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The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

**SECRETARY CYRUS R. VANCE**

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*Initial interview date: November 3, 1969*

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### INTERVIEW

*Q: Let's begin by identifying you, sir. You're Cyrus R.. Vance, and your official positions in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations were entirely in the Department of Defense, as Counsel and as Secretary of the Army and as Deputy Secretary [of Defense]. Then after a time out of the government, you came back as Deputy Chief Negotiator in the Paris peace negotiations in 1968.*

*Your first contact with Mr. Johnson, I suppose, comes in the 1950's while he is still in the Senate. You were Special Counsel for the Committee on Aeronautics and Space?*

VANCE: No, my first connection with President Johnson was at the time of the first Sputnik. Shortly after the first Sputnik went up Senator Johnson called my partner Ed Weisl and asked him if he would be willing to come down to Washington to discuss with Senator Johnson and Senator Russell the possibility of acting as Special Counsel for an investigation which they were contemplating holding with respect to the Defense Department and the impact of the launching of Sputnik on our national security. Shortly after receiving that phone call one early morning, Ed Weisl asked me if I would join him and go down to Washington that morning to meet at noon with Senator Russell and Senator Johnson. I had been doing trial work for my partner, Ed Weisl, and inasmuch as this was going to be a hearing Ed thought it might be helpful if I should come along.

We did go down to Washington that morning and met at noontime with Senator Russell. I cannot recall whether Senator Johnson was present at that meeting, but I do recall that we had an extensive conversation with him later that day. They told us at the time that they contemplated having a hearing which would last two or three weeks and asked if Mr. Weisl could act as Special Counsel. He said that if he did so, he would like me to come along with him and that we would have to consider it further and discuss it with our partners to find out whether they would have any objections to our taking off the time to do this job.

We discussed the general ground rules with Senator Johnson and received his assurance that he would give us full latitude in the preparation of the hearings and in the conducting of the hearings. He, of course, as chairman of the committee would have the final word,

but he contemplated leaving the entire preparation of the hearings and the running of the hearings by-and-large to Mr. Weisl and myself if we should take on the task.

Under those circumstances we concluded on the way back from Washington that if our partners agreed we would be willing to take on the job because we thought that a useful service could be rendered for the country by having meaningful and probing hearings. We were somewhat concerned however because of our lack of knowledge in the area, but we believed that as trial lawyers we probably would be able, with a good staff, to prepare ourselves adequately to handle the job.

*Q: Nobody knew anything about that area at that time, really.*

VANCE: Another thing that impressed us very much in our conversation with Senator Johnson and Senator Russell was their statement to us that they intended this to be a nonpartisan hearing; that this was not to be a witch hunt; that it was to take a look at the strengths and weaknesses without any partisan caste to the investigation. This was appealing to both of us and was one of the strong factors in leading us to the conclusion that this was something that we should take on.

*Q: He didn't say that he was trying to end up any certain place? He wasn't trying to accomplish any certain things by the hearings?*

VANCE: No, he did not. He said he merely wanted to find out what the facts were and then to put the questions to the various witnesses who would be called and to receive their opinions with respect to the direction the United States should go; to find out where we had failed in the past, where the weaknesses lay, where our strengths lay, and where our course should go in the future. But he had no preconceptions about where we should come out in the area.

*Q: Did he specifically indicate that he wanted you to go easy on President Eisenhower, perhaps?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: Just the bipartisan charge would have taken care of that?*

VANCE: That's correct.

*Q: When you did undertake the task, did it work out that way? Did he in fact let you run it as he had indicated he would?*

VANCE: He did indeed. He was one hundred percent good to his word on that. He gave us full and complete authority and a free rein in what witnesses were to be called, [and in] the manner of questioning the witnesses. In each and every case we were permitted to question the witness first, and thereafter to examine each witness after each of the

Senators had had his period of questioning. Usually he kept the period of the Senate questioning to either five or ten minutes per Senator, which wasn't very pleasing to them from time to time. But he felt that if we were going to get on with the business of the hearings and to develop the fullest record that it would be better to have it developed by a staff who had prepared itself very fully than to have it done by some of the Senators who had not had the time to prepare themselves as well.

*Q: Was this the antecedent of the well-publicized strain that was supposed to exist between Senator Johnson and Senator Symington? Symington felt like he didn't have an opportunity to perhaps develop his views as fully as he might have?*

VANCE: In part, I think.

*Q: Was that rift fairly real to the staff that was doing the preparation?*

VANCE: One could notice the tension between the two from time to time, but it wasn't so marked that it marred the hearings in any way.

*Q: No, those hearings got very good press by-and-large, as I recall. What about the impression that you had regarding Mr. Johnson and the military at that time? Did he have a discernible viewpoint toward military men in general? That's a subjective impression, but it might be important from someone who saw it fairly closely.*

VANCE: I really can't recall what feeling or impression he gave with respect to military men, or the Defense Department, or the Services. I would really be just dredging it out of thin air because I don't have any clear recollection on that.

*Q: Which probably indicates it wasn't so strong as to make a big impression on you anyway.*

VANCE: That's right.

*Q: How close was your contact as Assistant Special Counsel during the course of the hearings? Was it fairly extensive--daily, or every other day, or just very briefly--?*

VANCE: No, I probably saw him usually every day, because Mr. Weisl and I worked hand-in-hand on this and every time Mr. Weisl saw him I saw him also. So the contact was very frequent.

*Q: Mr. Weisl, of course, is a long-time personal friend, too. Did your friendship become nonofficial as well as official as Mr. Weisl's was--social as well as business, in other words?*

VANCE: Yes, of course much less than Mr. Weisl's, but Senator Johnson was very kind to me and occasionally used to invite me to his house for a meal.

*Q: Was there any instance of importance in the course of the hearings where he didn't take the advice of yourself and Mr. Weisl?*

VANCE: I recall that we had some difference of opinion concerning General [James M.] Gavin and General Gavin's testimony. As I recall it General Gavin testified late one evening about 10:30 or 11:00 o'clock, and in his testimony he was critical of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This led to a second hearing, which I believe was a closed hearing, at which follow-on testimony was received from General Gavin. The question arose as to how far General Gavin should be pushed in his testimony. Everyone recognized that if he was pushed too far it might mean the end of his career.

*Q: He had not resigned at that time?*

VANCE: No, he had not resigned at that time, and the problem which I recall was how far it was appropriate to push him without jeopardizing his future service as an officer in the Army.

*Q: Mr. Johnson wanted to get more criticism, to push further in that case?*

VANCE: That's correct.

*Q: And then I believe did so. That was one of the headlines that came out of the committee.*

VANCE: That's right.

*Q: What about a final report of the committee? Did you and your staff people write that?*

VANCE: Yes, we did.

*Q: Did Mr. Johnson play any significant role in getting agreement on the substance of it from the other Senators?*

VANCE: He did indeed. We drafted the report, and it was circulated on very short notice to the members of the committee. When I say "we," it was a number of us: Solis Horwitz, George Reedy, Mr. Weisl, myself, Gerry Siegel, and others.

Mr. Johnson displayed the greatest of skill in getting the report through the committee at a short two-and-a-half or three-hour hearing the morning following the completion of our drafting of the report. It was one of the most skillful pieces of diplomatic statesmanship that I have run across. He was able to satisfy the differing views of members of the committee, which in some instances were quite disparate, and to get with a few minor changes unanimous approval of the report.

*Q: Had there been a real serious threat that there was going to be a minority report on the part of some of the Senators?*

VANCE: There was talk to that effect.

*Q: And Johnson's personal activity was, you think, important in preventing it, as it turned out?*

VANCE: Yes, I do.

*Q: You stayed then, or came back later, to work with the Preparedness Subcommittee of the Senate Armed services Committee while Johnson was still Chairman?*

VANCE: No. The same committee, which was the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, that did that hearing reached a conclusion that it would hold periodic hearings following the closure of the main body of the hearings over a period of time for the purpose of holding the feet of the Defense Department officials to the fire. So that all the subsequent hearings that took place on a bimonthly or trimonthly basis throughout 1958-59 were merely a continuation of the previous hearings.

*Q: They were more or less recessed in that case, then.*

VANCE: That's correct. The original hearings, rather than lasting for the two weeks that we were told lasted as I recall about four-and-a-half or five months. Thereafter we used to spend two or three days every two months in these follow up hearings so that we put in a good deal of time in the hearings over a period of two years.

*Q: What was your connection then with the Committee on Space and Aeronautics?*

VANCE: It was decided by the leadership in the Senate, sparked as I recall by Senator Johnson, that it was necessary to create a new organization to handle the developments in space which it was obvious in the post-Sputnik period would be forthcoming, and that this should be a civilian organization. Therefore it was determined that hearings should be held to take testimony as to what form this organization should have and to draft an act which would establish this organization and set out the ground rules for the future conduct of the space activities of the United States. Senator Johnson who chaired that Special Committee on Space and Astronautics, again asked Mr. Weisl and me if we would act as consulting counsel for the committee during the hearings, which we agreed to do. Therefore we, along with the regular staff which had been assigned to work with this Special Committee, conducted the hearings which led to the drafting of the Space Act.

*Q: Was Mr. Johnson as involved in this as he had been in his earlier task with these post-Sputnik investigations? Or was he that closely interested?*

VANCE: He was very closely interested. I don't believe he devoted quite as much time to it as he did the missile and satellite hearings, as they were called, but he did devote a considerable amount of attention to it.

*Q: I don't recall any major episodes that got in public prints about that hearing.*

VANCE: No, it was a pretty straightforward hearing. It was well conducted by him--took the necessary testimony and came up with what I think has proved to be a pretty sound piece of legislation.

*Q: You then were back in 1960--similar to the things you had been doing--with the missile gap, as they were called, investigations. Allegedly, at least, they are not quite so nonpartisan as the earlier ones had been. Is that a true impression that one gathers?*

VANCE: A degree of partisanship did creep in. I don't think because Mr. Johnson wanted it that way, but this became such a sensitive issue in a pre-election period that regardless of what anybody wanted to see, it did take on a partisan tinge. I know that people within the Administration felt that the allegations with respect to a missile gap were tinged with partisanship.

I think that most of the members of the staff felt, that on the basis of the evidence which was available, there was indeed a missile gap. This was the testimony which was being elicited from the witnesses so that the staff, and I think a majority of the members of the committee, particularly on the Democratic side, didn't feel that this was a partisan charge. But, as I say, because of the sensitivity of the charges at that particular point in the pre-election period, it inevitably became a partisan issue.

*Q: This was in the spring of 1960, I suppose?*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: Was Mr. Johnson obviously an active candidate at that time? Did it show up in his activities that you could see?*

VANCE: He was talked of as a candidate. He kept saying that he didn't want to run and would not run--that he had too much to do in the Senate--but still there was a tremendous amount of speculation and comment in the newspapers that he would be a candidate.

*Q: And his immediate staff acted like he might be running?*

VANCE: Yes, they did. I think that the members of his immediate staff felt that he would be a candidate.



*Q: Was there a good deal of jockeying in that episode between the Johnson and the Kennedy forces for a favorable image for their respective heroes?*

VANCE: I think the answer is yes.

*Q: Just sort of going forward and looking back--Mr. Kennedy when he took office would say that the missile gap was perhaps not as real as had been advertised. Why would the professional work that was done by this committee have in your opinion received a different impression than that?*

VANCE: I don't think he said when he took office what you have suggested he said. I think what happened in the period immediately after he took office is that Mr. McNamara, in reexamining the data which had become available during that last few months--four or five months--preceding the change of administration, came to the conclusion that there was less of a gap than had been predicted by the witnesses who had been testifying. Mr. McNamara being an honest man stated that this was his conclusion. President Kennedy then accepted the conclusion which his Secretary of Defense had reached.

The specific answer to your question is, in my judgment, that the evaluations which were made were honest evaluations, but as more evidence became available the facts simply showed that the Soviets did not take a course which it was believed by the CIA and others that they would take, with the result that the missile gap was either nonexistent, or not as large anyway, as people had predicted it would be.

*Q: It's a difference of prophets then and not a difference of some lack of work or non-professional outlook.*

VANCE: Right.

*Q: You went to Los Angeles in the summer of 1960, I believe.*

VANCE: Yes, I did.

*Q: Did you go as the stated supporter of any candidate?*

VANCE: Again, Mr. Weisl, as I recall it, was asked by Senator Johnson to come and assist him in Los Angeles. Ed asked me if I would come along with him, and I said I would be very happy to do so. That's how I got there.

*Q: But you were not an active political supporter in the sense that you were doing political errands and so on, or were you?*

VANCE: We did call on some delegations. I did call on people whom I knew in the West Virginia delegation, and Eddie and I called on people whom we knew in the Delaware delegation. Those were the only two delegations with whom I had any personal contact.

*Q: Were you ever asked for your advice or your opinion regarding whether or not Mr. Johnson ought to accept the Vice Presidency?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: You would not have been involved in those meetings?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: Once the campaign occurred and the election was successfully held, it was commonly believed, at least, that those men who had been associated with Mr. Johnson in one capacity or another got into the new Administration at least partly because of his influence. Do you think that's true in your case?*

VANCE: I think partly true. The procedure which was used by Mr. McNamara was to talk with a large number of individuals out of which he called a long list of names. He then cross-checked these names with other people in whose judgment he had confidence. He then arrived at a list of final names whom he wished to associate with him in positions of responsibility in the Department of Defense. Prior to completing his check I understand that, in my case, and I know in the case of John Cormally, he did check or had someone check for him, what the view of senator Johnson, the Vice President-to-be, was with respect to me and about me and whether or not he had any reservations about my qualifications to serve in a Presidential appointee's slot. As I understand it this was the contact.

*Q: That was the extent of his activity?*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: The contact of the Vice President with the Department of Defense is not regularized in any way.*

VANCE: No, it's not.

*Q: What kind of contact did Mr. Johnson have as Vice President? I know the State Department, for example, assigned a briefing officer to Mr. Johnson from time to time. Did the Defense Department have such a connection?*

VANCE: Yes, the Defense Department had a military officer, and there may have been two--at least one military officer was assigned to his permanent staff. I believe it was Colonel [Howard L.] Burris, but I may be wrong.

*Q: That's the name I have. His job was just to keep the Vice President informed of what the Defense Department was doing in any given instance?*

VANCE: And to act as liaison for routine chores from time to time that might come up. In terms of, you know, seeking information with respect to substantive matters, the Vice President would deal directly with the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, or other Presidential appointees.

*Q: Those other Presidential appointees--did that include you?*

VANCE: Yes, it included me as General Counsel.

*Q: Did you see much of him as Vice President?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: He didn't have need to get involved too frequently with your level?*

VANCE: Very seldom, when I was General Counsel.

*Q: What about when you were elevated then? Did he play much of a part in your elevations to Secretary of the Army?*

VANCE: I believe that President Kennedy consulted him about it, but I think the decision was President Kennedy's.

*Q: Your implication was you did have a little closer contact with him after you became Secretary of the Army?*

VANCE: No. He really didn't have many problems with matters which put him in contact with the Department of Defense as the Vice President. You see, his principal responsibilities at that point were his legislative responsibilities on the Hill, his general advice and consultation with the President on domestic matters, and his special responsibilities in the field of space and astronautics. So that the only other contact he had was as a member of the National Security Council, and in that respect he would be dealing directly with the Secretary of Defense and not with the Secretary of the Army.

*Q: Do you recall the first time that you saw Mr. Johnson as President?*

VANCE: No, I don't.

*Q: Were you already Deputy Secretary by then, or was that shortly thereafter?*

VANCE: No, he appointed me Deputy Secretary of Defense, and I was appointed Deputy Secretary of Defense in January of 1964.

*Q: Immediately after he had taken office as President.*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: So he did talk to you about that appointment, I assume.*

VANCE: No. Again, I think that he acted on the recommendation of Bob McNamara, and Bob told me that the President had approved it.

*Q: And you were just made Deputy Secretary without having a specific instruction or charge from the President.*

VANCE: That's right. He always operated in that way. At least in our Department, he believed very strongly that the man through whom you ought to deal was the head of the Department. So Bob McNamara was the man in charge of the Department, and he would deal through Bob. Now when I became Deputy Secretary of Defense, if Bob was out and I was Acting Secretary, of course he would deal with me. Or if he couldn't reach Bob on the phone because Bob was up on the Hill testifying, then he would call me directly on the phone. But he was a man who dealt through the senior man in the organization.

*Q: Did he consult you in a nonofficial capacity in any way during that early period?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: As an old acquaintance?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: Was the first mission that you undertook as special envoy for the President the Dominican crisis in 1965?*

VANCE: No. Almost immediately after I became Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Panama situation exploded, and the President asked Tom Mann and me to go to Panama to see what we could do about cooling the situation down there. Tom and I did go and spent several days during the fighting down there until it was brought under control. Then we came back and made certain recommendations to the State Department, the Defense Department, and to the President with respect to what steps we felt should be taken to try and ameliorate the situation and to face the problems which had to be faced if you were going to have any hope of permanent stability and peace in Panama.

*Q: When a situation like that arises suddenly, as that one did, what was the procedure by which the President appoints you to go down there?*

VANCE: He called a meeting early in the morning. At that meeting, as I recall it, were the Secretary of State, Deputy Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, myself, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Tom Mann, who was the Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs--or maybe at that point he was even the Under Secretary; I think he may have been, as a matter of fact--and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, McGeorge Bundy, his special assistant. I believe that was about all who were present. The President reviewed the situation, received the recommendations of his advisors, and determined that under the circumstances that it was necessary to send this small group down immediately to Panama, and by noon we were on the way to Panama.

*Q: That very day.*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: Do you get fairly specific instructions in such cases as that?*

VANCE: I can't recall the specific instructions which we were given. My recollection is that they were non very specific but rather, "Go down. Determine the facts as you see them. Report back what you see and your recommendations as to how to get on top of the immediate crisis and to stop the killing that is going on. Secondly, take a look at the long-term problems and be prepared when you come back to make recommendations to me as to how you think we should move in order to find long-term solutions to the problem in Panama."

*Q: Did Mr. Johnson customarily give his people such as yourself on a mission like that fairly wide latitude in the kind of things you could do?*

VANCE: Well, certainly he did in my mission to Cyprus. He gave me the widest latitude. The same was true in the mission that I undertook for him in Korea in the post-Blue House, post-Pueblo period.

*Q: Is that because you'd proved yourself in, say Panama and the Dominican Republic? He kind of tested you out and then gave you more latitude later?*

VANCE: I really don't know.

*Q: There was no specific issue involved in the Panama thing that required President final decision while you were in Panama that you had to get clearance from there, was there?*

VANCE: Not that I recall.

*Q: I was wondering about the problem of getting a decision when you're in the field like that, from Washington.*

VANCE: I remember at one point talking to Bob McNamara directly from a car radio right next to the fence along the edge of the Canal Zone and across the street from where much of the fighting had been taking place. We were able to talk very clearly with each other and for us to pass on our conclusions to him. Of course, this was over an open circuit so that we were guarded in what we said.

*Q: Mr. Johnson, I believe in that instance was involved personally and to the extent of talking on the telephone to the President of Panama.*

VANCE: I believe he did talk to the President before we went down, and the President said that he was sending some emissaries down to meet with him.

*Q: Was Mr. Johnson pretty good at this kind of personal diplomacy himself?*

VANCE: Yes, he was.

*Q: That was effective?*

VANCE: Yes, I thought it was effective.

*Q: The press would like to have alleged, I think, sometimes that Mr. Johnson's style was not exactly similar to those of some of the foreign chiefs of state, but it didn't interfere there as far as you could tell?*

VANCE: It certainly didn't. I think it was helpful.

*Q: The next crisis then would be the Dominican one, I suppose, the following year, which is a good deal more substantial one than the Panama one?*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: How much were you involved in the early events of our involvement there--the meetings and so on during the week prior to the actual sending of troops?*

VANCE: I don't recall attending any meetings at the White House prior to the sending of troops. I do recall discussing the building tensions with Mr. McNamara and with members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I do recall discussing the contingency plans which existed and the need to re-look at the contingency plans to see whether or not the forces provided by the contingency plans were sufficient in case it was necessary to move.

On the day that the decision to go into the Dominican Republic was made, I was not at the meeting at which the decision was made. I was back at the Department of Defense. I received a call from the White House, I believe it was Mr. McNamara, telling me that the decision had been made and that we should take the necessary steps to get the wheels moving. Thereafter I did attend a meeting--I believe it was the next morning although it

may have been later that day. I believe it was the next morning--at which the situation was reviewed. It was determined that it would be advisable to send a team who would act as emissaries of the President to the Dominican Republic. At that meeting it was decided that there should be three of us--Mac Bundy, Tom Mann, and myself. As a matter of fact, there were four--

*Q: Tony Solomon?*

VANCE: No. [Jack] Vaughn, who was Assistant Secretary of Latin American Affairs. Tony Solomon didn't come down until later on.

Once the decision was made, the team was put together very rapidly, and we flew immediately to Puerto Rico where we split up with Mac Bundy and I talking with Juan Bosch in Puerto Rico, and Tom Mann and Vaughn going over to Santo Domingo to view the situation there.

Coming back again, I do recall participating in the carrying out of the contingency plans after the decision was made. I remember going to the State Department and sitting there with George Ball as the decisions were being implemented to land troops in Santo Domingo. I remember we were in constant touch with the Department of Defense. Decisions had to be made continually with respect to a number of matters such as whether we should try and air-drop troops in during the night, or whether we should wait and bring them in in the morning. Fortunately, we decided to do the latter, after full consultation with the Department of Defense, because it turned out that our maps were faulty and that if our troops had jumped in there in the darkness, there would have been a substantial number of casualties. We learned some lessons from that about updating all the maps which were to be used in connection with contingency operations.

*Q: One of the criticisms, before you leave that subject, of the whole operation by the critics of it, was that the force used was far more numerous than would have been required to do the job. Whose decision would that have been?*

VANCE: That was a decision which was reached by the President on the recommendation of Mr. McNamara and myself. Both of us felt that one of the lessons that history teaches is that if you are going to use military force you should use sufficient force to accomplish your task; and that if you put in sufficient force, you may be able to cut down the bloodshed. One of the difficulties that you find is that an inadequate force almost invariably tends to find itself being overrun, which leads to more fighting and more bloodshed on both sides.

*Q: And ultimately more force.*

VANCE: That's right, so that we made the determination, or advised, that if we were going to go in, we ought to put in enough troops and you ought to err on the side of

having put in too many rather than putting in too few. So it was on our advice that a force of some twenty-odd thousand was put in rather than a smaller force.

*Q: You had contingency plans, I suppose, that would have put in smaller numbers or even larger numbers.*

VANCE: Of course, this took place over a period of time, and the numbers were changed as you went on. Originally the force that was put ashore was a battalion-landing team, as I recall it, of the Marines, which was put in to remove the civilians--both American and other foreign nationals--who were being threatened at that point by the violence which was taking place. As the conflict escalated and other factors began to emerge, the situation was looked at again and it was determined then that we should put in a larger force and it was at this point that that we recommended that if we were going to put in this large force, that it should be sufficient. Therefore we ought to put in a force of some fifteen to twenty thousand which eventually we increased to about twenty-two thousand, as I recall it.

*Q: The President didn't hesitate to accept the advice of his senior advisers on this instance.*

VANCE: He listened to the arguments pro and con and made his decision.

*Q: Was there an argument "con" from other agencies or other levels?*

VANCE: I think that there were some questions raised as to whether or not we needed that much force. I don't recall the argument being made strongly, but I think the question was raised. I can't recall who made it.

*Q: Was there a strong argument that we shouldn't have been there at all that was surfacing?*

VANCE: Nobody raised that--

*Q: Nobody thought that at that time?*

VANCE: No. There was a real question raised as to whether or not we should have put any troops ashore prior to a meeting of the Organization of American States, but that was a different issue from the issue of whether or not it was proper to put American troops ashore, at least initially to protect the withdrawal of American nationals and other foreign nationals. I don't think there was any dispute on the desirability of that action initially, but there was considerable dispute both within and without the government on the question of acting before the OAS met.

*Q: Why was the decision made to act before it met?*



VANCE: I wasn't present at that meeting itself, but I understand that the decision was made because of the recommendation of the Ambassador and those on the ground were such that--

*Q: The Ambassador to the Dominican Republic?*

VANCE: That's right. That unless this were done immediately the result would be the loss of American lives and the lives of other foreign nationals, and he recommended that steps be taken immediately. On that basis the decision was taken to put troops in immediately.

*Q: Was there a clear understanding and agreement as to what troops were supposed to do, that is, what their mission was?*

VANCE: I think there was no question about what their mission was when this first group went ashore.

*Q: That is, merely to save lives. Was there a consideration of the fact that the very intervention itself might prejudice one side or the other, that it might, in fact, act to prevent the success of the revolution?*

VANCE: I wasn't present at that meeting, so I don't know whether that was discussed at that meeting or not.

*Q: You started into your episode of going down there. Was the only instruction that you got the one that you received at the meeting where it was decided for the three of you to go?*

VANCE: I can't recall what the specific instructions were. I know that the first task we were assigned was to talk to Juan Bosch and to see whether or not there was a basis for finding a new government which would be acceptable to a majority of the Dominicans and form a basis on which the fighting could be stopped. This was the thrust of our activities during the first long day and night that we spent in Puerto Rico. We met for six or eight hours, as I recall it, with Juan Bosch and discussed with him the situation. Mac Bundy took the lead in these discussions with Bosch.

*Q: Was Bosch saying different things to you and Mac Bundy than he was saying publicly during this period? Was he really in touch with the situation closely enough to know what was going on?*

VANCE: He was in touch. He told us, and I have no reason to doubt it [that he talked] on a frequent basis, namely several times a day, with people in Santo Domingo, so that I think that he had fairly current information as to what was going on in the country.

*Q: Did he think that he had control of the rebel situation still, at that point?*

VANCE: Yes, I think that he felt that he did have control of the rebel situation. He also felt that the only way of finding a solution to the problem was to put in a provisional chief executive who would be someone affiliated with him and with his party, namely Bosch's party, and he specifically suggested an individual whose name I simply cannot remember now. The discussion really centered around whether or not this man had sufficient stature to become a chief executive officer, or the President--or at least the provisional President--of the Dominican Republic, and whether or not he could gather around him a government of national reconciliation which would provide a basis for ending the fighting and some hope of stability pending new elections. One of the basic issues, of course, was the issue of the Constitution, and whether or not the old Constitution would obtain or whether the new Constitution would obtain. This was one of the fundamental theological issues that permeated the whole period and the dialogue during that period.

*Q: Latin American issues get theological pretty quick sometimes.*

VANCE: They do, indeed.

*Q: There's a widely written-about rift, at least, between Mr. Bundy's view that the provisional government ought to include some of the rebel elements, and Mr. Mann's belief that perhaps it shouldn't. Does that mean that the three-man mission worked at cross purposes?*

VANCE: No, I just think that we had different views. Mac and I believed that it was essential that you have people from the Constitutionalist Bosch group in the government and, perhaps, even as the provisional President. Tom simply did not share that view and didn't hesitate to express his views and his reasons for those views to the President and others in Washington. We discussed our differences with each other, and eventually Tom went back to Washington where he presented his views firsthand. Mac and I remained on in Santo Domingo. Finally Mac returned, and I stayed on to the bitter end until the group--of which Ellsworth Bunker was one--of the OAS came down to take over from us.

*Q: Did, at one point, Mr. Bundy have what he thought was an arrangement which Washington didn't buy because perhaps Mr. Mann disagreed?*

VANCE: My recollection was that he thought we were pretty close to an arrangement.

The man's name whom I was trying to think of is Guzman. Antonio Guzman. We thought at one point that we had a government built around Guzman that would be acceptable. We found however that, as in all these things, there are many sticking points. One of the main sticking points was the question of who would be the respective senior military officers under any such government. I played a role in that aspect of our discussions and acted as the contact with the Dominican Chiefs of Staff.

Once we left Puerto Rico and came to the Dominican Republic we split our work so that Mac and, for awhile, Tom dealt with the civilians and I dealt with the military, trying to

put together this package which would provide an acceptable solution. I urged upon the Chiefs of Staff that they all tender their resignations on the basis that the only way to find national reconciliation was to find a new group which would be acceptable to both sides, because it was quite obvious that the current Chiefs of Staff were unacceptable to the Constitutionals. At one point they had all agreed to tender their resignations. However in a period of an hour-and-a-half after we had reached that understanding, they all went and talked to Tony Imbert, and somehow in the process of that conversation it became unstuck. So that that part of the proposed package fell apart.

*Q: Imbert was John Barnlow Martin's man, was he not?*

VANCE: Yes. He had acted earlier in the crisis as the de facto leader of the so-called Loyalists, or government group. He moved into a vacuum which existed and because of his strong and tough personality, and I believe with some urging from the United States, took over the de facto leadership of the government. He was one with whom we also had to deal because he felt quite strongly that he was being dumped, which he didn't like, when the suggestion was made that he should step aside for Guzman or anyone else. So that our conversations went primarily along the following lines: conversations with Guzman and the Constitutionals on the one hand: with the Chiefs on another hand: and thirdly, with Imbert and the people who rallied around Imbert. So it was a pretty complicated puzzle that we were trying to assemble.

*Q: Are you saying that essentially the agreement that you and McGeorge Bundy thought you had fell apart more from Dominican reasons than from anything that Washington did?*

VANCE: Yes, I think that's fair.

*Q: But Washington was not very happy with the agreement, apparently?*

VANCE: As I recall it, they weren't very happy with the agreement. They had some real questions as to whether this was a viable alternative and weren't really too enthusiastic about it.

*Q: But you're not saying that they shot down an agreement that was firm? That's the implication of some of the stories that have been--*

VANCE: No, they did not.

*Q: That's not what you thought at all. What was your impression of the situation in the Dominican Republic as compared to the information that the mission was giving Washington at the time you left? Did it prove to be accurate, or do you think that they were perhaps over-reacting in the Dominican Republic?*

VANCE: Again, it's hard to recall precisely what we knew before and what we found after, because these things tend to run together. It became very clear, however, once we were there that the country was in a mood for a bloodbath; that the passions were deep and inflamed; that the first thing that had to be done was to try and get a cease fire, otherwise the bloodshed was going to be unbelievable. It was to that end that the decision was made to interpose our troops between the two contending forces along that central line running from the Ambassador Hotel to the west all the way through the town, across the bridge, and out to the airport on the east. I think that the decision to do that was a sound decision. Without the interposition of the American and, later, other OAS forces, I think that the bloodshed would have been vastly greater. Indeed, [Colonel Francisco] Caamano [Deno] told me privately in one of my conversations with him that if the United States had not interposed itself between the contending forces that thousands and perhaps scores of thousands of Dominicans would have been killed.

*Q: The rebels, then, were agreeing to that position too, as well as the government forces?*

VANCE: He wasn't saying that he agreed to it. He was stating it as a fact that it did save thousands and perhaps scores of thousands of Dominican lives. He said that this was something that he would never admit publicly but that it was a fact.

*Q: Did you agree that by the end of that week that there were Communist elements or Cuban elements that had gained substantial control of the rebel forces, or substantial influences in the rebel forces?*

VANCE: There were Communist elements in the forces. I think there is a question as to how strong these elements were. There was a good deal of straight nationalist and anti-government sentiment in the group, but it's also clear that there were some Communist elements. It was awfully hard to measure or weigh the influence of any single group at a given point of time.

*Q: Was there an agreement among the observers in the Dominican Republic as to the nature of the Communist involvement?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: Some thought it was more than you did, apparently?*

VANCE: Although I think it was quite clear that there were a substantial number, and one of the elements of the package which was discussed was what was going to be done with the ones who everybody knew were Communists. The question was how should they be treated, how were you going to isolate them, should they be expelled from the country, or should they be arrested and put together in a particular location within the country. This was one of the big debates and one of the sticking points again with Guzman. Guzman, originally, as I recall it, indicated he thought that this problem could be handled, and that they could expel the known Communists from the country. As time wore on however,

this apparently became more and more difficult for him to produce, and this was one of the reasons that he eventually was unable to produce a proposal along those lines that was satisfactory to the United States.

*Q: It is not as simple as just another Cuba though?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: Washington understood that?*

VANCE: It understood it. I think at different times it was clear that different weights were placed by different individuals on the nature and extent of the Communist threat, I think thinking changed in Washington over a period of time. In the early stages I think there was a general feeling in Washington that there was a substantial Communist presence and that they were in fact taking over, and that this did have the seeds of another Cuba. But I think as time went on and more information became available, people realized that this perhaps was not the fact.

*Q: Does this mean that when the OAS goes in they will be able to conclude agreements in the Dominican Republic that would not have been acceptable to Washington earlier, because of better understanding as to what the situation really is?*

VANCE: Yes, I think that's a fair statement.

*Q: The OAS then came in, and you were still there. You were the only remaining American envoy of the President at that time?*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: Everybody else had come and gone.*

VANCE: I think some of the OAS forces were coming in while I was still there. I'm quite sure they were.

*Q: Did you remain for Mr. Bunker's negotiations?*

VANCE: No, I was there I guess all-told about three weeks, and I came on back. Then Mr. Bunker came in and did a superb job of guiding, with his colleagues from the OAS, the country up to a point where they selected a provisional President--[Hector Garcia] Godoy, and then put together a provisional government which acted pending elections, which as you know resulted in the election of [Joaquin] Balaguer. But Bunker did a superb job in a very trying period in advising Godoy, in holding the situation together as the inevitable strains came during the months that followed the taking over of power as a provisional president by Godoy and his colleagues.

*Q: Were you advising closely with Mr. Johnson in Washington during that period?*

VANCE: Yes. During that period I participated in many of the discussions that would go on with Mr. McNamara and the people in the State Department--Mr. Rusk, Mr. Ball, Mr. Mann, Mr. Vaughn, and others.

*Q: Mr. Johnson is supposed to have maintained such close contact with that crisis during its hottest period. That's the one where they count the phone calls to Bundy and things like that. Did he stay that interested in it and close to making the decisions personally in the period where it was finally settled?*

VANCE: He followed it very closely, of course, not so closely as when it was at its height. But he followed it very closely and was extremely careful in evaluating and finally making the decisions with respect to the settlement.

*Q: Were there closely argued critical decisions that the President was called upon to make personally?*

VANCE: Yes. I can't recall what they were but in any one of those complicated situations there were such.

*Q: Were there would be advisers on both sides?*

VANCE: There would be different views?

*Q: And it would be left to him then to decide?*

VANCE: It's a lonely job where you have to make the final decision.

*Q: Did he ever sit down in a sort of informal way with you at any point and just talk about what he believed or felt in regard to the Dominican Republic?*

VANCE: No. Later on and during the negotiations in Paris he did that on a number of occasions, but not during the Dominican situation.

*Q: That was still a little bit on sort of a higher official plane than it later became?*

*We have about ten or fifteen minutes left on this tape. Do you have that much more time today?*

VANCE: Why don't we just do that and call it quits for today, because I've got some stuff I've got to do.

*Q: Perhaps we can take care of the urban missions that you performed in 1967 and 1968 in that remaining time if that's satisfactory. The first one, I suppose, is the Detroit one*

*which took place in a kind of compressed period of time. Perhaps you might just describe your involvement.*

VANCE: I had gone to Europe on leaving the Defense Department at the end of June, and I had been abroad for about a week when my mother died and I returned to the United States, and was in Clarksburg where my mother lived for several days. Then I returned to Washington on Sunday night. On Monday morning I received a call from Mr. McNamara who said that he was with the President in the White House in the Cabinet Room, and he wanted to know--the President wanted to know--whether I would be able and willing to go to Detroit immediately, if necessary, in connection with the trouble which had broken out there Sunday, I said that I really hadn't had any chance to inform myself as to what was going on because I'd just gotten back late the night before from my mother's funeral, and asked him what the general nature of it was. He told me that the rioting had broken out in Detroit, and that it appeared to be an increasingly difficult and dangerous situation.

*Q: Was this early in the morning now?*

VANCE: This was about 9:30, as I recall.

*Q: This was before the authorities had actually asked for troops to be sent in.*

VANCE: Well, I think it was questionable whether they had or hadn't asked, as I recall it. This was one of the issues, whether they had or hadn't asked.

I told him that I would be happy to go if I could take my wife along with me, because at that point my back was acting up badly and I couldn't bend over to tie my shoe laces or get my socks off. If it was all right for her to come along and help me get in and out of my clothes, that I would do it. He said, of course, that would be all right and for me to come down to the White House right away.

I did then go down to the White House and went to the Cabinet Room where a large, or fairly large, group was sitting around the table. Someone, and I can't remember who, summarized the situation as it stood and said that they had had a specific request, finally, from Governor [George] Romney to send federal forces to Detroit. They had tentatively come to the conclusion that this should be done right away; that alerting orders had already been sent out during the night to certain units, and that they should be able to move very promptly. It was decided that a call should be placed to Mayor [Jerome P.] Cavanagh, and I can't remember whether Romney was called also--but I do remember that Cavanagh was called. The call was put in from the White House and at the end of the call I was asked to go on the phone and tell them that I would be out there and give them an approximate time, which I did.

I then got on the phone and talked to General Throckmorton, who would be the troop commander and was then at Fort Bragg, and told John, whom I knew, that the order was being issued to load troops and fly them in, and that he should execute the order. He

asked me whether General Wheeler was there, as I recall it. I believe that he was and I said yes; that this was an official order although it was coming strangely from me, a civilian who was no longer associated with the Department of Defense.

*Q: Were these units previously designated?*

VANCE: Yes, they had been designated the night before.

*Q: You mean, they hadn't been designated over a long period of time for such use?*

VANCE: I don't recall. At least part of that division, which was the 82nd, had been previously designated under the standing contingency plans. As to whether this group had been in its full extent designated under one of the contingency plans, I just don't recall.

*Q: I was wondering about training, really, in that case.*

VANCE: They had had some training in riot control as part of their normal training.

*Q: But no special training in riot control for these designated units?*

VANCE: No, but in the post-Dominican period people in the Regular Army had all received intensive training, as I recall it, in the kinds of problems that one faced in urban communities where fighting broke out. This was particularly true of the airborne forces which would be the first ones to move in as they were in the Dominican Republic. So they were fully trained for the kinds of problems that one meets in a foreign urban environment, and to a certain extent the problems have similarities to those which you find in an urban conflict in a domestic situation.

We then went over to the Washington National Airport where a plane had been put aside for us, or sent over for us. I borrowed from General Wheeler a Colonel, John Elder, who was a very able fellow whom I knew, and also borrowed from Bob McNamara Dan Henkin, an old friend who was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, and in whose judgment I had great confidence, and took them with me as advisers and staff for the operation.

We flew out direct non-stop to a military field immediately north of Detroit and when I got there I found that General Throckmorton had already landed. I went in and had a very brief meeting with him and got a report of what the situation was.

*Q: His troops were being held there at that time?*

VANCE: That's right. They were landing at the time. They were beginning to come in and were landing. He came with the first string that came in--the first string of planes--so that he was already on the ground. His troops would not totally close until some time, as I recall it, late that evening, and I arrived around mid-afternoon.



We called the Mayor's office and learned that he was meeting in the office with the head of the Michigan National Guard, and that he wanted us to come down to the office and meet with the Governor and with him to review the situation.

General Throckmorton changed into civilian clothes and we drove down to the Mayor's office where we met with the Governor, the Mayor, and the General in charge of the National Guard. We received a report on the situation which indicated that it was quieter than it had been the day before; that more troops had been moving into the city during the night and day as a result of deployments from Camp Grayling [?] where the National Guard had been at summer camp, and that there were several thousand more troops in the city than there were before.

*Q: These are all National Guard?*

VANCE: National Guard, that's right. We asked the National Guard commander whether these troops had been deployed out into the streets, and he indicated that they had not. We suggested to him strongly that he ought to get them out into the streets as rapidly as possible, that it made no sense at all to bring troops into the city and not deploy them where they could act as a deterrent to a resumption of violence should that occur.

It was then suggested that we should take a trip through the areas where greatest destruction had occurred in a car to get a firsthand look at the situation--which both General Throckmorton and I felt was necessary before we made a determination as to whether or not we should deploy into the city the federal forces. We took this trip through the city. It lasted, I think, about an hour or an hour-and-a-half. There was a considerable amount of destruction, buildings still burning, broken glass on the streets. But by and large it was relatively quiet. There didn't seem to be an undue amount of surliness, nor was the feeling of tensions which you get in a situation like this apparent at that point.

When we returned to the Mayor's office, where they had provided us with some space, I found that there was a group of Negro citizens including the two Congressmen, John Conyers and Charlie Diggs, who said that they wished to meet with us. I said I'd welcome that, because I wanted to get the feeling from the Negro community on this issue. Some, led by John Conyers, indicated that the situation appeared to be quieting, that if federal troops were put in that this might exacerbate the situation rather than quiet it. They recommended that the troops be held in reserve at the air force base where they were now assembling that was located about--my recollection is--fifteen to twenty miles outside of town.

On the other hand, Charlie Diggs and another group said that their information was that things would heat up again as night fell, and troops ought to be moved in immediately.

Governor Romney came in after the meeting and asked that the federal troops be moved into the city. I said that I was not yet satisfied from the information I had received that

there was a necessity for the federal troops to be moved in because we had not yet seen what the effect would be of the deployment of several thousand additional Guard troops in the city; that part of the Negro community had indicated that they felt the situation was quieting and it would exacerbate it to bring federal troops in; that another group had held a contrary view, but that under all the circumstances I felt that the safest thing was to watch and wait and if it became clear that the federal troops should come in that we then would move. We discussed the desirability of, in the meantime, perhaps moving some troops closer into town so that if they had to be deployed that it could be done more promptly.

The Governor and I then went on the radio and television and made a brief statement with respect to the situation.

*Q: Did the Governor express disagreement with your view?*

VANCE: Not on television.

*Q: Privately before the television?*

VANCE: Yes. He said he did not agree. He felt that it would be wiser to move them in right away.

*Q: Were you in touch with Mr. Johnson during this period?*

VANCE: I reported after the interview with the press my conclusions to, I believe, it was Mr. McNamara, who was, I also believe at the White House at that point. We said we would continue to follow the situation very closely.

As the evening wore on, as we approached nine o'clock, I could see the incidents building up. We had set up a reporting system, incidentally, as soon as we came in. We wanted a report on the number of fires per hour, the number of--it was a half-hour, I think it was, every half-hour--the number of sniping incidents, the number of people arrested, and a whole spectrum of indicators.

*Q: These were federal people reporting to you or local people?*

VANCE: These were figures gathered by the police and were given to us.

Also, in the meantime we had, before I had the press conference, called and checked with the local FBI people and gotten their Judgment with respect to the situation. My recollection is that they said that it was unclear as to whether the situation would get hotter or cooler as the night wore on.

*Q: A safe prediction.*

VANCE: As the evening wore on, however, the indicators showed that the curve was beginning to rise again. We reported this to Washington and said that if it continued to rise, we were going to come to the conclusion that we would recommend that troops be deployed; that we were still not satisfied that this wasn't the normal incident that occurs as nightfall sets in.

We kept in constant touch with Governor Romney and the Mayor. As the incidents started to rise, they became more vocal about the need for deploying federal troops.

I believe it was somewhere around nine-thirty or so, and all of this is in a report that I prepared in the post-riot period--and I'm just doing it from memory now--about nine-thirty or so we came to a tentative conclusion that we were going to have to perhaps put our troops in so that we made preparations and started moving them into town. It was somewhere after ten o'clock that we told the President that we felt the troops must be deployed.

As I recall it, they said they wanted a little bit of additional time to prepare a statement which the President was going to issue.

*Q: The President wanted additional time, not the troops?*

VANCE: No, the President, for a statement which he was going to issue. But in the meantime to go ahead and make all the necessary preparations so they could move as rapidly as possible.

I've forgotten exactly, it's in my report, as to when we got the authority to actually deploy into the city, but we then did move them into the city. In the meantime General Throckmorton and I had a plan whereby we put the federal troops on one side of the city and left the other side of the city under the responsibility of the National Guard troops.

*Q: So from your account, the only point at which there could be a charge that the President was delaying, for whatever reason, would be from nine-thirty or so--ten o'clock--when you called, and the time that you got authority to issue the order, however long that was.*

VANCE: Yes. Now, charges have been made that we should have put troops in immediately once I arrived. I myself felt that this was premature because of the factors that I have indicated. And I think any such charge against the President is totally unfounded. I was his representative there. I was recommending to him that he do nothing until we had a chance to ascertain what the facts were; that the putting of federal troops into a state is not a thing that is lightly done, and that circumstances were not sufficiently clear either to General Throckmorton or to me that this should be done--for him to act. So certainly in those early hours when we were first there there could be no basis at all for a charge that he was unduly delaying deployment of the troops.

*Q: Earlier before you left, I believe you mentioned in passing that there was some genuine confusion in Washington about whether troops had been asked for.*

VANCE: That's right. Requests were apparently made and then withdrawn. There was a very confused situation.

*Q: Your report on this did go to the President, so it should be in the Presidential papers somewhere? If you've got a copy, I might append it to this transcript and it might be helpful to do that.*

*Then you went back to Washington the following day, is that correct?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: You stayed for a while?*

VANCE: I stayed for, let's see, how many days?

*Q: It's on this report. July 23 through August 2.*

VANCE: Yes. I stayed until August 2.

*Q: Were there obvious instances of difficulty between the federal forces and the National Guard during that period of time?*

VANCE: There were some problems between the federal forces and the National Guard, but they were basically at command level and not between the troops themselves because they were in different parts of town. But General Throckmorton, when the federal troops came in, as one does in a situation like this, took over all command of all forces-- including the National Guard forces which were federalized.

Quite frankly, the leadership of a number of officers of the National Guard was inadequate, and, as a result of that, problems developed which had to be dealt with and dealt with strongly, as General Throckmorton properly did. This did lead to some tensions, but it was absolutely necessary that such action be taken. I made certain recommendations to the Kerner Commission and to the Department of Defense with respect to the National Guard, both in terms of training, in terms of qualifications of officers, and the need to review the qualifications of officers in the Guard, and with respect to increasing the number of black and other minority members of the Guard, as a result of the lessons which we learned in Detroit. We found the fire discipline of the guard was unsatisfactory; that they were increasing the tensions by indiscriminate firing rather than using the tactics which the federal forces used, which was not to fire unless it was absolutely necessary to do so.

This now has become accepted practice. We recommended it in the final report made after the Detroit situation, and that is accepted now as standard practice, I think, in all riot control situations by the federal forces. We proved, in my judgement, that this was the right course of action to take by what happened in Washington where I went during the Washington riots. Some people criticize it on the basis that this leads to undue looting. I personally feel that it's better to save a life than to shoot a fourteen-year old kid who's taking a loaf of bread, and I think that by and large most police chiefs now agree with that. I believe that they arrived at this conclusion almost unanimously at a recent meeting of the police chiefs.

*Q: Did any of these tactical problems involving the Guard get up to Presidential level?*

VANCE: No.

*Q: They all were solved on the--*

VANCE: We solved them right on the ground, Johnny Throckmorton and myself.

*Q: So Mr. Johnson didn't have to make any of those decisions at all.*

VANCE: Every morning he and I would talk with each other while I stayed in Detroit, when I would usually give him a report. He would usually call me, or I would report in to him at seven o'clock in the morning. We would talk from seven to seven-thirty about the situation and my evaluation of how it was going, so that I did keep in very close touch with him from that standpoint, although we weren't talking about tactical decisions.

*Q: The Kerner Commission did come pretty directly out of this?*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: Was it one of your recommendations that a national commission--?*

VANCE: No, he arrived at the Kerner Commission idea that was his idea. He called me about it and asked me what I thought, and I said I thought it was a good idea.

*Q: Did he consult with you regarding membership of that committee, and what it would do?*

VANCE: My recollection is that he mentioned a few names to me of the kinds of people that he intended to put on it, and I said that they sounded like good names to me. I don't think we had detailed discussions about the individuals.

*Q: Other than reporting--the report I have here now will be appended to this transcript and the report that you rendered to the President when you returned--did you participate in the Kerner Commission's activities?*

VANCE: I testified twice before the Kerner Commission.

*Q: That was the extent of your activity--the testifying?*

VANCE: That's right.

*Q: And there is a record of that.*

VANCE: I participated in a number of press conferences in Detroit and once in Washington when I came back to report to the President, which I believe was the same day as the Kerner Commission first assembled.

*Q: I believe I've seen a photograph of you with the Kerner Commission on that occasion, as a matter of fact.*

*You were appointed, I think, on a small panel--a six-man panel or something--on the urban problems right in this general time period?*

VANCE: No. What happened afterwards is that I was asked to be one of the incorporators of the Urban Institute, and a small panel consisting of Irwin Miller as chairman, R. J. Miller, Robert McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, Dick Neustadt, myself, and Kermit Gordon acted as the incorporators of the Urban Institute. In the process [we] decided what kind of an organization it should be, how it should be structured, and it now as you know is a going organization.

*Q: Was the President involved in that?*

VANCE: He made the appointment of the original trustees. He approved our recommendations with respect to the structuring of the Urban Institute.

He felt very strongly the need for an urban institute to coordinate the research required in the field of urban affairs to provide assistance to the federal government in this area; and to act as a problem solver for the government as well as director of long-term basic research; and to provide assistance also to the states and cities, which is the basic responsibility of the Urban Institute.

I think that's about all we've got time for this morning unless you've got one--

*Q: I do have one more because one of the major books on the Johnson Administration is out and makes the point that one of his chief failings is just that he didn't understand metropolitan problems. You talked to him thirty minutes on the telephone for two weeks during a riot--what do you think about that implication that Mr. Goldman has made the basis of a substantial part of his book on the Johnsons?*

VANCE: It's hard, you know, from conversations with respect to a specific situation to draw conclusions about what Mr. Goldman said. I have not read Goldman's book so I don't know what his charges or statements are with respect to the President's understanding of the urban problems. Really I find it sort of hard to comment on without knowing what it said.

*Q: Certainly. In that case, that invalidates the question anyway. Fine. Let's let this tape run off then, and that will leave us, if this is a complete list, Cyprus, the Korean mission you mentioned in February of 1968, and then finally the Vietnam [mission].*

I certainly thank you for your time.

VANCE: Not at all.

*Q: Regarding Cyprus first, I've been told in the course of this project, I think I can say without violating any confidence, that you're one of the few men in the world who can tell his grandchildren that he actually prevented a war--in the case of the Cyprus controversy. How did that mission arise, and what were the circumstances that sent you there?*

VANCE: I first heard about the possibility of being sent to Cyprus the day before Thanksgiving. I was sitting in this office, and at about eleven-thirty I received a call from Nick Katzenbach in the State Department. Nick asked me how I would like to go to Ankara. I thought he was joking and asked him what he really called about. He said, "I'm not joking." He said, "I'm serious. You may have seen that the Cyprus situation has heated up again, and there is a possibility that we may want to send you to Cyprus with the first stop being Ankara."

I said, "If you're really serious, I don't see how I can possibly do it. I'm terribly busy at this point. What sort of time pressure is there?"

He said, "The time pressure is immense, and if it's decided that you should go, you'll be going this afternoon."

*Q: This was middle morning.*

VANCE: Eleven-thirty in the morning. I asked him further about the situation, and he filled me in as to the events, which had somehow not caught the public attention. I had recalled seeing something on page ten of the New York Times that morning--nothing on the front page--so that I was really quite surprised to hear from Nick that the situation was as serious as it appeared to be.

As we talked further he indicated to me that the most recent analysis indicated that there was a strong possibility that the Turks might be going to invade Cyprus the following

day. He said that they were checking their information further, and that if this checked out then the situation was indeed a desperate one.

I told Nick that I would be, under the circumstances, willing to go if the President felt that I could do the job, and said I would first, however, have to check with my partners and let them know what was in the offing.

*Q: Almost tell them goodbye at that point.*

VANCE: I got off the phone about five minutes till twelve and it being the day before Thanksgiving, a great many of my partners were not around so I found it hard to find some of my partners to talk with them. But I did indeed talk to a couple of them, and they fully agreed that if the President wanted me to go and with the situation being as grave as it appeared to be, that I should go. Accordingly at about twelve-fifteen I called Nick back and told him that I had checked with my partners and if the President decided that he did want me to go, then I would be prepared to do so.

I went out to lunch over at Dillon, Read and got a call at lunch from Nick saying that Secretary Rusk and the President had met further, and that they did want me to go to Cyprus, and that a cable was being sent to the capitals involved requesting permission for me to come as the personal emissary of the President. Nick also indicated that U Thant was going to send a personal representative; Mr. [Jose] Rolz-Bennett was to be that individual, and that he would be leaving some time later in the day as well.

*Q: From here?*

VANCE: From here. Rolz-Bennett was going to go to Nicosia, whereas it was proposed that I would go to Ankara and Athens, and then subsequently to Nicosia. I asked Nick what the time schedule was, and he said that I should be out at Kennedy by no later than four o'clock; that they were going to have a plane there; that Luke Battle would be flying up to fill me in on the latest information; and that I would have a small staff consisting of John Walsh, who was the Deputy to Ben Read in the Secretariat, and one Turkish expert and one Greek expert, plus a secretary. I told Nick that size staff sounded ideal, that I didn't want any larger staff and that I would look forward to seeing Luke later in the afternoon.

I then called my wife, who was packing my suitcase to go down and visit one of my daughters at school for the Thanksgiving holiday. I told her that I would meet her at La Guardia Airport to pick up my bag, but that I was not going down to Washington and Virginia to see our daughter, but on the other hand was going to the Eastern Mediterranean. After a considerable silence she finally accepted the fact that I was not joking and that indeed I was going to the Eastern Mediterranean some time that afternoon.



I drove out to La Guardia and picked up my bag from my wife and went on out to Kennedy. I waited at Kennedy for an hour-and-a-half or so because the plane had trouble taking off from Andrews and was late arriving. It got into Kennedy some time after five, and I then got on the plane and talked to Luke Battle for about an hour or so.

*Q: That was the only briefing you got, right there?*

VANCE: That was the only briefing I got from Luke. Subsequently on the way over on the plane I read all of the cables to bring me up to date and discussed the situation in detail throughout the entire flight to Ankara with John Walsh and the two other staff members who were among our group. While we were waiting at Kennedy for an okay from Ankara that they would receive me, Luke checked in to find out what was happening at the U.N. and we received confirmation of the fact that Rolz-Bennett had already departed for Nicosia. The okay from Athens had come in and from Nicosia, but the okay from Ankara was long overdue. Finally at about six as I recall it, or six-thirty, we got word that Ankara had said that they would receive me. That meant it was about one o'clock in the morning Ankara time. I think there is about seven hours difference between the two.

The information that Luke gave me indicated that what Nick had said earlier appeared to be true, and that the best information which the United States government had is that the Turks plan to launch an invasion.

*Q: Which would be that same day.*

VANCE: Which would have been that morning at daybreak. Apparently the delay in giving the okay for me to come to Ankara was in some way related to the various activities which may have been underway at that time.

We flew nonstop from Kennedy to Ankara and upon arrival were routed into a fighter airstrip. The Turkish government indicated that they did not believe it would be safe for an American representative to land at the regular airport because of the intense feelings which existed in Turkey at the time. People had recollections, according to the Turks, of the 1964 crisis at which time the United States took a strong position which caused some severe repercussions.

*Q: You were not associated with that personally though, were you?*

VANCE: No, I was not associated with that personally.

We landed about first light at the fighter strip outside of Ankara, and the pilot incidentally did a superb job. He had never been into this airfield before, it was a cold winter's day with snow all around. He brought it in and landed on a fighter strip, and it was an absolutely superb job. Incidentally, it would have been absolutely impossible to carry out the mission with the recurring trips back and forth between the various capitals at all

hours of the night and day without the superb help of the two crews which were flying the KC 135 which we used throughout the mission. They did an absolutely superb job. That plus the communications which were available were both absolutely essential ingredients of a successful mission, or a reasonably successful mission.

*Q: What was your communications hookup? Was it to the White House, or was it to the NEA Bureau at State, or--?*

VANCE: Through the command center to the State Department.

*Q: You were getting your instructions through Battle's bureau?*

VANCE: The only instructions that I had when I left were from the President, and they were to do everything within my power to try and prevent a war. They said that there would be further instructions arriving later, but there was really only one essential instruction and that was to use my best efforts to see that a war was averted.

On the way to Ankara we discussed the strategy to be used and concluded that with the limited time available to us, that it was absolutely essential to find if possible an agreement between the Greeks and the Turks as the two principal protagonists and then try to get the Cypriots to agree to the basic understanding which might be reached between Greece and Turkey. It was simply impossible within the limited time available to get all three people on board at the same time.

Inasmuch as the people whose troops would be used were the Greeks and the Turks, we decided that this is where we should concentrate our efforts. We further decided that what we should attempt to do was to find out what the essential position of each of the two countries was and then see if there was common ground which might provide the basis for an understanding. We further decided that we would not attempt to mediate until we reached the conclusion that there was not a basis for common ground in their stated positions. Accordingly, we then went through several days of shuttling back and forth between the two capitals trying to communicate the position of each to the other in an effort to find a common ground which might provide the basis for a settlement.

*Q: Did you discover that the Turks had, in fact, been prepared to invade that morning and had stopped because of your mission, or had our information been not correct in that regard?*

VANCE: I was never able to really tie it down to my satisfaction. My feeling is, however, that it probably was correct that they were about to invade that morning.

After two trips back and forth to the two capitals, Ankara and Athens, I concluded that it would be impossible to get either country to agree to the other's position, and therefore decided that we should take the mediator's role and propose a four-point settlement which appeared to me to give each its essential needs and at the same time provide a face-saving

device which would permit both countries to climb back from the limbs which they had gotten themselves on.

*Q: You devised this four-point program yourself, on the scene?*

VANCE: Yes. Together with the assistance and advice of our Ambassadors in Ankara and in Athens, they were Phil [Phillips] Talbot [in Greece] and Pete [Parker T.] Hart [in Turkey]. Incidentally they and Toby [Taylor G.] Belcher [Arab. to Cyprus] as well as all the members of the various missions performed superbly.

We took the proposal back to Ankara, and presented it to the Turkish government. Their initial reaction was favorable. They said they would have to consult with their Cabinet and with the opposition leaders and would be back in touch with us. That was early in the morning when they said that. The day dragged on. We heard that the meetings were being held with the opposition leaders, but we received no call from the Foreign Minister [Ihsan S.] Caglayangil or others in the Turkish government that they were prepared to pick up the conversations again. This dragged on into the evening and it was not until a little after midnight that we heard from the Foreign Minister. It had become apparent because of the delay that they had run into some kind of trouble, and this became crystal clear when we arrived at the Foreign Minister's office some time after one o'clock in the morning.

We sat in one room, John Walsh and I and Pete Hart, together with Caglayangil and his very able assistant, who incidentally now is the Turkish Ambassador to Greece, and negotiated with the Turkish Cabinet which was sitting in the next room. It was one of the most agonizing negotiations I have ever had anything to do with because we were negotiating with twenty-some individuals, each of whom had apparently strong convictions, and it made it awfully difficult to accomplish anything.

*Q: You were also doing it secondhand, which didn't help anything, either.*

VANCE: Right. We would receive suggestions for modifications of the basic four-point document, and we would then discuss them with the Foreign Minister and either accept them or make suggestions for their change, and these would then be taken in by either the Foreign Minister or Turkoman and discussed with the Cabinet. Then they would come back and report to us what the result had been.

*Q: This still hadn't been presented to the Greeks at this point?*

VANCE: No, it had not been presented to the Greeks. [To] each suggestion that was made by the Turks I responded in terms of what I thought was feasible and fair, keeping in mind what the Greek reaction would be as I saw it, having talked with them over a period of days back and forth--because what I was trying to do was to find a middle ground that would be acceptable to both.

At one point during the night we came to a sticking point on the time the Turks were demanding for the withdrawal of all the Greek forces above the treaty minimum from the island of Cyprus, and the Turks were seeking what to me was an unrealistic and unreasonable time period. So I asked specifically to meet with the Prime Minister [Suleyman] Demirel, and we had a very difficult session which culminated in his going back to his Cabinet and coming back with a modification in the time which seemed to me possible to reach agreement on.

We concluded our session at about seven o'clock that morning, having worked throughout the night, and left with a somewhat mutilated and hardly articulate document to take back to Athens. We went back to the residence and picked up our shaving stuff and took off immediately for Athens.

When we arrived back in Athens we met promptly with Foreign Minister [Panayiotis] Pipinelis who took the document for his perusal and for consultation with the Greek Cabinet and the King. As you know, agreement was reached with one or two minor modifications on the document which I brought back from Ankara, and this formed the basis for the ultimate settlement.

The problem then arose as to how we were going to get [Archbishop] Makarios [III] on board, and we discussed that among ourselves at some length, and then our group took off for Nicosia.

Incidentally, I might say that throughout all of this John Walsh was a tower of strength. He was the one who was the basic draftsman of our cables reporting to Washington. He would do the first draft on the aircraft flying back and forth between the capitals so that we would have it typed and in final form when we arrived and thus were able to keep Washington fairly well clued in on a current basis.

*Q: Were you having to get approval from Washington at each step of the way?*

VANCE: No. We merely reported what we were doing, and assumed that if they felt that we were not proceeding in a satisfactory fashion they would let us know. But time was so much of the essence that there simply was not the time to report back and wait for instructions.

*Q: The new Greek government--the coup had already taken place--*

VANCE: Yes, the coup had taken place before that, and the government was a government basically being run by the current Greek leadership. It had a civilian Prime Minister at that time, but the real power lay in the hands of the military.

*Q: Was their desire to gain the continued approval of the United States a factor in making them amenable to the agreement that you had worked out with the Turks?*

VANCE: They did not mention that at any time. I'm sure it's probably a factor that operated in their evaluation and their thinking about the problem. I think they became convinced that they were faced with the prospect of war between Turkey and Greece, with all the dreadful consequences that that would mean for their country, for NATO, and for the peace of the Eastern Mediterranean. So that the factor which you have referred to was only, in my judgement, one of the many factors that was weighed in their conclusion that they should try and find a way to settle the matter and pull back from the brink of war.

*Q: What were the other peace makers who were around doing during all of this time? The U.N. representative, and wasn't there a NATO representative [Manlio] Brosio there?*

VANCE: Yes, Mr. Brosio was there. We reached an agreement that inasmuch as we--the United States--had been first in Ankara and Athens that we should take the laboring oar, and that the others would assist in every way which was necessary. I must say that the cooperation between Rolz Bennett, Mr. Brosio, and all of the others could not have been better. I look back with great interest and pleasure in seeing that it was possible to have a mediation and negotiation involving three different organizations, each having a part to play, and involving three different countries, and it was possible to integrate all of them and for each to contribute to the common end. I think that's the most satisfying part of the whole operation.

*Q: Was there a Russian presence in the middle of it that was either positive or negative?*

VANCE: The Russians did not play an important part. They only appeared at one time on the scene. They made a statement to the effect that should war come about that they would give support, and by that I believe they meant logistic support, to the Turks. But other than one meeting which took place in Ankara between the Russian Ambassador and the Turkish government, they did not appear to be playing an important role in the controversy.

*Q: Did the participants think that the United States was genuinely impartial as between the two of them?*

VANCE: I think that they did. At first, I don't believe that they felt that. I think that the Turks were very suspicious at the outset. They thought that we were coming to slap their wrists and to interfere in what they considered to be their internal problems, but I think as time went on they became convinced that the United States was seeking the common desire of all, namely to preserve the peace of the Eastern Mediterranean, and to prevent our good friends, the Turks and the Greeks as well as the Cypriots, from becoming embroiled in a conflict that could mean nothing but misery and hardship for all concerned.

*Q: Did you talk to Mr. Johnson about all of this when you came back?*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: You did see him then?*

VANCE: Oh, I did indeed, and reported at length to him when I came back. He was superb all the way through this. One of the things that made it possible to accomplish what was accomplished--and I think that people give us more credit than we deserve--I think that really basically both countries found themselves in a situation where they had gone too far and both were looking for a way to withdraw, and we were merely able to act as the agent or intermediary which facilitated this process. But President Johnson was absolutely superb. He never tried to dictate in any way the details of what was going on, but gave full support to our activities. His encouragement was invaluable during many bleak periods when it looked as though everything were going to fall apart and no settlement would be possible.

*Q: You were in touch while you were in Ankara or Athens with the White House ?*

VANCE: Not personally, but word would come through from the State Department speaking on behalf of the Secretary and the President. This was helpful to us.

*Q: This sounds like a remarkable freedom for a negotiator in the field.*

VANCE: It really was extraordinary, just extraordinary. And the fact that the President was willing to give that much authority to a negotiator in the field is to me perfectly extraordinary.

*Q: Did he do the same thing in the Korean mission in early 1968?*

VANCE: Yes.

*Q: How did that one come up? That was sort of a quick one, also.*

VANCE: Yes, that came up just about the same way. I got a call from Dean Rusk that time, as I recall it. I knew that we had a crisis because the Pueblo had been seized, and there had also been the attack on the so-called Blue House, which is the Presidential palace. Secretary Rusk asked me if I would be prepared to go to Korea should it become necessary. He said that they had received a recommendation from the Ambassador Bill [William J.] Porter and from [Gen. Charles H.] Tic Bonesteel, who was our U.N. commander in Korea, saying that they felt that the situation was getting terribly tense and that it would be helpful to have a Presidential emissary come and talk directly with [Chung Hee] Park.

*Q: Just to calm Park down, or to try and get some--?*

VANCE: Primarily to do two things. First, to prevent any precipitate action in terms of a move to the North by Park and the Republic of Korea's army; and secondly, to talk with Park about the kinds of assistance which the United States was prepared to give. So it was a double barreled set of objectives that we were being asked to discuss with Park and his Cabinet.

*Q: Did you talk to Mr. Johnson this time before you left?*

VANCE: Yes, I did. I talked to him about two hours before I left. He called me on the phone and wished me good luck. I then took off and caught the plane here in New York, again with John Walsh, whom I had asked to have with me, and a couple of others. We flew to Anchorage and refueled and then on to Seoul where we began our around-the-clock sessions with President Park and the Foreign Minister and other members of his Cabinet discussing the situation.

*Q: What was President Johnson prepared to do? I know he did announce a hundred million dollars and some airplanes were sent in. Was he prepared to do more than that, anything necessary?*

VANCE: No. President Johnson was prepared to provide a hundred million dollars of military assistance. He was terribly concerned that President Park might take some action in terms of a military move across the demilitarized zone into the North which could precipitate a war, and he made it very clear to me that President Park should be under no illusions as to the seriousness of any such action; and that if such a step were taken without full consultation with the United States that the whole relationships between our countries would have to be reevaluated.

*Q: In a case like that, I know Park is one of the Chiefs of State that apparently Mr. Johnson had a very good personal relationship with--does that kind of thing pay off in a crisis such as this was?*

VANCE: It certainly does, and I think this is the reason why the Ambassador and General Bonesteel felt that it was important to have somebody coming as the emissary of President Johnson, because Park had great respect for President Johnson. When the President sent somebody to come and speak on his behalf, Park listened in a fashion that he could not or would not do for the people who were on the ground and there all the time.

*Q: The situation was as tense as reported--our intelligence was good in that case?*

VANCE: Yes, it was terribly tense, and this became clear to us as soon as we got there and discussed it with Bill Porter and Tic Bonesteel and members of their staffs.

*Q: But it wasn't really an attempt to get an agreement, in the sense of a document, so much as just a personal--?*

VANCE: No. It was, as I said, to convey a clear message to him concerning any military action, and that message was that there could be no military action against the North without prior consultation with the United States, and that we felt very strongly that no such action should be taken; and that the negotiations with respect to the crew of the Pueblo should continue with the Americans meeting with the North Koreans without the South Koreans present. This was another one of the matters which we discussed with and received the approval of President Park to continue. We felt this was very important because we felt that to bring the South Koreans into the discussion at this point might jeopardize the success of the discussions. President Park agreed to this, and we kept him fully informed--the Embassy kept him fully informed at all times--on what had taken place as soon as each meeting at Panmunjom was terminated.

*Q: You weren't connected with those meetings at all?*

VANCE: No, I was not. So that he was fully clued in at all times on all conversations.

*Q: But not a party?*

VANCE: But not a party. This caused a good deal of pain for Park in his country, because members of the opposition party attacked him for permitting discussion of matters affecting Korea--the Republic of Korea--to be going on without Koreans being present. So he showed considerable courage in going along with our request to abstain from being present at those meetings.

*Q: Turning to Vietnam, you were there for quite a long time during the time when the major decisions were made. How close were you as Deputy Secretary to the Presidential decision-making? You did attend the NSC meetings. Did you attend the Tuesday Luncheon regularly?*

VANCE: Well, no, I did not attend regularly. I attended I believe most NSC meetings, I didn't attend all of them, but I did attend most of them.

By the way, how long do you think this will go on, because if we get into this one it may take a long while and I wonder if we oughtn't to have another session if you could on this alone?

*Q: Well, I can. That would be fine with me.*

VANCE: Because I think we're going to have to cut it too short, and Vietnam is just going to take a long, long while.

*Q: I can tell that it will go beyond, well, at least beyond this tape. It will probably take a full session.*



VANCE: I think it will take a full session. My guess is that it will take an hour-and-a-half or so to do the whole Vietnam thing.

*Q: Well, why don't we just stop then and have another session for Vietnam only?*

VANCE: That's fine with me.

*End of interview*