dire penalities if he revealed that he was talking with them they would question him the same way. Perhaps the maid would have said, "Well, at eleven o'clock on Tuesday Mrs. Smith, the wife of the British counselor, called on Mrs. Johnson," and when it came around to the butler's turn he didn't mention this. Then they would say to him, "Didn't Mrs. Smith call on Mrs. Johnson at such and such a time on such and such a day?" "Oh, yes." He'd forgotten to mention this. Why didn't he mention it? Then they would bore in on him, and then he would begin to wonder whether somebody was trying to get him in trouble. Perhaps it was the maid; perhaps she was also informing. Thus he would become suspicious of the maid and the maid would become suspicious of him and they both became suspicious of the cook and so on, so as to set

people against each other. It is a diabolical system, but for over a limited period of time at least a very effective system, because it makes people very loath to combine with each other.

Our life for the most part centered around the diplomatic corps, neutrals, Westerners and others, finding that we were the only people with whom we could really associate. We had a very magnificent residence in Prague, and we attempted to share this with other members of the diplomatic corps, having regular movies which we received from the Army circuit in Germany, in general making a life among ourselves, but a very unhealthy life in that we each fed on the other's rumors. It was not possible to have any real contact with the people of the country.

As I recall it, it was about April--let's see, I would have been there about three months--when I received a message from Washington asking me to come back to be the coordinator of our delegation to the proposed conference at Geneva on Korea and Indochina. This would have been April, 1954. Becoming somewhat bored the way things were going in Prague and having no real reason to refuse, I went back. I found that Douglas MacArthur, who was then counselor at the Department, had persuaded the Secretary that as he had no Far Eastern experience he was really not qualified to be coordinator, and the finger had pointed to me. Thus, within three months of my arrival in Czechoslovakia, and thinking that I had divorced myself from Far Eastern affairs, at least for a period, I found myself right back in the middle of them.

I returned to Washington to undertake the work. Coordinating involves what some countries call being secretary general of a conference delegation; we call it coordinator. It involves the drawing together of positions, drawing together of differing points of view and in general acting as a

focal point for everything having to do with the conference and making decisions insofar as decisions can be made, referring to the secretary those upon which decisions can't be made. In 1954 the Geneva Conference involved two quite separate questions and two groups which overlapped to some degree. The first question was that of Korea. On our side this involved ourselves and the sixteen countries which had contributed forces to the United Nations action in Korea. On the Communist side it involved North Korea, of course, Communist China and the Soviet Union. There was little hope of anything coming out of the Korean conference. The preparations for it, or the attempt to get the conference, had gone on for months at Panmunjom, where Arthur Dean had been our representative. Ken Young had also worked with him there.

Thus the preparations on our side involved coordinating not only our own positions within our own government, but coordinating the positions of the sixteen other governments involved, and most especially that of Korea. Syngman Rhee, who was still president of Korea, and the Korean government were still very much on the policy of a march north and the forceful integration of the north into the south, even though the armistice had been reached. One of our problems was trying to get them to take positions which would appear reasonable as negotiating positions but would not sacrifice any of our essential points. This was very, very difficult. Their Foreign Minister, Dr. Pyun, was just as stubborn as Dr. Rhee, and throughout the conference we usually had great difficulty in getting any position coordinated with the South Koreans.

The conference almost broke down before it started over the question of seating. Secretary Dulles was very sensitive to domestic opinion, in being accused of sitting around the table with the Chinese Communists in

particular. Therefore, he wanted a seating arrangement which did not involve the delegations sitting around a table, either literally or figuratively or anything that could be interpreted in that way. He also wanted the South Koreans close to us in the conference so that we could confer with them and keep close taps on what they were doing, and he did not want to be seated near either the North Koreans or the Communist Chinese. This was the task that was given to me when I went on the advance party to Geneva. The man I attempted to work it out with was my opposite number, more or less, on the Soviet side, Kuznetzov. They were equally adamant in getting us to sit around the table, but we finally resolved it.

It was agreed that we would sit in more or less a parliamentary manner, in which the delegations would be seated in a semicircle facing the podium where the chairman was to sit. However, working out the seating arrangement, which in international conferences is usually based on an alphabetical arrangement, we found it very, very difficult to get the North Koreans separated from the South Koreans and the South Koreans near us, because the alphabet just didn't work out that way. The Russians, understandably, were not very cooperative in helping us do so. I had worked out an arrangement which involved considerable straining of the alphabet and considerable straining of the normal method of seating at international conferences, which the Russians had refused to accept. We came right down thirty minutes before the conference was due to meet with still no agreement, but at the last moment the Russians capitulated and we got the type of seating we wanted, with the South Koreans right in front of us where we could grab them by the shoulder, so to speak. The North Koreans were down in front, and the Chinese Communists were separated from us by some distance. However, this involved some very tough negotiations.

The next question was that of a chairman for the conference, and on that the compromise was finally reached on Prince Wan of Thailand. As I recall it we met about three o'clock in the afternoon. After a brief organization meeting, at which Prince Wan was elected chairman, or accepted as chairman of the conference, we then adjourned to the parlor in the Palais des Nations, where we were holding the meetings in Geneva. We adjourned to the parlor for tea, as was customary in conferences of this kind. An incident occurred there which, oh, I wouldn't say it fundamentally changed things, but something occurred that still plagues U.S.-Chinese Communist relation, and I think to a degree influences Chinese Communist attitudes towards us. I wouldn't say that they would fundamentally change, fundmentally they're hostile to us; however, it was the type of thing that aggravates an already difficult situation.

As we went into the parlor Chou En-lai with his Chinese group were over on one side, and he started walking towards Secretary Dulles with his hand outstretched, obviously seeking to shake hands. There were some photographers around also, as I recall it. Chou's obvious effort was to get a picture and a public demonstration of his shaking hands with Secretary Dulles. Secretary Dulles, for I know entirely domestic reasons, just felt that he had to refuse, and quite ostentatiously turned his back on Chou En-lai and refused to shake his hand. To a proud and sensitive Chinese such as Chou En-lai this cut him really to the quick. Throughout the years since that time, I've often heard from visitors to Peking that Chou En-lai still mentions this incident as indication of the implacable hostility of the United States and rudeness of the United States towards him. I myself would have preferred that, in spite of the domestic problems, Dulles would have shaken his hands. He need not do so in any effusive way, but after all

we were meeting in the same room, and it would have been the courteous thing to do. I think if I would have been in the Secretary's place, I would have done so.

Another amusing incident I recall was in the early days, I forget, the first couple of days of the conference. Dulles had made his speech in which he had laid great stress, as he often did and very rightly so, upon our willingness to accept a world of diversity. Chou En-lai had made a very strong speech, and as we were walking out to the parlor for tea Molotov came up alongside Dulles--I was walking with Dulles, Molotov had Troyonosky as his interpreter,a very fine interpreter. Molotov fell into step alongside of Dulles, and with a twinkle in his eye said, "Mr. Secretary, you must have enjoyed the session this afternoon." Dulles, not being quite as quick, looked at him with some question on his face, and he said, "Why, what makes you think I enjoyed the session?" Molotov retorted, "There certainly should have been enough diversity there this afternoon to make you happy."

Molotov was very, very quick on the repartee, a very tough man. Once or twice during the early days--I guess, no, I guess Foster Dulles had left and Bedell Smith was in charge of the delegation--we had dinner with Molotov at his villa there in Geneva. It was a very, very overly elaborate dinner with game and fish and things flown in from the Soviet Union, as they usually do in such cases, or as they did at that time, very overly elaborate. Molotov was the very, very gracious host and very, very kind host, but always with the sharp repartee that almost always had some political content in it some way--not in an offensive way, but in a way that he would always get in the last remark, or get in the side remark in some way, making his point with a twinkle in his eye. But his mind was always working in the

political realm.

Two problems plagued us on our side throughout the meeting. One was relations with the United Kingdom and the difficulty that Foster Dulles and Eden always had in working together, which had been aggravated by the misunderstanding, if you will, which occurred before the conference--which has been written about by Foster Dulles and also Anthony Eden, both sides of their stories--with respect to the formation of a Southeast Asia Treaty Organization before we went into the Indochina conference. Foster Dulles felt he'd been double-crossed by Eden and Eden felt that Foster Dulles had double-crossed him. In any event, it was a misunderstanding that plagued us. However, in spite of that, Dulles and Eden were just personally not compatible and found it difficult to work with each other.

Walter Robertson also had an intense dislike for Eden, which he seldom did very much to conceal and which was very evident to the British. I can't say that I was fond of Eden. There was something about him that I just didn't feel comfortable with, but I tried to retain my feelings. Harold Caccia was the second member of the British delegation, a very able and a very fine person, and I did a lot of work with Harold. Harold and I, between us, I think helped smooth over some of the problems that existed. Then after Foster Dulles left the delegation and Bedell Smith worked with him, Bedell was able to work quite effectively with Anthony Eden.

The other problem was the Korean delegation, the difficulty I mentioned of getting them to take positions that would be helpful to us in the conference. Nobody had any expectation that we would be able to resolve the problem of Korea in the conference, but the problem was dissolving the conference on a basis that left us in a good public position and a good position for the future.

(10b)

After some weeks we gradually, with great difficulty, worked out a position and thought we had all the elements in a row to break off the conference sine die. We went to the meeting with the position of all the Sixteen carefully coordinated, with a script worked out, and with a declaration by the Sixteen with respect to Korea that still forms the basis of our policy with respect to Korea. All our carefully laid plans, though, almost broke up through a slight mistake by one of the simultaneous interpreters, indicating the great sensitivity and difficulty of this position. Bob Eckvall, who was Lieutenant Colonel Eckvall then, who was a member of our delegation, understood Chinese, French and English and was the only one that enabled us to understand what had happened.

What had happened was one of the interpreters, translating Chou En-lai's Chinese to French, had added just a word or two in the thought that he was being helpful. Spaak, listening in to the French translation, thought that this meant a change of position on the part of the Chinese, and he jumped to his feet and made remarks based upon what he understood the French translation to be. We, not having heard the French, of course, having heard only the English, were utterly baffled by what Spaak said, and you could see that Chou En-lai was equally baffled. Chou En-lai retorted, Spaak retorted back, and they were of course talking past each other because neither knew what the other one had really said. We rushed over to Spaak and tried to straighten him out insofar as we understood the situation, and the meeting almost broke up at this point without our being able to carry through the script. In the meantime Bob Eckvall had come down and explained to me what had happened, and on the basis of that I was able to help in straightening it out. We finally broke the conference up on the

basis of our original script; however, it was a very complicated and very tense moment.

In the meantime we had started organizing the Indochina conference, which had entirely a different cast of characters, being ourselves, the British, the French and the noncommunist Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians on our side, and on the other side the Chinese, the Soviets, the Viet Minh. Then the great effort, great fight centered around the effort to seat the Pathet Lao and the Khmer Issarak, the communist element in Cambodia. However, this was defeated.

This conference also marked the beginning of my own relationship with the Communist Chinese. The history on this was that we had been urging the British, who were of course at the conference, to talk to the Chinese Communists about American prisoners who were in the hands of the Communist Chinese. The British were ostensibly representing our interests in Peking at the time. We had a number of prisoners, a number of different groups of prisoners. First, we had American civilians, missionaries and businessmen who had stayed on when the Communist Chinese took over and who had been arrested for alleged espionage and were in Chinese Communist prisons or under house arrest. Then we had military prisoners, crews of some military planes that had been captured. And then we had a large number of men who were missing from the Korean War. It was not known whether they were alive or dead, but they were not accounted for by the other side at the end of the Korean War. Thus we had a considerable heterogeneous group of people who were in Chinese Communist prisons.

The British, Humphrey Trevelyan, who was British chargé in Peking at the time and was at Geneva, talked with the Chinese, and the Chinese replied that both the Americans and the Chinese were there in Geneva, why

didn't the Americans talk directly with them. Of course, the effort of the Chinese was to obtain something in the way of recognition from us. This seemed very hard to gainsay, and after much searching of the soul, the decision was made that we would seek to talk with the Chinese.At a staff meeting Foster Dulles looked around the table and to my horror pointed his finger at me and said, "Alex, why don't you see what you can do?" So through Humphrey Trevelyan I made contact with the Chinese. They in turn, appointed a man who was roughly my opposite number on their delegation, Wang Ping-nan, who was then Secretary General of their foreign office and Secretary General of their delegation. Through the British, we agreed on the time and the place and the room in the Palais at which we would meet. I deliberately chose a room that had no table in it. It was just a small sitting room.

We met. I attempted from the outset to set as easy an atmosphere as I could. I deliberately shook Wang Ping-nan's hand when he entered the room and made some light conversation. We sat down on sofas and began our conversation in as informal an atmosphere as I was able to contrive, trying to put him at ease as much as I could and also trying to make up for what I felt was the strains, unnecessary strains that had been created by Foster Dulles' refusal to shake hands with Chou En-lai. Well, in our first meeting I don't recall that we got very far on it. It was up to them to arrange the second meeting, and they deliberately arranged it in a room with a table where they sat on one side and we sat on the other side. There were four of us on each side, as I recall it. I had my interpreter who was Bob Eckvall, an adviser and an assistant to take notes. It was agreed that we would not make any stenographic transcript.

We met a number of times, as I recall it five or six times throughout the conference, I on my side asking for release for Americans, and he on his

side alleging that we were restraining Chinese in the United States who desired to return to China. The latter had some validity to it, as during the Korean War we had issued orders, Immigration had issued orders preventing the departure from the United States of Chinese who had been educated in the United States in technical fields, such as rocketry and weapons and so on, that could be of assistance to the Communist Chinese. These people came from the mainland, and they wanted to return to Communist China. We had prevented them from returning. We worked out a small exchange in which we lifted the order with respect to some of these Chinese, and they in turn released a few American prisoners. However, we never got very far on this, and when the Indochina conference finally ended, it was left that we would maintain contact through our respective consuls general in Geneva. They met a couple of times, but nothing came of that. The next phase was when we met again in August of 1955. However I will return to that later. I will now go back to the Indochina conference.

Bidault was representing France at that time, and the permanent civil servant, more or less my opposite number, was Claude Jean Chauvel, who later became French ambassador in London. It rocked along without any real resolution until the fall of Dien Bien Phu and the governmental instability that took place in France at that time. I was present at the conversations in Paris for the beginning of the conference, when the French urged us to enter the war directly and we refused to do so. With the fall of Dien Bien Phu and the fall of the French government and the assumption of the government by Mendes-France, it of course assumed a different character.

Meanwhile, Foster Dulles had left sometime before, Bedell Smith had left, and I was left as the U.S. representative, the conference being somewhat moribund at that period. Phil Bonsal was my principal assistant. Phil

and I were with some others, but it was primarily Phil and I who were left to hold the fort.

Then Mendes-France assumed power and gave his famous thirty day deadline on reaching an agreement. Chou En-lai, Molotov, Anthony Eden, everybody came back to Geneva, and there I was left with no instructions from Washington. My instructions primarily were not to get myself committed to anything, but as I pointed out, sitting around the table one either agreed or disagreed or acquiesced. It was a question of my removing myself from the table into an observer's status, which Washington did not approve, or having some instructions as to what I was to do. I have never felt more uncomfortable. I sent telegram after telegram trying to get some answer but was unable to do so.

Then Mendes-France and Eden made a frantic appeal to Washington to come back into the conference. Foster Dulles refused to come to Geneva but did agree to meet with them in Paris. So I flew over to Paris with Mendes-France, where we had a meeting far into the night with Dulles, and it was finally agreed that Bedell Smith would come back without commitment as to what positions we would take in the conference. Mendes-France talked very well and convinced Dulles that we should effectively re-enter the conference.

Bedell Smith did come back but was very ill, spent most of his time in bed. And I may say also, Bedell is passed on now, he was again drinking very heavily, and I had a great deal of difficulty in working with Bedell at that time--not of a personal kind, but it was very, very hard to get any decisions or get any actions out of him.

However, in general our posture was not to intervene actively but wait and see what the conference came out with and then decide what attitude we would take on it. It's remarkable how everybody, including the communist

side, accepted this thirty-day deadline of Mendes-France and worked frantically to meet it, coming down to midnight of the last day and in effect stopping the clock, carrying it on through the night, ending up a very weary bunch in the early hours of the next morning. A great deal of hasty work, very ill-considered work, was done at the time, and some of our problems, of course, stem from that period. My own feeling was that the North Vietnamese, the Viet Minh, represented by Pham Van Dong, who was then their foreign minister and is now their prime minister, saw victory within their grasp and were very unwilling to settle for anything other than total control of all of Vietnam.

However, I feel that Molotov, and to a lesser degree Chou En-lai, exercised some restraining influence on them, and they finally came out with an agreement, as far as Vietnam was concerned, that was not too bad. In fact, I do think that the North might have gotten a somewhat better agreement considering the situation. However, it was very interesting, time after time during the meetings the North Vietnamese would take a position, and then the communist side would call for a recess and they'd go out in the hall and come back and the position would have changed. However, not much of the work was done in the open meetings. Most of the work was done in the corridors and in smaller private meetings, in which for the most part we did not at this time participate.

Midnight of the last day the Cambodians were taking a very firm stand against tying themselves down, to not joining any defensive alliances. I forget, there were a couple of other points at issue. It's very odd to think of those points now, considering the turn that Cambodian policy has taken. But they took a very stout line and came around to see Bedell Smith and myself about two o'clock in the morning, as I recall it, and we encouraged

them to stand firm, although Eden, Mendes-France, Molotov, Chou En-lai, everybody was furious at them. However, they dug their heels in, and as a result, got by far the best agreement out of the Geneva Conference.

The Laotian agreement, as it turned out, was very unsatisfactory. It left the Pathet Lao in control of the two northern provinces of Phong Saly and Samneua, and as I've often said since then, part of the problem of Laos that has continued to exist is that Laos was the one place around the whole periphery of the communist bloc in the free world in which the line was not clearly drawn between ourselves and the communists. You had a 17th parallel in Vietnam; Cambodia was left free; but in Laos a fuzzy situation was created which has been exploited by the communists, of course, and which remains with us to this day. Except it hasn't gotten much worse; it's not greatly different from that that existed at the time of the Geneva agreement in 1954. The remarkable thing is, in spite of all its weaknesses Laos still continues to exist.

In the '58-'59 period we made a serious mistake by backing right wingers, or I should say conservatives, who simply didn't have the skill or the power to change the situation fundamentally in Laos. We tried to go too far too fast there, trying to make it a bastion of democracy. As I often say, Laos is never going to be a bastion of democracy, and the best that we can hope for there is that it remains a spongy buffer situation between the communists and the free world. It can only be resolved if we resolve the situation here in Vietnam.

After the Indochina conference was over in July, as I recall it July 20 was the final signing date, I dusted the affairs of the Far East off my shoes once again and went back to Prague. I should say that before I left Bedell Smith and I and two or three others had dinner with Mendes-France

after the conference was over. Talking at the table, Mendes began to talk about Algeria and said that the same situation that had taken place in Indochina was going to take place in Algeria. This was before anything really active had developed there and before Algeria had assumed any prominence. We had asked Mendes-France why, if he saw that the same course of events was going to take place there, he couldn't do something about it and prevent this happening and prevent France undergoing another tragedy such as had taken place in Indochina. I don't recall all the details, but he went into an elaborate explanation of the French political situation and the impossibility of doing anything about it. It was almost like a Greek tragedy, in that the elements are all present, and they moved inexorably to the denouement of the tragedy. It was, of course, an indication of the inability of France to really govern itself at that time.

One of the tragedies is that this country where I now am, Vietnam, has inherited this tradition from France, that is, this lack of tradition, really, how to go about governing. The parliamentary system of government seems to me probably the most difficult of all systems of government to operate. I'm speaking of the parliamentary system, European-British parliamentary system, as opposed to the strong executive type system of the United States and some other countries. The parliamentary system has really never worked well outside the United Kingdom and the English speaking dominions where, one, they have the political sophistication and background to make it operate, and they don't have the multiplicity of parties that makes a parliamentary system impossible to operate.

One of the great tragedies of the newly developing world, or the underdeveloped world, is the number of them that have, because of the historical reasons, their associations with their mother metropoles, adopted

the parliamentary system of government. This country here tries to make it operate, other countries have tried to make it operate, and particularly in these underdeveloped countries it just cannot and will not operate. My own theory is that many of these countries, each in their own way, are groping for a stronger executive type government. It's very fortunate that in our early history our forefathers had the wisdom to adopt the presidential system of government, which has done so much as a system to contribute to the stability of our country, particularly in the early days when it was seeking to develop governmental institutions. If these newly developing countries had adopted something closer to the presidential system--really, I shouldn't say presidential system, but rather the stronger executive type government--I think that they would have made out much better. Of course, this is no guarantee of success, as witness the situation in Latin America, many countries there having adopted a system similar to our own but still having difficulty in making it work. However, even there, I think it works better than in these countries, given the entire situation, it works better than the parliamentary system.

Well, back to Czechoslovakia. I returned in August of 1954 and went back to work there; however, there wasn't too much to be done. It was very difficult , still, to have any contact with the Czechs. The government was not really interested in doing much to improve relations with the United States. I had very little freedom of action to do anything about it. One thing that I did stress strongly at the time was the necessity of treating each of these countries in Eastern Europe differently. At the time there was a tendency to lump all the satellite states together. In our policy and our legislation we talked about them all together, as if they were one monolithic bloc. Even though they were still at that time

strongly under the control of Moscow, all of us who were serving in those countries were deeply impressed by the fact that they were still Czechs and Poles and Hungarians and Rumanians, and that if we were going to advance our policy it was important that we recognize these differences and seek to exploit these differences.

This of course was still the period in which Foster Dulles was still talking about "liberation," even though he full well realized that this was nothing but a slogan and there was no possibility of giving it substance. Nevertheless, it did do much to exacerbate our relations. I felt that if we had started in earlier in exploiting the difference between them, talking less about liberation, we would've perhaps been able somewhat to accelerate the movements that have taken place in Eastern Europe--I must say in spite of us rather than because of us, because our policy certainly did little at that time to contribute to these movements. Of course, for an ambassador in one of these countries at the time, it was very difficult. On one hand we were supposed to "improve relations," we were supposed to solve local problems, get people out of prison, while in Washington we were declaring our implacable hostility to each of these governments. Our Voice of America and Radio Free Europe were in effect calling for their overthrow, and I found it took a great deal of mental gymnastics in talking with the local government people to reconcile our professions of a desire for better relations with the policy that we had adopted towards these governments.

Of course, these governments were not good governments, they were cruel, they were ruled by repression. Nevertheless, they were the governments that were in power. About all I could do was to show the flag, both literally and figuratively. I used to drive around the country as much as possible with the flag flying on the car. This was always very satisfying.

People would give a quick look of recognition, and when they saw the flag their faces would brighten. If they dared to do so, they would wave. I think it fair to say, probably, that there was no place in the world that the United States was more popular than in the countries of Eastern Europe, including Czechoslovakia. However, it was quite evident that, much though they disliked their present regime, the people also would not want to go back to the old regime either. There were reforms, medical care, things of that kind, that had taken place. The socialization and the nationalization of some of the larger industries I felt that the people would want to preserve.

However, the mismanagement in Czechosolovakia was glaringly evident. Here was a country that was not underdeveloped; it was fully up to the standards of Western Europe, but after the Communist takeover had fallen more and more behind. The contrast between West Germany, which was just a few hours away by road from Czechoslovakia, became more and more glaring. The Czechs were fascinated on the one hand by what was going on in West Germany, and yet a deep fear of Germany was still very evident throughout most of the country. There was also, though, a nostalgia, even for the old days of the Austro-Hungarian empire. I well remember when the first Sputnik went up that the Soviets launched a teacher told me this story. She was lecturing her class under instructions on the wonders of this Sputnik. Here this was--I see I'm getting down towards the end here, I'll have to turn this side over. This is the end of tape number five by U. Alexis Johnson. I'll resume the Sputnik story on the next tape.