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Interview

with

W. AVERELL HARRIMAN

During the period 1950-1953, Governor Harriman held the following posts: U.S. Representative in Europe under the Economic Cooperation Act of 1948, 1948-June 1950; Special Assistant to the President, 1950-1951; American Representative and Chairman on the Committee to Study Western Defense Plans (Temporary Council Committee), NATO, September 1951 to February 1952; Director for Mutual Security, Executive Office of the President, and head of the Mutual Security Agency, 1951-1953.

by

D. M. Condit

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Washington, D.C.
June 18, 1977

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CONDIT: Before we discuss mutual security, I have just one question about those several conferences that were held between you, General Marshall, Secretary Acheson, and General Bradley on the relief of MacArthur. Was the number of people limited to those four that I have named?

HARRIMAN: Yes, the four. The President usually had his cabinet meetings on Fridays, which I attended as the Special Assistant to the President. After that was over on Friday morning, April 6, 1951, he invited General Marshall and General Bradley, Mr. Acheson, and myself into his office and he raised this subject about the relief. I knew he was going to raise it; I'd been warned beforehand. He asked each of us what we thought about it. I think he covers that quite well in his book. I think that he invited each one of us to speak from the standpoint of our particular view of it: obviously, General Bradley, for the Joint Chiefs' viewpoint; General Marshall, as Secretary of Defense, for its national security aspects; and Acheson, on its foreign affairs implications. Each one said that he had the impression that it was a very serious situation and he would get the information the President wanted.

For my part, I believe I recalled to the President my report to him of my talks with General MacArthur in early August 1950. I had then pointed out that, although General MacArthur had said he would accept the President's orders as his Commander which I had given him, I had the

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feeling that he was not convinced and that there would be difficulties ahead. These orders related to MacArthur's avoidance of becoming involved with Chiang Kai-Shek and, above all, not to take any actions which would involve us in war with Mainland China. Now that he had been so insubordinate, I believed the President should recall him.

I think we met again with the President on Saturday, probably in Blair House, no maybe in the office again, I can't be positive. We all reported, each in his own way to the President. There was no adverse influence which offset the necessity of relieving MacArthur for his attempt to take over the foreign policy of the United States. Acheson and I thought it was a very grave constitutional crisis with a military proconsul attempting to usurp the powers of the President of the United States to make foreign policy. The President said he would think it over, and on Monday he called us together and announced that he had made his decision.

CONDIT: Again, just you four?

HARRIMAN: Just the four. Always just the four, as far as I can remember. I don't know how many times we met, but we met a number of times. Monday was the last meeting, and the President said he had decided to relieve him. Then it was decided to inform him through Secretary Pace, who was thought to be in Tokyo. It turned out that he was in Korea and for some reason or another communications couldn't be gotten to him. The release was to have been given Tuesday morning, as I remember it. General MacArthur heard it on the radio because Pace was not able to give him

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the information. That was unfortunate. Whom the President saw on Sunday or whether he saw anybody on Sunday or whom else he may have consulted, I don't know.

CONDIT: Didn't he say he was going to consult Chief Justice Vinson?

HARRIMAN: I don't know. I always thought he consulted Chief Justice Vinson. I don't know that he told us he was going to do it; I have no record of his telling it.

CONDIT: General Bradley has that in his notes.

HARRIMAN: Oh, he does have it in his notes?

CONDIT: Yes.

HARRIMAN: I am so glad to get that information because I was convinced that the President had. When I said that, someone who had reviewed his diary said that there was no record of it. You have given me a very valuable piece of information.

CONDIT: He said he was going to consult Vinson and the Vice President, according to Bradley's notes.

HARRIMAN: That was Barkley. I'm glad to know that, appreciate knowing that. This will be very interesting to the man writing Vinson's biography; he was quite sure that the President had consulted Vinson because he consulted Vinson so often, but he had nothing to go on and there's nothing in Vinson's notes either.

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CONDIT: This is only to say that he said he was going to, it doesn't say he did it.

HARRIMAN: I know, but if he said he was going to, he would have done it because he consulted Vinson often. I thought he consulted Vinson, because he consulted him on matters of importance that related to the powers of the President. He didn't say he was going to consult the Speaker?

CONDIT: I will have to check, I don't remember. I will check.*

HARRIMAN: This is very helpful to me. Is there anything else you want to know about that?

CONDIT: I'm simply checking because General Carter thought he remembered being there. I think he thought he was there because he was at later meetings on this and because he may have written up memos for the record that Marshall dictated to him.

HARRIMAN: I don't recall anyone else being present. I can't deny that he was there because it's conceivable that he came in at the later meetings. I think the record will show that at the first meeting I was the only one who said, without qualification, that the President should recall MacArthur.

By the way, did I tell you in the last interview about my final talk with General MacArthur? This was at the Time dinner party.

CONDIT: Well, you said that the last time you saw him he acted in a

* He specified the Chief Justice, the Vice President, and the Speaker as among the leaders he wanted to confer with.

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very, very friendly manner toward you. You said that you didn't understand why, because he knew by then of your role in his recall. I had no idea why!

HARRIMAN: I'm satisfied that it goes back to our long relationship; I had known MacArthur since he was superintendent of West Point. He chose to forget the past and not to involve me in this incident.

CONDIT: In other words, a long friendship wasn't going to be wrecked by this one thing.

HARRIMAN: He wanted to retain that, and I did of course. I was gratified.

CONDIT: You know, there's so much good and so much bad in this particular episode . . . .

HARRIMAN: I was a close friend; it meant a great deal to me, because I had no personal feeling against MacArthur. To me, it was a tragedy that he made that mistake.

Let's first go to this Temporary Council Committee; it was originally called the Three Wise Men. I was chairman of it. It was not Harriman, Monnet, and Plowden -- but it was Harriman, Jean Monnet, and the British Chancellor (of the Exchequer), who was then Hugh Gaitskell. After briefly attending a meeting or two, Gaitskell found there was a call for a general election in England, and he had to return to fight the general election, and then there was a new government. Technically, the Conservative Chancellor was the British member of the Committee,

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"Rab" Butler. I remember his coming to a meeting or two. In the meantime, Plowden had taken over; he was deputy to Chancellor Gaitskell, and he was so immersed in all of it that Mr. Butler left him there. In a sense, it is true that Plowden was the working representative of the British and carried on all the activities; but technically, it is quite important that it be understood that this was on the level of the Chancellor. Of course, Monnet had a very special position.

I invited Abe Lincoln to be my principal advisor, chief of staff, whatever you call it. He was at West Point, and he dropped his work and joined me at once. He was an old friend of mine. (General Joseph T.) McNarney was appointed by the Pentagon as my assistant for military matters.

CONDIT: I thought he was head of the subcommittee on Screening and Costing (SCS). Lincoln, I thought, was the Secretary's representative to you.

HARRIMAN: No, Lincoln was my representative; maybe he was appointed.

CONDIT: I think so, and McNarney went as the subcommitte head.

HARRIMAN: The military subcommittee head. But Lincoln was my right hand. I asked him, I know. I may have gotten the Secretary to appoint him.* Of course, I was very close to the Secretary of Defense. Was it Lovett by that time or Marshall?

* On October 4, 1951, Colonel George A. Lincoln was appointed Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense and assigned to the U.S. Representative to the TCC as his Defense Adviser.

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CONDIT: It was just the turnover time, September 17, 1951. Marshall was leaving.

HARRIMAN: I suppose technically, in order to get him released, he would have to be appointed; but in any event I selected him to help me. I had a small staff. Lincoln Gordon came on the economic side. I haven't got the details with me on my activities.

It was a ministerial level committee. The idea was that we would call in the ministers, not staff. In almost every case the minister of finance of the different NATO member countries came themselves with their staff. Then, of course, there was a lot of staff work that went on as well. The reason I emphasized that the Chancellor was a member, not Plowden, was to indicate that it was supposed to be a ministerial committee. We dealt with the ministers of the member governments of NATO. We reviewed the information received from each country and came out with our findings.

(General Dwight D.) Eisenhower cooperated with us fully. He named a young officer by the name of Colonel (Andrew) Goodpaster as the liaison officer; he spent a good deal of his time with us and got us any information that we needed or that would be helpful from General Eisenhower. There was the fullest cooperation. Everyone was pretty much cooperative. I think the government that was least cooperative was the Canadian. They felt this was an invasion of their internal affairs. But Canada was geographically so far removed that they were not as concerned a member of NATO as the European countries were. Is there any question you want to ask about that operation? I think the

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records are there. I produced the report which was taken to the Lisbon conference and we got an agreement at that time. The French Prime Minister was very courageous. I don't remember his name (Edgar Faure), but he said he would agree although he knew the government would fall. He did agree. Everyone thought that the Lisbon conference was one of the high spots of the early period of NATO.

The British were very keen to have the headquarters of the NATO ministers in London. Acheson was always rather inclined to cooperate with the British and, since the French had the military headquarters, he would give the British this concession. But I felt it was necessary for this group to have its headquarters in Paris for two reasons: One, the closer they were to the Supreme Commander, the better it was; and two, they could also have economic liaison in Paris. There was a section to the NATO Agreement that provided for economic cooperation, and in Paris there was OEEC (Organisation for European Economic Co-operation), which was the economic committee for the Marshall plan and included countries that were not part of NATO. It would have been impossible to set up a separate economic organization; but I thought, if they all had their headquarters in Paris, they could have an economic liaison with the OEEC. This organization is now called OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) but still continues. I felt it was well to have the NATO political and military headquarters and the economic headquarters all in the one capital so that there would be the closest collaboration between the three. I won out on the decision to have the headquarters in Paris.

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At that time it was also agreed there should be a permanent political head of NATO, paralleling, of course, the Supreme Commander. Before this I think there was a rotating chairmanship among the foreign ministers. Then it was decided that the permanent head of the North Atlantic Council, who would be called The Secretary General, should be British. I immediately thought it ought to be an economic and political figure and not a military one because the Supreme Commander was military. I wanted it to be the British Ambassador to the United States who had been chairman of the first Marshall Plan meeting in Paris, Oliver Franks. The British were reluctant to do this for some reason or another, but I didn't realize it. I pressed it, it was accepted, and Pearson called Franks on the telephone and got him out of his bath. He said, "I could never accept a position of this kind with so little notice." He was quite annoyed at being pulled out of his bath, and he said no! Immediately the British proposed Ismay, whose nickname is "Pug" and who had been Winston Churchill's chief of staff in his role as Minister of Defence. I knew him intimately and had the highest regard for him; I was completely cornered because I couldn't oppose him. The perfect man. But I regretted that it was a military and not a political person. Ismay did extremely well, but under him the Council developed a habit of dealing with only military matters. My failure to get them to have a political-economic man as head didn't start NATO off on what I thought would have been the right emphasis.

CONDIT: You wanted a more political orientation?

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HARRIMAN: A political, economic orientation. Ismay was a great friend of mine. I had the highest regard for him; he did a superb job. But it was a much more limited role than it would have been had Oliver Franks taken it. I speak of that because Acheson didn't share my concerns, although he didn't oppose them. I had been in charge of the Marshall Plan, as you know. I knew the importance of the military as a shield for the growth of economic cooperation and development in Europe. Of course, we were all hopeful that between the Marshall Plan and NATO there would be greater political union. Since the treaty provided for more political-economic collaboration between the countries, I thought we ought to make the most of it. I thought it was a missed opportunity.

I think I told you I had Linc Gordon on my staff, and he was one of the important members of my staff.

CONDIT: On the TCC?

HARRIMAN: Yes, the Three Wise Men.

CONDIT: Now you had already become Director for Mutual Security?

HARRIMAN: No, the TCC was first and then I became Director for Mutual Security.

CONDIT: You were in Paris all this time?

HARRIMAN: I was in Paris part of the time. I think we finished our part in December and I came back for Christmas and for some weeks and

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then we went back in February. I stayed in Washington until the February Lisbon Conference. Whatever work had to be done I left in charge of. . . .

CONDIT: John Ohly?

HARRIMAN: No, my chief of staff of ODMS was a man named Theodore Tannenwald, who is now Judge Tannenwald. Ohly was in charge of military matters. I'll talk about that, but let's get rid of the Lisbon conference. You're quite right, it was the highwater mark of NATO cooperation, with a question mark. I think it was. The French Prime Minister (Faure) behaved extremely well. He knew that by agreeing he would lose, but the French government was falling every five or six months anyway. At the same time, it was a courageous thing for him to have done.

CONDIT: Do you remember Daniel Edwards or Luke Finlay?

HARRIMAN: I don't remember Daniel Edwards or Luke Finlay.

CONDIT: Do you remember (Charles W.) Spofford?

HARRIMAN: Oh yes. Spofford was selected as our ambassador. I knew him quite well. That was a combination of Acheson and myself, I think, in picking him.

Now I would like to talk about the question of my assuming the role of Mutual Security Director. I remember returning to Washington

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just to be sworn in. When I went back, I immediately organized it. The Director for Mutual Security had charge of economic operations and the coordination of military assistance and Point IV matters. I decided that I would make it my job to take direction of the coordination of the activity. I was physically in charge of funds and they were allocated to the various operating agencies. I appointed W. John Kenny, who had been associated with the Marshall Plan as the head of the mission in London, my Deputy in charge of economic aid (Mutual Security Agency), and I gave him a very free hand.

In the Office of the Director for Mutual Security, I substantially kept on my same staff (from the White House), except I added this gentleman you speak of, Mr. Jack Ohly, to be in charge of the military (Assistant Director for Program). He had been with the Pentagon and moved from there to the State Department, where he had something to do with the military aid program. I brought him over (to ODMS), and he was in charge of the details of the military program. Theodore Tannenwald was my (Assistant Director and) Chief of Staff and, whenever I wasn't there, he was in charge of the organization. He was extremely effective. He was a lawyer, but he had been with me when I was the Special Assistant to the President. He had worked in the Pentagon and had a very close relationship with Lovett. We did our business with General Marshall or Lovett, I think mostly with Lovett. General Marshall didn't want to get into the details of it, so that we dealt largely with Lovett, whether he was the Deputy or the Secretary of Defense.

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Tannenwald had no difficulties.

I have a note here that Mr. Tannenwald told me we had once to go to President Truman because we (ODMS and DoD) couldn't agree. There was a very serious conflict of interest between the needs of NATO and the building up of requirements for our own reserve forces in the United States. This was particularly true of tanks, I think probably aircraft too. There were certain key items. Whatever we sent abroad, it was quite natural that the Pentagon thought we were stealing it from our own requirements. Lovett was very broad-minded, and we settled these questions without undue hesitation. The decisions were my responsibility, and Tannenwald tells me that we settled it all amicably except for the one case we had to take to Truman. I don't know which way the decision went.

CONDIT: I haven't seen that; that worries me.

HARRIMAN: This is his memory.

CONDIT: One case went to Truman?

HARRIMAN: One case, a disagreement on allocation. I'm not sure whether it was a disagreement so much as it was such an important decision that the President should have known about it. I think it was probly a case where, in order to strengthen NATO, it meant a serious postponement of the equipping of some of our own units; and I think we probably both felt the President should be informed about it. I don't believe that Lovett and I would not have been able to work out an agreement.

CONDIT: That's hard to believe, from all I've heard.

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HARRIMAN: On the other hand, I can very well see that the decision to deprive our forces and send the equipment abroad was one that should not be taken without the knowledge and authority of the President. It's an indication of how tight the situation was at that time from the standpoint of certain types of equipment. I particularly remember the tanks.

You have a question about personnel. If you take the list of my staff as Special Assistant to the President, they were all transferred to my staff in the Office of the Director for Mutual Security. They were Tannenwald, who was really my principal chief of staff; Linc Gordon on economic matters; Sam Berger on labor matters; Brig. General (Frank N.) Roberts on military matters. I had for a while Charlie Collingwood on public relations questions, but he resigned and was replaced by (Thomas W. Wilson). George Elsey was my assistant. I added Ohly because of his knowledge of the details of the European requirements.

CONDIT: He had been right in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and then he had gone under Bruce at the State Department. I've had long talks with him and he's very helpful. Very much an admirer of yours.

HARRIMAN: He worked very cooperatively and it was a very smooth operation. I think Linc Gordon probably helped me deal with the economic problems with John Kenny and also with Jack (Jonathan) Bingham who was the head (Deputy Administrator) of the Point IV program.

CONDIT: I found two places that seem to indicate friction between

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ODMS and the OSD. One was in the relationship with General (Clark L.) Ruffner over in OSD. Tannenwald was very concerned that OSD appeared to be bypassing ODMS, especially on budget matters and the allocation of money. There is a very strong letter of protest from Tannenwald.

HARRIMAN: Did he sign it?

CONDIT: Yes, he signed it.

HARRIMAN: Where was I? I must have been away or I would have signed it probably. Anyway, it proves the fact that he was in charge when I was away.

CONDIT: This was in 1952. I can't give you the exact date, but I can look it up. (April 8, 1952).

HARRIMAN: But he would have been in touch with me about things of that kind.

CONDIT: Yes. As a matter of fact, OSD made the statement to General Ruffner that he should answer the letter because he was apparently the one who was at fault.

HARRIMAN: Was it corrected?

CONDIT: Apparently; yes indeed.

HARRIMAN: Tannenwald was very, very effective with the Pentagon because he had worked there and understood them and knew how to deal with them.

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CONDIT: Now the second place where I found some friction comes later in 1952 where you yourself signed the correspondence. This is the matter of priorities set by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for D-Day forces and for D-plus-three through D-plus-fifteen forces.* Do you remember that?

HARRIMAN: No, I don't. But I was very much into detail, and this shows how much in detail I became with these plans.

CONDIT: You were very persistent too! I asked Ohly about this, and he said he could only guess as to why you got into this detail concerning JCS priorities. He suggested that the end-item problem was so great by that time that you were trying to create more impetus for getting more end items to Europe by getting a higher priority for D-plus-three forces.

HARRIMAN: I don't remember at all, but of course I had a very strong sense of the obligation that we had taken and I knew what they were at the time of the Three Wise Men. I would have been very strongly for the United States fulfilling fully the obligations that it took, because the other countries also took obligations. If you want to know what my emotions would have been in this, it was to see that we carried out our commitments to our allies. So that's the only reason I can imagine why I would have been moving so vigorously.

* This controversy, which lasted from January into October 1952, was apparently eventually sent to the President, and is probably the same problem referred to by Mr. Tannenwald.

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CONDIT: Towards the end of 1952 there must have been some strong feelings that, if we meant what we said about NATO, we had to make a real commitment and put some end items there. Was the ending of the administration also a factor? Since the Truman administration was coming to an end by the fall of 1952, was this a part of the tidying up process?

HARRIMAN: I don't know. It may have very well have been. It all worked on the whole rather smoothly, didn't you find it so?

CONDIT: I think so. I get the impression from talking to people that this was the great age of government, when everyone knew everybody and trusted everybody and cooperated with everybody. And when they didn't agree, they worked it out.

HARRIMAN: I thoroughly endorse that because you had Lovett, Acheson, and myself, who were . . . .

CONDIT: All Yale!

HARRIMAN: All Yale! It wasn't that we were "all Yale," but we had all worked together in government also, and we all had the same objectives. Of course, Kenny was extremely able as my Deputy on the economic side, and he had developed during the Marshall Plan days of cooperation, so there was the maximum amount of cooperation. I'm not saying everything went smoothly -- I pointed out that Tannenwald remembers very much the real struggle in the beginning over the allocation of items in short supply, and he remembers particularly tanks.

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This was the pull of our services' requirements against the requirements of the allies -- but things were settled. I do believe it was a period when government functioned particularly well, not because we were friends and gave in to each other, but because we had the same general objectives: being for NATO, believing in working with our allies, believing that we had certain responsibilities if we demanded it of them. We were not just friends; we were intellectually very much in favor of the policies that were being carried out. It was natural that the Chiefs of Staff had the pressure of the requirements of our services. It was perfectly natural that they should have been insistent on demands and that these were not always carried out.

I'm interested that you called this . . . . What do you call it, the "Golden Age"? I thought it was an age of effective government. I've always been strongly in sympathy with the idea that economic and military aid should be tied together under one direction. Military power is a protection for the social and political and economic life of a nation, but it can destroy and tax the economic side too greatly and weaken the security of a nation. On the other hand, it has to be sufficiently strong to give political insurance, to have people feel they can invest. I always felt the three subjects were very closely aligned. That is why I wanted NATO to have a leadership that brought into focus the political and economic points of view.

CONDIT: Do you remember anything about the Lovett-Ismay Agreement

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made at the Lisbon Conference? In order to get the British to support the 50-50 percent sharing on the costs of four air bases, we had to agree to buy $28 million worth of offshore procurement in England?

HARRIMAN: I only have a very general remembrance of it. But that was typical of Lovett: He was ready to recognize the economic side as well as the military. It exemplifies the necessity of having close collaboration between the economic and military.

CONDIT: Was your impression of Mr. Lovett that he was effective?

HARRIMAN: Very effective. One of the most effective executives that I worked with during the war and postwar period.

CONDIT: Yet unsung and more or less unremembered, I think.

HARRIMAN: Well, he was a man who never pushed himself, but he was always ready when General Marshall did anything. Marshall always called for Lovett. Do you remember when he became Secretary of State, he called for Lovett? And it was Mr. Lovett who handled the presentation of the Marshall Plan to Congress. Acheson had very little to do with the Marshall Plan after the Harvard speech because he resigned and Lovett took over. Acheson was one of those -- George Kennan, (William) Clayton, myself, and others -- who were pressing, who saw the importance of it; but it was Lovett then who was Under Secretary and who organized a very effective group in presenting the case to the Congress. They used a good number of the figures in the study that had been made by the special committee that the President

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appointed which was known as the Harriman Committee, a citizens' committee of business, labor, commerce, farmers, and so forth. Now I was Secretary of Commerce then, but Lovett did the detail work -- carried it out. General Marshall testified himself, I'm sure on figures that were given him by Lovett, and his prestige was such that his testimony had enormous value. He also made speeches around the country. But I agree with you that Lovett was one of the unsung. I don't know that he was entirely unsung; he was one of the heroes of the war when he was Assistant Secretary of War for Air. He was very effective in those days.

CONDIT: Well, when I saw Mr. Lovett, he was one of the most charming and most unassuming people that I had ever met. Somebody said to me that General Marshall was led "kicking and screaming" to the Marshall Plan but that once he espoused it and saw its value he was very good about supporting it.

HARRIMAN: I would never be so undignified as to say that General Marshall was being led "kicking and screaming," but I will say that General Marshall was the last to give in on not being able to work with the Russians. He remembered that Stalin had kept his military agreement to attack when we landed in Normandy; he knew how important it was. There were 199 German divisions on the Russian front and 60 satellite. That was part of the agreement, that Stalin would attack in order to hold down the German divisions. We would have had great trouble if they hadn't done that. General Marshall felt that they

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had kept the important agreements, and he just couldn't believe they wouldn't continue to cooperate. In fact, when Bedell Smith took my place in Moscow, he talked to General Marshall, of course. Marshall said that we must listen to Harriman very carefully. I was very close to General Marshall during the war. He had been extraordinarily considerate of all my needs, he had kept me fully posted on military strategy, and he made it possible when I attended meetings to deal with them. This was not a lack of confidence in me; he had wanted me to take Hopkins' place in the White House and become Secretary of the Cabinet. I don't know if you knew that.

CONDIT: No, I didn't.

HARRIMAN: It's in the Marshall book. This wasn't because he had a lack of confidence in me, but he said, "Harriman was under such great difficulties during the war that he has become a bit discouraged; discount his point of view on the Russians." Of course, my point of view was the most accurate when Bedell Smith told me that story. I'm telling it only to show that General Marshall -- this happened in the winter of 1946 -- still believed that he could negotiate with the Russians. It wasn't until General Marshall himself went to Moscow and found Molotov so utterly obdurate they could come to no agreement that he came back and finally decided it was impossible to come to agreement. That meeting was in March or April 1947 and it was after that experience that he accepted the need for the Marshall Plan. Even then he gave the Russians the opportunity to come along at the end.

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CONDIT: Did he give the Russians or did he give the Eastern satellites the opportunity, or both?

HARRIMAN: Both. He gave the Russians. Molotov came to Paris at the request of (Georges) Bidault and (Ernest) Bevin. The three of them were discussing things and Molotov would not accept that there would be a cooperative plan. Each country should have its own recovery plan. He asked the United States how much money they were willing to give and then said it should be divided on the basis that those who had suffered the most would get the most. That meant the Russians would get the most. When Bevin and Bidault said no, "We've got to accept the Marshall proposal of a cooperative reconstruction program, a recovery program," he got up and left. Then the Russians declared war on the Marshall Plan. Poland and Czechoslovakia were ready to join, but Moscow refused to let them. But it is true that it was not until after the unpleasantness of the Moscow Conference in April 1947 that General Marshall gave up hope.

It's very interesting that our two generals, General Marshall and General Eisenhower, were the very last to see the Russian intransigence. This is important to the argument against the revisionists, who say we brought the cold war on. I know that General Eisenhower was very slow to believe, because he felt he had a very special relationship with Marshal Zukov and he felt Marshal Zukov would succeed Stalin. I'm going into this only because of the rather amusing expression that you have; who invented this "kicking and screaming"?

CONDIT: I shouldn't tell!

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HARRIMAN: But General Marshall moved into it very reluctantly and only after the Moscow meeting, and then of course he gave them the opportunity to join the recovery program. Whether he thought it was a considered risk or whether he thought they should be given a final opportunity doesn't make any difference. He felt the opportunity should be offered them. He was still ready to work with them. General Marshall's attitude really condemns the whole revisionist school that thinks it was the United States, not Russia, that brought us into the cold war.

CONDIT: I can't find anything that upholds the revisionist school.

HARRIMAN: You have these questions down here. There's one very important thing, and that is that I was very anxious to have the representation in Paris parallel the responsibility that I had as Mutual Security Director, namely, both military and economic. Therefore I appointed Bill (William H. Jr.) Draper to be the Special Representative in Europe and I got Fred (Frederick L.) Anderson to be Deputy Special Representative. He had been with the Air Force and retired, do you remember that?

CONDIT: No, I don't remember that.

HARRIMAN: Well he had been commander of the Eighth Air Force Bomber Command in England and had been deputy to "Tooey" (General Carl) Spaatz at the time of the landings. He had a little murmur in his heart or something which prevented his staying on, or I think he would have been Chief of Staff for the Air Force. He was a good friend of mine; I knew him in Europe. I appointed those two men, both of them with a military

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background, in order to try to make sure that when General Eisenhower took over, if he were elected President, there would be a continuation of this coordination in Paris as well as in Washington. I thought that since Bill Draper was a Republican and Fred Andersen had had a high position under General Eisenhower's command during the invasion of the continent, he would pick one of them to succeed. Unfortunately, the new State Department didn't like to have a strong representation in Paris. They wanted the control to be in Washington, and both men were retired. They appointed a textile manufacturer who knew nothing about any of these things, a very charming gentleman, to be representative in Paris. My whole conception collapsed!

CONDIT: As it collapsed in Washington, because Harold Stassen was the very wrong person.

HARRIMAN: I did everything I possibly could to educate him, persuade him, everything else; but he really was . . . . He not only got rid of the good people but was rather unkind in the way he got rid of them. Didn't you find it so?

CONDIT: Well, he was kind to Ohly. He asked Ohly to be his Deputy, but Ohly refused. Ohly never took a presidential position. In fact, Ohly said that Stassen needed to get a Republican, Ohly being a Democrat. Stassen said all right, but he made him his acting director for the very beginning period while he was away, so that Ohly found himself at the first three meetings of Eisenhower's cabinet.

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HARRIMAN: Yes, I had cabinet rank of course.

CONDIT: Yes, well he was representing Stassen who also had cabinet rank. He was at the first three cabinet meetings, and he was absolutely floored apparently because no one knew anybody. The cabinet members did not know each other and only a few of them had previous government experience. Mr. Nixon had and Mr. Dulles had, but the other people had not. They came in with a strong sense of mission but no knowledge.

HARRIMAN: The whole thing pretty much petered out afterwards.

CONDIT: Well, Mr. Ohly felt there was friction between Dulles and Stassen. Do you know anything about that?

HARRIMAN: Not a thing. But Stassen had one objective and that was the Presidency.

CONDIT: I was wondering how the French cooperated. Mr. Lovett seems to feel that the French were very, very difficult to work with, that when it got down to the nitty-gritty they were very grasping and very hard. Could you say something about the issue of the Germans coming into NATO or the Germans being accepted as part of the defense force. Did you find that a particularly difficult thorn?

HARRIMAN: The French people I dealt with were not difficult. Jean Monnet was very cooperative. I knew him intimately, and he was very cooperative. During the Marshall Plan days I found the French very cooperative and working to unify Europe.

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The British were the ones that were standoffish on such things as the European Payments Union. They didn't want to go ahead. They didn't want to have anything affect their sterling area. And they were always resisting my insistence that the ministers of the OEEC have a permanent ministerial chairman full time rather than rotating. I had great difficulty in getting them to accept that. I wanted (Paul-Henri) Spaak, who was a vigorous man, a Socialist incidentally. You know the British were Socialists then. Mr. (Dirk) Stikker, who was finally agreed to, was a good man, but he didn't quite have the drive. Spaak was one of the ablest men in Europe. I found the British sticky, rather than the French, during that period when we were trying to get the European Payments Union going. This really helped to break down trade barriers: We had countries going into a deficit position, and we put in $300 million to make the payments balance out, and it was really the reason trade began to move freely in Europe. It made a major contribution.

Maurice Petsche was the Finance Minister of France. He cooperated fully. Who was the Prime Minister of France who made the very famous agreement or rapprochement between France and Germany -- Adenauer and the Frenchman who's an Alsatian and who had the German name? (Robert Schuman). They made, I think, one of the most historical steps. Schuman was very able. It's when DeGaulle came in that we had the big trouble with the French!

CONDIT: I think on the defense side there was a lot more trouble about getting German troops into NATO.

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HARRIMAN: We had a lot of trouble getting the French to agree to let the Germans into NATO, and I was opposed to our helping the French in Indochina. Roosevelt had been opposed to letting the French back into Indochina; so I was opposed to helping them.

CONDIT: Who wanted to help the French in Indochina?

HARRIMAN: Acheson. He sent me a rather rude telegram, the only rude telegram I think I ever got from the Secretary, saying something to the effect, "Your job is Europe, keep your nose out of Asia."

CONDIT: He used those words?

HARRIMAN: It wasn't quite those words, but that was the gist of it. I'm using slang. He was very anxious to get the French to agree to EDC (European Defense Community). The French resisted EDC. I was never very strong for it, and the British didn't like EDC either. But Acheson was very strong for EDC and we were strongly for it as a way to bring the Germans in. It was a matter of merging the German troops -- no unit should be bigger than a brigade, something of that kind. Churchill was against it, said you can't get men to fight that way, men would only fight for their own country. But the French were reluctant too on that, so maybe that's what Lovett was talking about. I was for taking the bull by the horns and bringing the Germans into NATO. We brought them into the OEEC, where they functioned very well, and I wanted to see them come into NATO, rather than this complicated . . . .

CONDIT: What year was this that you wanted them to come into NATO?

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HARRIMAN: I don't know. This was during the Truman period. This afterwards happened, of course, because the EDC collapsed.

CONDIT: The French failed to ratify it in August 1954, I think.

HARRIMAN: Yes, they were very sticky on the EDC, had little enthusiasm for it. It was a way, some thought, to get over the resistance of some countries to Germany's joining NATO, but I didn't think it was very practical. I think that was the reason the French were sticky. I found the French very cooperative during the Marshall Plan days. But not when M. DeGaulle came in!

CONDIT: I get the impression that the Military Production and Supply Board and later the Defense Production Board never really operated very efficiently insofar as getting economic and military production going.

HARRIMAN: I can't remember. As to matters of offshore procurement, we did some real work in trying to get standardization in those days. I was very strong for standardization, and Draper and Anderson were very strong for standardization. Fred Anderson got started on the building of European fighter aircraft, a standard aircraft that was to be built in several countries; and we worked very hard for standardization and made more progress then. We were, of course, for using offshore procurement to help that. I was for using offshore procurement in lieu of economic aid in order to achieve objectives. I think Lovett approved it too.

On these names you have on this list, do you want me to run over them?

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CONDIT: I would like it very much.

HARRIMAN: If Bissell and Cleveland had anything to do with it, I don't know; I think Bissell left, but they were under Kenny. Lovett, Nash, Foster, and Olmsted -- I did all my business with Lovett. Bill Foster was finished, wasn't he?

CONDIT: He came in as Lovett's Deputy; he left ECA and came into the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

HARRIMAN: Frank Nash I remember. I don't remember Ruffner and Olmsted. Foster and Nash were very cooperative. Obviously, Foster would be cooperative because he had been my Deputy in Paris and he had been my Under Secretary of Commerce.

CONDIT: What sort of man was he?

HARRIMAN: He was a small businessman, very competent. He was a Republican. I brought him in when I was Secretary of Commerce, as my senior assistant; I don't think they had deputies in those days. He was my second in command of Commerce. I wanted to get a Republican that had the confidence of people, and Paul Hoffman recommended him. Than he went on to more important things. He went with me to Paris and then he became the director of ECA.

CONDIT: Lovett said something about helping him get that job. When you look back on your overseas work, NATO and Mutual Security, what do you think each of these efforts accomplished?

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HARRIMAN: I think NATO was essential. After we had the Berlin blockade, it was absolutely essential. You couldn't have a recovery in Europe without a sense of security; you had to have security. Although I disliked seeing economic resources being devoted to military matters, I was strongly for it because it was absolutely essential. I felt the coordination of the three activities was essential, because you should not spend more money on military affairs than the country could afford, you would do more damage than good. On the other hand, you had to spend enough in order to have the economic recovery go forward and to encourage investments. So I thought the whole period was very important. I agree with your idea that it was a great period in government. Not only were the individuals ready to cooperate, but the machinery that was established provided a way through which these men could function and decisions could automatically be made after consultation with those involved. I was all for it, and I am all for it. I think, as you look back on it, it was a combination of good machinery with the right kind of people under President Truman's leadership.

CONDIT: Certainly the Mutual Security Agency and the ODMS were probably the most rational and logical organization for foreign aid that we've ever had. Do you feel that Truman captured the knack of doing all this in his second administration? Do you think he managed better in the second administration than in his first?

HARRIMAN: I think he did pretty well in 1948 before his election. I think that President Truman, like anyone else, advanced in his knowledge

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of action through his experience. He was a man of limited experience when he became President, but he developed at an extraordinary speed. I have tremendous respect for Truman. He was very humble when I first met him in 1945 when I returned from Moscow. I think it was within a week after President Roosevelt had died. I wanted to tell him about the difficulties we were having with Stalin, and I found he had already read all the messages, the Yalta decisions, and so forth. Then I learned that he was an avid reader, extraordinary reader, one of his great points. He read reports in detail and then absorbed them and understood them. But he was very humble. He said, "I was not elected President, it was Roosevelt. I must find out what his policies were and then carry them out." I was a little afraid he would be too humble and not take any initiative, because the situation was changing so rapidly; but then he moved very fast with the changing situation. Took hold. He made a few mistakes, but remarkably few. I think he was an amazing President. Naturally he was better later on than at the beginning because he had more experience, more knowledge, and greater confidence in himself.

[redacted]LY

3038 N STREET
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20007

March 23, 1982

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JUL 24 2019

Dear Mr. Goldberg:

I have had an opportunity to review the two interviews I gave in 1975 and 1977 as part of the Defense Department's Oral History program.

I am perfectly willing for your office to share these interviews with other military branches which have historical offices. I agree to have these two transcripts open for research but with the stipulation that quotes are restricted. I would ask that anyone wishing to quote from the transcripts get my written permission prior to any publication.

Sincerely,

W. Averell Harriman

W. Averell Harriman

Mr. Alfred Goldberg
OSD Historian
Office of the Assistant
Secretary of Defense
Washington, DC 20301

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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20007

January 29, 1982

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Dear Mr. Goldberg:

I have received your letter of January 25 regarding two interviews with me, one in 1975 and the other in 1977.

I am unable to answer your question about their access in that I will have to read them before I can give my permission.

I will be away for a month and doubt that I have any objection, but I regret I cannot give you an answer unless I see copies of the interviews.

Sincerely,

W. Averell Harriman

W. Averell Harriman

Mr. Alfred Goldberg
OSD Historian
Office of the Assistant
Secretary of Defense
Washington, DC 20301

I have not copies to the interviews and would like you to send them to me so that I may reply to your req of for circulation