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

AMBASSADOR WILLIAM R. TYLER

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is the first interview with Ambassador William Tyler concerning his career in the Foreign Service. My name is Charles Stuart Kennedy. I'm conducting this interview for the Foreign Service History Center of George Washington University. The interview is taking place at Ambassador Tyler's home in Chevy Chase.

M*r. Ambassador, I wonder if you could give me an outline of your upbringing and education that lead you towards a career in Foreign Affairs.*

TYLER: I would be glad to. It is a very unusual career and unusual life, and I don't want to go into too much detail. So, if I do, you'll tell me won't you? I was born in Paris in 1910 of American parents. They were living in Paris at the time. I remained in France until the age of nearly 9, then in late 1918, I was sent to school in England. So, although I was born American, and always felt American, I didn't come to the states until I was 22 years old.

Q: May I ask, obviously the war was on, which precluded certain movement in your early years but by 1918 it was over--why were you sent to school in England to receive your education?

TYLER: Because by that time, my parents were settled in Paris. My father was working on a history project for the British records office on the correspondence of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and the English court, Queen Mary and Philip. I lived in Europe until I came to the U.S. in September 1933. By that time, I had been to school in England. Incidentally, my father, although a new Englander by birth, also went to school in England. He went to Milton Academy near Boston first, then when his father died, his mother came over to Europe. It was still a bad period you know, people moved and settled in Europe then in an easier way than now.

Q: I understand that your family was acquainted with Edith Wharton, Henry James and others such figures?

TYLER: When the war came in 1914, my father and mother were already friends of Edith Wharton. My father was by preference a historian. He worked for the U.S. Government later, but he was not a career official. My parents became great friends with Edith Wharton, they met first in 1912 in Paris in the apartment of Henri Matisse, who was a friend of my fathers. Edith Wharton and my mother got on very well together. Then the war came. Edith Wharton immediately created an oeuvres, as they call it in France, a center for the care and the upkeep of the refugees (French and Belgian) and other refugees from the front and areas. This was founded by Edith Wharton. My mother was the executive director, chairman, and ran the whole thing.

Q: You came to the U.S. after completing school of Oxford?

TYLER: Yes, I went to a private school in England in Gloucester, then I went to Harrow School, a so called public school which you call private school. Which my father had been to because his father had died and my grandmother came over to Europe and rented a villa in France and quite by chance my father was put into an English school. Its one of those things that make no sense, but that's how life was. After Harrow I went to Oxford and graduated in what is called "modern greats"-- philosophy, politics and economics in 1933. I've always had a yearning to go back to my country which I've never been to. They not only understood this but encouraged me and through friends went right into the depths of the Depression. I went as a student with what is called Guarantee Company which is the security's branch of the Guarantee Trust Company. I came back in September 1933 inspire of adverse circumstances. I landed a job as soon as I was out, a job in New York. I accepted it and went back to England and married my wife, with whom I was already engaged with at the time. We both set sail for the United States in September 1934, after our marriage. I then worked with the Guarantee Trust Company in New York for 3-4 years, then was sent over to the London office because of all the contacts I had. To cut it as short as I can, by 1938 I made up my mind, that banking was not my thing. I did not want to go on banking. I did not feel it was a congenial environment and that it did not offer congenial prospects in the future. I got in touch with friends back here and on basis of my Oxford career I was welcomed as a post graduate student at Harvard University in the school of Fine Arts, History of Fine Arts. So in 1937, just before the

war, in September or October 1938, I left London and came to New York. You know in 1934 after we been married we went back to New York. I was working for Guarantee Trust Company, so we already knew New York, and we came back to New York in 1939, just before the war. I was at Harvard then working in the department of Fine Arts and History of Arts. Paul Sacks was the Chairman and Edward Forbes the co-chairman, and I found it was just exactly what I'd hoped.

I was working for my Ph.D. just as the war was breaking out in Europe in 1939. My draft number came up very rapidly but I had a history of adolescent tuberculosis which has been completely cured, however, when they saw the scar on the x-ray they said I was out of the military service. They wouldn't take me, so, I wanted to do something if possible so I might contribute to the Allied cause. It happened that in Boston, there was a Radio station a short wave radio station, WRUL-Worldwide Broadcasting Foundation. It was created by former IBM vice-president, Walter S. Lemon. Walter S. Lemon was a brilliant radio engineer who was President Wilson's radio advisor in a peace conference in 1919 in Paris. Walter S. Lemon welcomed me. And Harvard was very helpful. And so, well, you want to do something for the war effort and (Harvard said) we want to help you so, we will keep your fellowship on ice for you until you come back. Well, as it turned out after Pearl Harbor, Bob Sherwood, who knew friends of my family came to Boston and asked me if I would leave WRUL. All the private radio stations, there were only 7 in the US at that time, broadcasting overseas were taken over by the Government.

Q: May I ask you, what was WRUL doing?

TYLER: Walter S. Lemon had made a great deal of money. I think he invented a way of reducing tuning to one radio knob instead of two knobs. He got a patent on that and made millions. He was an idealist, a Christian Scientist. He wanted to broadcast news about America and the American point of view to the world. We had audiences in the Far East and all over the world. So when he took me on, I was in charge of the French language broadcast. I'd write my own scripts in pencil and broadcast every day a summary of news.

Q: We're talking about 1940, yes?

TYLER: Yes, 1940, 1941, and in 1942. In 1942, after Pearl Harbor, Bob Sherwood came to Boston and asked me out to dinner. He said, well I know what you been doing, I've been looking into what all the short wave radio stations have been doing. I'm delighted and you are well respected by those who follow International affairs. If you ever you want to work for the government, I can't recruit you but if you want to work for the government I'd be happy to have you join the OWI (Office of War Information) radio division.

Q: But back to WRUL, this was private?

TYLER: This was purely private, existing partly on Lemon's own funds and also on money it used raised in its broadcast appeals.

Q: Well, now, did you have a line, or was there any government direction?

TYLER: Not until this station was taken over with other private short wave station by the OWI. NBC, CBS, Westinghouse, GE had short wave programs, 7 in all including WRUL, the only American stations broadcasting to the outside world.

Q: I think I know the answer, but up until Pearl Harbor, was there such thing as an American government broadcasting service?

TYLER: No, absolutely not, and I shudder to think of the latitude I had because I had no directives from anyone except my own views and whatever good sense I had.

Q: Because I 'm doing this interview to look at the early days at our information service and the predecessors to it, when you were talking to occupied France, what were you personally and what were you broadcasting over the radio that you felt was of importance to the people in occupied France.

TYLER: Well, two things, one the news they could not get and another the reasons and the facts I could give them the people of occupied Europe have confidence in ultimate victory.

Q: What were these reasons?

TYLER: There were so many. There was of course no U.S. involvement until Pearl Harbor but after Pearl Harbor, the main thing I felt in 1940-41 when I started broadcasting, was "don't despair the cause for liberty, it is only momentarily extinguished. The German invasion, occupation of western Europe is not the end, the last word. The UK is holding firm." I would read them extracts from Churchill's speeches and also from the statements by congressmen and President Roosevelt to give them hope and make them understand that we represented not just the last bit of hope of freedom and liberation, but we represented at the time the hope and anything that could encourage morale of the people over there I would select and give. If you'd like it was the most complete and sincere propaganda.

Q: Now this was also the period of the America First movement and there were congressmen and others. At any time did you have any pressure from anyone of what the hell are you doing?

TYLER: No. I don't recall at all having any pressures aware from anyone. Some of my friends were members of America First but I was never given any indication in the sense of any adverse or critical action from any member of the public.

Q: I guess we should return to Robert Sherwood. Did you know him before?

TYLER: No I didn't know him before, but there were mutual family friends and when he started looking around, he found WRUL was one of the 7 stations broadcasting overseas.

Sherwood called me up in New York, introduced himself, even though he didn't have to. Having come up from Boston, he asked me if I would dine with him and I said I would be very happy to. He said he knew what I had been doing. He had been looking at what all the shortwave stations had been doing and now that he was coordinator of information he was anxious to recruit the best talent he could find for the big job in front of us, which is to make our role in the world and our policies known to the world, to encourage our friends and lower the morale of our enemies. I think we have a great future task for us. He said, "I'm not recruiting you, but if ever you are in need of a job, just let me know."

Q: Now at that time was it pretty much just Robert Sherwood going around testing the ground?

TYLER: No. There was a big superstructure in New York created immediately after Pearl Harbor, I think the first before the War Information Act. To cut a long story short, I said I want to do anything I can. I went down to New York to take up the Radio Division position in early August 1942. In fact, it was Monday morning, August 10th, 1942 and a friend of mine, Doug Schneider, who is now dead, came down with me too, because he also was recruited. He was always told if he would like to work for the government that they would like to have him. So we turned up at the then office of the OWI which was later moved to 224 57th street, but at the time when I went there it was still on Madison Ave. Well, so, beginning of August 1942, I was in the thick of it; they put me first of all in the French Division. Because I was broadcasting in French and writing my own scripts in French, I was a French tool for them. But very rapidly I was taken away from the French desk and put into Broadcast Control: that was because I had already a familiarity with German, Spanish and other languages. I spent some time in Austria in the years 1929-30 and I also knew some Italian so I was sort of a linguist also. I was put in Broadcast Control as head of Broadcast Control, in fact the head of the Radio Division, the whole Radio Division. When I went there, there was a fellow Joe Barnes, a former AP correspondent, (I think AP), very highly thought of and indeed a personality I remember still with great respect and great admiration. Joe Barnes had a talk with me when I came in, he told me what we are all trying to do. So right from the start I was in the thick of things.

Q: I was going to ask you, by the time you arrived there you were a professional in Broadcasting, and Mr. Barnes was, I mean you've been doing this. I'm thinking of another organization that was recruited at the same time as the OSS, remember Bill Donovan? To begin with, it was recruited from people of like mind with William Donovan and it was kidded for a long time of about being a dilettante, amateur organization until it proved itself. Did you have a feeling that the OWI was sort of a cloning of Bob Sherwood or was it a quite a professional ?.

TYLER: We became professional by experience. None of us were professional to start with. I was not a professional. What was I, I was a graduate student from Harvard University who turned up because I had been turned down for medical reasons and wanted to do something I had heard about this station in Boston WRUL, so I went there and said, "do you have any use for a French speaking American who would be very happy to contribute and not be paid?" And yes they said, they are very much interested, and would I like to start?

Q: But at the OWI, the first people who came there, was it pretty much an amateur put together organization.

TYLER: Completely heterogeneous group of people with a strong element of the press, correspondents, people all connected with the press, who had written with the press. There were also good many refugees from Europe.

Q: I was going to ask you, a continuing problem with the Voice Of America has been refugee groups pursuing their own ethnic policies.

TYLER: That's inevitable, that's inseparable from the conditions that had to be fulfilled in order to create a group of people who could speak to a country day after day. I really can't exaggerate to you the extent to which all we did was improvise. The policy guidance was only in the broadest terms it didn't require a genius to know what they were trying to do because what we were trying to do was win the war.

Q: You were put in a rather critical position, supervising these people who were broadcasting to Western Europe, because when I think of Spain, I think of the Loyalists and Republicans, in France you has the Communists, Royalists, Socialists and others. Even in Germany you had various political viewpoints. Can you tell me things that come to mind of these diversities and trying to put them together?

TYLER: I was in Broadcast Control, out of the French desk, after 3 or 4 weeks. The head of Broadcast Control was at the time was a former newspaper and called Ed Johnson. And I used to read a lot of scripts that were prepared for broadcast--before they were broadcasted, in French, German, Spanish and Italian. All broadcast more or less at the same time, 4 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon in order to hit the next audience in the evening in Europe. I knew what the guidance was in broad terms, but of course there was a great latitude. I remember frequently, moments when I would call up a desk officer and ask him to come up and see me at Broadcast Control and say I don't think we can say this, we are speaking for the USA. I know how you feel about it, but your opinions of elements within the country which are trying to do the same thing, unfavorable opinions are not something you can air to the world on U.S. time. Well, the biggest flair-up when I was there with Paul Warburg, who was of the Warburg family and a very able fellow. He had it in for the Italian king, Vittorio Emanuelle. He wrote a script which was broadcast and sent to Italy, in Italian, and which passed through Broadcast Control, because Paul Warburg had his way of operating on that particular issue, and the script referred to the moronic little king.

Well, no one will say that Vittorio Emanuelle will cut a heroic figure, but what he was not was moronic; he was extremely well-educated and in his own way a courageous fellow and politically astute who was trying to keep an even keel with Benito Mussolini having cut the ground out from under him, etc. So this caused a great outrage in Italy and annoyed a lot of the listeners. And the big brouhaha of how this got across, how had Paul Warburg sidestepped Broadcast Control's apparatus. You see, we were very loosely organized. And that script was broadcast by a guest speaker in Italian. I wish I made ample notes, but I was too busy working 12 hours a day. Now of course in Germany many of the refugees were distinguished academicians, men of letters refugee politicians. I don't remember really having any great trouble except on certain specific points which I would talk over with the script writer and if I felt the issue was of principle involving areas of importance to our policy I would refuse to clear the script and it would have to go upstairs to Joe Barnes and to John Houseman, the director of the WPA theater, the movies, and a very talented man of Romanian birth. John Houseman was the guy on the upper floor, I was below on the operating level. We knew each other, I don't remember anything dramatic in the way of scripts. Broadcast Control would go over a script, the fellow who had the language reading it as it was to be broadcast, and when there were difficulties, inaccuracies or if we felt that what he or she was trying to do was not consistent with US policy interest, a pretty broad area. Then we would discuss it.

Q: Well, going to policy interests at the time, besides giving the news, which after a certain time was getting better, but say in regards to Germany, what were we trying to do other than just give the news? Were we trying to persuade the Germans to get rid of Hitler?

TYLER: You couldn't get the Germans to get rid of Hitler. He had them under his control.

Q: But were we trying?

TYLER: Well of course, we were indirectly give all the elements that could encourage the Germans to feel that United States was in this until victory and to not give up hope. But, in my point of view, it would have been insane to try to arouse intemperately and without any basis for being able to support it, resistance within Germany to Hitler and all the people who were National Socialists there, all the others would have been immediately liquidated so the whole point was to give the Germans the feeling of: a) that America was in this that we would win the war, b) that it would take time but not to despair, and c) that they were being fed erroneous information and news which we would correct. We had the ability of course from our own monitoring of the German news services to know all that Germany was broadcasting to its own people. So continuously in any language we would correct the enemy line on this or that issue with chapter and verse. It was a morale building exercise of making the people over there feel that victory would come in the end, that the United States was on the side of freedom, as we had always been. We gave them good reasons to hope. We made great effort to bring to them knowledge of all the enormous wartime and military effort of the planes, tanks, ships and supplies that we

sending overseas. We would do whatever our ingenuity and good sense made it seem to be the kind of thing if I were listening in a small room in a little village in Germany and tuned to America, what would I like to hear? It was there were reasons not give up or despair but to have confidence in the ultimate victory.

Q: But were we aware at the time and did we try to transmit news of atrocities done by the Nazis? Of course I'm thinking of the crimes against the Jews and other groups.

TYLER: Oh yes, of course, whatever came that would work towards the discomfort or to the diminishing to of any respect for the National Socialists, any information we got, we used.

Q: You mentioned the Communists who would broadcast. Did you have any problem with them?

TYLER: No. I wouldn't say that. It was only in the course of the months that I was in the OWI in New York from August 1942 till March 1943 when I was sent to North Africa. I didn't know who might or might not be a Communist, but you know this stuff gets around that some such person might be a Communist. But of course in June 1941 came the German invasion of the Soviet Union. We used everything that we could which would be effective to make the people feel the Germans would not conquer Russia and that they would not carry out their plan of creating their 1000 year Reich. I was told after the war that some of people working for the USIS during the war had been Communists. But during the war the most important thing was making sure that the news we were giving was reliable, that the news would have in effect of encouraging those who were likely to be against the regime and also discouraging those who were on the fringe who felt by joining the regime, the National Socialist regime, that they were somehow on the tide of victory. Everything was an attempt to portray America as a resolute and ultimately invincible factor in the winning of the war.

Q: The French politics were always so convoluted, including the strong anti-British element, strengthened by the British attacks on the French at Dakar and Mers el Kebir and all of that.

TYLER: De Gaulle and Churchill. Starting when I was still at WRUL, I always felt from my knowledge, and after all I could speak from firsthand experience from all my youth, that while collaboration as such was not only reprehensible but must be discredited and condemned, I felt it important to be very careful not to appear from outside, from the United States to be taking a strongly partisan, or any partisan position, in French politics itself. De Gaulle was someone whom we could support considering his declaration of June 18, 1940, "France has lost a battle, but has not lost the war". Anything which would be helpful for the morale of the French within France, who felt that the war would be won was our policy. Anything that we could use I always used. For example, Pierre Laval's role, I had no trouble attacking it.

Q: Its very hard to find an attractive side to Laval.

TYLER: None at all, not only no attractive side but he was a cynical political manipulator who had thrown in on the side of the Nazis. I tried to discourage as much as possible political vituperation against Marshal Petain. Because with the perspective I now have of those years, I realize, it was inevitable I think, how I greatly oversimplified very complex issues. The years after the war when I was at the embassy in Paris, 6 years as a Public Affairs Counselor, my view of the war years in France was greatly modified by the feelings that formed many people in France. There was no really easy solution to the Hitler times. You see, when I got to North Africa in March 1943, in Oran, the first thing that happened was that I fell in with a French naval officer who asked me in to his home because I spoke such good French. He was delighted to talk with an American who speaks French, most of our people didn't. And he said, "would I come to dinner with him and his wife, that we can't give you much to eat, there isn't much, this was Oran, not much I could offer you but whatever we have I'd like to share with you"? "I'd love to talk to you", I said, "well I'd be glad to." Well, my first education was when I went to the little livingroom, a rather mean little living space he had, his wife was there, and on the mantlepiece there were two photographs, one of Marshal Petain and the other of General de Gaulle. And I saw these, I said to him, what do you think of de Gaulle? He said, oh well, any Frenchman who is mobilizing the forces of France to continue the struggle of Germany, I respect and support. Marshal Petain is doing what he can in his own way. He is trying to keep up keep intact the soul of France, I have a great respect and admiration for the Marshal. Well, here you may say I'm over simplifying the but remember this optic, this view of the situation was very much what I found after the liberation. That except for the few who had simply cast the issue in terms of black and white, that perspective reflected the views of the majority of the French people.

Q: What brought you to North Africa?

TYLER: Well, after I had been in Broadcast Control until after the American landings, the landings were which you will remember were in November 1942. Shortly after these landings, I was aware of our links with the British SOE (Special Operations Executive), MI-5 is confrontations, SOE was the British equivalent of the OWI overseas. They had a liaison officer in New York. I became aware of his presence in New York. He was very closed mouthed, as I had expected he would be. He talked to me a few times, and was interested in my background, and shortly after that I can't remember exactly how it happened but I was told that I would be sent to North Africa, but I was not allowed to talk about it, which I didn't. I didn't even tell my wife until much nearer to the time of departure. I was told I had to get to Canada by my own means, without using a passport, just with my drivers permit, with which you could cross into Canada. I must go to a certain place, get off at Montreal, I guess it was, and take a train to a certain place and I found my self in a training camp for various secret operations. Remember at that time I was just OWI, but I was only known by the name of Bill and I knew nobody else's family name, there were several dozens of us around. And going through the bitter and rude never-never land, but there it was, I had to learn a few facts of life about secret

operations. Though I never engaged in any myself except politically. I was there in a cram course for about 10 days to two weeks, I still don't know where it was, it was out in the woods somewhere.

Q: Was this a sort of a OSS or a special agent type course?

TYLER: The officer who gave us our training was British. Of course they had much more experience then we did. And this was about the time, I guess, the OSS was coming into being, I really don't know what was the framework but it was a US/British/Canadian venture to train these types they wanted to send overseas to know the rudimentary elements of secret operations and undercover work, Then I went back to New York I was not allowed to talk about where I'd been and I deliberately avoided trying to memorize anything. All I know is that I took a train to Montreal and got out at a little station and I felt that when I get out of the station I'd be taken care of, and when I got out of the station, there was a fellow there, a personnel carrier, he must of had a description of me, I don't even remember if there was a password but he took me off into the woods, and deposited me into a place where this was all going on.

Back in New York I was told, alright, carry on as you had done before, on Broadcast Control, you will be going overseas but you won't know until the last moment. John Houseman called me into his office after I got back from Canada, and told me that I was actually going to Allied Force Head Quarters in Algiers. All I knew was that they had something for me or I wouldn't have been through this covert operations course. John Houseman called me up and said, "Alright Bill, I've got news for you", he said, that I was going to North Africa, to Allied Force Head Quarters to be in charge of Radio Operations. Houseman said he had ordered his uniform from Brooks Brothers but his own departure would have to be put off indefinitely. I recently had learned he had not been cleared by the FBI. Whatever John Houseman's political affiliations were as a younger man were, I just don't know.

Q: Well, I read his books, and he was very much involved in left wing activities of the 1930s in the field of putting on plays.

TYLER: John Houseman called me up and said you are going to Allied Force Head Quarters in Algiers in charge of Radio. He said "I was going but that has been indefinitely postponed." I said, "why did you pick me?" He said, "well I'll tell you, there were 3 or 4 people on the short list, anyone of whom might have gone, but we wanted somebody that had qualities, somebody who we thought not only well qualified but also a son-of-a-bitch." He used those words. I said thanks for the compliment. He said, "well you know what I mean." And I said, "alright, I'll do what I can." Then he said, "get your uniform and don't talk, don't tell anyone where you are going", and I said I wouldn't. I didn't even tell my wife. She was in Boston, we were living in Dedham. Houseman said that when the time comes, you will have at the most 36 hours notice before you leave. that will give you a chance to see your wife if she doesn't come down to see you before you go. I was staying at the Seymore hotel on 44th street.

Q: When you went to Africa, you were stationed in Oran?

TYLER: No, I arrived in Oran. I was there for a couple of days then was flown to Algiers.

Q: What was your position in Algiers?

TYLER: Well, in charge of the Radio Division. The Radio Division was the psychological branch of the Allied Forces Head Quarters.

Q: Was there a difference in the type of work you were doing there than what you were doing in New York? Was the radio work in Algiers more tactical more than strategic?

TYLER: No, the same issues. It was continuing the same work.

Q: Was it also aimed at the same Western European countries, say Spain, Italy and France?

TYLER: It was the Western Mediterranean area, which included Spain, Italy, France, but not Greece. But the record is fuzzy in my recollection, whatever the programing was, it was aimed immediately at two targets, one the local population in the country and another, the German troops, anything that could effect their morale and diminish their fighting spirit.

Q: So in this regard you were performing more of a tactical type of radio as opposed to talking to the populace at large?

TYLER: I was in the theater of operations. I was being bombed in Algiers, until after the Sicilian landings when the German airbases had to withdraw. But until July-August 1943, when I arrived in Algiers, we were under wartime, blackout conditions.

Q: What type of people did you have working for you there.

TYLER: A lot of former colleagues from the OWI. And there were people who I thought were simply devoted heart and soul to the Allied cause in support of our positions and our policies. I myself never concealed the fact that I was very strongly in support of de Gaulle, not as a political figure but as the one rallying point in France for resistance that could have in due course a determining effect on French opinion. Bob Murphy was there, and he was a friend, my father knew him when he was consul in Paris. Bob Murphy naturally was an official of the State Department, and I was OWI. There were the OSS people, Ridgway Knight, Julius Holmes, Harry Woodraw, Selden Chapin and Robert McBride, people like them. I was not with the OSS. They were civil affairs officers. We were all for the government but they were in the government framework. I was OWI, but I was not responsible to them.

Q: What about the coordination, you were in the military command, we have an overall, sort of a dual political structure with MacMillan and Murphy, Harold MacMillan being the British administrator, Murphy being the U.S. advisor. Who gave you orders?

TYLER: That's a very good question. The answer is I can't remember. I tell you, by the time we got our directives from the OWI in Washington, very often those directives were no longer topical. After a delay of several days, so in a sense, I was in charge of radio, I broadcast myself a few times but my administrative responsibility was for script writing, so I gave up broadcasting in French. Actually looking back on it its staggering the latitude I had.

Q: I think this is true in any wartime situation, it happens. Did you attend staff meetings?

TYLER: I had my own meetings in the building, the Maison de l'Agriculture in the Boulevard Bourbon in Algiers. I had the Radio Office staff meetings, but small meetings of the people in charge of units. But, I don't remember there being any conflict in policy except that I knew Bob Murphy where he stood was somebody who was naturally carrying out very closely and rightly the President's policy after all he was our President. I never conflicted with his policy but I always insisted on emphasizing as much as possible, not de Gaulle's military roles, but the importance of supporting de Gaulle as the spirit of France.

Q: What about Giraud?

TYLER: Well, that of course, I saw Giraud in Algiers I was present at the first meeting with him and de Gaulle with the press present.

Q: The wonderful handshake picture.

TYLER: I was there. Well, Giraud was made mincemeat of by de Gaulle. Giraud I think is an honorable and patriotic man who just didn't have what it took to create a position of leadership, a rallying point. In a way I was too close to it all to have a true perspective on it. But it is quite clear that Giraud would not be able to rally enough support to withstand the strong and increasing role of de Gaulle.

Q: Now moving to a sort of tactical or even more strategic situation, were you at some point given orders to concentrate on the troops, the German and the Italian troops in Sicily before the landing?

TYLER: In Sicily before the landings, I knew that the landings were going to take place. Yes, but you see we had a lot of material to broadcast, also our operation was not only radio but writing material for leaflets to be dropped by air. First of all I've got to take another peace of the cake.
On arrival in March 1943 until the end of December 1944 I was Chief of the Radio Division, as C.D. Jackson (Time Life), a very able fellow, was our boss, the head of the

whole OWI office. Then there was an Englishman, Dick Crossman, whom his enemies called double Crossman, he became a member of the British Parliament. He died about 10 years ago. The there was Mike Bessie, Simon Michael Bessie.

Well I knew I was being sent to North Africa, I sort of jumped in the middle there. We sailed in very short notice from the North River in New York in a convoy of landing craft, we were the first out, I had never seen anything like it before, I had never seen a landing craft before, landing ship tank. When I got to the pier, my wife came down from Dedham. When we parted, she didn't even know where I was going, I didn't tell her, all she was told was that the office would be in touch with her when I arrived. Well as it happened, I saw below the pier, I saw this strange craft they were still welding bits of it together. This is the LST 356, and I was with several other civilians and about 200 troops. The civilians, the people from the board of economic warfare, 2 or 3 OWI people.

Q: Walter Schwinn was there?

TYLER: Walter Schwinn was not on that one, I think he came a little later. Simon Michael Bessie, Dick Hollander, Johnny Peyser, and then people on the Board of Economic Warfare, I've forgotten their names. And we were doubled up in the officers' quarters, and well, I was only 32 years old, so I guess I could take it, but when I look back on that trip, instead of taking an estimated couple of weeks or more we combined the terrible March Atlantic storms with the Doenitz submarine offensive so we had to go way south, to stay away from the area of possible submarine operations.

Q: Well the LST was known not only landing ship tank but also a long slow target.

TYLER: This is so personal, it is not worth reporting, except we made Bermuda after more than one week, it was terrible, no lights of course, and the mountainous seas and the damned LST as you know is like a saucer, it has no keel, so I just don't know how we all survived, but we did. And when we got to Bermuda, we had a two day layover, which was just wonderful, but after leaving Bermuda, the convoy set off, forest of toothpicks on the horizon all around us, victory ships, liberty ships, I don't know, and lots of LST ships marching around. I suppose our speed was about 7 knots. And suddenly the motor stopped and we were left wallowing in the sea. That was really the lowest moment of my morale, otherwise it was awfully high, when I realized the convoy around us sailing on and I could see it through the toothpicks of the radio masts disappearing over the horizon and we were just sitting there waiting to be picked off. Well, our Scot engineer, McGregor got them going again thank God. It took us nearly four weeks to get to Oran. We were so long overdue, the OWI office thought something had happened to us and notified Mrs. Tyler that there was no reason for alarm that she would be told if there were, but she should know that my arrival had not yet been reported. But that was remedied a week or so later.

Q: Then in Algiers, dealing with German or Italian troops...

TYLER: We had interrogation teams.
Q: You would get information from them?

TYLER: Oh Yes.

Q: It is always difficult in broadcasting, where you're sending out, you dream things up in your head and you try to use your knowledge of the country and all that but how did you measure your effectiveness?

TYLER: I had no means.

Q: How about prisoner interrogation did you get anything from them?

TYLER: Yes, occasionally we received reports. What we were doing in North Africa was peanuts compared with what BBC was doing and Voice of America was doing from the states. But we did have the advantage of broadcasting from these two antennae, they were balloon rigged antennas, there was Hippo and I forget the other name, rigged up outside of Algiers. So, our medium wave broadcasting from Algiers only had the advantage that it was a voice coming from nearer than from across the Atlantic, but it was a very small beer compared to the mass of information coming from Britain and the United States.

Q: With the BBC, was there was much cooperation, did you feel it was a role model or a rival?

TYLER: Oh I never felt it was a rival. I never felt any competition. BBC was so infinitely better, covering the whole of Europe.

Q: To go back a bit, was the Voice Of America under the OWI?

TYLER: Yes.

Q: Were you called the Voice Of America?

TYLER: No. We called ourselves the Voice of the United Nations Radio Allied Force Head Quarters in Algiers.

Q: But when you were in New York you called yourself Voice Of America?

TYLER: Yes. Until December 1943, I was in charge of Radio Allied Force Headquarters, and I used to go regularly go to AFHQ, I forgot the name of the hotel in Algiers where General Eisenhower was. But then of course, he moved to London, AFHQ moved to London for preparations for Overlord (the invasion of Northern France). The void created by the move was immediately taken over by Seventh Army Planning HQ for "Operation Anvil", which was to take place in the south of France following (the landing of Salerno). Salerno followed after the conquest of Sicily.

General McChristal was the US army officer in charge of psychological warfare branch of the HQ; he succeeded Colonel Hazeltine. And General McChristal called me up and said, "I'd like to see you", and I said, "General I'm on my way." And he said, "I'm taking you up to Bouzarea, above Algiers to the west and I'm going to introduce you to the officers and staff in planning HQ for these landings in Southern France." Later on I met General Patch the Seventh Army commander and his senior staff. My particular military anchor was then Colonel Quinn, who later became a lieutenant general, and a mighty fine Irishman. Under him was his deputy, Bob Bruskin. General McChristal said to all the people, he made me stand up there with him and said, "I want you all to know Bill Tyler, because he will be working under Colonel Quinn and Colonel Bruskin for the public affairs, psychological warfare side of the preparation of the landings and for the landings themselves." I got the fullest cooperation. There I was, a measly civilian, but they gave me full cooperation. I was in charge in drawing up the plan for the press, radio and leaflet side of the preparation of the landings.

Q: Was this the landing at Salerno?

TYLER: No, the main landing in Southern France.

Q: Oh, this was Dragoon?

TYLER: Well, it started out by being Anvil then ended up being Dragoon. From January 1944 until our operations which followed of course much later than Overlord, the final landing was August 15.

Q: After the landings did you go into France?

TYLER: Yes, but much after the landings. It was a great disappointment to me being the fellow in charge of the whole thing I had the enormous interest and responsibility of planning the preparations, I had been given the fine sounding title of Chief Psychological Warfare, West Mediterranean. I was in charge of leaflets as well as radio, and also the plans for the public affairs side of the landing. All the hardware, the number of men, all the people of the press side, the radio side that had to go in following the landing. I worked on them of course, then I went to Caserta [outside Naples] where the Headquarters was and I saw General de Lattre de Tassigny, we had become friends. Eve Curie, the daughter the Curies, was on his staff. Its incredible looking back on it, I can hardly believe it all happened. I went to see General de Lattre de Tassigny, in Naples. I also had to arrange work with the French commissioner for information who was Henri Bonnet in the provisional government in Algiers. Henri Bonnet was in charge of the whole press and special relations side. Again, my odd background helped because Bonnet knew my father. I knew Rene Massigli, the Commissioner of the interior, I had contacts, easy contact, between their headquarters and its successor, the planning headquarters of the French on nonmilitary matters.

Q: And after the landings in Southern France?

TYLER: I stayed in the Algiers till the end of August. I had to fly to London in July shortly after Overlord took place, because Bob Sherwood was in London then and wanted to have a report from me on the planning of the next stage. I have the vivid recollection of arriving in London just after the buzz bombs that started. I never heard of them. They had been going on for two days so the taxi driver from the airport told me then that they were coming over. When you hear the motor cut out you better hide. Of course they were landing all around us. And I was going with Sherwood, in his office, going over these sheets, facts and figures, and we heard one coming, menacingly, in our direction, and when it got very close to us, Bob Sherwood said, "we'll dive under the table." So he and I dove under the table. It was quite a situation for me to be tangled up with Bob Sherwood's long legs under the table. Well, the bomb landed just in Aldwich, 50 yards from us, we weren't hurt but it killed a few people. When I was in London for this exercise, coordinating with the British elements on the present psychological warfare side, and then I went back to Algiers waiting for the time of the actual time of the actual landing. I stayed on in Algiers, continuing giving what support I could and was flown to London in early September and then into Paris about a month or less then a month after its liberation in September 18th or 20th. And immediately started setting up the OWI Paris/French operation.

Q: Now at that point there must have been a feeling that the OWI was beginning to move closer to the State Department?

TYLER: Yes, but not only closer, because you see, we have never been far apart from State Department officers. I was working with the civil affairs people in Algeria until they went to London.

Q: In a way, looking at the birth of USIA, did it come right out of OWI?

TYLER: Yes. I was Deputy Director OWI for France and North Africa to start with. My chief was a fellow called Louis Galentiere, who was an American, born in America, a very distinguished person in his own way, he had perfect French. He translated the words by Jean Anoulih the playwright. He was in the OWI, he was in the radio part of it. The one area where I felt great opposition was with Louis Galentiere, who I think was very strongly anti-de Gaulle, and I was very strongly for not for DeGaullism, that wasn't the point, I was very strongly not impairing the role of de Gaulle as a catalytic agent in mobilizing and keeping alert and full of hope the resistance to Germany. Louis Galentiere and I sort of made up after the war, years after, but we had some pretty tough times in Paris when I was his deputy. I was loyal to him. I never did anything behind his back. Louis Galentiere went back to the States and I was also told to go back just before the Battle of the Bulge (December 1944). The Battle of the Bulge started when I was back in the States being debriefed. I was there to meet Cass Canfield, who was Galentiere's successor as Director of OWI.

Q: Was that in France?

TYLER: Yes. And Cass Canfield was a wonderful person to work for. Mike Bessie was my deputy as Deputy Director, was my assistant. For all the major not only press but all the media information on cultural relations program. And Cass Canfield and I flew over in January, early January 1945, and Cass Canfield remained Director until about VE-Day. Then he went back to the States and I continued as Director until I was left USIS.

Q: Now in France, once you were in Paris, did your role change? Did you find yourself pushing America more then the allied cause?

TYLER: Of course, in France there was enormous opportunity. But the allied cause was the background to pushing America. The OWI programs were all directed to projecting America's role as part of the Allied cause. After VE-day, May 8th, 1945, then the whole effort shifted consciously, toward educating French opinions in the case of France and North Africa, on the importance of the Pacific war.

Q: So you were continuing with the war thing rather then the America thing.

TYLER: No, but America was inseparable with the Pacific war, they knew nothing about it of course. Public opinion was not interested they were only interested in what was happening in Europe. But after the VE-Day there was a definite and conscious, and I think necessary process of education, of public opinion in France for the press, whatever we could get into the press and films for promoting the Pacific war. For example, I remember the excellent documentaries we got of action in the Pacific we used to show to audiences that were particularly selected in order to benefit from seeing these documentaries. Now that the war was won in Europe, it was going to be wrapped up in the Pacific. A great cultural program had been launched in Europe with exchanges, libraries that had been without books for four years people not knowing what had happened outside so there was a great process of educating European opinion, in my case, in France and North Africa, of developing information and cultural programs on the role of the making of what had happened since the war started.

Q: Did you find any problems? One is always struck at the strength of French culture and its resistance of outside influences?

TYLER: I think that has been exaggerated, its a question of knowing how to set about it. It sounds a bit conceited on my part but I was in a unique position to have some ideas and I found that the French are no different really from other people except that they are different in their formation and they have their own national genius and characteristics but I found them enormously avid for information about anything to do with America. The French people could never get enough information about America. I found no resistance. I was engaged in a lot of more or less official activities in the anti-communist area. But I don't want to get into that because it would appear to be give it more significance but it would focus it more. The whole point was that very soon, after the end

of the war, I'd see Communists in Paris, Jacques Duclos, Ferri Moultri and members of the French political party, I would invite them to see documentary films, I would send them the material in order to give the American point of view across as much as possible. But it rapidly became very clear this was going to be a battle for the opinion in Western Europe.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, we were talking on the last tape about your dealings with the communists. Again I don't want to over emphasize this in today's context, that everything is a battle of democracy versus communism. How did you see the development of the communist party in France in those days, its divergence from the allied cause?

TYLER: Oh, yes. The allied cause, I'm sure, was focused from a different point of view, it had built into it the consciousness that the cause of democracy and freedom was at stake. And it was immediately quite obvious, after I arrived to France that the communist party was simply an instrument, an agent, a tool of the communist party for the Soviet Union. So I made it a point to cultivate the communists who were in positions of political interest for two reasons; one was to be exposed to what they were doing or what lines they were taking, and the other to be able to bring to their attention certain aspects of the situation which they would not accept but with which they would have to reckon with in the future. The determination that while we were an ally of the Soviet Union during the war up until the end of the war, naturally fighting allies, there was no common meeting ground in the ideology behind our two ways.

Q: Did we have broadcasts in those days going to France that began to look towards American interests more than allied interests?

TYLER: I wouldn't differentiate between the two, because right on through till the end of the fighting, allied interests and American interests were focused on one thing which was victory.

Q: Towards the end of the war and right after the war, when the Fourth Republic was being formed, there were a series of referenda, plebiscites and elections. We were careful as a new French government was being formed, did we avoid taking sides or were we helping one of them?

TYLER: Oh, no, not in France. I was involved but later in that. I was involved in covert support of some of the media that were able to use material that I felt was in the interest of the United States. And this was with the knowledge that the Ambassador Jefferson Caffery. The fact was that I was much more accessible than people in the regular Foreign Service. Take an example, at a time before the end of the war in 1944 I got to know an actress by the name of Madeline Carroll.

Q: She just died very recently.

TYLER: Yes, I know, October 2nd.

Q: I remember her in "The 39 Steps". She was a beautiful woman.

TYLER: You can imagine how dazzled I was by her, even though I was married. She had a French mother and excellent French. She and I used to broadcast together on the radio in Paris after the liberation. We became very good friends. She was always changing husbands although Lord Ashley was the first. She had a delightful French husband, Henri ?.

Q: There was also an American actor, Sterling Hayden.

TYLER: Madeline Carroll and I formed kind of a team for French radio broadcasts, which we were invited to give by the French radio, on Franco-American relations and the role of the United States. She was really helpful. I was in the Directorate of War Information before it was taken over by USIA in 1945. I was of course part of the Embassy. And Jefferson Caffery was the Ambassador and there were some stalwarts there like Doug MacArthur.

Q: He came in right at the beginning.

TYLER: Well, of course, he had been France at least 3 times.

Q: He was one of the two or three people who opened our Embassy.

TYLER: That's right, that's when I first got to know him. I didn't realize he had anything to do with that.

Q: This Douglas MacArthur II.

TYLER: There were others, whom I've forgotten. I was part of the Embassy.

Q: Did you feel welcome by the old members of the foreign service?

TYLER: Yes, I had no problem.

Q: Did Jefferson Caffery understand the rules?

TYLER: Jefferson Caffery was actually responsible later for my going to Paris, him and David Bruce. I went to call on Jefferson Caffery at once when he arrived in 1945. That helped because he knew my father, Ronald Tyler. And we had other friends. You may say this was the old boy network, but it was the mode of communication. Then there was his deputy minister, Harry Labouisse who dealt in economic affairs and the deputy chief of mission, Jamie Bonbright. I want to give you an example of how easy the system worked. The USO (United States Organization) gave us "The Time of Your Life."

Q: The movie?

TYLER: The play. It came to Paris in 1945. I was very much in touch, as I had said, with Madeline Carroll and also because of my Algiers days with the Soviet Ambassador, Bogomolov. I thought it would be simply wonderful to take Bogomolov to see the play. I invited Bogomolov to see this play to give him an aspect of America to which he might not have been exposed. Madeline Carroll and I took Bogomolov to the play. I can't remember if I spoke to those at our embassy before the Soviet Ambassador actually arrived. Our chargé d'affaires was flabbergasted to see me with Madeline Carroll escorting Bogomolov. This was improvisation, making a target of opportunity, you might call it, to see how the Russian would react to the play. There was quite a commotion about Bill Tyler having invited the Soviet Ambassador to a play, however, nothing came of it. I started projects that would be cleared with Ambassador Caffery first--in fact, I became a kind of a CIA outpost.

Q: I'll let you answer how you like, but it is certainly well known that many of the newspapers in France and Europe, particularly in the earlier days were not only under the control of political parties, but also venal, they were buyable.

TYLER: The press in France was in a terrible pitiful condition. It had no resources of its own. It was venal in the sense that like so many other the papers, but not all, had simply been bought by this or that faction.

Q: Or even established by this or that faction?

TYLER: Yes, some were. Liberacion grew up out of the Communist resistance. In 1945 I would place anything in the French press which I thought would help the cause whether it was disinformation or information.

Q: This was the cause for the United States and general democracy?

TYLER: Most definitely. But I avoided as much as possible ever taking a position or ever trying to do anything which would make me seem like I had been intriguing or active in internal French politics. The dividing line is rather thin, but that is where you use your judgment.

Q: Did Jefferson Caffery and others trust your judgment on this type of thing, I mean, you had been brought up in France, you had your contacts--but did you find they accepted you as one of the members of the country team?

TYLER: Yes, completely. I used to see Caffery all the time during 1945. Later, in 1948, I served under him. He was still there in 1948 when I went over as Councilor for Public Affairs.

Q: You went back to the United States?

TYLER: Yes, when OWI was wrapped up, at the end of 1945. Bill Benton was appointed then as assistant secretary of state for Public Affairs. He was from Benton and Bowles, a public relations firm. OWI was being wrapped up so it was time for me to go home. The war was over. By that time, my wife and our two children had received permission to go over to England and see my wife's mother, who was in London all through the blitz. My wife was born English and became a U.S. citizen immediately after the war in 1946. During the war she felt it wasn't a time for her to renounce her British citizenship, but she felt increasingly more and more that she was an American. Even before she was a citizen, she as a wife of an American official, she had the ability to go over to England and see her mother. I went over to London from Paris to spend two or three days with her and the children, then we sailed from South Hampton, December 30th on the S.S. United States [S.S. America?] which was still in her troop carrying configuration. I was going back to wrap up my government service and then to go back to Harvard. Harvard had very handsomely made me a fellow at the University. Paul Sacks and Edward Forbes were saying to come back, that "we are all waiting for you, you've got a lot of fences to mend." It was then I realized that I was being totally unreal to myself; I was never going back to academe; I was going to continue in public service. I only became aware of it when I arrived in Washington and I stayed in a crummy little hotel next to Union Station which I remember was teetotal, which didn't suit me. I went the next morning to the USIA office on Pennsylvania Avenue. I signed off and to get paid and was told that I was, I think by Ed Barrett who was the head of the Office of Information then, that there was an office down the corridor for me and a secretary. I said, I'm leaving. They told me, putting the pressure on me, that said, "okay, we accept the fact that you may not want public service for your career, but would you give us a few months to help us build up an interim office of information and cultural affairs, which became OIC, and then later became part of the State Department. Bill Benton was just appointed assistant secretary of that. Bill Stone was the head of the office of Information and Cultural Affairs [OIC]. He got into trouble later under McCarthy. I put my hand in the fire, I'm no dope about this, but I knew Bill Stone. I had met him then, but to think that he was hounded out of government under McCarthy makes me sick, but then so many people were.

I said okay, but I've got to get leave from Harvard, because they are expecting me back. So I wrote to Paul Sacks and said that I wouldn't be back quite as soon as I had thought, but could you give me leave until commencement, the end of the school year? And he wrote back and said these are extraordinary times and you have had extraordinary years, but you must come back, we can't extend this later then May. You have a lot of fences to mend. I said alright, well thank you very much, I know it means a lot here because I can bring in all the field experience which came my way and my first position, Chief of the Southwestern European Branch of Area Division One of the U.S. Information Cultural organization. The head of Area Division One, the chief of that division was a fellow by the name of Eric Belquist, a professor from California, a very fine person, now dead. Eric Belquist welcomed me, he said he knew all about me and I said that I had hoped not. He said, you've got to help us. And there again, I felt this tremendous urge and challenge and stimulus for tackling something for which there was no precedence. I said, "I can only stay 6 months". "Alright", he said, "stay as long as you can". It was while I was there

working on this new stuff that one morning when I realized I was kidding myself, I was never going back to Harvard. I just have to go on with this. And so I wrote to Harvard and they were awfully nice, they had the feeling I wouldn't come back. I started in as chief of the southwestern branch of the European office, Division One. The director of the office was Bill Stone and the assistant secretary of state was Bill Benton. Then in April I was taken out of my position as chief of that branch and was made assistant director of the office under Bill Stone.

Q: That office dealt with mainly west or everything?

TYLER: Everything. That office was the matrix, the interim of US Information and Cultural Relations under Benton. The office I was in was the Information, Benton had the whole public affairs, independent from the information.

Q: I don't want to belabor this, but this is a very important period, as the USIS was being formed. Who was the driving force behind this as far as putting this together?

TYLER: Benton, I think.

Q: Benton wasn't involved in other things?

TYLER: He had a very powerful personality, I credit Benton for doing a tremendous job for lobbying on the hill and a tremendous job rallying support in the public. And for pressing home the message that the United States could not afford to neglect the absolute need for our having, not merely a voice, but means for making that voice heard not only by one medium, i.e., radio, but by everything, cultural and information.

Q: This was really quite a new role for the United States. We cranked up for the war, but was there opposition to doing this in the immediate post-war period?

TYLER: If there was opposition to this, I wasn't aware of it. I was in the heart of the maelstrom of creating something out of nothing. We were what the French call feu sacre --that driving inner impulse. There was the absolute necessity for having us extend our influence and making our voice heard which was to me, an irresistible incentive. I was in charge of the overseas program of the five area divisions. Bill Stone had the whole office but I was in charge of the five area divisions, as assistant director of the overseas programs. In 1946 I stayed on through 1947, when Bill Stone asked me to become policy planning chief for the USIS. That was in order to give consistency and planning of the formulation of information and cultural policies, so I worked on very dull, tedious and not so relevant material that I would write out to try to get approval.

Q: My center has done another interview with Walter Schwinn who is involved in that too. Walter was my former consul general. He said that he found this almost an exercise (he was involved in policy planning) futility because Dean Acheson was not very interested in USIA; it was not high on his list of priorities.

TYLER: I had if you will, some access. I knew Dean Acheson before the war. He was a close friend of my godmother, Mrs. Robert Bliss. Bob Bliss was a former ambassador, a foreign service officer in South America. Through the Blisses, Bessie and I had met the Achesons already in 1934 or 1935. So when I returned to the Washington orbit, although by that time he had become Secretary of State under Truman, before that he was for some time Assistant Attorney General. The last thing I want to say is that I had any influence on him, but I could talk to him about the invisible but vital aspect of foreign policy which is the means to make it known and to make it persuasive and to counteract the foreign policy of those countries that are motivated by total opposite ideology.

Q: But were you looking at the other side of the hill at that time, in other words, were you looking at what the Soviets were broadcasting and working in some other response as a counter to them?

TYLER: Yes, very much so. I'm afraid it was very difficult to get people to understand that something so alien to the American ethos, that the amount of money and ingenuity in white, gray and black propaganda the communist Soviet Union was spreading throughout the international communist party, was something which the Americans couldn't grasp.

Q: Let's remove the problem of McCarthyism which came later, but was there a problem with recruitment at USIA at that time with people involved in any policy decisions who were involved with the communist party?

TYLER: I wouldn't know that, because I had nothing to do with personnel and recruitment, and so, I was always thrust looking outward, of course, if I knew of anybody who might be of interest or if I had reason to believe anyone was not worthy of a position that they held, I wouldn't of hesitated to talk about it, but through channels. As far as I was concerned, in 1947-48, I was not aware of any problems in recruitment. Charlie Halton is an important role in recruitment for USIA. He worked for Bill Benton and he was Bill Benton's operating manager.

Q: Did you find that Benton coming from public relations was pushing public relations type people as opposed to media types?

TYLER: I was in operations so much, in running the divisions, and the programming, I was not to exposed to the recruitment or any personal influence Benton might of had on people.

Q: All of you coming out of the wartime experience, you pretty well knew what you were doing?

TYLER: Well, when there were no guide lines, you had to write them yourself. I was in Washington until 1948. Jefferson Caffery was still Ambassador and Douglas Schneider was the public affairs officer at the Embassy. Doug Schneider had been with me way

back in WIUL and he was the first public affairs officer for France. He had been there for two or three years, then next thing I knew, I was being sent to Paris as councilor for public affairs for France and Northern Africa in 1948.

Q: What were the major problems you had to deal with during that time? The time of the formation of NATO, the new Fourth Republic?

TYLER: It was a little pre-NATO, 1948-49. There were already Western European defense, all the time a strong sense of need for a more formalized more organized security effort by the west and NATO was the North Atlantic Treaty, of course that was way above my head, but for me the greatest thing for me was the Marshall Plan and that came around about that time.

Q: Did USIA play a role in the Marshall Plan?

TYLER: Yes. It was our bread and butter in all the media.

Q: Well, how did this work, what were you doing?

TYLER: What the goals were? To build a strong and confident and prosperous Europe on the ruins that had been left behind by the Nazis. In fact, I'm saying this not out of false modesty, but in was a very minor way, my thoughts have been running so very strongly along those lines in a very low level way. It probably had something to do with my going to Paris. I wrote a memorandum before the Marshall Plan was announced, and I don't mean to imply that because I had written the memorandum that it had any effect on what was done. Late '46 or very early '47, I wrote a memorandum to Eric Belfist who was the director of Area Division which I was in. I entitled the memorandum "Coal and Wheat." The memorandum had the merit of brevity, it was less then 2/3rds of a page. I tried to draw attention to what I felt we were missing out on, which was the role of Western Europe's attitude towards the U.S. Their attitude would be to a great extent shaped as which to they felt that we represented not only a strong military power but a power which was involved in their recovery, economic recovery, and in particular what the common man could hope to find apart from ideology in America's role in Europe. There are two categories which are intimately related and which were individually and vital forces, the coal, steam, power industry, and the food production, especially wheat--the human side. We had a generation of people in Europe of whom millions of children were weakened from not having the essential ingredients of good food. Coal and wheat were the two aspects of our aid, which should be identified and categorized and pushed so that every European would say, "America brought us heat when we were cold, power and industry and on the human side, the means of rebuilding the strength of our population." It was nothing more than that, it is quite obvious looking back on it, but it hadn't been put down quite like that. So I sent that memorandum to Eric Bellfry that I thought he might like to hear my thoughts because the situation is so confusing. Everyone was talking about democracy and freedom of people. People are what they can live by and what they can hope for. It seems we ought to recognize that. Eric Belfry sent the memorandum directly

to Bill Benton. The next thing I knew, Bill Benton had called me over to see him. He had an office in the State Department, and so he said, "I wanted to see you, Eric Belfast sent me your memorandum and I like it very much. It is very helpful and I hope that you would continue to work for us. Anyone who is thinking of the future had to know, you can not sell America unless the people you are selling America to are people who have good material cause to identify America with their well-being and people".

Continuation of interview: December 1, 1987

Q: Mr. Ambassador, after a long career with the United States Information Agency, you took the Foreign Service exam for lateral entry into the State Department in 1952. Why did you wish to move from the information side of foreign relations to the political reporting side?

TYLER: Well, after World War II, I'd made up my mind that I wished to devote my life to public service instead of returning to academic life. Even while I was Public Affairs Counselor at the embassy in Paris, I had never considered that there was a sharp dividing line between information and cultural activities on the one hand, and political activities on the other. Toward the end of my time, I had been, indeed, given certain responsibilities ad hoc by the ambassador and by the Department, which meant that I was acting almost as a political officer engaged in utilizing or exploiting information and cultural resources in order to promote the objectives and interests of U.S. policy.

Q: This was in Paris.

TYLER: In Paris, yes. In fact, in 1950, when I went back on home leave, I found myself being interviewed by the CIA it then was, already, and they were quite familiar with what I'd been doing.

Q: There was an interruption because of equipment problem.

You were saying that you had been doing much political work in Paris at the time. Had you been encouraged by anyone to take the Foreign Service exam and to move over to the Foreign Service side of the Department of State?

TYLER: No. It was my decision, it was my desire. I applied for the oral examination for lateral entry. I was then a Class 1 reserve officer. Ever since I'd arrived in Paris as Public Affairs Counselor, I'd been very much encouraged by the ambassador, Jefferson Caffery, to discuss the French situation with him. He knew that I knew France unusually well and that I had been engaged in some activities which certainly didn't fall under the normal category of information work. I worked very closely with my--it was then OSS, but it shortly became CIA--colleagues, and although I was not employed by the CIA and was never on their payroll, I used to work very closely with them for political action work in the information field, in addition, of course, to certain cultural activities which are sometimes not as easy to distinguish from political activities as people think.

So I decided, as years went by, and I was more and more involved, that this was my life. I wanted to devote myself to public service, and decided that I would very much like to take the Foreign Service examination and, if possible, be appointed as a Foreign Service officer. But I feel perfectly frank to say that I did not think that I would be, because of my background. Here I was, an American citizen, well and, I think, generally favorably known to the powers that be, but I was an American born overseas. I never graduated from an American school. The first degree I got in the United States was a Masters from Harvard in 1941 in the field of Fine Arts. So I was not exactly tailored for normal Foreign Service career work.

But I decided, "After all, I can only try, and if they won't take me because of my background and my accent, I would fully understand it." I wasn't defeatist about it, but I was, in a way, resigned.

Q: Well, you were practical.

TYLER: Perfectly. Yes. I thought, "Well, even if I'm not appointed to the Foreign Service, which I doubt whether I will be, there's probably a good deal of continuing work in the public affairs field that I would be qualified for."

Well, the examination itself took place in the old Walker Johnson building, on a very hot morning in 1952. I had done a lot of boning up. I had been reading as much history and as much economic and cultural history of the United States as I could. When I met with the Board, I was not defeatist, but I had no expectation of being recommended for appointment. The exam was a very long one. The questions were all very fair, including one question which I had anticipated. It went something like this: one of the interviewers, one of the members of the Examining Board who had a reputation for being very tough and very hard on applicants, toward the end, after about an hour and a half, said, "Well, now, Mr. Tyler, there's something I'd like to ask you. We've enjoyed talking with you and we know your record. We've been through your file thoroughly. There's just one question I'd like to ask you: I know a lot of people on the Hill, and I go overseas sometimes with one of the Committees. Suppose that this board decided to recommend you for appointment to the Foreign Service. I suppose that you might, with your present rank, which is up already at the top of the Reserve, that you might well find yourself appointed, say, Consul or even Consul General in a smaller country."

I said, "Well, I suppose I could be if I were considered suitable."

He said, "Well, suppose one of my friends from the Hill were to say to me that they'd been overseas when you were already in a responsible position, as Consul or Consul General, and suppose he came back and said, 'Look, we went over to country X, and the ambassador was away. We were looked after by a fellow called Bill Tyler, and we liked him very much. We saw rapidly that he didn't speak like the average American, and in talking with him, we found that he was born overseas, that he'd been to school in

England, and had never been to an American school except to Harvard afterwards.' Suppose my friend asked me how did it come about that I recommended him for appointment, since he could hardly pass as a grass-roots American to the average American? How do you think I should answer?

Well, I had anticipated that question, quite frankly. It was one which I would have asked myself, so I couldn't help grinning when it came, you know. "Here it comes!" And I said very simply, "Well, I'm sure of one thing, which is that if this Board thinks well enough of me and of my possible contribution to U.S. interests to recommend me for appointment to the Foreign Service, all its members will recall the reasons why they did so."

He threw down his pencil and laughed, and then I knew I was all right.

Q: But you are quite right, because I recall I took the entry level Foreign Service exam not too long afterwards, and congressmen at that time were calling for a massive infusion of Main Street into the Foreign Service.

TYLER: Yes. I was Rue de la Paix more than Main Street. [Laughter] Well, anyway, when he laughed and everybody else sort of smiled, I had a feeling, "Well, this kind of looks rather good," but I didn't count on it. But sure enough, two or three weeks later, I was informed that I'd been recommended for appointment. I had applied for appointment as a Class 2 Foreign Service officer, though I was Class 1 reserve. Friends of mine in the Foreign Service had said, "Well, you can probably get appointed a Class 1, but remember you'd be riding on top of a lot of people who have been in the Service 20 or more years. It might be wiser for your relations, more politic, if you apply for a 2, which wouldn't be bad if you were." So that's what I was appointed to.

Q: Moving ahead to the principal focus of this interview, your time as the Deputy Assistant and then Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, 1961 to 1965, and then as Ambassador to the Netherlands, 1965 to 1969, how did you become assigned to, first, the Deputy and Assistant Secretary position for European Affairs, which we call EUR?

TYLER: Well, I think that it was probably because some EUR officers knew me, and knew about me, and thought I would be useful. One was Livy Merchant [Livingston T.], another was Foy Kohler, who was subsequently my chief as Assistant Secretary of State.

Q: Livy Merchant being Livingston Merchant.

TYLER: Yes, Livingston T. Merchant. I don't know. There were a lot of other people. Doc Matthews, who had arranged for me to work in the political action field, with David Bruce as Ambassador, while I was in Paris as Public Affairs Officer. I felt that they decided, "Let's use him in an area where he could be most useful." I was brought back to the Department in early 1954, as Deputy Director of the Office of Western European Affairs under John Wesley Jones, and became Director before being assigned to the

Embassy in Bonn as Counselor of Political Affairs, in January, 1958. In early 1961 I was at my desk one day, when I had a call from the Counselor of the Italian Embassy in Bonn, and his first words were, "Congratulations!"

And I said, "Congratulations for what?"

And he said, "Well, you know, of course."

I said, "I know what?"

He said, "Well, you're going back as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs."

And I said, "Well, I never heard that. I don't believe it. I never heard of this."

He said, "Well, we know, because one of your top people told our ambassador this last night."

I said, "Well, that's fine!" That's how I learned of it.

Q: This shows how the European intelligence system works. [Laughter]

TYLER: Right. Well, anyway, I got back.

Q: Approximately when did you . . .

TYLER: This was only three or four weeks before I left in the spring of 1961. I don't know; So I moved in as Deputy to Foy Kohler, the Assistant Secretary of State.

And then to move on a little more rapidly, the first thing that happened was in the summer of 1961 I was still trying to get my feet on the ground. One Sunday morning, which was August 14th, I was in the office, and I knew that Dean Rusk was in, because I'd heard his feet above my head. His tread I knew, because my office was on the sixth floor, under his on the seventh. I heard and knew he was in. I turned on the radio for the news, and that's how I learned about the Berlin Wall going up, even before the cable had come in. So I went up to the office, to the Secretary's office, at once, and we read the cables together. I called Foy Kohler at once, and he came in.

Then after a few weeks, in fact, a short time, that was August 14th, and, I think, by the end of that month almost or the beginning of September, Foy was appointed Chairman of the Interdepartmental Group on the Berlin Wall, and I was appointed Acting Assistant Secretary of State. That continued until the spring of 1962, a few months. I know Foy said he had recommended me to succeed him. In the spring of 1962, my wife and I were leaving a reception at the Finnish embassy, when a friend of mine, who was a French correspondent in Washington who had many friends here came up and tapped me on the

shoulder and said, "Bill, many congratulations!" Once again, I was being congratulated for something I had no idea of.

I said, "What are you congratulating me about?"

He said, "Well, your appointment as successor to Foy Kohler is going to be announced."

I said, "You wouldn't pull my leg, would you?"

He said, "No. I have it on excellent authority. I was having a drink last night with two or three other newspapermen, with someone there whom there is no higher authority in the land--JFK!" So Betsy and I went home, feeling slightly dazed by this, and that's how it happened. That's how I learned I was to be an Assistant Secretary of State.

Q: Could you describe what were your main responsibilities, first as Deputy Assistant Secretary and then as Assistant Secretary.

TYLER: As Deputy Assistant Secretary, I plunged--got into the deep end, because Foy was pulled out so soon after I arrived. I became Acting Assistant Secretary of State, running a bureau of 250-odd people and was ultimately responsible for everything, ultimately, up to a certain level, to my level for what the Bureau was doing. I reported to the Under Secretary of State George Ball, or the Secretary, if I wanted to see him. Chester Bowles was still there as Under Secretary when I came in, but he left soon after.

Q: For the benefit of people who may be looking at this transcript, EUR encompasses what areas?

TYLER: Well, at that time, (I wouldn't speak for now, because there has been a re-allotment of geographic responsibilities) EUR was like an octopus. It had its tentacles out all over the place. Eg: British Guyana, which no longer exists, and in the Caribbean, the Dutch interests, the French interests in North Africa and Asia, and even Canada was part of EUR. So it was an extensive and complex area.

Q: It included what is now Eastern Europe.

TYLER: Yes indeed.

Q: And if I recall, it did not, at that time, include Greece and Turkey--or Greece, anyway.

TYLER: No, that's right. Greece and Turkey, those Point Four countries from 1948, those were under my colleague Phillips Talbot, who was Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs.

Q: Algeria was . . .

TYLER: Algeria was part of metropolitan France then.

Q: Later I'd like to come back to the Battle of Algeria, if possible. Before we move to some topics, I wonder if you could talk a bit about some of the people you worked with. Jean Monnet, in his memoirs, wrote, "Of all American Presidents, Kennedy was certainly the one whose education and upbringing best equipped him to understand the problem of Europe." How did you find dealing with President Kennedy? Did this reflect his knowledge of Europe?

TYLER: He was, as you know, a very outgoing person with a buoyant temperament and manner with everyone but I had not seen much of him. But as I saw more of him I found that he was always eager to talk, and would ask me many questions. He would have me in and we would talk, and he seemed anxious to have my reaction particularly to matters affecting Europe in general and, of course, France and North Africa, particularly. Once, I was about to have lunch with the Norwegian ambassador in 1962, when McGeorge Bundy called and asked me to come over to the White House right away and said . . .

Q: He was the head of the NSC?

TYLER: He was the President's advisor for National security affairs. After McGeorge Bundy, the post gradually became absorbed into the NSC.

I said, "I've asked the Norwegian ambassador to lunch at the Metropolitan Club."

He said, "Well, call him up and regret."

The ambassador had already left for the club, and I spoke to his secretary. I said, "Please extend my apologies to the ambassador. I'm afraid I can't be there for lunch, and I know he will understand why. I've been called over to the White House on an urgent matter."

So I went over to the White House and went straight in with McGeorge Bundy into the President's office, the Oval Office, and the President said, "I'm going to talk to General De Gaulle on this particular matter." (I won't go into it, it was not very dramatic, but at the time it was important). The President said De Gaulle was being very obstinate, as one would expect. "I'd like you to talk to him, because you know him." I'd known De Gaulle in North Africa. "I'd like you to talk to him, and we'll sit together at my desk. You take notes, and I'll tell you what I want you to reply to him." In fact, I acted as an interpreter, but I had a substantive angle to it that he otherwise would not have had. We got through to De Gaulle and the talk went on for, I guess, about 20 minutes, quite long and interesting. The President had thought of using me because of my knowledge of French and the fact that I was so familiar with the problem that he wanted to discuss with De Gaulle.

Q: What was the problem?

TYLER: Well, I'm not being diplomatic about it. As to show you, so many things happened that I didn't keep any notes. It was a problem in which De Gaulle was opposing United States policy in relation to NATO. De Gaulle was always very sensitive on matters involving national security prerogatives. The President wanted to get a few points across to De Gaulle directly, which he felt would be better than to do it formally by cable through the ambassador. So that item gives you an idea of the range of things an Assistant Secretary of State has to deal with, including preparing for hearings on the Hill, the budget, and dealing with ambassadors of other countries on sensitive matters.

Q: Did President Kennedy call on you and other people of the staff more than would be normal for a President?

TYLER: That I would not know, because I couldn't compare, you see. I'd never been in a comparable position before in the Department.

Q: What about with President Johnson?

TYLER: Well, yes. Of course, they were very different personalities, different political temperaments. President Johnson, I also saw a good deal of, but never quite in the substantive way as informally and as frequently. President Kennedy would call people up at home. One day he called me up early in the morning, furious because he'd just been shown a piece in the press he didn't like. He really blew up and expressed himself quite forcefully, as he liked to do on the phone, and asked me what I thought and, "Where did they get that angle on it? It's ridiculous."

Q: The State Department had a very interesting staffing at that time, people who were really, at the top were quite informed. You had a President who was well informed, you had Dean Rusk, who had been in and out of government.

TYLER: Yes.

Q: But who was more of an Asian hand.

TYLER: That's right.

Q: And then you had, for most of the time, George Ball, who was the Europeanist.

TYLER: He was "Europeanist" in a special sense of the word. He was Monnet Europe.

Q: I was going to say he was Monnet Common Market.

TYLER: And not only that, but with the political integration of Europe as an ultimate objective.

Q: You came from a background where you had served in Paris and very much involved with France, also in Germany. So you came from a somewhat similar background. Did you find that Rusk turned Europe more over to you and Ball while he concentrated on Asia more?

TYLER: First of all, I wish to say that I have great respect for Dean Rusk. I admired him and still admire him for his integrity, and the clarity of his thinking, and I really can't imagine anyone for whom I could have worked with greater pleasure and respect than Dean Rusk. He did not--and I think he would agree if he were in this room now, listening to me--he was not drawn towards Europe. Or to put it another way, the only part of Europe he was drawn to and with which he felt really at ease was the British. He was a Rhodes scholar, and he found it very easy to talk with the British. I remember one day coming back from Andrews Air Force Base with him. He had just seen off [Harold] MacMillan who had been on one of his trips to Washington. He used a phrase that stuck in my mind something like "talking with British is like putting on an old shoe; it's easy to fit." I don't think he had any foreign languages. But he was not--I think he would agree with me that he was not at ease in European political matters, and I think he found the mentality of people generally called European less accessible than he did discussing things over in a quiet old boy way with the British.

Q: Were you--to use a modern term--on the same wave length with George Ball, or was he a little bit too ethereal, you might say?

TYLER: He was not ethereal, but I think I can see which way you're looking, and I think you're right and completely justified, but you're right. I was not on the same wave length as George Ball, and I think he'd be the first person to say so. It was nothing personal, but George Ball had been for many years an international lawyer and had gotten to know Jean Monnet and was a very strong supporter of the conception of a united, integrated Europe, Europe, as envisaged by Monnet, in partnership with the United States, in a great endeavor of mutual benefit. I thought the objective was indeed a worthy one, an admirable one. However, I never felt that it was politically within the realm of possibility that it could be achieved, at least not in our generation. The result of this was that I was simply not on the inside of Ball's chosen group of officers, whom he saw to talk about "European" matters. I don't mean in the sense of things happening in Europe, but <u>the</u> Europe. When I say "Europe," I mean the problem of European unity and integration. He had--well, there was Stan Cleveland, who was a very bright officer, who was in EUR, and particularly Bob Schaetzel, who was not a Foreign Service Officer, and was also extremely intelligent and articulate. And to them, to George Ball and to Schaetzel and to Cleveland and to others who believed that the goal of a politically integrated and economically integrated Europe was realistic, I was someone who was not with them. I would have liked to have been, but I just didn't feel that it was possible. I felt that one should not expect these things to occur in our generation.

Although I was Assistant Secretary of State, I never had a conversation on "Europe" with Dean Rusk. I tried to once. I asked formally for an appointment to see the Secretary, and asked to have 20 minutes with him."

And his secretary said, "Yes, what's the subject?"

I said, "Well, I'll bring up the particulars with the Secretary, but you can tell him, in general, that it's Europe."

And I went up there, and it hadn't been over two minutes when he said, "Look, Bill, on matters concerning Europe, I really prefer you talk to George Ball."

I said, "Well, I'll do that, Mr. Secretary, but I was anxious to get in as brief and specific form as you can give to me, your view of our policy in terms of its feasibility in achieving objectives along the line of complete backing of Europe as Monnet sees it, which means, of course, in opposition to De Gaulle, who happens to be the President of the French Republic."

And he said, "Well, any ideas you have, talk with George about it, and I know he'll be interested".

I said, "Yes, of course, he's interested, but I think he knows that I don't see it as he does in terms of practicality. I don't see it along the same lines as he does. I really want to know." There was never a question of principle involved; it was a question of the strategy to be pursued. I never felt that my integrity was at stake in differing from what was the agreed policy of the State Department toward Europe, as personified by George Ball. I did not feel in any way that I couldn't be critical of something which I wished were feasible. I did feel it was a mistake to focus on De Gaulle, beside whom there was no effective source of political power in France, and to appear to be overtly and repeatedly locking horns with him personally, because it wouldn't get us anywhere.

Q: I take it, then, under Ball you felt that our course was rather confrontational.

TYLER: It was. But it was confrontational, from George Ball's point of view, in a positive sense. Of course, it's all very well for me to talk like this, but George Ball isn't here to tell his side of it, and nothing that I'm saying is intended to be critical of George Ball. It's a question of assessment. I felt that Monnet's Europe was a wonderful objective to work toward, but I did not feel that we were reading right the psychology, not only of the French, but of many other European countries, which would, in different various ways sympathize with the objective, but felt that the political integration of Europe was something that could only come, really, out of many years, perhaps generations.

Q: How did this policy translate itself in, say, our dealings with France, particularly?

TYLER: Well, many of my French friends, who would ask me when they saw me, why did we think that it was likely to further our policy to take on De Gaulle personally publicly. De Gaulle has, you might say, nationally peculiar--indeed, unique--and characteristically French problem--a man of great character. Many people whom I knew would say to me, "We're not Gaullists. We don't think that De Gaulle is the answer. He's not here forever. But in attacking De Gaulle, you appear to many Frenchmen to be justifying the suspicions which De Gaulle airs about the ultimate intention of the United States: to take over Europe as a great commercial outlet for your exports; by pushing for an integrated Europe, you make many people who are not supportive of De Gaulle feel, to some extent, that De Gaulle is standing up for something which they would wish him to stand up for, and not appear to be going along with something which would economically, perhaps, reduce Europe to the role of an inferior partner of the United States, and lose control to a great extent of European economic and political interests.

Q: And this was at the height of sort of our commercial dominance and our political and military dominance?

TYLER: Yes? We did have tremendous assets, and we had great authority, in many respects. Many people on our side did feel that it was right to push on, that you couldn't sort of be timid about it and sort of half push on; you had to push toward anything that contributed to the integration, the political integration of Europe. This was why the other group in the "outer seven", were an anathema to "us", because they only wanted commercial and economic deals with us, but not without forfeiting any national sovereignty or working toward the real objective, which should be the political integration of Europe.

Q: What you are saying is that ideology was really taking over from practicality in our relations with Europe.

TYLER: I don't think I would--let's see. Ideology is perhaps too broad a term. I think that the conception, and the means at hand, (i.e., Monnet and a politically and economically integrated Europe) were inadequate. Those tactics, I think, were not likely to bear fruit.

Q: Did you find yourself sometimes acting a bit as diplomats often do? The United States Government would act in opposition to France, and you were sort of going around trying to smooth feathers down?

TYLER: No, I think that's an exaggeration of my role. One thing I did not do and could not have done would have been to, in anything I said or wrote, to appear to be deviating from our position and our policy goals. If I had felt that a matter of principle was involved, I would have resigned. But I didn't feel my integrity was at stake, because I was entirely in sympathy with the objective, but not with the means pursued. But I kept this to myself. It was just not a realistic position for us to take, and I feared the effect it might have on our relations with certain other European countries, in addition to France, if we pressed so hard that it seemed as though we were completely and unremittingly beholden

to the prospect of somehow using our power and our political clout to try to impose European political integration when Europe itself was not ready for it.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, there seemed to be a sort of close entente between Adenauer and De Gaulle. Was that an actual perception? If so, what did that do to American policy?

TYLER: Well, Adenauer and De Gaulle first met in 1959 or '60. Those two men were very different from each other, yet had a certain vision in common: Adenauer saw a united, integrated Europe as, indeed, not only worthwhile, but necessary, in the long run, if Europe was to survive. Of course, one must not forget that Adenauer, as a German, could not have abandoned the idea of a reintegrated, united Germany, but he did not want a Germany that would ever be in a position to play a role such as Germany played under the Hitler Reich. He saw the salvation of Germany in the future and its only hope for reunification within the framework of a united Europe. So that there was a meeting of minds, or rather: a meeting of goals proceeding from certain different outlooks, because De Gaulle's views were fashioned by circumstances very different from those of Adenauer's. While Adenauer strongly supported close U.S.-German ties, De Gaulle, while he recognized the role the United States had played, and must play in the future security of Europe, and in particular of France, was not basically in sympathy with the American outlook, and conception of the political future of Europe.

Q: What was your experience in dealing with, particularly, France? Did you get involved, as the Assistant Secretary for EUR, with the problem of French Algeria?

TYLER: Oh, yes. Yes, of course. I had served in Algeria during the war, and I had long had an interest in what was going to happen in North Africa, because it became quite clear that France would not be able to continue to play the same role there. In fact, De Gaulle himself had been very long-sighted about the French empire. What he said in public was one thing, motivated and determined largely by the circumstances in which he was speaking, but he had foreseen as early as 1943 (Brazzaville Conference) that the French imperial role must undergo profound changes. Whereas Churchill was saying that he had not become a minister of His Majesty's government in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, De Gaulle used no such phrase but he had recognized that whatever role France might play in the future it would be very different from what it had played before the war.

Q: At that time, Senator Kennedy had made quite a name for himself over supporting Algeria vis-a-vis France.

TYLER: In particular, one speech he made. In '57, was it? It was just before I was assigned to Bonn.

Q: When he became President, was he asking the State Department to try to make good this separation between France and Algeria? Did you find we were playing a role in that?

TYLER: To a certain extent, it was--well, I'd sooner have McGeorge Bundy talk about that, really, obviously. I think I was, to use a much abused word, pragmatic. You might say that George Ball was more ideological. His goals were determined by a basic feeling with which I sympathized, but which I thought were goals which could not be achieved in the way and within the time frame which he hoped.

With regard to Algeria, naturally, when I talked to French visitors, including people from the Parliament, and newspapermen or businessmen, there were times when the conversation was painful because it was very easy for the French at that time to feel that American policy concerning Algeria was digging France's grave. Of course, I would do my best to point out that history would determine what France's role with regard to North Africa would be, not what we did or didn't do, and that our general position in regard to Europe was well known and had been made very clear in public speeches by the President and by the Secretary of State, as well as in Copenhagen, in 1962, by McGeorge Bundy.

My position, in talking to the French, and in particular with Louis Joxe, (De Gaulle's man for Algeria whom I had known since North African days in Algiers) was: We don't want you to think of us as being opposed to France continuing to play playing a role in the future, but when it comes to France continuing to conceive a role with North Africa as French provinces and, therefore, part of metropolitan France, we just don't think that history is going your way. We don't think that's the way it's going to work out. The question is how are you going to retain an influence in the future, unless r
you recognize that the tide are running against you and that the clock is ticking?" And Joxe recognized that. De Gaulle himself later recognized that. It was De Gaulle who, as you know, finally, on his trip to Algiers, recognized that France had to get out. That's why he was very nearly assassinated, and the French extreme right, the extreme nationalists, did everything they could to prevent this happening.

So there was very little we could do except to make the French people at the top, the ones who really needed to know, realize that our position was not one of systematic hostility to France, but that this was a problem that they would have to work out themselves, and that the factors were there for all to see.

Q: Did you also get involved with trying to prevent the steady pulling away of De Gaulle during the time you were there from NATO? He had not severed relations, but this was in the wind.

TYLER: He had not severed relations, but he was absolutely determined not to continue to have the French military element of NATO under a foreign commander in chief. I accompanied Dean Rusk and Chip Bohlen, who was then ambassador, to see De Gaulle on this very subject in--I guess it was late 1964. It was an eye-opener for Rusk, but not for me, if I may say so. It wasn't an eye-opener for Chip either, who read De Gaulle perfectly lucidly and clearly. But Rusk could hardly believe his ears when he heard De Gaulle say, "One thing you have to understand, Monsieur le Ministre, is that the French Republic and

the troops of the French Republic will fight to the end for the common cause, which is certainly the cause of freedom and democracy in the world alongside of America, etc., but French troops will only die defending their own soil and under French command." That was it, just as simple as that. The great merit of De Gaulle, if you can call it a merit, is that he was absolutely logical and true to himself, and to him, the idea of a French general receiving orders, as you would conceive it, from an American or any other foreign general was intolerable.

Q: You were there when the one final bombshell came, and that was De Gaulle or France's recognition of Red China. Were we aware of this? Because this was the first break in the West.

TYLER: Well, it was the first break, if you would. I've forgotten what year that was.

Q: I think that was January 1964.

TYLER: Yes. Well, of course, we were on the receiving end of that, and I was no China watcher. I had enough chickens to count in my own yard. The implications of it were, of course, clear to those who knew the situation, but I was not surprised that it occurred.

Q: There was little we could do.

TYLER: No. As I did not know how we were reading the events that led up to that, I don't know. But, except for reading the policy papers, I would not necessarily be well informed on it.

Q: Before turning to the subject of relations with the Soviet Union, going to the British side, would you say the special relationship with Great Britain more or less held while you were there?

TYLER: Well, you know, the word "special" itself has a special meaning in the context of U.S.-British relations. It isn't a kind of open and shut definition of mutual interests. There is a special relationship, but, of course, the special relations themselves are a specialty. The special quality of the relationship is not determined only by sentimental or traditional or historical reasons of the past, though this all plays a role in the way in which we approach and communicate with each other, I think. But the French have always been keenly aware of this and, of course, De Gaulle in particular resented it, this assumption that Britain's interests would be likely to be taken more into account or better understood by the United States than those of France. To a certain extent, I think that this is true. I think we find the French more difficult to read than the British.

Q: There was some political bombshell in the whole Skybolt business. Were you involved in that?

TYLER: Well, yes, I was. Yes, I had accompanied the Secretary to the Bahamas, with Ambassador Bruce over from London, but it was not really such a bombshell, because in terms of our relations with France, we knew where De Gaulle would stand; he'd be entirely opposed to it and simply would not go along with anything that would bring him into the club, as it were.

Q: If I recall, the Skybolt problem was essentially that MacMillan had staked quite a bit politically on the development of a joint nuclear weapon, and we had rather casually, at least it seemed in retrospect, rather casually dismissed it, cutting the ground out.

TYLER: I don't think it was casual; I think it was taking all the factors into account. It was not in our interest to go into it as he would have liked, so MacMillan certainly took it very hard.

Q: Was there a difference between Robert McNamara's counting the figures, finding Skybolt didn't make sense, and the State Department's view? Were we looking at it and saying, "You know, this has political consequences beyond what the figures say?"

TYLER: Well, all I would say to that is that is par for the course on any event in which certain national interests may or may not conflict with ours, or ours with those of other countries. I think it was fully understood, and I think that we were fully aware of how hard--I mean, MacMillan would be going back to England, in a position in which the whole question of relations with the United States had taken a very hard knock.

Q: This brings me to dealing with the Pentagon, with the military establishment in the United States. When you were in EUR, obviously, in almost everything we had not only a political, but also a military side.

TYLER: As it does today.

Q: How did you find dealing with the Pentagon?

TYLER: My opposite number at the Pentagon, I think his name was McNaughton, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Affairs, and he was killed in a plane crash here in the United States a few years later. I don't know at what point you would want to stop the film and read it, you see. There has always been, of course, right up to our time, and always will be, a broad convergence, but at times a very sharp divergence of views and conceptions between the State Department and the Department of Defense. That's inevitable.

Q: Yes. Sometimes there is this wide divergence. Were you more or less speaking the same language and had more or less the same vision, did you feel, at the time you were there? Or were you at cross purposes?

TYLER: More or less, but I would not personify any divergence as sharply as could be personified in more recent years between Burt and Perle.

Q: Can you think of any disputes that may have come between the State and military concerning Europe at the time when you were in EUR that developed?

TYLER: I can think more of limited or tactical points of differences with regard to, say, how much money should be spent for defense by a certain country, or should we put more pressure on it to do more. I can't think of any, nothing like what I've read about in the press in the last few years between the State and Defense Departments. McNamara and Rusk were on very close personal terms, and I have no doubt that a lot was discussed between them which never filtered down.

Q: It was really what one would say would be a working relationship.

TYLER: Oh, yes.

Q: Rather than an adversarial relationship.

TYLER: Oh, yes. Of course, again, an adversarial relationship is often created and defined by the outlook and the personal characteristics of individuals who, at a higher or lower level, happen to be at the flash point of a particular issue. And there were times when I would be aware of divergences at this or that level of the State Department with Defense on this or that particular specific issue. But in general, I found that our relations--and we had meetings I don't know how often--but I think McNaughton and I would, even on telephone calls, recognize some differences, or work something out. I did not feel that there was an adversarial relationship between the bureau and Defense.

Q: Did you get involved in our NATO nuclear policy? There was a time when we were trying to combine NATO forces based on the Polaris submarine, I believe, at the time you were there, the joint command.

TYLER: Well, we went through that famous exercise in futility of the multilateral nuclear force. My own personal feeling is that I don't think that President Kennedy really believed in it, but he played it straight. You know, we even had a ship commissioned which was to be multinationally staffed. I remember very well one of the last meetings with President Kennedy which I attended. It was a visit in the early fall of 1963, from Alex Home, who was then either Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary, I can't remember which. the subject of the multilateral force came up.

Q: Whose concept was this?

TYLER: I don't know. It was one of those ideas of which it is very easy to say, after the event, "It couldn't work." But we did give it a go; we did give it a try, because we felt that if it could float politically, internationally, that it would have considerable advantages in

sharing responsibility. However the bottom line was, ultimately, that the button would be pressed only by us.

Q: Was this designed more as a way of perhaps keeping France within the framework of NATO, as we saw it beginning to slip away?

TYLER: It certainly would have worked in that direction, which is something which the French might have been interested in. I don't think that they were. I think that in the case of the particular visit which I recall, Alex Home was trying to persuade the President that . . .

Q: Home, by the way, came in around the fall of 1962.

TYLER: Fall of '62, was it?

Q: And Wilson came in '63.

TYLER: That's right. Then it must have been fall of '62. I remember that Alex Home asked the President if the U.S. was really serious about "this thing"? He implied that he did not believe in it, and he could not believe that we were seriously behind it. Well, President Kennedy was not going to be pinned down as easily as that. He said, "This is something which we've got to take a look at, and project into the future. We believe that this has a chance, if people believe in it. And if they do, it's worth pursuing, because it has certain enormous advantages psychologically and politically, and technicalities can be solved in a multi-lateral nuclear force, with all countries participating, all those who intend to do so." And he said, "I don't know whether it's going to work or not," said President Kennedy. And then he said, "Bill here may be around still, but I may not be."

President Kennedy was a realist. He was a realist about Europe. He never really got on board the European integration bandwagon. I wonder what George Ball would say. George Ball really picked up that European ball, without making a pun, and ran with it very, very hard. Rusk was basically not--didn't want to be--involved with the European issue. I think that's about how the whole thing stood with regard to the multilateral nuclear force. Well, it didn't work.

Q: While we're talking about President Kennedy, I heard a story sort of second-hand from a friend of yours, Emmerson Brown.

TYLER: Oh, yes, Em Brown. He was economic counselor in The Hague when I was there. He's a delightful fellow.

Q: He said he heard a story. This is going back when the Congo crisis was going on.

TYLER: Oh, God, that takes us right back to 1960, right?

Q: Actually, this is when Kennedy was on board, so it was 1961-62. You know there were continuing series of crises in the Congo. We were trying to get money from European countries to help sustain the U.N. peacekeeping force.

TYLER: Yes.

Q: And supposedly, President Kennedy called in various ambassadors, including the German ambassador, to ask for money and voluntary contributions for this force. The German ambassador raised the possibility of getting back some of their assets which had been confiscated during the war.

TYLER: That rings a bell, yes.

Q: And Kennedy had given a rather not completely committal reply, but said, "We'll certainly talk about that after you come up with the money." And then the ambassador persuaded Bonn to pass this on. Bonn came up with the money, and then when it was time to come back and say, "Let's talk about assets," Kennedy said, "Oh, don't you know when I'm joking?" or something like that. Does that ring a bell with you at all?

TYLER: Not really, no. No, I don't know. It's quite possible. It's quite possible that there was some misunderstanding there, but it didn't stick on the wall. Have you seen Emmerson Brown?

Q: I talked to him on the phone, and he's pleased that you're here, and I gave him your telephone number.

TYLER: Of course. Well, I'm going to call him. Now that I feel things are getting more settled.

Within the Bureau of European Affairs, the Office of German Affairs had a very important role, and they had--well, Martin Hillenbrand, who came in later as ambassador to Bonn, and Elwood Williams, who died a few years ago. He was there for many years, a wonderful person. And Al Puhan, who was there. I felt that although I had served in Bonn for three years, indeed, three and a half years, and spoke German and had friends in Germany, I feel that the Office of German Affairs played a more influential role in relation to Germany than, say, the Office of Western European Affairs played in relation to France.

Q: You could turnover some authority to them.

TYLER: Oh, yes. He didn't see me all the time, but I did not feel that my expertise, such as it was, was such that I could be--of course, George McGhee had gone there.

Q: As ambassador.

TYLER: Yes.

Q: So in a sense, you delegated.

TYLER: Not consciously, but I recognized the momentum that the Office of German Affairs, had acquired ever since the early days after the war, when there was a joint political-economic office, it had a lot of weight within the framework of our policies.

Q: I'd like to turn to our relations with the Soviet Union. Again, how did you view the Soviet Union? We had our Soviet experts.

TYLER: We did indeed.

Q: Did you sort of basically monitor them, or were you involved with them?

TYLER: I was only involved to the extent that I would be involved in the normal clearance and discussions at meetings of issues involving the Soviet Union and ourselves, but I was not qualified to play a very active role at the policy formulation level, in the sense that I never had any experience with the Soviet Union, although I had been to several Eastern European countries in one way or another, but I never served there. So with people like Tommy Thompson and Chip Bohlen and Jake Beam and one or two other well known . . .

Q: Mac Toon?

TYLER: Mac Toon. Yes. Of course, Mac Toon was serving in Berlin at the time I went to Bonn in '58. I never felt that I was in that league. I could not be a very creative participant in policy subjects, except insofar as judgment on the effect of any particular policy, what the effect of that might have on other countries in the European bureau.

Q: Did you come away with the impression, particularly, I think, in Kennedy's first meeting with Khrushchev in Vienna and all, that this was--I've heard some people say that Khrushchev sort of took him to the cleaners, is one term.

TYLER: No, Khrushchev was hoping to; he did not take him to the cleaners. He was anticipating that this young--that's why Adenauer mistrusted Kennedy--you know, that this young sort of all-American boy would be easy game. Adenauer underestimated Kennedy and did not have the respect or the attitude toward Kennedy which I think a man wiser in the ways of the world than Adenauer was would have had. But of course, Kennedy's trip to Vienna was just about the time when I was coming back to the Department--in fact, what was the date of that trip?

Q: I think that was in May or something.

TYLER: About the time I was coming in. I remember well a talk with Chip Bohlen about it. I think it's quite clear that Khrushchev had anticipated that he would be able to make a good many points, and that he did not--the President was not taken to the cleaners at all. In fact, the people around him were not the kind of people who would have allowed him to be taken to the cleaners. [Laughter]

Q: Moving on, the Berlin Wall became quite a problem for you, is that correct?

TYLER: It was a crisis for all of us. The basic problem literally arose out of the ground. Were we going to move in? A lot of people--I won't use the word, since I'm being recorded.

Q: You can use anything you want! [Laughter]

TYLER: [Laughter] But I've read pieces about the Berlin Wall, in which people identified a course of action which was technically open to us, as a solution if taken, to prevent the Berlin Wall from going up, and forcing the Soviet Union to stand down. In actual fact, that wasn't the problem. The question was whether within the first few hours we were going to enter into a shooting war with Soviet troops, East German and Soviet troops in the Soviet-controlled part of Berlin, because the wall went up, obviously, at the dividing point. Now, if we were going to take measures there, how were we going to control what would happen next? Soviet divisions were massed in East Germany and all around there. How could we possibly prevent the wall from going up other than by trying to use physical force to prevent it going up, in which case what would the consequences of that had been?

Q: How did this crisis break on you?

TYLER: Well, it broke on me, I guess, as it did, as far as I know, on everybody. There were some people who were wise after the event.

Q: Were you involved in some of the early decision-making on this?

TYLER: You see, what happened was that when I went up and talked with Dean Rusk, he didn't know any more than I did. He was, on the phone at once to our civilian and military authorities but as far as I know, there was never any--well, in retrospect, I do not know of any strong high-level advocacy of attempting to take physical measures to prevent the wall going up, without our being in a position to control the outcome. And the Soviets, certainly, would not have withdrawn. So I think the wall had to go up once they decided it would go up, because it was on the limit of that part of Berlin which was their area of control in Berlin, and there was no way that I could see to prevent them doing it, unless we were prepared to face the eventuality of a shooting war.

Q: And that really wasn't on the cards at that point?

TYLER: Many people advocated it after the event. It's amazing how many wise people there were around then. [Laughter] There was just one thing lacking in all that; they didn't have responsibility.

Q: Yes. During much of the Kennedy years, there was this tension over Berlin, causing Kennedy to call up reserves.

TYLER: Access, yes.

Q: This was access to Berlin.

TYLER: Because that was our right, you see.

Q: What was behind this? What was our analysis of the reason for this, in a way, somewhat artificial tension?

TYLER: I don't think it was artificial at all. I think that the issue of access routes to Berlin went to the heart of our position in Germany. You know, the term that was used at once was "salami tactics" of the Russians, and they played it very astutely.

Q: Cutting thin slices.

TYLER: Before you know what's happened, you've lost your pants. So I think perhaps the aspect of foreign policy which is most difficult to convey or to record is that what sometimes seems like a matter of detail and not of great consequence is, in reality, a work of art, representing an underlying basic situation which determines the ability of an issue to be settled in a way favorable and acceptable to yourself or giving it away to the enemy. And I feel that right of access was such an issue. There were times when it seemed almost as though we were squabbling about the size of marbles. Each marble was part of the assets of the West and of the future and of the confidence of the West Germans and all of NATO in the role and firmness of purpose of the United States.

Q: Was the State Department, the President, and the Pentagon fairly united on this approach?

TYLER: I think anytime there's a crisis of any kind, you'll find differences of emphasis in the reasoning and position of participants. But so far as I'm concerned, I don't remember any difference, any divergence of views with regard to the basic issue, which was that Berlin was militarily totally indefensible. The East Germans alone could have had us a running out of it in no time, but it didn't work. It was our presence in Berlin and our retaining our rights in Berlin, the French retained their rights in Berlin, the British retained their rights; it was that on which the three were always completely agreed, the commanders of the allied garrisons. And I think it's due to this unity that the map of Europe reads as it does today. We had to maintain our rights in Berlin and to prevent, by all means, the constant and very able attempts of the Soviet Union to undermine our

position, so that before we knew what was happening, we would find that we'd lost the game in Germany.

Q: This brings me to another subject, a little bit broader one. How did you find the support you got? How was the support that you got from the CIA at this time? In intelligence, was it a supportive agency, did you find? Or were you concerned what they might be doing behind your back?

TYLER: No, the latter consideration, rightly or wrongly, never occurred to me. Of course, I knew there were many operations which I was unaware of, but I did not feel that anything that was happening across the river--that was before Langley [CIA Headquarters], I guess.

Q: Now they call "across the river," meaning across the Potomac.

TYLER: Yes. But I felt--oh, I have no doubt that there were operations of which I had no knowledge. But we did have Alex Johnson who was in charge, particularly, of the coordination of intelligence.

Q: You were talking about Alex Johnson being responsible for . . .

TYLER: Being coordinator of intelligence reports for the last, that I can remember, for the last year or more that I was in Washington, perhaps more than a year. I think a committee was set up, an interdepartmental committee, of which he was chairman, in an attempt to improve the flow.

Q: So much today, speaking in 1987 terms, is concentrated on covert action, but the basic function of the Central Intelligence Agency is to furnish intelligence for making your decisions.

TYLER: That's the intelligence-gathering part, yes.

Q: This is the real function of this agency. How good was the intelligence that you were getting? Was it helpful in making assessments?

TYLER: Yes. Of course, there are many aspects of intelligence which was received. I fed on reports from our embassies, political reports, and I fed on intelligence reports which we received every day. An intelligence officer of the State Department would come to my office. If it wasn't every day, it was every two days, to brief me.

An obvious example was when I was shown several days before the Cuban Missile Crisis broke, pictures of the Soviet ships containing missiles on their desks on their way to Cuba. It broke the way it did when we had to face up to the immediate implications for our national security of what would happen if those missiles were all installed in position.

Q: Just to get an idea, you read the cables. I want to get a picture of how the Assistant Secretary for the vast area of EUR would operate. I won't say a typical day, but how would you gather your information?

TYLER: Well, it started with my staff assistant Jerry Holloway, who had come in an hour before me, and I got in pretty early, so he would probably be in by 7:00. He had already gone through the overnight cables, several hundred of interest in the European area. And he had a very keen, perceptive judgment. He would prepare an impressive stack of cables, which I would have to read and digest, to some extent, before the Secretary's staff meeting, which, as I recall, was at 9:15 every morning in his office. So that would be the intake. Plus, very often, news of developments received through the CBS World News "Round Up" at 7:45--I had a radio on my desk, and would very often would learn the development of a situation sooner than anything I could expect to get either from an embassy or coming in from the CIA. That was the daily intake, if you will, of information, plus, of course, sudden developments in situations which had been maturing on a longer term basis. There is a saturation, a limit to what one can do for oneself. I couldn't go around picking and choosing. I had to depend on the refinement of the incoming information and intelligence by the system, of boiling it down to the essential aspects of the issue that really needed to be brought to my attention, and not go through the usual channels to the assistant desk officer.

Q: Did you find it useful to call up ambassadors or to take advantage of the to-ing and fro-ing of ambassadors, political counselors, DCMs?

TYLER: Oh, yes. Yes, any time that I wished to speak to an ambassador of that vast European area I could call up anyone, or anyone could call me up who felt that they had something to say and must get through to me. It would probably go first to one of my deputies, but if somebody wanted to reach me, they could always do so.

Q: What did you think of the caliber of ambassadors in Europe when you were there? Of course, these would be Kennedy appointees, but Europe is also the playground of wealthy political contributors.

TYLER: You know, of course, there's always been that element in it. I would say that all the arguments, all the pros and cons have been weighed and hashed over so many times, I have nothing very new to contribute. But just as being a professional in the sense of being a Foreign Service Officer doesn't necessarily mean you are better than anyone else, so being a political appointee does not necessarily mean that you're worse than anyone else.

Q: Obviously, when you think of a David Bruce or an Averell Harriman, you're talking about a professional in any sense but a very narrow one.

TYLER: Yes. David Bruce was a Foreign Service Officer early in his career.

Q: Yes. But the Foreign Service Officer, if nothing else, brings experience. But did you find that you were well served by your ambassadors? I'm speaking both of Foreign Service and non-Foreign Service officers in EUR during, really, a critical time in our relations with those countries.

TYLER: Yes. It's a very short answer to a very complex, huge area and multiplicity of problems, but looking back from the time I was thrown in from the relative bucolic existence of being political counselor in Bonn to being Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe, yes, I am sure not everyone is of my opinion--after all, I wouldn't expect or want them to be--but I think that taking everything into consideration, I feel I was very well served. There were times when this or that ambassador either seemed to have missed some important point, or when one would query an embassy to report on an aspect that didn't seem to have been reported on, but by and large, I was proud of the Foreign Service and of those, even though they were not Foreign Service Officers, who were ambassadors.

Q: You felt, then, it was--I don't want to put words in your mouth. Did you feel you had a good team working for you in the State Department?

TYLER: I like to feel that they all felt that they were working--big words--for the United States in our national interest. There were, by and large, variations, gradations, but that's inevitable in any form of human activity in which the organization is so large, and the multiplicity of issues so great. Yes, I'm proud to have been a Foreign Service Officer and of my experience in the Foreign Service. I came to the end of my career really feeling--I know it sounds like a Boy Scout declaration, but I really felt that way--very, very proud of having been a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: This raises a question that Emmerson Brown said, that one time you noted, when you were in the Netherlands, that one of the most difficult problems you had to deal with was as the head of EUR, which was always considered a plum assignment for officers and their families, having to deal with the requests of Foreign Service officers and sometimes even their wives of using your weight to get them assigned to Europe.

TYLER: Yes, but I take that as par for the course.

Q: But was this difficult?

TYLER: Individually, if you want to hitch your horse to any one particular problem, you find that it's a hell of a struggle and ought to be done away with, but no. I don't want to make it all sound easy. It isn't all that easy. Perhaps it's a question of personal philosophy. I think I understood the motivations of people who were dissatisfied or who wanted something better. You see, one of the things that happened--I don't know whether this is of interest to you, to the recording at all--but you see, I went to the Netherlands because I asked to go to the Netherlands, fully aware of the fact that going from Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs to the Netherlands . . .

Q: This is as ambassador.

TYLER: Yes, would be read as a demotion in the eyes of many people. But I had special reasons for being interested in the Netherlands, because the Netherlands, while a small country, is a wonderful listening post for the rest of Europe because of the fact that it's a small country which it has a centuries-old experience in international commerce, trade, and involvement in other parts of the world. I liked the idea of going to the Netherlands much more than, say, being the ambassador to a country which had really no particular role or never had any particular role to play in international affairs. So I was very pleased to go to The Hague, and I never regretted having gone there.

At the end of the time, when I resigned from the Foreign Service, the then-Secretary of State who had just taken office two days before and asked to see me was Bill Rogers. I happened to be back because my godmother, Mrs. Robert Bliss, had died, and I had already accepted, a year before I resigned from the Foreign Service, an offer from Harvard to be Director of Dumbarton Oaks, if I would be interested. I wanted to do that. I had left the Foreign Service. But when Mrs. Bliss died and I came back for the funeral, I found a message waiting for me from the new Secretary of State asking me to come and see him. This was about January 21st or 22nd, 1969.
I can tell you very shortly what happened. I couldn't figure out why he wanted to see me. I had not only resigned formally , but I had emphasized and followed it up with a letter saying, "I am leaving."

So Mr. Rogers asked to see me, and his office was quite bare and he was still just camping. He said, "This will be the second time I've been in my office." He said, "Look, we're sorry that you have resigned from the Foreign Service. We've looked into the matter, and you have said that you are leaving the Foreign Service. The President and I would very much like you to stay on and take another mission."

I said, "I'm extremely flattered by this, obviously, but I have resigned in order to accept a position which I wanted to take. I'm staying."

Then he said, "Well, how about Bonn?" Of course, it was a mission of tremendous importance and interest to me.

I said, "But I'm no longer in the ball park. I'm not available."

So he said, "Is there any other mission you'd like?"

I said, "Really, Mr. Secretary, I just don't want to take any more of your time. I'm naturally very pleased and flattered that you should want me."

Q: I'm skipping around a bit, but I would like to go back to the problem of Vietnam, which was boiling up, of course, both during Kennedy and the Johnson Administration, and the impact on Europe. I wonder if you could speak on it?

TYLER: I can wrap that up very quickly. I, through my wartime experiences, came to be on very friendly terms with General--later Marshal de Lattre de Tassigny, and he used to bend my ear on Vietnam. I saw him just a day or two before his death in 1952.

Q: He had been sent out to Vietnam earlier for a while when the French were in Hanoi.

TYLER: But also, he went out again as military commander. He asked to see me, and I didn't realize then that he knew he was dying. He died within a few days after we saw each other. He talked to me at some length, saying, "The last thing I have to tell you, you are going to get bogged down. Don't get involved with a large territorial military force in Vietnam. You won't be able to come out of it." And he said, "With your massive organization and military power, it's not possible for you to fight the kind of war necessary to achieve a military solution in Vietnam."

Q: In dealing with Vietnam, in the first place, as the Assistant Secretary, you must have been tasked with selling the need for us to be there.

TYLER: Yes.

Q: But the European governments, for the most part, didn't want to see more, not out of theory, but, basically, they saw . . .

TYLER: A dilution of the American . . .

Q: Dilution of American power. Actually, we were taking arms from Europe.

TYLER: We were squandering our military effort.

Q: Did you find it difficult . . .

TYLER: Very.

Q: . . . to sell the . . .

TYLER: Impossible. I went on selling, but nobody was buying.

Q: Was this a dual thing? Was Assistant Secretary Tyler sold on this, or were you selling it because you were a good soldier?

TYLER: Because I was a good soldier. I can't say I foresaw how it would end, but I feared that it would end badly for us. It was difficult to be giving talks to groups, and to sound

convinced and optimistic. However I did my best. I would invite young students to come and talk with me about Vietnam, which was about as popular as finding a skunk in your bedroom. I talked in Rotterdam and Amsterdam and in The Hague, and got nowhere, because people were just firmly convinced that things were already pretty bad. Well, after all, an ambassador isn't only there to give out good news and take popular positions. When Clark Clifford came over . . .

Q: He was Secretary of Defense at that point?

TYLER: Yes, then he was at CIA afterwards for a short time. But he and Mrs. Clifford came over to Holland and stayed with my wife and me at The Hague. One evening when the ladies, Mrs. Clifford and my wife had retired, he and I left alone, had a very candid talk, in which he asked some straight questions and I gave him straight answers to the effect that I could see no way for us to come out whole out of this thing. Not that I had any particular knowledge; I just felt absolutely sure. This was in April 1963, just before I left the Hague. I said, "I think that it's a hopeless proposition, and I think we've got to drink the cup to the dregs. I don't think there's any way out. We can't retire defeated on the battlefield of our own volition. If we have to get out then let us get out in time and salvage what we can. But I see no way in which we can ever have the West with us on this, nor can we, from what I gather from a military point of view, look forward to any other outcome." And he said nothing, but he nodded. I said, "That doesn't stop me, obviously doing all I can to explain tour policy as convincingly as possible". I think that was the only time I spoke to somebody at that level in that way.

In my mind, I heard the words of de Lattre de Tassigny ringing: "Don't commit yourselves militarily overwhelmingly..... Your concept of warfare is not valid in these circumstances. You can destroy, you can burn, you can shatter, you can bomb, you can do 1,000 things, and you'll still find the enemy everywhere." This was what was being said just before his death in 1952, sixteen years earlier by perhaps the most brilliant military leader that the French had.

Q: I suppose, too, in Holland, having gone through the Indonesian experience, they had some feelings there, too.

TYLER: They had very strong feelings, and they felt we had let them down terribly. In my time I was involved in the West New Guinea (i.e., "Irian") issue, in whose negotiated solution Ellsworth Bunker played an outstanding role.

Q: He negotiated the settlement there.

TYLER: When Sukarno lifted Dean Rusk's gold wristwatch, I can remember Dean Rusk dolefully saying, "I don't like him. He stole my watch."

I said, "Mr. Secretary, he can't have stolen it."

He said, "Well, he did, in all but the name he stole it, because he admired my wristwatch, could he look at it. And so he looked at it so long that it was obvious I was expected to say, 'Keep it.' I did, and I've always regretted it." [Laughter]

No, it was West New Guinea, and then, of course, there was plenty of back and forth between Far Eastern affairs and EUR. Naturally, EUR was torn between--torn in the sense that it usually was. We could not take the Dutch for granted. Sensibilities, unreasonable, maybe, but they were the reality that I felt very deeply. This was the last part of the rather colonial . . .

Q: Colonial empire.

TYLER: And you know, they penetrated Indonesia, Indonesian culture so deeply. There are so many Indonesians of mixed Dutch and ancestry. There was a very, very close relationship then and with West New Guinea. Naturally, there were we in an ungrateful role of being mindful of what was reasonable in terms of our national interest, and also not going too far one way or the other. It was already quite a joke between EUR and FE.

Q: FE means Far Eastern bureau.

TYLER: Yes. Fighting words were exchanged in meetings, and things would go down on the record, and memos written on this, that, and the other. But thank God we got out of it with our relations with the Dutch somewhat tattered but basically intact.

TYLER: Yes. Much of the success was due to the wisdom of their ambassador here, Herman van Roijen, whose mother was born American. Not that gives him a passport to wisdom, necessarily, but he was--still is--a very wise man. He and I, had each of us his position but never lost contact with each other. This is a silly anecdote which is worth recording. Once we were having a rather difficult meeting in Averell Harriman's office, that glorious time when I had a colleague of equal rank named Averell Harriman, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs! [Laughter] Wonderful! On one occasion we were about to meet with Ambassador van Roijen, in order to lay down our position very strongly on this or that aspect of the situation. And you know, Averell Harriman was deaf, and he had a hearing aid, and he very often did not hear with his hearing aid properly. I suspect that he did not hear when he chose not to.

Q: That's the story.

TYLER: It's true. I'll tell you this story because it happened in my presence. In Averell's office, he was over there, Herman van Roijen was there.

Q: We're talking about five or six feet away.

TYLER: The room was fairly large. Yes, about ten feet away. Van Roijen's aide, Emil Schiff, his number two, minister counselor, was also there. Harriman was deep in his

armchair, going through a folder prior to the start of the meeting. Emil Schiff said something into the ambassador's right ear, in quite a low voice, so that even I couldn't hear what he said. While Harriman apparently oblivious to what was going on, was going through his papers. Suddenly, Averell looked up and said, "That's not true, you know. I made that point perfectly clear the last time your ambassador came here."

Q: What was the situation at that point between the Netherlands and Indonesia? The situation had long been settled, hadn't it?

TYLER: No.

Q: We're talking about New Guinea.

TYLER: New Guinea, West New Guinea.

Q: Irian.

TYLER: Irian.

Q: What was your main task, did you feel, when you went to the Netherlands in 1965?

TYLER: Well, I had two things very much on my mind, and this issue illustrates a fundamental aspect of the difference between a Foreign Service officer ambassador and a political appointee. You might say it comes down in certain cases to the degree of clout which a Foreign Service officer has compared with that of a political appointee.

When I went to The Hague, I had two things very firmly in my mind. One, the Dutch had got themselves hooked on what turned out to be perhaps not a very clearly defined offer by President Eisenhower, at a NATO meeting, I think as early as December 1960, that the United States would be disposed to give sympathetic consideration to a request by any of our allies interested in acquiring a nuclear submarine. The Dutch picked this up and started riding the horse of acquiring a nuclear submarine. Ambassador van Roijen was instructed to press the matter in Washington.
The other subject of great interest to the Dutch was landing rights for KLM in the United States.
Anyway, I thought, "If they don't get their nuclear submarine, I really at least must press hard in the matter of landing rights. That would really mean a great deal for our relations." This sort of submarine-landing rights tandem went on bumping around during the years I was at The Hague.

I was leaving at the end of June 1969, and my successor was William Middendorf, a political appointee. I briefed before he came over, and told him that there were only two issues of real importance to the Dutch. One is, I was sure, is a dead duck, but still it may sort of quack occasionally, and that's the nuclear submarine. The other is landing rights

for KLM I added that although the nuclear submarine issue was probably hopeless for them, he should continue to press for landing rights.
So Bill Middendorf thanked me for this information and went to see the President and said, "I've got to have something to give the Dutch."

According to this story, which if my source is right, is what Bill Middendorf told a friend of his in order to illustrate the difference between a political appointee and a Foreign Service officer, President Nixon, when Bill Middendorf said, "I've got to have one of two things, and one is a nuclear submarine, and, of course, I gather that's difficult." Nixon sort of obviously wasn't going to rise to that. "But the Dutch have got to have landing rights."

So Nixon pressed a button and called in whoever the flunky was, the high-level flunky, and said, "Work this one out, whatever the problems are. Get over them so that we can do something for the Dutch." That was all there was to it. And me, I don't even feel bitter about it, because that's the rules of the game. But it's a good example.

Q: Middendorf was a political appointee. He became Secretary of the Navy, did he not?

TYLER: Yes. He was said to be influential in the Republican Party, being close to President Nixon.

Q: One last question before I cut off this very interesting conversation. You worked in EUR under two different Presidents, quite different, but two rather major figures and personalities, Johnson and Kennedy. Can you describe a little bit about the approach of Kennedy and Johnson, say, towards Europe, and how they operated in the foreign affairs field that you experienced?

TYLER: I really don't know how I can define it. Kennedy was alert, knowledgeable about Europe, interested in Europe, and very careful. I felt that he had a sense, an instinctive sense of the alliance and the reactions of other countries, even when they weren't based on personal experience. I think he had a shrewd instinct for international relations.

I think that Johnson was quite different. I mean, he would listen, but I never had a feeling that he was particularly involved in European affairs, save as part of a much broader picture. Of course, he had been Vice President a long time, and he knew the major issues; but he was not a man whose background and experience in politics had been really focused very consistently or broadly on international affairs. I know he had traveled and all that, but I think it was a very different feeling of perspective and depth and knowledge of international affairs so far as I could judge.

Q: I rather imagine, too, that given the ever-increasing problem of Vietnam, he saw Europe as being almost a place to be taken for granted, somewhat.

TYLER: I think that's right. I think that's right. De Gaulle had done had his way, and had taken France out of--not out of the Atlantic Treaty, but out of the military organization of

the alliance. And it was Johnson, after all, who took that fateful--if not fatal--decision of doing exactly in his Baltimore speech what de Lattre de Tassigny had warned us 15 years before never to do, of putting in 300,000 or 400,000 troops. Once we got in there, we couldn't get out. I don't think Kennedy would have done that.

Q: One of the things that was said about Kennedy on Vietnam was that in looking back, one would say, "Kennedy would have gotten us out." But somebody else said, "The Kennedys are not losers," and the idea of losing--I realize we're off the course a bit, but it's a little hard in retrospect to see what anybody would have done.

TYLER: I'll tell you. I'm not going to say which foreign minister it was, because even though I know that this is a privileged conversation, I don't want to name the country.

Q: I don't want to make this privileged. This will be open.

TYLER: Yes, what I'm going to say, but I'm just not going to give names. When Kennedy was assassinated, one of the most fabulous things that happened was that many chiefs of state and other high dignitaries appeared and gathered on the eighth floor [of the Department of State]. You had Queen Frederika of Greece sitting on the couch next to De Gaulle, with Mikoyan on the other side. [Laughter] It was like a circus with all the animals getting mixed up. [Laughter] But in this particular case, it so happened that there was a foreign minister, one of our allies of whom I'd seen a good deal, and we got to know each other pretty well, well, on a first-name basis. When he arrived with his Prime Minister for the reception, for that extraordinary gathering on the eighth floor, he came up to me and said, "Bill, I know how hard this must have hit you all."

I said, "Yes, we are all somewhat desensitized by shock and lack of sleep."
He said, "I'd like to leave a thought with you, which may or may not help you." And he said, "You know, President Kennedy was a wonderful figure. The world will not be the same again without him. It will be a different world. He brought into the world something which all his admirers, and even his non-admirers, would recognize as being a very special human quality, a spiritual quality. Whatever else is secondary to the charisma, the feeling that he could arouse in people who had never seen him, as we knew when people knelt down and lit candles and prayed in the darkest Africa when they heard of his death." He said, "Remember that all that he did and which shed so much radiance on the world and on America. That is something which is now woven into the fabric of your national consciousness, of your history. But remember, if he had to go, this was the time for him to go, because he never knew the disappointments I think that he would have had to face later on in his legislative programs and his relations with Congress. He went out, you know, still climbing in the firmament of achievement. You've got to think of it in terms of what would he be like in another two years, or would he have been re-elected? This isn't much of a comfort to you, but remember that all that Kennedy could give to America, he gave before he died, and that the world will never forget that."

Q: This is true also when one thinks back of Lincoln, who did not have to deal with Reconstruction. The politics of Reconstruction, which may not have been his finest hour.

TYLER: No. But in the case of Kennedy, I've always remembered that, because I was completely--I really was, all of us were, pretty well in a daze. And to have this fellow who had become a good friend say this so quietly at a time of such intensity in my feelings seemed so appropriate; and I thought of Alexander the Great. Well, there we are. That's about it!

Q: Mr. Ambassador, I want to thank you very much for this. It's been not only a privilege, but a real pleasure.

TYLER: It's very nice of you. I've enjoyed it, too.

Date: February 24, 1988

Q: Mr. Ambassador, we were discussing some points that were not really covered in the first two interviews. Specifically, some of the international meetings you attended. And we developed a small listing of those which--your participation--you had some interesting perspective in. So could we start with the tripartite meeting in London? This was the North Atlantic Council. This was 1950--when would this have been, about?

TYLER: This was in 1950. I think it was in the early the summer of 1950. It was not a North Atlantic Council meeting. It was a tripartite meeting; a three-powers meeting to discuss the future of NATO's role.
Q: Who were the three powers were--at that time?

TYLER: U.S., U.K., and France.

Q: And you were . . .

TYLER: At that time I was stationed at the embassy in Paris; I'd been stationed there since 1948 as Public Affairs Counselor. I was not yet a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: So your role at this meeting was what?

TYLER: It was as adviser, adviser to our delegation. Adviser, I should add, with a small "a." But in order to be aware of, and report on, the public relations aspects, the international information aspects of the meeting, and also to render any service that I could to our delegation because of my special knowledge of the political situation in France, and of the French perspective in general.

Q: I was going to say, that you were there really more than just as a public affairs person.

TYLER: Yes. David Bruce wanted me there, and that was that.

Q: David Bruce was our Ambassador at that time. Before we move on--you served under David Bruce--could you give me a little idea of what his operating style was like?

TYLER: David Bruce asked that I be included in our delegation to this meeting. Specifically, he asked me to put down for him my ideas on the information and public relations role of NATO in the future.

Q: I wonder if you could mention what type of ambassador David Bruce was? Not good, bad, or indifferent; but how did he operate?

TYLER: He operated in the most flexible and informal way you can imagine. In a meeting he encouraged general conversation, he welcomed and solicited people's ideas, and he never seemed to be trying to cast the discussion in a way which reflected specifically his views, but to solicit and encourage opinions by others.

Q: Well now, you went to this meeting as an adviser. Who were the participants at the meeting? It was with foreign ministers?

TYLER: It was three foreign ministers. Dean Acheson was our representative. Of course David Bruce was there. And I guess that the British Foreign Secretary then--I hope I'm not mistaken--was Ernest Bevin.

Q: Ernest Bevin?

TYLER: Yes. So there were Dean Acheson, Ernest Bevin, and Robert Schuman.

Q: Well, now how did this work. I mean, you were there as a knowledgeable person on France. Did you sit behind somebody's shoulder and whisper to them?

TYLER: It seemed very informal. We were quite a small delegation. I sat in on the meetings and took the notes. My principal job was to send back telegrams to USIS for suggestions as to how to treat, or to emphasize, or to play any particular aspects of the meeting which were germane to our interests and to our view of our relation within the Alliance. It was also my job to keep our delegation informed on the French and international press treatment of aspects of the conference important to us.

Q: Now did Dean Acheson draw on your knowledge at all?

TYLER: Yes, well, we knew each other personally already, and so we could discuss matters informally. Our relationship was as informal as our relative positions permitted. Chip Bohlen was also there. He was then the Minister in Paris. But apart from that I can only really remember David Bruce, Chip Bohlen, and Dean Acheson.

Q: What were some of the issues that came up, particularly as pertaining to France, your field of expertise?

TYLER: Actually, my field of expertise went beyond France. The issues really went beyond the--the issues were more concerned with the future of the North Atlantic Alliance, in terms of its role and relation to the Soviet Union and the problems that we had to envisage and had to face, which were already very clear. Remember that this was, I guess, just about the time of the Korean War--or just before June 25, when it broke out. So in London military considered reports from the British and the French on matters relating to the strategic--the political and military strategic--role of the Alliance.

Q: What were our concerns, as far as the delegation went, with France?

TYLER: You mean at that time?

Q: Yes, did we know the French wanted something that we didn't want the French to have? Or that we wanted something the French didn't want us to have?

TYLER: Our thinking was directed toward the future, and cooperation, within the Alliance as a whole, rather than simply the French. Although I was Public Affairs Officer for France-- whatever expertise I might have had on internal French matters did not come into discussion.

Q: I wonder then if maybe we might move on to the next meeting? This was when?

TYLER: The full Brussels, North Atlantic Council meeting.

Q: This was in December of 1950?

TYLER: December, 1950.

Q: This would be after the Korean War had . . .

TYLER: Had already started.

Q: . . . and was looking rather bad for us at the time.

TYLER: Yes. It was a huge meeting, because each country seemed to want to have a large delegation present. And the discussions--the real discussions--I think went on behind the scenes, between the Foreign Ministers themselves or with a few advisers, and not in the meeting itself.

Q: Speaking of this type of meeting, how effective are these ones? You see the pictures of everybody sitting around a table, with their delegations behind them. What can really be accomplished at that type of meeting, in your experience?

TYLER: Well, any issues involving the interests, or the particular policies of each participating country need to be affirmed, or asserted and publicized. You don't negotiate at a plenipotentiary meeting--you state your position and you comment, if necessary, on the approach of other countries may say. But you don't negotiate in a large meeting like that. You state your position. The negotiation goes on between the principals, when they see each other informally--in the evening or elsewhere. But if there are specific points requiring expert knowledge of one or another aspect of the issues discussed at the meeting--then, of course, that's where you need those people who are sitting behind but who are more knowledgeable about one particular aspect than maybe the principal is.

Q: Were you involved in any sort of expert knowledge in this North Atlantic Council meeting?

TYLER: Yes, at the delegation meetings--each of our delegation meetings--views were exchanged as to what particular issues seemed to be particularly relevant to our interests. And then if there was anything to say, particularly with regard to international information, propaganda and press, that was the time for me to speak up.

Q: From your point of view how did the various delegations get along? I mean, did you all feel that you were sort of one big team in those days?

TYLER: Well, it was one big team, but not all playing exactly the same game.

Q: We were playing football and they were playing soccer?

TYLER: It might not have been, but it was not--we didn't all play the same way, but on the major issues there was a tremendous common thrust--the momentum of The Marshall Plan, of the need for strengthening the cohesion of Europe, of the West, we were very conscious of the imminent threat posed by the Soviet Union. Uncertain of what the Soviet Union was going to do next, we always went on the assumption that the Soviet Union would take any position which obviously not only would suit its policies, but would be divisive in the West. And so we were a big western team from one point of view, but we were not a big western team in all national interpretations of that role.

Q: How did the American delegation--maybe say differ--say from the French and the British?

TYLER: I don't think I could establish--I don't think I could define how it differed. It only differed in so far as each delegation knew what it hoped to contribute to or get from such a meeting. And the issues would be discussed within the delegation meeting in the morning before the meeting started. But at the meeting itself, of course, there was an agenda. And so the topics that were raised were known ahead of time. The point was to be absolutely sure that our man, the Secretary of State, would be briefed on all aspects of the problems which would be of use to him in discussion.

Q: Well now, we move on to the very important, very indicative meeting in January, 1954, in Berlin? This was the first real--it wasn't a summit meeting--it was a foreign ministers' meeting, conference with the USSR, the United Kingdom, France, and the United States. At this point in 1954, what was your position?

TYLER: I'd been called back from Paris. In fact, I was called to that conference while I was still physically in Paris. I went to Berlin. Secretary Dulles was then Secretary of State. And there again, my role was one perhaps for which there is no precedent, in the sense that while I was in Paris I was Public Affairs Counselor for France and North Africa. But in fact, I went to Berlin in my role as somebody who was knowledgeable in, and had rather an unusual experience in European affairs in general, and in particular in the psychological warfare, propaganda side.

Q: Was this a meeting that you felt--just the very fact that you were there on sort of the propaganda, psychological warfare side--was this meeting envisaged as one with major importance in the field of public relations?

TYLER: Oh yes. And public relations, of course, is such a vague term, but also in international relations--on the one hand between ourselves and our allies in relation to the U.K., and the French and in relation to the Soviet Union.

Q: Now you say that Acheson knew you, and used you from time to time knowing your knowledge. What about Dulles? Did you know Dulles?

TYLER: Yes, I did know Dulles slightly, but only by the fact that Allen Dulles . . .

Q: That's his brother, who was head of the CIA.

TYLER: Allen Dulles, during the War, was stationed in Bern. My father, who had been--before the War--the League of Nations' representative to Hungary, was in charge--for the League of Nations--of supervising the operation of the loan agreement between the League of Nations and Hungary. My father had known both Allen and Foster who had been a member of the U.S. delegation in Paris, 1919 when my father was also on our delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. There was a personal element in my relations with them.

Q: Did you find that Dulles used his team that went there in a different manner than say Acheson had used his team?

TYLER: In my experience every gathering, every international gathering--meeting--develops its own character in a way which would be difficult to define ahead of time. Each conference acquires, a resultant of the various factors, forces, and personalities involved, its own special character. Foster Dulles had a very keen and trained legal mind-

-and his manner was more formal, if you will. But in Berlin--are we talking about the Berlin conference?

Q: We're talking about the Berlin conference.

TYLER: Well, Molotov was then still Foreign Minister of the USSR. This is of extreme importance. I think that Molotov was--well, it was really the three Western powers working very closely in order to coordinate our position in relation to the Soviet Union.

Q: What were your observations dealing with the Soviets? Was this the fist time you had dealt with them?

TYLER: No, because Gromyko was the Soviet representative a long quadripartite conference of Deputy Foreign Ministers. I was a member of our delegation in Paris in 1951 at that conference, for press and public information matters. Our representative was Philip C. Jessup.

Q: What did you learn as far as style and how Gromyko and the Soviets dealt?

TYLER: Very matter-of-fact, very practical, ideologically completely monolithic, of course. And it was a very different feeling from when the allies talked among themselves.

Q: Everything was very formal?

TYLER: Yes, Gromyko's personality was very formal, and when he did smile, it was as though it caused him internal pain. He was always perfectly courteous, low key, no temperamental outbursts. But day after day after day there was that same grey, persistent, northeasterly wind coming down across his desk. He was ideologically, of course, predictable. One never had a feeling of making any headway.

Q: Well, at the Berlin conference did you work with, say, the public affairs officers of other delegations?

TYLER: No. I was in fact the delegation public affairs advisor. So far my job, as I conceived it, was to be able to inform the Department and send guidance on the implications for our position, worldwide, of developments there in the public domain, and how they should be played publicly in our national interest.

Q: What was the major development, as you saw it, and to publicize, from this quadripartite meeting?

TYLER: We examined and probed all the possibilities of reaching agreement with the Soviet Union on certain points, but found them completely inflexible and it was impossible to make any headway. The important issue was, of course, that of Germany joining NATO.

Q: This was a direct consequence of this meeting?

TYLER: It was--The mind of the West was already completely made up on this point. There was political resistance within France, particularly on the part of the Left. There was a very strong and politically powerful Communist party. And the further left you were the more you were opposed to Germany joining NATO. But we knew that in order to establish the security position of the West, Germany must be in NATO, so that was certainly the largest, most important factor.

Every morning I would give a report to the delegation in the Secretary's office, on the cables that had come in reflecting opinion in the world press of other countries. Also, in the case of Germany, of the German press. So my job was to give a succinct, as brief as possible, picture of the way world opinion was being reflected in so far as the public media--the press and radio--was concerned. Then there would be some discussion of what was on the agenda, what we would be continuing to discuss, and any angles which were of particular interest to us from the point of view of our worldwide propaganda position.

Q: Did you--looking at it from the public affairs side--find yourself pressing our delegation, or suggesting to our delegation that they try to put the Soviet Union into an awkward position or not?

TYLER: That was incidental. The Soviet delegation was doing it for us. The principal interest was not putting the Soviet Union in an awkward position, because that depended on the Soviet Union. The point was putting ourselves in as favorable a position as possible, and reaching agreement with our allies if possible. But if there were aspects of a problem, where you wouldn't have had unanimity, then the question was: how to treat it in such a way as to minimize the differences within the West?

Q: Again focusing on your role, did you see the American delegation as having sort of a bifold task? One was, of course, informing the world and the United States, but also acting as a conduit to Germany. As being, you might say, both the outsider in Europe but also, maybe, the closest to Germany at that time?

TYLER: Yes, the United States had a special relationship with Germany. We'd been, heaven knows, enemies during the War, but we were free--relatively free--of the trauma which other European countries felt, that had been in direct contact . . . Of course the British were in a special position--they'd never been occupied. But, yes, I think we had a broader view, perhaps, of the future than public opinion in those countries could be expected to have.

Q: Yes, well we--having been somewhat removed--we were not carrying a lot of emotional, European baggage with us on this.

TYLER: That's right. We had more perspective of the future, more latitude. That, in fact, is why our allies, without giving us a blank check--why should they--looked to us for leadership. And that leadership, I think, we gave very successfully after the War going back to the Marshall Plan, and also the role that we played in establishing--or helping to establish or foster--the elements in Germany working toward a democratic, stable Germany, solidly in the Western camp.

Q: So, in your particular job you did feel a certain amount of focus on Germany? More than say maybe the public affairs officers of the others--United Kingdom, French delegations?

TYLER: I think there's no question about it. After all, I was the one representing the United States. In those years after the War a member of the American delegation, with a specific mission, carried with him a certain authority. People looked toward him--members of other delegations--because the role of the United States was determining for the way things would eventually go in Europe. And since the way things were going to go in Europe was intimately linked to, and still is linked, to our security, our position was incomparable. That isn't to say the French position, or the British position, or that of smaller countries after all, was not important. But our position was then unique. And our ability to influence, or to make more intelligible, the long-term interests of the West really rested with us more than with any other.

Q: And this was sort of, almost, absorbed from--at the knee of--from the mother's knee of every person on the American delegation?

TYLER: I think we were all conscious that we . . . When you say you have a mission it sounds as if you're bigger. We felt that the fine dust of responsibility rested on all of us, to a degree which could not be quite attributed to that of any other of our allies.

Q: I think this is a point that is often overlooked .

TYLER: Oh yes.

Q: . . . by historians who look upon this, who have not come from the era. They miss the feeling- -not of pure self-interest--but of mission.

TYLER: I would call it the psychological and political dynamics of a situation; what the French call a conjoncture. The conjoncture is that point at which a lot of factors converge. I think you are absolutely right there; I think that a purely quantitative, or factual assessment of a situation can be extremely misleading unless it is informed with an awareness of what the factors--the dynamic current and potential factors were at the time.

Q: Before we move on, I'd like to ask one more question of this period in the 1950's. Looking back on--or even at the time--did you ever feel that there were opportunities where, in the West--particularly the United States being the leader--there was something

that might have been done that might have changed the course of the Cold War? Or was it impossible? Was it your feeling that there was nothing that could have been done to change the relationship with the Soviet Union to make it more friendly?

TYLER: Well, of course you're raising a field for endless speculation.

Q: I know. I'm really asking you did you see any opportunity?

TYLER: I feel that we were on the right track from the start, on some very all embracing, and yet very simple, matters. One was that--and as President Roosevelt had brought home to the American people--the concept of a fortress America was not tenable. Isolationism, however desirable it might be emotionally, was absolutely untenable in view of the forces at work in the world. Europe had bled itself to death, practically, for the second time in a generation--I mean between 1918 and 1940.

There was only one incomparably more important menace to our liberties and our survival as an independent country, and that was the Soviet Union and its policies based on international communism and its world-wide goals. It almost didn't bear discussing. It was that basic assumption that we were all aware of and conscious of; which did not mean that we should unsheathe our swords and start parrying and thrusting. We wanted to avoid that. But not to have any illusions, whatsoever, as to what would be the future of democracy and freedom in the Western hemisphere if the Soviet Union could possibly acquire a situation in which it would command the approaches to the Atlantic, and to Africa. It's so strange, looking back on it, how little we discussed it. Because it was as though you had a meeting very morning to try explain why it was that the sun kept on rising in the same place.

Q: Moving on, to--I think it's around--we're not quite sure of the date--but we think it's in September, 1954, when Germany joined NATO.

TYLER: That is correct. I think it was at the London Nine Power Conference. Probably you could look it up. My recollection is there'd been a meeting--that I attended in London. It was after the Berlin conference. I think that it was--because of the failure of the Berlin . . .

Q: This was the January, 1954, conference?

TYLER: I think because of the failure of that conference to reveal any possibility, any form of--not that we expected to reach agreement on all points with the Soviets, but any form, any give, any possibility that the Soviets, in any respect, would be looking for the possibility of reaching an agreement--when all that was so clear, it was obvious that we could not just sit there. then Germany had to be part of NATO--must be, in order to make our security arrangements complete.

And I think it was from Berlin that I went to the conference in London where Adenauer sat next to Eden, I think it was.

Q: This was Konrad Adenauer, the Chancellor of Germany.

TYLER: Yes, that great man.

Q: What was your role at this conference?

TYLER: The same thing. I was there as a public affairs adviser, reporting on trends, assessing the various indications of national attitudes in relation to problems that were of great interest and importance to us and making recommendations how these issues should be treated in the public domain. Apart from the telegrams I'd send back to USIS--to USIA--apart from that, whatever role I may have played, and I don't want you to think I'm being falsely modest, I am modest about it because it was so very little. It varied depending on--if I said anything--whether anyone thought it of interest.

There would be continuous discussion with all the members of our delegation. I was one of them, and the advantage, if any, that I had over them was having an important USIS responsibility, and more access to what was being said in the world, and in the various movements in opinion in the world, and of assessing their relevance to the achievement of our objectives.

Q: Well now, you were sort of to give how these conferences were playing in the world. How did you get your information?

TYLER: Cables, radio, press.

Q: But were there special instructions? I'm looking at little at the structure of this. Were there special instructions?

TYLER: The instructions were not given to me on how to do my job. The guidance was specific, in relation to our policy, and to our objectives. In terms of our objectives, what developments were significant or not significant; and if something were developing in movements of opinion in this or that country, was this development--or change in opinion, or trend in opinion-- of importance to us, and if so why? Why is it important, and how? And was there we could do, were there any countermeasures or corrective measures that we could take?

Q: The German delegation--this was the first time, probably, there was a German delegation en masse?

TYLER: There my have been. I was hypnotized by seeing--(I thought of him then--as "that old Chinaman") Adenauer, because he had that . . .

Q: He did look Chinese. But how did the German delegation fit in? This was probably the first time that a full delegation had come.

TYLER: The London Nine-Power Conference was relatively small and very rapid. It didn't last long.

Q: I was wondering whether some of the other delegations were a little bit stiffish, or not?

TYLER: I don't think so. No, we were all eating from the same trough. And the trough was--if you can use the word for that--we were all looking at the development of the situation; the possibility of developments in the situation in fields which vitally related to our future policies, and to our security.

Q: Is it all right if we turn now . . .

TYLER: Yes.

Q: . . . to the July, 1955 summit in Geneva, between the United States . . .

TYLER: Yes, that was with the Soviets. It was the British, the French, ourselves, and it was Heads of Government.

Q: What were you doing there this time? This is 1955.

TYLER: I was then Deputy Director of the Office of Western European Affairs in the State Department.

Q: So you were really taking quite a different role in this summit, or not?

TYLER: Not really, because all the momentum of the previous years, and whatever knowledge or experience I might have gathered, were not limited to one country. I mean, the movements of--no, it's a good question. It never occurred to me to ask it of myself. I was in Montana on vacation at the time when it was announced that the conference would take place, and I got a telephone call from the Department of State--I guess it was from the Secretary of State's office. It must have been Bill Macomber or somebody--saying, "Look, get back, you're going over with us to Geneva."

So I flew back and went to Geneva. It never occurred to me I would be, but since I was asked, it didn't surprise me that I was going to Geneva if there was going to be a conference with the Soviet Union. Chip Bohlen, Tommy Thompson, Doug MacArthur, also Livy Merchant, who was Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs and was my boss. Doug MacArthur was Counselor of the Department. Well, I didn't keep any notes, but I remember flying back from Montana to Washington, and going to a cram session of forty-eight hours on what the chips were we were going to have to play with.

We had no illusions, but we had not--certainly there was no feeling that we were going to go through motions. We were going to prod and sound out Khrushchev as much as possible.

Q: I think it may have been Khrushchev and Bulganin?

TYLER: Pinay was the French Prime Minister.

Q: Yes. Was there any change? Did you find in your delegation, as far as how you observed the Soviets?

TYLER: No, I don't think the individual went over with any preconceived ideas, as a member of the delegation, to see how it would play when you started negotiating, talking. One thing I will say, it's sometimes easier to generalize if you start from a very specific point. I do know that Dean Acheson was not at all in favor of holding--any more than he had been in favor of Kennedy going to Vienna. I'd just come back from Germany, in '61 . . .

Q: Wait, but you were talking about Acheson, who was then the former Secretary of State, observing this from the sidelines.

TYLER: Yes, and I was in the Department, of course. I remember that when I had lunch with him, he said, "I don't know why we're going through with this exercise. All it does is provide a bigger platform for Soviet, psychological warfare and propaganda. They're going to make no concessions, and we're not going to get anywhere. So why give them the benefit of occupying center stage with us, when there's absolutely nothing on which we're going to be able to agree?"

He was saying that off the record, to me. And I said, "Well, I think probably that if we follow the logic of what you're recommending, then we'll never meet with the Soviets. I think the act of meeting--we're not going to lose our shirts with them, we're not going to give them anything. On the one hand, the advantage which they may derive from attending a conference with us, at that level, is surely more than offset by the disadvantage we would incur if we, as a matter of course, did not meet because we knew we couldn't basic agreement with them."

But I think he felt--and of course what upset him, and a lot of us felt was hurting--was the so-called spirit of Geneva, that fiction. . . The way the West was reacting to the possibility of a setting in of a thaw.

Q: This was sort of dubbed "The spirit of Geneva."

TYLER: By the press.

Q: And there was no thaw.

TYLER: Of course not, there couldn't possibly be. I think one of the most difficult things in my particular field of--if you like--public affairs, was how to isolate and define a factor. You can call it a confrontation, but the difference between a free society and a totalitarian society is how to isolate that difference without taking the position that you feel there is no point in discussing or talking, because you know the other man's position.

We were perfectly aware that the Soviet Union would derive a considerable, or short-term at least, advantage from appearing to be reasonable. But we knew, also, that we must continue to meet and discuss issues with them, in order to get our own story across--our own side for the free societies, and last, but not least, for the uncommitted world.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, turning to the conferences you held in 1956, concerning the Suez Crisis, I wonder if you could--first place--say what the Suez Crisis was and what was your particular role in this?

TYLER: Well, the Suez Crisis, in the shortest way possible, was caused by Egypt taking over the Suez Canal and denying access to it. And abolishing the privileges and the rights which had long been held in international law by other countries.

Q: That would be France and England?

TYLER: Yes, principally, but of course the Suez Canal was, in law, an international waterway open to international shipping. Now it could be opened only according to the interests and the will of the Egyptians.

Q: Well what was our particular concern in the Crisis?

TYLER: Our particular concern was that the British and the French should not have recourse, to armed force, to try to overthrow Nasser and to reopen the Canal. We foresaw that it was absolutely impossible for such a venture to succeed, and that it would create a situation from which the Soviet Union would benefit enormously. And also, we didn't feel that the British and the French had the military means to achieve their objectives.

Q: Well this was right in your backyard at the time? You were dealing with Western Europe, and here were the two major Western European powers who were headed on a collision course with us. How did you see it at the time and how did you pass what you saw on?

TYLER: It was the conventional wisdom, and it seemed to me the only wisdom--conventional wisdom sometimes is the only wisdom--that it would be madness for the British and the French to have recourse to force, in order to try to overthrow Nasser, and to reopen the Suez Canal. It looked to me to be absolutely a misreading of the trend of history and of the long-term political factors involved. Of course, you know it was in

October--well, before the invasion took place--that we had meetings. Mr. Dulles was Secretary of State when I was with him up there at the Security Council meeting in New York, in October. We talked and had separate tripartite meetings with the British and the French.

Well, all that's been written up by people who were much more closely involved than I was. It did seem like madness, and that the only possibility--if the British and the French were going to insist on having recourse to force--the only possibility was that they could do it surgically, quickly, neatly, overthrow Nasser and reoccupy. But, then what would happen after that? For the British and the French it was proved impossible for them to have that perspective on the future.

Q: Did we find the blinds were drawn, pretty much, with our British and French colleagues?

TYLER: Yes, of course a good case, theoretically, could be made out for not accepting this unilateral, illegal act of force on the part of Nasser. You could, in international law, make out an excellent case. The question was, whether the action which you propose, or might be contemplating, would in fact re-stabilize the situation and remove the consequences of Nasser's act in taking over the Canal.

Of course, remember, that was after the Suez Canal conferences in London. The talks which I'm referring to took place at the Waldorf Astoria, at the time of the Security Council meeting in October of '56.

Q: I'm not sure of the exact date.

TYLER: I think we hoped, up to the last moment, that the British and the French would not have recourse to armed force. But our intelligence--I don't have to go into that--but we had means of knowing that they had in fact decided to have recourse to armed force. And it looked like a--as was the case--very low point in relations with our allies. Because we felt that they were on the wrong track, that what they had envisaged and had committed themselves to was a very dangerous and ultimately hopeless course of action, which might have the effect of greatly increasing the role of the Soviet Union in that whole part of the world, and that they would not be able to . . .

Q: Well, were there the equivalent of hawks within the State Department at that time, saying why not let the British and French do it and let's . . .

TYLER: If there were I never heard of, or was aware of, anyone with any responsibility taking that position.

Q: So at least at the policy level there was pretty much unanimity, that this was the course we should take?

TYLER: The course we should take would be to dissuade the British and the French from undertaking armed force. But, of course, they decided to go ahead, and then you saw what happened.

Q: Were you trying to do anything, in your particular area, talking to the British and French officials?

TYLER: Oh yes, at my modest level. After all, Mr. Dulles was there. I was also with him at the meetings he had with foreign ministers of our allies, other than the British and the French as well. There was no doubt at all about our position, which was that we were opposed to the use of force. But the momentum of internal politics, and of national, false conceptions . . . Everything that was done by the British and the French was contrary to good judgment at that time, I'm afraid, and was only justified by the irresistible sense that it was politically not possible not to do something.

The argument most advanced by them was that: if we don't draw the line here, then everybody else in Europe will feel, well, where will we draw the line? I've never read a history of that period, but I remember very strongly, very clearly, the pressure and anguish when it became clear to us that the British and the French--(when we knew, and they had not admitted it to us that we knew)--were going to invade Egypt.

Such small things as intelligence reports coming in. The British kept up to the end, a fiction that the reason their planes were flying over the Eastern Mediterranean, in that area, was for the protection of their nationals in the event that hostility should break out. But in fact, we knew what they were building up in Cyprus,--a fleet and air cover to protect the landings. The French and British together--were simply on a different track from ours. It was the most dangerous moment for the alliance, after the War, that I remember.

I don't know how many conversations I had, not only with members of other delegations, but with newspaper men and correspondents. And I remember the reactions of British and French friends of mine. The fortunes of the alliance, at that point, were at a very low ebb.

Q: But you were trying to explain to newspapers and others what our policy was, and that we would not be with them. So there should be no surprise that we would not support them.

TYLER: Yes, of course. My job was to explain and reaffirm our policy that there could be no military solution.

Q: I would like to then turn, just to finish this up, to two items which we did not cover before, with President Kennedy. One was, you accompanied him on his last trip to Europe in June, 1963.

TYLER: I was then Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs.

Q: And what was this trip about? Was this more just to show the flag, or were there things of substance that you . . .

TYLER: Well, I can't recall. There was the importance a visit to the Federal Republic of Germany and particularly to Berlin, as well as Ireland.

Q: Well he was going back to the "old sod" for Ireland.

TYLER: That trip to Europe was not really a trip of substantive negotiations. It was, many people felt, a long overdue trip for him to take, to touch base with some of our European allies.
Q: How was Kennedy received at the official level, rather than just with crowds and all that?

TYLER: Very cordially. He enjoyed a great personal reputation. The crowds of course were delirious, as you know. And when we went down to Italy, and felt a little nervous as to whether the Italian Communist party would put on a counter demonstration in Rome, and then in Naples.

Q: I was told--speaking of my time when I was Consul General to Naples--that our Public Affairs Officer in Naples . . .

TYLER: Homer Byington?

Q: Homer Byington was Consul General, I believe, at the time. But, was telling our officials that he could guarantee that there would be a crowd, and a friendly crowd, coming for Kennedy. Because the Neapolitans are noted for marching to a different drum. And yes indeed there was a very positive demonstration.

TYLER: I was there, and it was indeed delirious.

Q: Well, one last item of this thing, talking about various meetings. You mentioned that you accompanied President Kennedy to his home in Hyannisport, where he was going to meet with the Prime Minister of Canada, Mike Pearson.

TYLER: Mike Pearson, that's right.

Q: This was, sort of, an "at home" with the Kennedys. Could you describe a little of what was covered, and how it was handled there, please?

TYLER: Well, it took place at Hyannisport. We flew up one day from Washington. Kennedy, stopped off--I think maybe along the way back from that trip--just for a few hours to discuss and look at the site of the future Kennedy Library, which was being planned.

Q: At Harvard.

TYLER: Yes.

Q: In Cambridge.

TYLER: Cambridge, yes. I stayed on the plane with--what was his name? David Powers, the personal aide of Kennedy. And he and I, I think, were the only two people with him. But I stayed on the plane with Powers while he went off for a couple of hours.

Of course I wrote the cables back to the Department from Hyannisport, following the President's conversation with Prime Minister Pearson but I didn't keep notes. The major issue, certainly, that was gnawing away at us a bit--and are still giving us trouble--in our relations with Canadians, among others, was the Law of the Sea with regard to the territorial waters between Canada and the United States.

Q: What was Kennedy's attitude towards Canada? Was he taking it more for granted, as often is claimed? Or did he understand what the problem was?

TYLER: Well, you know on the first trip that Kennedy took to Canada, which was I think in 1961--just before I arrived from Germany--I think that this is really not for the record, in a sense, because its such a small thing. But a member of the delegation left, by mistake, on a couch, a paper he had prepared for the President. He said, "It's about time we started pushing the Canadians a little," or something; and unfortunately it was picked up and got in the hands of the Canadians, and there was a kind of a minor upset about that.

I couldn't generalize. His personal relations with Mike Pearson, who was a very communicative and very attractive personality, was very close. We all had dinner together at Hyannisport, both delegations--Kennedy and Mike Pearson.

The substance of the discussions really was going over a problem which still concerns us, which is the . . . The Law of the Sea. The conferences on this subject had not succeeded. It was important to us that we should not forfeit, or appear to make compromise on any of the aspects of the Law of the Sea, to the detriment of our rights and our position, involving both Canada and the United States.

I don't think anything very much of importance resulted from the talks.

Q: Well, I want to thank you very much, again.

TYLER: You're very welcome. [Tape interrupted]

Q: This is just a little addition. You were mentioning it was during this meeting . . .

TYLER: Well, it was a dinner afterwards, that President Kennedy informally turned to me and said, "I'd like to have Bill Tyler's opinion on European reactions, attitude in general, toward the use of the atomic bomb. If the issue would ever come up, where would Europe stand?"

I said, "Well, I think by asking the question you would immediately start a whole adverse reaction. European support for the nuclear weapons is only to the extent that they identify our possession nuclear weapons with not having to use them. But as soon as you ask what the reaction would be, of other countries, to our using the bomb, then psychologically, the game's up."
Subsequently, the President sent me on a private, low profile mission to see Adenauer to brief him on the reasoning behind the project of the creation of a naval multilateral force. I took a letter from President Kennedy to Adenauer, in order to encourage him to give the matter serious consideration, but the Chancellor felt it was not something that he could support. Adenauer had never enjoyed close personal relations with President Kennedy. To Adenauer, his generation, President Kennedy was too young. The only person with whom Adenauer was really at home was Dulles.

The incident I remember most about it is that when I went to be briefed in the oval office, by President Kennedy on what he wanted me to say to Adenauer, in addition to the letter I was to give to time, an aide came in and started, to my surprise, spreading a great sheet on the floor of the oval office. Well, obviously I didn't comment on it. The President and I were alone. Then in came another aide with a barber's chair. And President Kennedy said to me, "I hope you don't mind, but this is the only time I have for the barber to come in and cut my hair"

I said, "Well, Mr. President, you've given me the anecdote of a lifetime. I'll be able to say to my grandchildren I'm the only fellow who ever sat in the oval office while you were having your hair cut."

Q: Thank you.

End of interview