

*US Army Military History  
Research Collection*



**SENIOR OFFICERS DEBRIEFING PROGRAM**



**CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN**

General Lucius Clay, USA (Ret)

and

Colonel R. Joe Rogers

**CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA. 17013**

⑧

May 16 1975  
(Date) /

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR, USAMHRC, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013

SUBJECT: Access to My Oral History Audio and Video Tapes and Their Transcripts

1. My initials in the paragraphs below indicate the degree of accessibility I desire to my Oral History audio and video tapes and their transcripts.

a. Audio Tapes. Access is granted to:

L.D.C. all who seek access.

\_\_\_\_\_ only those who are determined to be bonafide researchers and scholars by the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ only active and retired uniformed members of the Armed Services and Department of Defense civilians who are determined to be bonafide researchers and scholars by the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ only those who first secure my permission directly or through the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ no one until such time as I direct otherwise or upon my death or incapacitation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (other, please write out) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Video Tapes. Access is granted to:

LDC all who seek access.

\_\_\_\_\_ only those who are determined to be bonafide researchers and scholars by the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

Lucius D. Clay

\_\_\_\_\_ only active and retired uniformed members of the Armed Services and Department of Defense civilians who are determined to be bonafide researchers and scholars by the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ only those who first secure my permission directly or through the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ no one until such time as I direct otherwise or upon my death or incapacitation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (other, please write out) \_\_\_\_\_

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c. Audio and Video Tape Transcripts. Access is granted to:

LDC all who seek access.

\_\_\_\_\_ only those who are determined to be bonafide researchers and scholars by the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ only active and retired uniformed members of the Armed Services and Department of Defense civilians who are determined to be bonafide researchers and scholars by the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ only those who first secure my permission directly or through the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection.

\_\_\_\_\_ no one until such time as I direct otherwise or upon my death or incapacitation.

\_\_\_\_\_ (other, please write out) \_\_\_\_\_

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2. My initials in the paragraphs below indicate the degree of accessibility of my Oral History materials that I desire upon my death or permanent incapacitation. Access to these materials will:

LDC be open to all.

\_\_\_\_\_ remain the same as indicated in paragraph 1 above.

\_\_\_\_\_ be as the Director, US Army Military History Research Collection feels it will best serve the interests of the Armed Services.

3. My initials in the paragraph below indicate the disposition of the literary rights to my Oral History materials upon my death or permanent incapacitation. The literary rights to my Oral History materials become the property of:

LDC the United States Army.

\_\_\_\_\_ (other, please write out) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Lucius D Clay  
(Signature)

LUCIUS D CLAY  
(Print Name)



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY MILITARY HISTORY RESEARCH COLLECTION  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

USAMHRC

SUBJECT: Accessibility to My Oral History Materials

Director  
US Army Military History Research Collection  
Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013

This letter is in reference to the degree of accessibility I desire to my oral history materials collected under the Senior Officer Oral History Program. I hereby make access to all audio and video tapes and associated transcripts open to all who seek access now and upon my death or permanent incapacitation. Furthermore, upon my death or permanent incapacitation, I direct that the literary rights to these materials become the property of the United States Army.

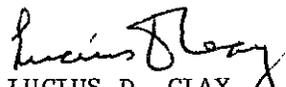
  
LUCIUS D. CLAY  
General, USA (Ret.)

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Section one

INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL LUCIUS CLAY

BY

COLONEL R. JOE ROGERS

COL ROGERS: This is tape #1, side #1, interviews with General Lucius Clay, conducted in New York City on 8 November, 1972.

First question sir, would you tell me something of your boyhood and what motivated you to go to West Point?

GEN CLAY: Well, I came from a relatively small southern town. The opportunities at that particular time were not very promising. I had a brother who had graduated from West Point. He had come down on his furlough with three or four of his classmates. At that time I was probably about twelve years old and had been tremendously impressed with these fine looking young men. I think that probably motivated me to want to go to West Point. You can never be sure, because I am not conscious of having really gone out and sought for an appointment to get to West Point. My father died in 1910, and he was succeeded in the Senate by a new man who immediately offered to appoint me to West Point. He subsequently did, so there was no problem in getting the appointment.

COL ROGERS: Did you have any early ambition to make the Army your career?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think when I went to West Point I never had any other thought then of making the Army my career. I certainly wasn't thinking of it as a stepping stone to something else.

COL ROGERS: Your father was a US senator. Would you say that you lived in pretty much of a political atmosphere as a youngster?

GEN CLAY: Well, probably, but I didn't know it. It was the only atmosphere

I knew so a political atmosphere seemed a perfectly natural one to me. I think, undoubtedly, I was exposed to more politics and to a better knowledge of political procedures under which our country operates than I would have otherwise,

COL ROGERS: You accompanied your father to Washington, I believe. I wonder what it was like to be the son of a US senator in Washington?

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't think it was any different than being the son of anybody else. US senators were much more expendable in Washington than they were at home. There were quite a few of them in Washington. Of course from your state there were only two. I went to Washington during two of the long sessions. In those days, Congress met one year for a long session which was for five or six months and then took a lengthy recess for Christmas. The next year they met for a short session, only three or four months. It wasn't sufficient time to leave school in Marietta and to go to school in Washington so I normally went up in the so-called long sessions. We lived in hotels. Interesting enough I used to skate from that hotel to the school that I attended right up Vermont Avenue.

COL ROGERS: Do you feel that your experience in Washington helped you in anyway later in your career?

GEN CLAY: I think everyone's experience, no matter what, has something to do with what you become later in life, so I must answer that yes, although perhaps not in the way I was conscious of. One of the things that I did have was access to the Library of Congress. I could go down there, and did go down there once or twice a week to draw five or six books. This made me, at that stage in the game, a very prolific reader

of quite an amazing cross section of public events.

COL ROGERS: You have been described as very self-disciplined with a burning desire to excel. Is there anything in your childhood that you feel contributed to this?

GEN CLAY: I don't even know that I am. Self-discipline, I think, perhaps is almost a necessity for an Army officer. One who succeeds can't afford the luxury of wasting time in trying to argue pros and cons. He is expected to make specific and definite recommendations as he moves up the ladder. Discipline itself is a self-discipline so I think that discipline is an almost implied characteristic of a successful military man. As for a burning desire to excel, I never thought of it that way. I don't know that I ever thought of anything except the particular job at hand. The job has to be done, and it is up to me in my capacity to do it. In my day you didn't get any choice. I can't remember any job that I ever went on that I asked for. So I think this was another one of the characteristics that was fairly common in the military establishment; take whatever job you were given and do a good job of handling it. Now, I must admit that as you do a job, as you get somewhat of a reputation of being able to take on the job and handle it. You probably do get caught up in the desire to maintain that reputation. This perhaps makes you work a little harder, a little longer, and a little more determined. You must remember that in the Army in which I served prior to 1941, your performance had nothing to do with your promotion. You had to be awful bad not to be promoted when your turn came, and no matter how good you were, you weren't going to get promoted before that time. So unlike the Army of today, there was no

incentive to do a job except for satisfaction of having done the job. Ambition played a very small part in the role of a major or a captain in the 1930's.

COL ROGERS: Sir, to go back to your cadet career. West Point of course has changed considerably since those days. I wonder if you would give me your impressions of the West Point that you entered in 1915?

GEN CLAY: In 1915, of course, it was then a relatively small group of cadets, some 600 odd in number. During your own service at West Point with four years or ours with three years and an early graduation, you probably learned to know by name every member of five or six classes. I suspect that at least fifty per cent of that number was just knowing names. This close association, I think, had a great deal to do with the formation of friendships, and indeed of evaluations of contemporaries that did have substantial value in later years. The West Point course was fairly cut and dried, no way nearly as diversified as it is today, and not really too difficult. It was operated though under very high standards with periodic tests and examinations so that whatever you were taught you pretty well knew by the time you finished with it, as evidenced by your ability to pass the examination. Perhaps we were also, in my class, influenced by the fact that while we were there World War I had developed, and certainly in our last year we were already in the war. All during that period there was a possibility that we could be in it. This unquestionably added a very high incentive to be at the Military Academy. I owe a great deal to the Military Academy. I think if I did have self-discipline that is where I learned it. It also taught me that in this world you have to live

with your fellow man and the best way to get along with your fellow man is on high standards. I also learned a very deep obligation to my country. If I had any success in the Army or life it started right at West Point where I learned that, though I wasn't what you would call a very good cadet. I suspect that because I wasn't a very good cadet, because of disciplinary difficulty, I felt more in appreciating and understanding that than I would have otherwise.

COL ROGERS: Sir, during your first class year with about seven weeks to go before graduation you had four demerits, I believe, that you could stand without being kicked out, and I understand this had something to do with your tactical officer and the girl friend that you spirited away. Is there anything to that?

GEN CLAY: I think that would be a very unfair conclusion on my part. I did have a certain friend who dated the tactical officer. Almost all of the demerits I received came from him. The result was that about three or four months before graduation, without any warning, my roommate and I were transferred out of that company over into another battalion under another tactical officer. Otherwise, I don't know whether I would have graduated. Whether this would have become a habit or whatever it was, it was something I simply couldn't overcome. My situation with respect to demerits was one of not having received very many demerits until I was a first classman, and then I couldn't go to a Saturday inspection without getting reported for about five or six different things no matter how hard I tried.

COL ROGERS: What were your main interests as a cadet?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that is very difficult to answer. You know we

didn't have too many outlets as cadets. We only had two or three varsity sports, and there was no place on varsity athletics except for the great athletes so there weren't many places for others like today. We didn't even have the intramurals in those days. We had the class rivalry which always culminated in a big indoor meet in the middle of the winter. I was on our class wrestling team although I wasn't very good. During the winter months I used to go over there and practice wrestling with Tom Jenkins the wrestling coach. Up until I was a first classman and under, on the area, I usually had a date for the hops, and again I did a great deal of reading. I used to go over to the library to get two or three books out to read.

COL ROGERS: Did you spend much time on your academics? I have been led to believe that after your first year you weren't really challenged by the academic system?

GEN CLAY: In that first year I really worked pretty hard at them and did very well. After that I rather lost interest. I wasn't particularly interested in going into the engineers. I knew I stood in the upper part of the class without any difficulty so I really didn't do very much homework. This was when I was doing so much of my reading. And as a matter of fact I have always been glad that I did because I think that in a sense one thing missing in the education at West Point was the reading assignments. Quite frankly, we were required to read very little, and I'm a firm believer that reading is one of the most if not the most important factors in the creation of an educated mind.

COL ROGERS: In this respect your cadet career was very similar to General

Grant's. I don't know if you are aware of that but he also spent a great deal of his time in outside reading.

GEN CLAY: Yes, one thing I've always admired him for was that he wrote his own memoirs and did an almost unbelievable, readable job.

COL ROGERS: Another aspect of your cadet career was involvement with a group known as the "Dirty Dozen." Would you like to comment on this, sir?

GEN CLAY: Well, this was a great group of people. We were sort of rebels in a mild sort of a sense. We had formed a small group. We persuaded the woman who ran the boodle shop to let us have a small room upstairs above the boodle shop. No one else could get in and we took a phonograph and some records down there. Saturdays and Sundays we would take our girls down there and dance, and we had really a very great time. As a matter of fact, it was a very representative group of cadets. A lot of us were first captains or cadet captains and I think that the "Dirty Dozen" records of service was pretty good.

COL ROGERS: One of them was your roommate, General Casey?

GEN CLAY: No. General Casey didn't belong to the "Dirty Dozen."

COL ROGERS: Oh! He didn't.

GEN CLAY: He could have, but he didn't.

COL ROGERS: You mentioned earlier about getting to know people in your class and about the impressions that were made. In retrospect, did your evaluations of people as cadets stand up in view of their subsequent Army careers?

GEN CLAY: Well, of course there were always exceptions but I would say that on the whole the evaluations that you formed of the cadets during that

period held up very, very well. And I may say that by and large they held up a lot better than the evaluations given to them by tactical officers. Now, I understand cadets help rate cadets but in my day you didn't, and I think that cadet ratings would have been very different from tactical officers' ratings.

COL ROGERS: That's the way the system operates right now. Cadets rate fellow cadets. The "TAC" officer also rates them and it is all thrown in together.

GEN CLAY: You know, as a matter of fact, in my day, I think there was too much attention given to orthodoxy, to what I call the outwardness, I'm sure the kind of discipline that you could not have taken out and used it in the service.

COL ROGERS: That was true even up to the time I was a cadet. Was West Point affected much by World War I? Was there much attention given to it?

GEN CLAY: Well, yes. It was very much affected by World War I. In the first place, when I was a plebe, the first class was the Class of 1916. All the rest of the classes at West Point while I was there graduated early. Only the Class of 1916 served its full four years. '17 was graduated a few months early, '18 was graduated about nine months early, and we were graduated a year early. The class behind us was graduated two years early. So this in itself was a very real change. Of course, this also changed the conditions of furlough. It changed all the schedules of summer camp. It changed the academic schedules. It changed Christmas vacations and it made a tremendous administrative change. Also during this period there were brought to West Point Americans who had served in

British forces, and we became much more military conscious than we were the first year I was at West Point. The first year I was at West Point our military practice was pretty much in the field of close order drill, skirmish runs and that sort of thing, but after that we were getting into the business of hand grenades and how to use them, artillery placement and a great many other things. They were quite exciting and, I think, had a great deal to do with maintaining our interest.

COL ROGERS: On the subject of artillery, I understand your original choice of service was the Field Artillery.

GEN CLAY: Yes. I left West Point wearing field artillery insignia on graduation and went to my home in Marietta fully expecting to be ordered to Fort Sill. When I got a letter ordering me to what was then Camp A. A. Humphries, Virginia, I wired the Adjutant General and told him that he must be making a mistake, to which I got a wire back informing me that I had better carry out my orders. I did and amazingly I found out that for the first time I was an engineer.

COL ROGERS: Was there ever an explanation as to why this happened?

GEN CLAY: Well, there was a shortage of engineers by percentage of officers from West Point. They were very conscious of this in the engineers and so they put in their demand which got much better consideration. Somebody decided by simply saying okay, the first 37 or 47 men, or whatever it was, were going to the Engineers. We weren't given any choice. Maybe most of them put in for engineers, I had not.

COL ROGERS: When you were a cadet I understand you met Mrs. Clay?

GEN CLAY: Oh yes!

COL ROGERS: Is there any kind of a story behind this?

GEN CLAY: Oh, I don't think so. Actually, the way I met her was really through one of my very close friends, a fellow cadet, a fellow classmate, Carrol Tye, who belonged to the cadet choir. The cadet choir had gone down to sing at the Columbia Chapel, and had been invited to one of the fraternity houses Sunday afternoon where he had met Mrs. Clay. He invited her up to West Point, and introduced her to me, and I guess from then on out she never came up with anybody but me.

COL ROGERS: After a very short graduation leave, you were ordered to Camp Humphries, Virginia, which I believe is now Fort Belvoir.

GEN CLAY: Yes.

COL ROGERS: Do you recall your first duty as a commissioned officer?

GEN CLAY: Oh, I certainly do. It was a very simple one. I arrived at ten o'clock or eleven o'clock in the morning and was taken out and shown an area and told, with four other officers, that we would meet a train with a thousand draftees at Accotink which was two or three miles away and we were to march them back into camp and establish a training area. We had one non-commissioned officer assigned to us. He and I were smart enough to get kitchen equipment and food. Unfortunately, we were the only ones that did. I think we fed a thousand people. However, that only lasted a very few days and we were ordered to report to Fort Lee, Virginia, for another training program.

COL ROGERS: From Lee you went back to Camp Humphries. What were your duties?

GEN CLAY: I was instructor and then company commander in the Officer's

Candidate School.

COL ROGERS: I believe in September of 1918 you were promoted to captain, temporary, and about this time I believe you proposed to Mrs. Clay.

GEN CLAY: That's about the time we got married. I got through and I proposed right then, but we were married the 21st of September, 1918 while I was stationed at Belvoir. I think we probably had gotten engaged about the 1st of September when I was still at Camp Lee.

COL ROGERS: You also attended, I guess it was the regular engineer course at that time. I don't know what they called it.

GEN CLAY: In those days instead of sending engineer officers to complete their engineering education at engineering colleges, the engineers ran what they called the Engineer School of Application which was in effect their own engineering college. This was put back into action after the war, at Fort Belvoir and my class and the class that followed were in this course.

COL ROGERS: I had an opportunity to look through one of those old manuals at Camp Humphries at this time, and it looked like a pretty thorough and demanding course of instruction.

GEN CLAY: Well, it was. As a matter of fact, I suspect a more thorough course of instruction than you would have gotten in a year as you were entitled to later in the various engineering schools around the country. You didn't have the name faculty, because your faculty was fellow officers and the engineers and, as a matter of fact, some of them had been out of school for a number of years. They were probably only a couple of days ahead of you in their assignments, but there was no question that the curriculum

was a very thorough one and a very difficult one.

COL ROGERS: What were your impressions of life for a newly married junior officer at this time?

GEN CLAY: Terrible!

COL ROGERS: Could you elaborate on that sir?

GEN CLAY: Well, in the first place let me say that no one would believe it today, but the fact remains that we had no quarters available. Washington was on a boom. There were almost no living quarters to be had in the vicinity and we lived in an apartment in Alexandria that was really pretty miserable but it was all that we could afford. Finally we did get approval to take an old infirmary. Three of us fixed up the old infirmary and lived in it. We lived in it for a year and a half. It was a fire-trap; the furnace was almost as big as this room.

COL ROGERS: I understand you had considerable difficulty just getting permission to live on post.

GEN CLAY: We had a tremendous amount of trouble getting it and in addition to that, no support in getting our place fixed up. That and my first two years at West Point were almost unbelievable living conditions.

COL ROGERS: When you finished the course there at Camp Humphries, the Commandant, I believe it was a Major North at that time, described you as inattentive in class and bolshevistic in nature, and I understand you kind of went to the mat with him on that. I think this would be worth recording.

GEN CLAY: I just wrote a letter and besides that I demanded him to review it because, as I understood, a bolshevik was one who was opposed to government and the establishment of government, and I objected very strenuously

to this wording. I think that in a career of 35 years of military service that's the only adverse comment I ever had on an efficiency report.

COL ROGERS: It was rewritten then?

GEN CLAY: Yes. At least that word was stricken out. I know what happened. I got him mad because at this stage of the game with our wives and families living in Alexandria, we were required to live in barracks, but we were going to the Engineer School and we could only go to see our families on the weekends, on Saturday, and we had to be back in on Sunday night. This was just outrageous to me, and still is, and I went up every Saturday to the Commandant's office and demanded a pass on the weekends for the following Monday. I made this thing out every weekend and finally Colonel North got pretty provoked about it. He told me that he didn't want to see me up here again. I said, "I'll be up next Saturday," and I was. I think he was just as wrong as he could be, whoever set the policy. They lost about a third of our class just because of that kind of treatment, people who were damn fine officers, and they lost my respect.

COL ROGERS: In June, 1920, you went to Auburn on ROTC duty. What kind of duty was it?

GEN CLAY: Well, I was the engineer officer in charge of the engineer unit which was very strong and a very excellent unit there. There was an artillery unit and also a very large infantry unit. Because it was a land grant college almost the entire student body belonged to the ROTC. It was a very pleasant year, but it was not a very interesting year. Again, it just didn't function. There wasn't really enough to do.

COL ROGERS: You did write an article while you were there, it was critical

of the program.

GEN CLAY: Yes, it was about the sand table method of teaching.

COL ROGERS: It seems that you were about 45 years ahead of the Army. We started getting the same criticisms of the ROTC programs here a few years ago.

GEN CLAY: I probably may have been, but the reason I did it was because I was bored myself. I couldn't teach the damn stuff that we had there. It was like teaching the ABCs to kindergarten students instead of something to an adult. I don't think I did it for the same motives as they do it today, but I did it because of the fact that I had to have something which was stimulating to myself, or I couldn't teach.

COL ROGERS: From Auburn you went back to Camp Humphries. This would have been August of 1921. What were your duties this time?

GEN CLAY: Well, I had several. I was what they call the camp engineer officer. I was really in charge of the engineer warehouses which had a lot of various special engineer equipment that was sent back from World War I. It had never been classified or put in any condition to use again, and I took the job of getting it straightened out, classified, and what not. In addition to that I was an instructor. After that I moved over to be the assistant to Major Flemming, and our job was to rewrite all the engineer training manuals. I worked on that, I guess, for two years. It was good experience.

COL ROGERS: In 1922, you were reduced to first lieutenant along with all of your classmates. How did this affect you and your classmates?

GEN CLAY: Well, it affected us very heavily, really. There was one thing

about it. We were not reduced in pay. We were permitted to continue at the old rate of pay. We dropped on the promotion list some three or four thousand files. This meant, of course, a demotion. We officers were not only unhappy about it, but I think most of us felt that it was an abuse of Congress and that we had every right to expect that where we were belonged to us and would be maintained. It cost us also a few more of our classmates who resigned at that time.

COL ROGERS: From there, and this would have been August of 1924, you went back to West Point as an instructor. Had West Point changed any since your cadet days?

GEN CLAY: Well, it already had expanded. It was substantially larger. There were several more companies than there were in my day and they had also made certain changes. For example, at the time I went there, they had the tactical officer in barracks which I felt was a great mistake. That was no way of giving cadets responsibility, and in addition to that, no tactical officers could be in barracks that close to the cadets and still remain objective. MacArthur had just left. He had done a great deal to improve West Point. I'm sure he had improved the curriculum. He had been followed, however, by a couple of more traditional officers who were doing their best to restore it to the way it had been so fundamentally there wasn't any complete change.

COL ROGERS: You mentioned earlier that you were kind of discouraged about the Army in this period when you were stationed at West Point?

GEN CLAY: Yes, I was. And in fact I went down to New York and interviewed two or three people down there that I had seen, and as a matter of fact

one of the insurance companies offered me a pretty good job, at least to a young lieutenant. In the final analysis, though, I couldn't leave. I really guess I was by that time completely indoctrinated. I think the Army had me.

COL ROGERS: I think that Mrs. Clay said that it was almost from day to day, and week to week as whether you were going or staying during that period.

GEN CLAY: I think it was. On the other hand, I must say, she always loved the Army. She never did want to leave.

COL ROGERS: Was this basically during this time because you felt there was a lack of challenge in your duties?

GEN CLAY: It was a lack of challenge. It was also stagnation. There was no opportunity for promotion. There was almost no money for troops to be equipped for maneuvers. It was really pretty deadly. At West Point it wasn't quite so deadly because we did have very fine cadets. It was a challenge, and of course we had to write a text book when we were there. That is always a challenging confrontation, and I spent a great deal of time, too, on lecturing Military History. This was a new field to me, and I really enjoyed it. Now, after the second year it became a little less attractive.

COL ROGERS: You mentioned earlier that the living conditions were poor while you were at West Point. You mentioned this when you were talking about Camp Humphries. Where did you live?

GEN CLAY: At West Point?

COL ROGERS: Yes sir.

GEN CLAY: The first year I lived at Highland Falls in a very miserable house behind a saloon, and the second year we lived at Newburgh. The living conditions in Newburgh were not so bad, but to get to West Point I used to go down to catch a 6:30 train. I think that meant that I was getting up about five o'clock every morning. If you stayed down at West Point which you might if you had an intramural sport and I had football for both intramural and troop assignments, you didn't get back home until 7:30. Well, this was an awfully long day. An awful long day, particularly when you wore the same clothes when you came back that you were wearing when you started out. If you wanted to go down to West Point to an officers' party or some sort of a thing, you had to leave either at 11:30 or you couldn't get a train until 0300, unless somebody gave you a ride. Well, not many of us had automobiles in those days.

COL ROGERS: Yes, and the roads weren't too much between West Point and Newburgh.

GEN CLAY: The Storm King Highway might even be blocked by a huge rock or stone which came down during the night.

COL ROGERS: This still happens occasionally.

GEN CLAY: They have another road now.

COL ROGERS: It even happens on the new one sometimes. From West Point in July of 1928 you went back to Camp Humphries again.

GEN CLAY: That was for the Engineer School of Application which I had never been to and that was really another wasted year.

COL ROGERS: You had already taught in that school?

GEN CLAY: I had taught and been through it and why they sent me back I

will never know. Ridiculous! I was sent back with two or three of my classmates. We were the cleanup. We had never been with the troops, so we had to go back with officers in the class right behind us. Really, it was a very unhappy year. I mean a useless year. I didn't do a thing that I didn't know.

COL ROGERS: From there you went to Panama. I understand the trip down was kind of miserable.

GEN CLAY: Well, it was hot as the devil. We were on one of the old transports. We had a very nice stateroom for the four of us, but it was right next to the boiler room and I think the temperature at night was somewhere around 110 degrees. We weren't supposed to go up on the deck and sleep. We did despite the fact that it was against the rules, and nobody really ran us out. Interestingly enough, one of the medical officers was a major. Major <sup>Chappel</sup> Temple was up on the upper deck with his wife. There were a couple of senior officers with them and when he saw that room, he offered for Mrs. Clay to take his place and come down there and stay. No human being should have been allowed to use those staterooms on that floor. The Army is much more considerate today of junior officers. Really and truly I don't think the senior officers gave a damn about the junior officers.

COL ROGERS: In retrospect it is amazing that as many of you stayed in as you did. When you got to Panama, you put in an application to go to law school. Was this over disgust of the trip down?

GEN CLAY: No, I thought things over. It seemed to me that duty and the other things that we were going to get from the limited appropriations wasn't stimulating, and that there had to be some other way in which you were

going to keep alert, alive and stimulated. It seemed to me that with a law course there would be enough legal responsibilities and work that you would always be using your brain. But I was turned down.

COL ROGERS: Your assignment in Panama was company commander, company B of the H & H Engineers. What kind of an outfit was it?

GEN CLAY: Best company in the Army. Best company the Army ever did have, really, I'm not joking. It was a terrific company, not because of me but because of the people in it. There was a number of old timers. It was a good regiment and this was an exceptionally outstanding company. Everybody worked hard.

COL ROGERS: Well, your regimental commander said that you were a born commander and the best that he had ever seen.

GEN CLAY: Some people are slightly prejudiced. But on the basis of the company, if you were giving any credit to the company I would guess it was worth something, but the company would have been good without me.

COL ROGERS: What kind of a regiment was it?

GEN CLAY: It was a half regiment really. You know, really a battalion of a regiment. I had B Company, and in the dry season we spent the entire dry season over in really deep jungles, doing triangulation work and contours. We were always working between times on stables. It was really a working outfit.

COL ROGERS: You must have had a tremendous amount of job satisfaction from this assignment?

GEN CLAY: Well I did, plus the fact my assignment to build the stables was really a very interesting one. I was at my house one day and I got a

telephone call. This was on a Sunday morning. "This is Preston Brown speaking. I want you at my house at two o'clock." I said, "Okay, Bud, I'll meet you at the Century Club at two o'clock," thinking I recognized his voice and all of a sudden he said, "What?" or something like that. Well, I said, "Yes, sir." Then I called up Colonel Lippincott who was the Chief of Staff. I told him that I had gotten that phone call. I didn't want to be a damn fool by going to the Commanding General's house at two o'clock on Sunday afternoon when someone might be putting a hoax on me. He said, "Well, I'm glad you called me. I don't know anything." Well, he called me back in a half hour. He said, "You better be in his quarters" so I went in and he asked if I knew who Scipio Africanus was. He said, "You know what he did at Carthage?" I said I did. He said, "The 14th Infantry stables are Carthage and you are Scipio Africanus. When can you go?" I said, "My noncommissioned officers and I will be on the five o'clock train this afternoon and we can start the company tomorrow." That was just what he wanted to hear and from then on I became sort of a fairhaired boy of General Brown's. Almost everybody disliked it but he brought a sense of mission and discipline in Panama that was badly needed.

COL ROGERS: I understand that there was a revolution while you were there.

GEN CLAY: Yes there was. We were called out. We had a post just inside Panama City and we went through jungle trails. We had to go out in the very early morning. The officers were down at the Union Club on Saturday night for the Saturday night dance. The Chief of Staff came around at about three o'clock to tell us to go home. Shortly after three o'clock we were called out, so along about four o'clock we were marching into the

post. One person got shot. One newspaper man went down between two lines. Unfortunately, he got shot. Nobody else did.

COL ROGERS: In looking at your career, it appears that this assignment might be characterized as kind of a turning point in your career. I wonder if you would agree with that, or how you feel about that?

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't know whether one has turning points or not, really. It is very hard to say. I think that the assignments that I had up to that time including at West Point, I had very satisfactory, very excellent efficiency reports. Only the one had any comments of adverse things on it, the one by Colonel North. I had a very ~~outstanding~~ <sup>average</sup> one from Colonel Spalding but he didn't give anybody anything but ~~outstanding~~ <sup>average</sup>. But in any event, I don't think I had a job that I would ever rate anybody very high on before Panama. You didn't have to be good to do all the jobs required. You couldn't do any better. I don't know whether I was a good instructor at West Point or not. I know I proved satisfactory from my professors' view point. Fundamentally whether I was good, bad, or indifferent as an instructor can never be told <sup>except</sup> by the cadet students and, then again, you were very limited because you weren't allowed very much in the way of innovation. We really were preparing the cadets for the type and kind of examinations we knew they were going to have to pass. A lot of times I would have liked to have thrown the books out of the window and lectured, and talked on other things but you never dared do it. So I think that perhaps this was a more measurable job. I commanded a company at Fort Belvoir in a previous experience and got a very excellent rating there, but it was a headquarters company and hell, you never saw it outside of feeding it

and paying it. We all went out on our special duties, <sup>as</sup> ~~to~~ the band and what not. I guess it is just one of those things. I think you've also got to remember this. It takes fifteen, maybe ten or fifteen years for you to become known in people's minds. And I don't think that the ratings that you get mean anything until you have become known. I can think of officer after officer that I have had to rate who was performing mediocre tasks, not mediocrity in those tasks, for me, but I couldn't rate them super. They may have been. I think that after awhile you can get a certain reputation. You can get the jobs which warrant evaluation or grading. Maybe this is unfair, but I don't know of any other way that it can be done.

COL ROGERS: Your next duty assignment, and now we are up to September 1931, was the Pittsburgh engineer district. What were your responsibilities here?

GEN CLAY: Well, I had various responsibilities under Major <sup>Styer</sup> ~~Styles~~, the district engineer. At one stage in the game I was in charge of all the boating and all of the other equipment that we had there in the district, and I was to be in charge of the construction of the Allegheny River Dam #1. Well, that's the way I finished out, two years, really my first civilian engineering assignment.

COL ROGERS: The Vang construction company built lock #2, and I have a note that you played polo with the Vang construction company. Any truth to this?

GEN CLAY: Yes! I played on their polo team for a while. I had played polo for a long time, and I suppose today you might treat that as a conflict of interest.

COL ROGERS: Conflict of interests?

GEN CLAY: Conflict of interests! In those days you never heard of an engineer officer having a conflict of interest. Nobody even talked about it. Everybody knew that I was going to play. They would have been highly insulted if I had refused to play polo because of that.

COL ROGERS: When did you start playing polo? Was this something you learned as a cadet?

GEN CLAY: No, I started playing it as an engineer officer at Fort Belvoir. We played down there for several years. As a matter of fact, we were in a very interesting time because we had one game with the 3rd Cavalry stationed at Fort Myer. They insulted us by sending down their second team. We beat the hell out of them.

COL ROGERS: Our present Commandant at the War College, General Davis, started off his military career with the 3rd Cavalry, I guess in 1940, and the regimental commander was Colonel George Patton.

GEN CLAY: Well, Patton was a man of terrific force and he was one of the polo players on the cavalry team there.

COL ROGERS: In 1932 you went to Office of the Chief of the Engineers and were finally promoted to captain after twelve years as a first lieutenant. How many officers were in the Office of the Chief of Engineers at that time and what were your duties?

GEN CLAY: Well, I can't tell you how many were there. Over on my side there were five and I suspect that over on the military side there may have been maybe ten or twelve, twenty-five or thirty officers.

COL ROGERS: What specifically were your duties?

GEN CLAY: Well, we had on the civil side two functional divisions. One

was finance and the other was river and harbor, called the River and Harbor division which was the engineering, authorizing, and supervising agency of all the river and harbor construction works performed by the engineers. We also represented the Engineers before Congressional committees. I was the number two man in this division which was then under Colonel Edgerton. He was busy most of the time on a national resources committee so the great bulk of the time I was reporting in directly to the Assistant Chief of Engineers, General Pillsbury.

COL ROGERS: I understand you represented the Engineers in the Civil Works Activities before Congress during this period?

GEN CLAY: Well, during most of the hearings and for the major appropriations General Markham would go up and a good deal of the time I went with him. We also went up on the authorization bills, supporting the various projects awaiting their approval and in maintenance of liaison with Congress which was again one of my jobs.

COL ROGERS: Who were some of the well known personalities that you were involved with at that time? I'm aware that Sam Rayburn was one of them?

GEN CLAY: Well, in the Congress it was Mr. Rayburn as Speaker of the House of Representatives. He wasn't then. He was then the Majority leader and, of course, then there was Congressman Mansfield from Texas, a Congressman Whittington ~~or Quigg~~, from <sup>Mississippi</sup> ~~Texas~~, and the two senators from Oregon particularly, McNary. The Chairman of the Commerce Committee was Senator Copeland of New York, a very active and able member. Of course, some of the distinguished senators were definitely interested in the rivers and harbors projects; Joe <sup>Robinson</sup> ~~Lauton~~ from Arkansas and the Arkansas River improvement,

Pat Harrison and the total Mississippi River improvement. We had a very broad range of interested people. Now, in addition to that, just as I went in there Mister Roosevelt succeeded Mister Hoover and they opened up the great money bags for public works, the WPA. And, of course, to the extent that we were able to put the money to work, we could get money for funding which might have taken years to get otherwise. So we had all this liaison too. The WPA was under Harry Hopkins, and indeed, we loaned Harry Hopkins half a dozen of our very best officers to help him get his show on the road. Several of them stayed with him until the end of the WPA. Even over at Public Works Major <sup>Fleming</sup> ~~Bunting~~ was there to get that organized for <sup>them</sup> ~~him~~ so we had all these people to do liaison with. I even remember taking the <sup>flood control</sup> ~~budget~~ bill up to Maine to get President Roosevelt to sign it.

COL ROGERS: That must have been an interesting experience.

GEN CLAY: Well, it was an interesting experience, an unusual one because I went over to the island in the morning, and I didn't get to see Mister Roosevelt till cocktail time. Then he called me right in. The whole family was there, gathered around, having evening cocktails. Right in the midst of it I told him what I was there for and what the bill was all about, and he, of course, knew a great deal about it. He signed it and I brought it back.

COL ROGERS: One of the interesting aspects of this is that you were a captain at this time. For those of us at this time, really, it is almost unbelievable that here was a captain with this responsibility. Of course, you were a very experienced captain at this time.

GEN CLAY: I'd been one for a long time in any event. I also organized a flood control trip for him which we took through Vermont and Connecticut by train and automobile, and I went with him on that trip. It was a very interesting experience too.

COL ROGERS: What were your impressions of President Roosevelt?

GEN CLAY: Well, I saw more of what he did than I did of the President himself. My own impressions when I saw him were, of course, very highly favorable. I was at that time neither Democrat nor Republican but on other things, however, I felt he was a strong man and I had a very high respect for him. Later on I worked in the White House under Jimmy Byrnes. He had become a very sick man by that time.

COL ROGERS: When you were in the Office of the Chief I believe you were also responsible for the 1937 Boy Scout Jamboree in Washington..

GEN CLAY: Well, that was by accident, really. The official chairman -- marshal -- or what not of the whole thing was the district commissioner who was then Mister George Allen. Since all of the equipment had to come from the Army, he told Mister McIntyre that he wanted somebody in the Army to be assigned to be in charge of all of this and Mister McIntyre knew me. Whenever he needed anything from the engineers he would call me. So he called me over and gave me this job. One thing that is interesting is when we were arranging the review, I got the idea that one practical way to have these 20,000 Boy Scouts reviewed was to put them in line and let the President and distinguished people go down the line in automobiles rather than vice versa. I think it would have lasted forever otherwise unless we had gotten it that way. So that's the way it was done. I had

President Roosevelt riding with the Boy Scout executive director, a man named West, at the time. The President said, "I won't ride with that so and so. I won't put up with it." I then went to Mr. West. I had to tell him that he was going to ride in the second car. Mr. West said, "I know he won't ride with me." But in any event, we got all through. I was under positive instructions from General Spalding, who was then G-4, to get these tents back. Because of the Army's scarcity of supplies, these tents were pretty important. Now, the day before they were to go back, I got called up by Mister McIntyre and told of another Veterans' march on Washington, and he said, "I want those tents to stay right where they are because if there's a march, this is where we can put these people." I said, "Well, I have orders to turn them back." He said, "You are not to turn them back, but you are not to tell anybody until I tell you." On the day the tents were supposed to come down and be returned, General Spalding called me on the telephone and he just really raised hell and reminded me of the commitment I made. I said, "General Spalding, I can't tell you anymore except that the tents have got to stay where they are." Well, he said, "I guess you got an explanation, but you gotta have a good one." About two days later the thing broke up and did not materialize. Then I was authorized to tell him that I was under direct orders from the President. It was really kind of embarrassing.

COL ROGERS: When you left Washington, your departure was noted in the society pages of the Washington papers. Today, I think it would probably take the departure of the Army Chief of Staff to make the social pages in Washington papers, and I'm real curious about this. Was this because . . .

GEN CLAY: My next door neighbor was the society editor.

COL ROGERS: Oh!

GEN CLAY: That's all there was to that.

COL ROGERS: You were pretty well known around Washington though because of your job?

GEN CLAY: Yes, we were but we really didn't participate in many society functions as such. We never have.

COL ROGERS: I thought it was possibly that you were quite well known because of your relations with Congress?

GEN CLAY: Well, it could be, but I don't think this fellow next door would have published it if he hadn't known me.

COL ROGERS: In 1937 you went to the Philippines to work for General MacArthur, and Lieutenant Colonel Eisenhower was the Chief of Staff. What was it like working for, first, Lieutenant Colonel Eisenhower, and also General MacArthur?

GEN CLAY: Well, interestingly enough, while General MacArthur was responsible for us being there, we did not go out to work for him. We went out to work for President Quezon. He had asked for a couple of engineers to make a hydro-electric survey of the islands with recommendations as to what was possible to do in the way of development; public power. General Markham asked me if I would like the job, and I said, "Yes." In fact it was an extra pay job for the Philippines government. I got General Casey, who was one of my classmates, to go with me, and we went over and took on our job. We were met by General MacArthur. He gave us a magnificent talk of hydro-electric capabilities and possibilities of the Philippine

Islands and what it would mean to the islands and so forth. After that we didn't really work under him in that particular assignment, but after we had been there for about a month, Lieutenant Colonel Eisenhower came to me and asked me if, while we were doing this, I would take on the job as the counterpart of the Chief of the Engineers.

(PAUSE)

COL ROGERS: Sir, we were talking about your experiences in the Philippines.

GEN CLAY: Yes, well, General Eisenhower asked me if I would take on the American opposite of the Philippine Chief of Engineers as a part time job in addition to the survey work for President Quezon, and I agreed to do it. So I then became a part of their staff, a part time member of their staff. Of course, I had known General Eisenhower before. We were great friends. I held him in great respect. I liked to work for him. He gave you responsibility and as you responded he gave you additional responsibility. Well, I had no problems of getting along with him at all. I saw General MacArthur from time to time, and I had great respect for his mental ability and, of course, I knew his reputation from many of his friends and classmates. However, in the sense that I really received instructions from and reported to him, I didn't really. It was all through General Eisenhower, then Colonel Eisenhower.

COL ROGERS: There are many tales about a rift that developed between General MacArthur and General Eisenhower at this particular point. Were you aware of this sir?

GEN CLAY: Well, the rift developed after I left. I was pretty cognizant of what happened, because what actually happened was that a group of Filipino

legislators felt that they could turn over this job of military advisor to Colonel Eisenhower and save the Philippine government a great deal of money, because they were paying General MacArthur a much larger salary plus a very nice apartment on top of the hotel. I know that General Eisenhower, then Colonel Eisenhower, had no part in this, and that he told these Filipino legislators that if they proceeded any further he would just have to ask to be sent home. However, this did come to General MacArthur's attention and I am sure that he just couldn't believe that this could have happened to him unless it had been instigated by Colonel Eisenhower. I think this is the real story of the rift, and it is simply ridiculous, really.

COL ROGERS: Did you ever complete the hydro-electric survey?

GEN CLAY:-- Well, I-didn't. At the end of the year I came home to build the Denison Dam on the Red River which is a job that I had wanted for a long, long time. My colleague, General Casey, did stay there. He finished one of the major dams just in time to blow it up before the Japs came in.

COL ROGERS: That must have been a frustrating experience.

GEN CLAY: I'm sure it was. However, it was not a total destruction job, and it has been able to be put back into operation. It's going again today.

COL ROGERS: Did you and Mrs. Clay have an opportunity to do any traveling while you were in the Orient?

GEN CLAY: We did a great deal of traveling throughout the Philippines, of course. Part of my job was to go everywhere in the Philippines where there was any prospect for hydro-electric power. This took us all over

the Philippines. We also were able to make one trip to China and Japan, not much of China because China by that time had been taken over by the Japs. But we still held our position in Shanghai and we did stop at Shanghai on the way to Japan.

COL ROGERS: You mentioned that after the Philippines you went to Denison, Texas. What did you inherit there? I understand that you had to start a division from scratch.

GEN CLAY: There wasn't anything there. This was an establishment of a district engineer office to take over the Red River, and the Red River area and primarily to build up the organization for the design and building of the Denison Dam on the Red River which at that time was one of the larger dams that had been built in the world.

COL ROGERS: Did you have any particular problems with your assignment there?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that it's difficult to quite answer that. We had the usual frustrations in trying to assemble the type and kind of people that you wanted, in finding office space in a rather small town, and finding housing for the people that we had to bring in under these same type and kind conditions, but nothing of any serious consequences. We organized with the minimum of delay, and moved right ahead, I think, right on schedule with the construction of the dam.

COL ROGERS: I understand that Pure Oil Company tried to have you arrested?

GEN CLAY: No. The governor of Oklahoma was the chap that wanted to stop the dam. And he made all kinds of claims that he was going to have us arrested, but federal judges were very much aware of the circumstance,

and I don't think that it would have taken us more than fifteen minutes to have gotten an injunction against the governor. The Pure Oil Company did find oil in the reservoir after we had started our plans and for this reason they were very, very much concerned about the building of the dam. After a very quick study we found that it was very easy to isolate this area with dikes, and they could go ahead and drill to their heart's content without any difficulty. This was what was done, and there is an oil field operating right in the middle of the reservoir right now.

COL ROGERS: Denison was in Mister Rayburn's district . . .

GEN CLAY: It was in his district, yes.

COL ROGERS: I assume he had some interest in this dam?

GEN CLAY: Well, of course he did. It was the major project of his service in his area during the whole time that he had represented the area in Congress. However, I must say this. I never had a nicer Congressman to work with than Mister Rayburn. He never demanded anything. I had an understanding that when people came to him for jobs he would refer them to us, and that we would see them politely and tell them so that we were under no commitments of any kind. He never asked for any commitments. It couldn't have been a more pleasant relationship.

COL ROGERS: Did you see much of him or anything of him?

GEN CLAY: I saw quite a bit of him. Yes, because when he was there he would come over to Denison quite often to see how things were going. And I would often go over to see him at his house in Bonham. As a matter of fact, often when he came over to Denison he would come in the back way because if he would come in the front way he would have all kinds of people

besieging him. So he slipped in the back way.

COL ROGERS: To shift gears here a little bit, in 1940 you were promoted to major, and ordered to Washington to run the Civil Aeronautics Association, or the Civil Aeronautics Authority Airport Construction Program. What all did this involve?

GEN CLAY: Well, this is rather interesting. As a matter of fact I was told also that I was supposed to go to Leavenworth again. That was about the second or third time that I had been ordered to Leavenworth, and the orders had been cancelled for one reason or another for me to continue on a civil assignment. The dam was well organized. The design was proceeding methodically. It was under construction, and we were beginning to feel the urge of war in '40 when I went to Washington on this job. It was a defense job. It was called the Civil Airport Program. The law was so worded that the airports had to be selected, and in concurrence with the opinions of the Air Force, so that they could be used as training fields and for satellite fields and what not for their activities in the event of a major expansion. This included also providing certain airports in Alaska and also out in the Pacific, and although our contributions to these were not in the nature of building major airports, they did provide the tactical kind of field that proved very useful to the Air Force when we got into the war. It was because of the defense nature of this airport that Colonel Connolly, who was then the administrator of Civil Aeronautics, wanted very much to have an officer to head up this program. And so he called and asked me if I would undertake it. If it hadn't been for the urge or feeling that war was very close, I doubt if I would have done it.

But I did feel that war was very close, and that I ought to get back into the defense establishment, that there was no longer the time to be on Rivers and Harbors.

COL ROGERS: It was a pretty impressive program. I have a note here that there were 32 instrumented airports in 1940, and you had 457 under construction by mid-1941.

GEN CLAY: Well, of course with the grant from our program we could also get very substantial WPA paying programs. So we would take a relatively small grant, and then go over and work out with the WPA how they could help us. This would usually enable us to do more by far than we could have with our money alone. I think it was a very excellent program and just in time. My opposite in the Air Force that I worked on with this program was Colonel Olds, later General Olds. He was a dedicated bomber pilot and we worked together, I think, quite effectively.

COL ROGERS: The fact that you hadn't had any previous experience in airport construction apparently didn't bother you when you undertook this?

GEN CLAY: Well, let me say, I was very much interested in air, and then in the Philippines I had taken some lessons and had done a great deal of flying over the islands. I had also become quite conscious of the fact that as we flew over the islands so many of these grass fields were just unusable at various and sundry times of the year, and that therefore the only dependable field that you could have was a paved field. At that time we didn't have the big airplanes that would have made it absolutely imperative to have the paved fields, but they were coming along. The B-17 was already under construction.

COL ROGERS: Was the airport program all approved when you got to Washington?

GEN CLAY: No. It was still in Congressional Committee. We had to work to get it out of committee, and to get it passed by both houses. We had to set up the machinery and procedures for an airport review board which consisted of the Secretary of Commerce with the Secretary of Army, and Secretary of Air. We had to develop the procedures by which we would make our recommendations to this board to allocate. I became the Secretary of the board. Eventually I think we did the allocating by telephone but at first, it was a very formal group. After they found out that they were fully satisfied with the principles which we were applying, then they gave us pretty full authority. But at first we made presentations to this board on everything.

COL ROGERS: You really carried the ball for the CAA in getting this thing off the ground?

GEN CLAY: Yes. Well, it was my job completely, period!

COL ROGERS: It was rather fortunate that you had your previous experience in the Office of the Chief of Engineers at this point I imagine?

GEN CLAY: Well, that didn't hurt, I'm sure, the fact that I knew people in Congress. However, these were different committees. Procedures were the same, but the committees were different and therefore different personnel.

COL ROGERS: One of the interesting stories to me during this period involved Mayor LaGuardia of New York and the West Chester, I guess it is now the West Chester County Airport. I wonder if you would discuss this?

GEN CLAY: Well, I saw someplace where Bob Lovett, who was at that

breakfast, described it, which interested me a great deal. I don't know where it was I saw it. What happened was that one of the airports to be developed as a satellite was at West Chester. Mayor LaGuardia made up his mind that this was designed to take business away from LaGuardia, and that New York couldn't support two airports and he wasn't going to have any airport built which could be a threat to his LaGuardia and that, therefore, he would oppose it. Primarily, he based his opposition on the grounds that this was adjacent to and therefore a threat to the New York water supply which, of course, wasn't a very sound or logical conclusion. But that was all right. He had his right to do whatever he wanted to do, but I felt that this was absolutely essential to the metropolitan area, and wasn't about to give in to him. But in any event, he came to Washington and had a breakfast which he did quite frequently and at which he had the various members of government with whom he was carrying on negotiations at the time. He asked Secretary Hinkley who was then the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Air and myself to come down at the meeting, this breakfast meeting. Now, we went to the Mayflower to this breakfast meeting, and LaGuardia got up and made a violent attack on the Corps of Engineers. Not on me specifically, but on the Corps of Engineers, "Untrustworthy in their recommendations, political and unreliable." After this had gone on for two or three minutes I just got up and said, "I'm sorry Mister Mayor, I simply do not have to take this kind of thing, and I'm not going to. Good morning," and walked out. That was all there was to it. He went down and raised a complaint to the Defense Department but apparently he didn't get anywhere.

COL ROGERS: Sir, that concludes the list of questions that I have on this part of your career. I wonder if there is anything that maybe I've left out that you would like to touch on? Are there any comments during this particular time taking you up to the start of World War II?

GEN CLAY: Well, I can't really think of anything except to say what I did try to say somewhat in an earlier period. And I don't know how you just can ever have this again, but one of the great advantages that we had in the Army of our period was the close service that we all had together, and the fact that by the time we had been in it ten, twelve, fifteen years, almost all of the senior officers were intimate with all other senior officers. They knew them pretty well. Of course, with the huge and larger forces of today that becomes much more difficult. Also with the very brief time that officers stay on jobs today I think it makes it even more difficult, because the old belonging to a regiment, the old belonging to a specific outfit of which most of us were very proud in the past, I think, has somewhat lost its significance too. An army has to have morale, that's for sure, and a part of that morale is the confidence of its officers in each other. This is to me what made the Old Army. Now, I must also say this: In World War I, we didn't do very well in my humble opinion. We were not a professional army, really, but the people who knew this were the people from the classes of about '14, '15, '16. They had gone in as relatively junior officers. They had become field officers, but they realized the lack of tools, the lack of training manuals, the lack of even knowledge of how to build up and equip a force that we had to overcome in World War I. They came back and insisted on the Army schools being made into really

worthwhile schools. While I didn't get to attend any of the big service schools, I give them credit for having developed for us a highly professional army. The army that went into World War II was infinitely more professional than the army that went into World War I, and it was because the junior officers who went into World War I came out of it determined to have a better army. I hope that the junior officers who came out of World War II and out of Korea and out of Vietnam will have the same kind of ambitions, because I am sure that this is a world of change and that we have got to learn to adapt to that change and the only ones that can really adapt to change is the younger people.

COL ROGERS: This concludes side #1, tape #1, the first interview with General Lucius Clay conducted by Colonel Rogers.

Section two

INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL LUCIUS CLAY

by

Colonel Rogers

THIS IS TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE, OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH GENERAL LUCIUS CLAY BY COL ROGERS IN NEW YORK ON 14 DECEMBER 1972.

COL ROGERS: Shortly after Pearl Harbor, you were sent to Brazil to survey airport sites. After Brazil, you returned to Washington and I understand General Stilwell wanted to take you with him to the CBI to be his engineer. What happened to keep you from going?

GEN CLAY: Well, I went to Brazil with Colonel Candy of the Air Force, to locate possible airport facilities which, as a matter of fact, were in the process of being negotiated by Pan American although they were, obviously, for the United States government. I'd been sent down there by the Army Ground Forces which was then under General McNair. While I was down there, the Army Ground Forces were abolished, and the jurisdiction that they had was transferred back to the War Department, primarily to the War Plans Division. So, when I got back, I reported in to General Eisenhower, who was then the Chief of the War Plans Division, on our recommendations for the Brazilian airports. I went in and reported, at his suggestion, also to General Marshall. I came back, and General Eisenhower said, "Until you find out what your next assignment is going to be, we can use you here in the War Plans Division." I had hardly been there when General Stilwell came through and said he was on his way. And he asked me if I would go along as his engineer. I knew that where he was going most certain that there would be a place where there would

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be action. And of course, I wanted to go. All he told me, further than that though, was to take tropical clothes. The next day I was told by General Eisenhower to forget it, that I was earmarked for something else which I did not know about and which I did not find out about for about a week when there was a meeting addressed by General Marshall announcing the reorganization of the War Department and the creation of Services of Supply under General Somervell, and also, my own promotion to brigadier generalcy and taking over as Assistant Chief of Staff for Materiel of the Services of Supply, whatever that meant.

COL ROGERS: What was your reaction to this assignment in the Services of Supply?

GEN CLAY: I was very unhappy about it obviously. I expected and hoped to get a field assignment, and I'd had no previous supply experience. It was entirely unexpected, and I'm sure that at the time I couldn't have thought of any job that I'd rather had less than I would have that job.

COL ROGERS: I understand that you had some choice comments to General Somervell when you reported into him. Do you recall these?

GEN CLAY: No, I can't say that I did. But, I certainly told him that I didn't think that he was being very much of a friend to pull me in on that type and kind of assignment as we were going into war.

COL ROGERS: What kind of an orientation did he give you? Or briefing?

GEN CLAY: He'd told me that my job was to find out what the Army needed, and see that it was produced. That's the only training I had, and the only definition I ever had of my job.

COL ROGERS: When you took this job in the Services of Supply, you didn't have any previous procurement experience did you?

GEN CLAY: I had had no procurement experience; matter of fact I had no real staff experience. It was an entirely new assignment for me, but it was also, perhaps, a new assignment for everybody that was with me because none of us, really, had that type and kind of experience. We did take over a part of the old G-4, and these people had at least had had the experience of working with army procurement in peacetime.

COL ROGERS: Originally, I believe, you were Deputy Chief of Staff for Requirement and Resources, Services of Supply. That was March '42 to July '42 and then you were Assistant Chief of Staff for Materiel and then later Director of Materiel for the Army Service Forces. Just what were you responsible for?

GEN CLAY: I think the first and most important thing was to develop the Army requirements. Obviously this required a troop base. The War Department General Staff had not provided us with a troop base. So, we had to buildup our own troop base; the number of infantry division, the number of armored division, the number of supporting troops, and from this to develop an Army supply program. It is interesting that we got a rather indignant letter from the War Department General Staff in 1943 asking by what authority we in the Services of Supply had built up troop bases. If we hadn't built one up, why we would not have had an Army supply program. We didn't get an official troop basis though, until well into 1943. Fortunately it wasn't too different from what we had planned, and it did not make too many drastic changes in our supply program. After having done this, figured out the requirements, of course, our basic job

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was staff; we were the coordinator of the procurement activities of the supply services. I mean by that of the Ordnance, Signal Corps, the Engineers, Medical Corps, etc. This included the supervision of production schedules, the development of contract procedures, the development of contract negotiations, the development of the needs of our allies, the fitting of needs of our allies and our own program, and in the representation of the needs of the War Department for materials and equipment to the War Production Boards and the other civilian agencies which had to do with the conduct of the war.

COL ROGERS: The actual procurement was done by each of the branches then? The Quartermasters for the Quartermaster items, and, I guess, the old Army Air Corps, and later Army Air Forces for the Air Force items, and you supervised the whole program.

GEN CLAY: We supervised the whole program with the exception of airplanes which, of course, was retained as a direct function of the Chief of Air Forces' Office. The ordnance which went on the airplanes was procured by our own ordnance department. But the specifications and general supervision of those items remained with the Air Forces.

COL ROGERS: Did you have pretty much a free hand to operate under the chart that General Somervell gave you?

GEN CLAY: Well, I told you the only instructions I ever received from him was to find out what the Army needed and see to it that they got it! And I think that's the only instructions I ever did have from him. So, yes. We had a very, very free hand, really. I think that we got the needle quite often. If anything wasn't being produced, we heard about it.

But nevertheless the procedures that we followed, the general relations that we had with all of the other War Department agencies was left very much into our own hands.

COL ROGERS: During World War II, the Navy had considerable difficulty with Congress concerning procurement, whereas, I don't believe the Army had that kind of difficulty. Would you like to comment on this and was part of this or to a large measure due to your previous experience with Congress in the Office of the Chief of Engineers?

GEN CLAY: I really don't know quite how to handle that. The Navy got into some of its troubles because it was hoarding, at one time, materials (particularly steel plate) which was in very, very scarce supply. We were very careful to avoid that type and kind of thing. I don't know why we didn't get caught on the procurement end. We didn't. We did get, you know, attacked, for example, on the Alcan Highway; and on some of the other things we were doing at the time, but I don't think that our procurement program was ever the subject of Congressional concern.

COL ROGERS: Did you spend much time on Capitol Hill in this position?

GEN CLAY: Well, I spent a lot of time on Capitol Hill on this position, among other things, to defending our action in building the Alcan Highway. Although, I was perhaps the only staff officer who had actually written a memorandum opposing it. Now, I wound up defending it before the Truman Committee.

COL ROGERS: You may have been one of the few engineers who ever opposed building a road, sir. President Roosevelt stated publicly certain production goals; 60,000 aircraft a year, 45,000 tanks a year. These were

not realistic goals, and I understand that you had quite a job in getting these changed.

GEN CLAY: Well, when President Roosevelt established these figures, he did more to put us all out for war than anything he could have possibly done. They were goals which could have been obtained although, they were far beyond anything that anybody believed could be obtained. However, if we had obtained these goals, it would have been at the expense of a balanced program. We would have had tanks, but without the self-propelled guns, without the supporting trucks, without a thousand and one items that you have to have to run a war. Nobody wanted to bring this to Mr. Roosevelt's attention. He had announced these goals, and it was very difficult to get anybody to say to him that this did not make for a sound military program. We had to go through a great deal at length, for example, to convert tanks into self-propelled vehicles, etc., so that the sum total still reached 45,000. But that it was divided between tanks, self-propelled, anti-aircraft, artillery mounts, and so forth. Finally we did put this all into chart form. We did, through Mr. Hopkins, get it to the President. We did get the President's approval, and then we were able to have a balanced program instead of the one-sided program. But I don't want to say that it couldn't have been done. I think we could have built the airplanes and the tanks, but if so, we would have nothing but airplanes and tanks.

COL ROGERS: The President never publicly revised these goals, did he?

GEN CLAY: I don't think he did, but nevertheless when we made out our reports on tanks and what not, we made our reports on self-propelled vehicles.

And the numbers were not far off, when we did it on that basis. And I think, as a matter of fact, it is a fair basis.

COL ROGERS: You recall any crises in the procurement effort during the war?

GEN CLAY: Yes, we had quite a few. I think one of the first was the crisis on the building of LST's. This could of, of course, held up the landing, and we really had to make an all out effort to get caught up on a program that, after its launching, did not go as smoothly as we would have hoped. We had, of course, a tremendous crisis in the very early stages of the war on rubber. We had not yet built the synthetic rubber facilities and, of course, we were exhausting the supplies of natural rubber that we had in this country very, very rapidly. This required an all out effort, and by the all out effort, we found out we were handicapping our ability to produce the gasoline required for our airplanes. The high octane gasoline required the special facilities, and this required the same sort of hardware that was required for the rubber plants. We had to immediately switch our priorities from rubber to high octane gas at this very critical stage. Fortunately by that time, we had developed enough rubber to meet our needs. It turned out to be much better than we expected also. And we were able to make the transition without too much damage to the program. But I think that we have to admit that we had crisis after crisis, and this is why my job existed. We were the trouble-shooter to solve the problems when a crisis did develop. *mm*

COL ROGERS: When you had a crisis like that, did you use a project manager type approach?

GEN CLAY: Well, we had what we called the production division, which was a staff of very highly intelligent and able men. Many of whom would have been production experts in civilian life. Whenever we had a particular crisis problem, it was assigned to the production division to pick the right people to put on it and stay with it until the problem had been resolved.

COL ROGERS: On the rubber problem, is this where you were involved with Mr. Bernard Baruch?

GEN CLAY: It's the first time that I had known Mr. Baruch. He had, of course, been an important figure in World War I, and when we had the rubber crisis, I assembled all of the manufacturers who were in this business, which included not only the rubber people but the petroleum people in Washington and the heads of the companies, and found out very quickly that it was truly a crisis. When we reported this to the White House, the President sent for Mr. Baruch. Mr. Baruch and Mr. John Hancock, who had worked with him in World War I, took over the job of making the study to determine the priority that was needed, and how much and how great an effort should be made. This resulted in the appointment of the "Rubber Czar" who was then president of the Union Pacific Railroad. He came to Washington and was given all out authority to push rubber.

COL ROGERS: You recall what your work day was like during World War II? I understand you worked pretty long hours, about 7 days a week.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that that frequently was the case. Sometimes we never left the office. As a general rule, I went to work about 7:30 with the car pool. We all had to pull our rides because of the ration of

gasoline. I would get down to the office sometime before 8 o'clock, and very seldom did I leave the office before 7 o'clock that evening. During the day, I was meeting with my own people and also, as a general rule, attending at least one or two committee meetings of various committees of the War Production Board, of the Munitions Assignment Board, on both of which I was the representative of the War Department, the alternate for General Somervell, but actually the representative because he didn't get to the meetings. So, it was just a constant rush back and forth from the Pentagon to various and sundry parts of Washington to meet these responsibilities. And of course, we were engaged in preparing one of the lend-lease plans. We were meeting with, particularly the British, but also the Russian representatives in drawing up the lend-lease programs. All of which took a great deal of time and effort. We kept busy.

COL ROGERS: Did you do anything? Did you have a program for relaxation or anything of that sort during the war?

GEN CLAY: No. No, I gave up anything including exercise. Perhaps that was wrong, but we had a terrific problem of getting organized. Actually it took us the better part of 6 months to get really organized and by that time, the full demands of war were on us.

COL ROGERS: Later on I am aware that you did have some health problems. In your book you mentioned during the occupation period your problem with lumbago and, I believe, you also had a problem with ulcers. Did you have any of these -- did they start during the war? wrc

GEN CLAY: I don't think I've ever been sick a day in my life before the war. If I was, I didn't know it. I don't know what caused the back problem.

It's one that just happens. You don't know how it happens. It did finally wind up with me having a back operation, but I didn't do that until after I retired. The ulcers, they did develop while I was in Germany. I think perhaps more than anything else from long hours and lack of exercise, but who knows.

COL ROGERS: How did you select your staff in the Services of Supply?

GEN CLAY: Well, some of my key people I got by inheritance. For example, Walter Wood, who was chief of my Requirements Division, and really made up the Army supply program, had been working on this in the old G-4 establishment. So, he came over as the chief of my Research Division. Later, of "Nuts" fame, came to me from G-4, Tony McAuliffe. My Contract Division was headed up by a man who had been brought in from civilian life by the name of Al Browning. Al Browning had assembled around him a group of civilian experts. Some of these we put in uniform; others remained as civilians all during the war effort. For my Production Division, I went down to the Ordnance Department and got one of their production experts, General Minton. And we surrounded him with such experts as Chuck Skinner, who was then the general manager for Oldsmobile for General Motors. I expect that any examination will show that 25 years later Who's Who in America would have had practically everybody on staff in a very prominent position.

COL ROGERS: I understand that the civilians who came to work for you were commissioned. Is it true that you could get them commissioned up to and including the grade of colonel? *mo*

GEN CLAY: Up to and including the grade of brigadier general as a matter

of fact. You know this is an interesting thing. We went out to get these top civilians from civil life, and many of them were very happy to come as civilians, but there were others that would come only in uniform. So, I had men like General Boyken Wright, one of our leading lawyers at the time; General Denton, Frank Denton from Pittsburgh, one of the principal men in the Mellon National Bank; General Browning, himself, came to us from civil life. In the Construction Division, General Harrison came from a telephone company. These were men who would not have come to us except in uniform.

COL ROGERS: What was the procedure? Did you recommend them to the <sup>6</sup>DSPER <sub>1</sub> and he took care of the action?

GEN CLAY: Well, we had a Chief of Personnel in the Services of Supply, and I simply would call him up and tell him that I wanted a commission for so-and-so and reason therefore. Obviously, I would take this up with Delp Styer, who was Bill Somervell's Chief of Staff; but I don't know of an instance where I was turned down.

COL ROGERS: I think this is real interesting, that the people at this particular time, the fact that all these direct commissions were made during the war. I just wondered if there was any kind of orientation program to tell them how to wear the uniform and how to salute, what was expected of them now that they were in uniform, and that sort of thing?

GEN CLAY: Actually, none. Except as they undertook one of their own and of their own making by talking to the Regular Army officers who were around. I think a great majority and maybe all of these people had been in World War I. They had been very young people in World War I. *mtc*

COL ROGERS: When General Eisenhower left the service, he warned about the military industrial complex, and probably this has been over played what he really did say. But I wondered if this had ever concerned you at the time.

GEN CLAY: Well, I'm sure that General Eisenhower's use of that phrase was taken out of context and overemphasized and over stressed and has been ever since he made it. Obviously, you do have to have some real concern when the cost of national defense reaches the percentage proportion of our total government expenditures that it is today. I don't think that there is any deliberate military industrial complex. In fact, I know there isn't! But nevertheless, industry and particularly defense industry does want projects. The Army and the Air Force and the Navy live on projects. They can't keep their military establishment alive or vital without new and better weapons. So, the real interest of both does lie down the same road, and they are both working to the same end. I don't think there is any conspiracy about it. I'm sure that it's done; I know it's done by the Army with tremendous sincerity, and I think by 90 percent of the manufacturers. Always there are some bad eggs and bad apples in every barrel. And there <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ some in the defense industry. And HAC there's going to be some in the services, but by and large, the service people that I'd known in the supply game are very highly dedicated men of their profession. And they sincerely believe what they are doing is essential to a sound national defense. Somewhere along the line there has to be a civilian authority that determines when that's too much. I would be in despair if we ever had service people that weren't asking for more

than they're getting.

COL ROGERS: Sir, to get back into World War II again. Ambassador Averell Harriman said that once you took charge of lend-lease it began to move with gusto. Precisely what were your responsibilities regarding lend-lease?

GEN CLAY: Well, the international division of the Service of Supply which was the division that received and determined what we would accept of the requirements from our allies was under me. The fact is that because of that, I also sat on the Munitions Assignment Board which was a board presided over by Mr. Hopkins, and I sat there for General Somervell. Of course, it was in this particular board that we made the final decisions as to what percentage of weapon production, or what percentage of raw material, of transportation, and so forth would be given to our allies. My position was not to promise anything we couldn't deliver, and when we once made a commitment, we pursued it with the same avidity that we did our own production schedules. Up 'til that time, there'd been a willingness to commit to certain <sup>numbers</sup>~~members~~ of guns and other equipment; for example, to the British. But nobody followed through on production schedules to see that they were actually being met. We placed our commitments in this field on the same basis as our commitments to our own forces. YOC

COL ROGERS: I understand this caused some hassling in the Army Staff.

GEN CLAY: Yes, it did. There were some people up on the staff that were very, very unhappy about it. They wanted our Army to be equipped regardless of whether the British got their commitments or not. Although actually at the time, it was the British who were doing the fighting.

COL ROGERS: You were involved with the lend-lease to Russia. In view

with our post-war problems with the Soviet Union, did you have any problems with them on the lend-lease?

GEN CLAY: Well, we had constant problems with them on lend-lease. They were always wanting more than we were willing to give them particularly in what I call the non-military fields. They were far more desirous of getting locomotives and signal equipment for their railroads, certain raw materials, certain machine tools than they were of getting tanks and guns and ammunition. Matter of fact, I think we found out after the war was over that they had done a much better job of building tanks and artillery weapons, particularly, than anyone would have believed possible. And, of course, certainly in their effort, their civilian equipment suffered a great deal. But nevertheless, it was a very difficult thing for us to be giving to the Russians those types and kinds of things which we were not even building for our own civilian population at home.

COL ROGERS: During the war, Doctor Vannevar Bush said that you were his protagonist in the drafting of scientists. What was your involvement in this sort of thing?

GEN CLAY: Well, I was again sitting on the War Manpower Commission, and as a member of the Services of Supply we were supposed to be the experts on essentiality of certain types and kinds of technicians as to determine whether or not we would recommend that they be excluded from the draft. I was not willing to go all the way with scientists because of the fact that we did need some scientists ourselves in the services. And secondly, we were really talking about the young graduates, who, in my opinion, would become scientists, but hadn't had that experience to be

all that valuable at the time. Looking back on it, I think he was probably more right than I was. But nevertheless, we differed although we became very good friends in the process.

COL ROGERS: Were you involved in the decision to release soldiers to go back and work in the mines?

GEN CLAY: I was responsible for that decision, but that was a temporary relief. They weren't excluded from the draft, they were really given a leave of absence for six months, I believe it was, until others could be trained and take their place.

COL ROGERS: During World War II, there were considerable differences in the attitude of organized labor. I mention specifically Walter Reuther, then who supported the efforts in the war, and then on the other hand, we had some problems with John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers and Philip Murray of the CIO. Wonder if you'd comment on organized labor during the war?

GEN CLAY: Well, I saw quite a bit of them and every time I went to them for help when we had production problems, I got it. I have no fault to find with the cooperation of the labor leaders in actual production. One of the troubles that came however, was the almost unanimous opposition of the labor leaders to the War Department's so-called draft law for all manpower. The War Department was advocating the right to draft labor and send labor where they wanted to send it. The union leaders were very, very much opposed to it. We actually won the war without the manpower bill ever having been enacted. WAC

COL ROGERS: Is this where we get involved with Justice Burns' Work or

Fight Bill . . . .

GEN CLAY: Yes. This was the Work or Fight Bill.

COL ROGERS: During World War II, there was a proposal to provide civilian operational analysis to military commanders. What did you think of this proposal?

GEN CLAY: I never heard of it.

COL ROGERS. Oh.

GEN CLAY: I never heard of it. I'm not quite sure of what it means.

COL ROGERS: Well, as I recall in researching this, they wanted to provide a group of so-called civilian experts for each senior commander. Kind of an operations-research type thing.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that if you put them in uniform and put them in G-3, it probably would have worked all right.

COL ROGERS: In view of your World War II experience, what do you think of the present Department of Defense organization and the increased civilian control since the time that you left the Army?

GEN CLAY: I think that it's unfortunate that the original program to really have one defense department fell through so what we wound up with was an additional layer in the defense department. We created a Department of Defense without doing away with any of the other departments. This just added another complicated bureaucratic layer and made the ultimate decisionmaking for all the services just that much more complicated. I think we didn't go far enough in creating a single defense department. I still think that way.

COL ROGERS: In 1943, there was a move to combine the procurement

activities of the Army and the Navy. How did you feel about this?

GEN CLAY: I never did believe in combining the procurement authority of the several services or within the services for the simple reason if you really went to war, your program was so huge, so vast, that you just had to have it decentralized if it had any hope to be successful. I don't know of any better way to decentralize than the way we had in separating by function, so to speak, with the Ordnance Department responsible for purchase of Ordnance procurement, Engineers for construction material, the Quartermaster for housekeeping materials, and so forth. This was a logical decentralization, and I think one that needs to be preserved.

COL ROGERS: The Army was involved in a surplus property disposal program during World War II. And there was some criticism that we over procured some materials. I wondered if this criticism bothered you.

GEN CLAY: I didn't have time to be bothered about it. I was also responsible for the disposal of this surplus property, staff supervision, and sat on the committee that was set up of Washington agencies having to do with the disposal of surplus property. We did, of course, procure many items that turned up not to be needed. And we also went through many changes where equipment became obsolete, obsolescent. If it had any value at all to a rationed society, regardless of criticism, the return of this material to society was highly important, and so we just decided to go right ahead and where we made mistakes, to admit them and dispose of the property so that it could be used somewhere else. we

COL ROGERS: General Somervell proposed a plan to bring all procurement

directly under the Services of Supply -- dropping out Ordnance, Quartermaster, and the other branches. I would assume that in view from your earlier comments you really opposed this.

GEN CLAY: This plan was developed in high confidence by General Somervell. I was not consulted in the drawing up of the plan. I didn't even hear about it until I'd gone on a trip around the world with General Somervell, when it was announced by Judge Patterson. It came out at least, publicly from Judge Patterson's office, at least, that this was being talked about. The minute I heard it, I told General Somervell how strongly I opposed it. By the time we got back, it was a dead issue anyway.

COL ROGERS: Was this the same trip where General Somervell got involved with Chiang Kai-shek and Stilwell?

GEN CLAY: Yes.

COL ROGERS: He got into the business of where he really probably shouldn't have been. Trying to negotiate the differences, I guess.

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't know if he should have or shouldn't have. I think that at that particular time, there was a sort of a feeling around that General Marshall was going to go to Europe to command our troops, and that General Somervell would probably be the man who would take his place. And I'm sure that General MacArthur, and perhaps Stilwell and his people, felt that there was something to this rumor. And so they really went out to try to get him to give them answers that really were not within his bailiwick. Bill was a great doer. If anyone came to him with a problem, he'd try to solve it. wmc

COL ROGERS: There must have been something to this rumor about General Marshall

because I've heard that he even started to move his furniture to his Leavesburg home, and there was an article about it . . .

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't have any doubts but that General Marshall thought that he was going to be our commander in Europe. And I'm sure all of us in the War Department thought so. It was logical.

COL ROGERS: I understand it was even agreed on in the Quebec Conference.

GEN CLAY: I'm not at all sure that that wasn't where it was agreed the other way. Let me put it another way. I'm not too sure that it wasn't at that conference that when it came up, both Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt decided they weren't going to let that happen.

COL ROGERS: I think it's kind of interesting in retrospect because I understand Admiral Leahy, General Arnold and Admiral King all lobbied against his going. Even General Pershing wrote the President cautioning against it. And I understand that General Marshall really wasn't too keen on the idea himself.

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't really know. When you've been the Chief of Staff of the Chiefs of Staff, when you are the right hand of the President, and when you have an understanding Secretary of War as Mr. Stimson was, who felt the world and all of General Marshall, to go out to command a somewhat nebulous military operation, I think it would be quite a decision to make. Now, of course, General Pershing and General March . . . they started out as friends and wound up as bitter enemies because General March felt that the Chief of Staff was the top man in the Army and General Pershing felt that he was, period. They never got over that, and I'm afraid that this might have happened if General Marshall had gone

to Europe. There wasn't anybody to take his place that had anyway near the stature that he had at that time. Now, Somervell was an extraordinary able man. One of the most able men I'd ever known, hard driving, determined man in every respect. I think he probably contributed as much, if not more, than any single man to the winning of the war in the short time that we really won it in. But by very virtue of these qualities, he didn't have the genuine affection and respect that General Marshall enjoyed.

COL ROGERS: Well, while we're on the subject of General Marshall. . . you hadn't met him prior to World War II, and I'd be interested in your comments on him as an individual. Did you see much of him during the war?

GEN CLAY: Well, it's hard to answer a question that did I see much of him. I knew of his immediate presence everyday, and perhaps three or four times a week I would get a telephone call from him, or General Somervell for me to call General Marshall and give him certain information. So, let me say that I was certainly very aware of him. Actually, I got <sup>to know</sup> him on a personal basis after we were both retired much more than I ever did than when we were both in the service. And I found then that this man whom I regarded as rather extraordinarily reserved and aloof, was, at least in his retirement, a very much warmer and easier man to know than I would have believed when we were in the service together.

COL ROGERS: I think that there's a story that you met him on one of the postwar meetings after you retired and he complimented you on what a fine job that you had done during the occupation. And I think you

made the comment that you weren't sure that he had ever fully approved of what you'd done up until that time.

GEN CLAY: Well, at one time, I know he had contemplated replacing me with Bedell Smith. Bedell Smith had even written to me in Berlin telling where he wanted to live and asking me if I would take care of his furnishings, and what not, when they came in. General Marshall never spoke to me about it. In our original meeting after the war though, at Moscow in the foreign minister's meeting in the conferences of the American delegation, I'd taken a very, very positive position of disapproval of a plan being discussed of taking the Rhur away from Germany. And I'm sure that out of this developed a certain coldness and a certain apprehension on my part that he was not particularly pleased with the job I was doing in Germany. As I said before, years later at a meeting of the business council, he went out of his way to tell me how much he thought of the job I had done.

COL ROGERS: To get back to World War II, General Eisenhower asked for you to be his engineer for the invasion. What happened? I would have thought that he probably would have gotten the people he wanted for this job.

GEN CLAY: I don't remember this. I don't think that he asked for me then. He asked for me a little later after the invasion when they were having trouble with the ports. He asked for either Lutz or myself to be sent over to get things straightened out. I did go over, but I didn't stay very long. LTC

COL ROGERS: Well, when you did get over, this apparently was to replace General Lee, who apparently caused a considerable stir in moving his

headquarters to Paris.

GEN CLAY: This was the thought behind it. They asked for Lutz Aurand or myself. Aurand and myself both went. By the time we got there, and when I went to see General Eisenhower, it was very clear to me that he had made up his mind not to relieve General Lee. That General Lee was on the whole doing a satisfactory job. I rather suspect that the initial moves were made by General Smith, and that when it got down to the final analysis, General Eisenhower didn't want to take that task on of relieving General Lee. That's when he asked me if I would go down to Cherbourg and see if I could straighten out the unloading situation that was keeping our ships so long in Cherbourg Harbor.

COL ROGERS: What was the problem at Cherbourg?

GEN CLAY: Well, the big problem was so many ships, with ships in short supply. They were laying day after day, waiting to be unloaded because there wasn't enough facilities to unload them and get the material to the front. Part of this came from the fact that we were being very foolish by continuing to unload ships with lighters, for example, Omaha Beach where the materials from those ships were being put in the fields, in which the highways and the facilities of moving the equipment to the front would never have moved it as fast as you could unload the ships. All of this had come about because of the great delay in the taking of Ostend -- I mean Antwerp. Antwerp was to be the great port. And when Montgomery and his people didn't clean up the island off the harbor there . . . you see, it was well after the landing before we ever got into Antwerp.

COL ROGERS: I understand. Correct me if I'm wrong, sir. When you got

there, you had a capable individual running the port who had run the Philadelphia port before hand. One of his problems was that he had too many bosses telling him what to do.

GEN CLAY: He was getting three or four pretty senior staff officers from the headquarters Service of Supply coming everyday asking him how many ships were unloaded that previous night, what the times were and so forth and so on. Poor fellow never really had the time or opportunity to think his own job out. I'd known of him before and I knew he was a man who really understood port operations. And I asked him what was his trouble. He said, "I've got too many people coming in here telling me what to do and I'm at wits end to find the time to do the things I should do." Well, I said, "That's a pretty good answer, but I tell you what I'll do. I'm going to give you a week in which I guarantee to keep everybody out of your bailiwick, including myself. At the end of that week, if your tonnage hasn't reached . . . (ascertain figure, I've forgotten what the figure was) per day, then you just come in and tell me good-bye." He said, "I never heard better words in my life." So I got into quite a tussle with the staff because a couple of them came up that morning, and I wouldn't let them go to the port. They didn't want to make an issue out of it.

COL ROGERS: Didn't you also help out with the railroad that was going into the port?

GEN CLAY: We took the railroad over. We gave it to him. The railroad was then being run by the Transportation Division of the SOS, General Ross. I just took it over and gave it to the port commander and called General Ross personally. He was very gracious about this, as a matter of fact.

He agreed that this type and kind of a port facility didn't really belong under the railroad.

COL ROGERS: You just stayed there a short period of time and then you went to Washington on a, I believe, an ammunition mission.

GEN CLAY: Well, I was there a couple weeks only, when General Eisenhower sent for me and he said, "We're running out of heavy ammunition and if we tell them, their gonna think we're exaggerating." He said, "They will accept what you say. You've been in this business so heavily, and I want you to go with General Bull to visit all my Army commanders to determine what they have and what their real needs are, and then go back to the War Department and make a presentation of these needs." It was interesting because we had to figure out the demands for heavy ammunition in the Army supply program, and Mr. Nelson had objected that these supplies were building up at a rate that would never be called upon to be used, and I didn't think so because we weren't using them. We hadn't started to fight. However, it did stir up the War Department, so they appointed a commission to determine the adequacy or inadequacy of the heavy ammunition supplies. This commission was under General McCoy, (a very distinguished gentleman of a very much earlier day), and they determined that we did have too much. They couldn't believe and realize the improvements in transport of ammunition in the trucks, in the way we could deliver ammunition, in the way we could move these huge guns, to realize how much they would be used. LTC

On the other hand, our field commanders had found out that they could move them and that they saved lives and they wanted the guns and the heavy ammunition. I came back and presented the case, and General Marshall was very

upset and he asked me to see what could be done. I immediately got the Ordnance people together. I found out that by compressing the pipeline, we could meet the needs for the next three or four months and that we simply had to make every possible effort to get back into production during that period. This was when Mr. Burns said, "All right, if we're going to do that, I'll see that it gets the priority, but I want General Clay over here to take charge of it." So there I went.

COL ROGERS: That was going to be my next question. You didn't go back and . . . Gonna ask how you got captured in Washington again.

GEN CLAY: I had a letter from General Eisenhower which when he told me that he wanted to go back and make this presentation, I begged him not to, and I said, "If I ever get back there, I will never get back here. This is where I want to be. I don't want to be over there. Besides, you'd promised me a division if I finished up the Cherbourg job." Well, he said, "I know, but you just got to do this for me and I'll write a personal letter to General Marshall that will bring you back." Well, he gave me the letter. I delivered it to General Marshall. I didn't read it, but I delivered it to General Marshall. And I was getting ready to actually go see the Army-Navy game in Baltimore and was going to fly back that night, when I got a telephone call from Mr. Byrnes telling me that I was going to come over and work for him. I said, "You're making a great mistake, Justice. I'm leaving to go back to Europe tonight." Well, he says, "I don't think you are." Well, I immediately got ahold of General Somervell, and he said, "Oh, I don't believe this. Let me call General Marshall." I didn't hear from him. I knew by that time his mission had failed. So,

I went down to see General Marshall myself. I had considerable trouble getting to see him because his aides knew very well what I wanted, but I finally did get to see him. And I didn't get anywhere either. He said, I don't want to be here either."

COL ROGERS: You attempted all during World War II to get overseas, unsuccessfully, and it must have been a very frustrating experience.

GEN CLAY: Well, it's very frustrating to have to live through two wars as an Army officer and to have not been, even for a short period of time, on any active military duty during war.

COL ROGERS: You were Justice Byrnes' deputy. What were your responsibilities?

GEN CLAY: Everything. Everything that was his. We didn't have any delegation of duties. We only had a very, very small staff. I did everything when he was away, as when he was at Yalta, I was in charge.

COL ROGERS: Justice Byrnes told President Roosevelt that after dealing with officials of all departments, he knew of no man more capable with more ability, and no Army officer with the understanding on the part of the view of civilians than you had, so he thought very highly of you.

GEN CLAY: Well, of course he was a very, very good friend. We became very good friends. I went down just a few months ago and delivered the eulogy at his memorial service.

COL ROGERS: He was certainly a giant. I don't know of anyone who has held more public positions or offices than he has. Governor, Supreme Court Justice, . . .

GEN CLAY: Well, I think he held the record probably held up 'til that

time by one of his famous predecessors, John C. Calhoun.

COL ROGERS: Another famous South Carolina man.

GEN CLAY: He'd been governor, senator, congressman, vice-president, etc., etc., etc.

COL ROGERS: Justice Byrnes probably would have been the Vice-President if he had not been a southerner. At least there are some people who feel that way.

GEN CLAY: Well, he had been told by Mr. Roosevelt that Mr. Roosevelt wanted him, and when he went to the convention, he found that labor was solidly arrayed against him, and I suppose this led the President to withdraw his promise. That's when he moved to Mr. Truman.

COL ROGERS: I read his book a number of years ago. One of several he's written. I think all in one lifetime. And he obviously was very disappointed about this. Just one of those unfortunate things, I guess.

GEN CLAY: Well, of course, it was quite obvious to me then that anybody that took that job had a better than 50-50 chance of becoming President.

COL ROGERS: I know that you got to be personal friends. I'd be interested in just your general comments and evaluation of him.

GEN CLAY: Well, Justice Byrnes was a man of high principle. He had a brilliant and very quick mind. He believed that politics was the art of compromise. He used to say that he'd probably been considered as a man of great compromise and particularly in his days in the Senate, but that he always compromised in the right direction. Which I think he did. In every respect, Mr. Byrnes was an outstanding public servant. I really think where he came into his troubles was that, he had been in the Senate

LWC

before President Truman had become a senator, he had much higher seniority and had been accepted as a senate leader long before President Truman, and, I think, he sort of patronized Mr. Truman when he was Secretary of State, but you can't patronize a President of the United States.

COL ROGERS: Justice Byrnes was referred to as the Assistant President during World War II, part of World War II. Is this an accurate description?

GEN CLAY: Yes and no. If you said that he was the deputy President of the United States for this home front, it would be more accurate. Most of the home front matters were entirely in Mr. Byrnes' hands. The President relied on him completely, and he made the decisions. He kept the President informed, but he didn't go to him to ask what to do. The President was so busily occupied with the international effort, the war effort, that he just had to have relief from the pressures at home, and Mr. Byrnes took those pressures.

COL ROGERS: What were the major problems that you faced as his deputy?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think our major problem, there were probably several. One was that there was a letdown at the time. There was always the beginning of a move to reconversion in industry and yet, here I was, back to get further production of war equipment, not to cut back, and still realizing that the war could end with dramatic suddenness. I also realized that it might not end that way, and that we had to develop and redevelop a morale; *mc* a determination in our War Production Board and also in American industry. It was still a major war effort. As a matter of fact, about that time we got the Battle of the Bulge, and this did far more than anything we could

have done to redevelop the fact that we hadn't as yet won the war. We had many problems. We, of course, were trying to push the Work or Fight Bill through. We had to resolve the question of, primarily, relationship between the War Production Board and the various defense services.

COL ROGERS: I understand that one of the problems revolved around the War Production Board, who apparently were starting to reorient some of the production back to postwar.

GEN CLAY: Yes, there was a movement to reconvert, to take certain of the industries that had turned into war industries, to begin to move them back into civilian type and kind of use production.

COL ROGERS: I might ask you a question about Donald Nelson. Secretary Stimson didn't speak very highly of him in his book. He describes him as perfectly helpless and useless. And I just wondered how much dealing you had with him and whether you shared these feelings.

GEN CLAY: A lot. If you want to find out about my feelings, there's a whole book over there devoted to him in which the relations between Somervell, myself and Nelson are probably written up from his view point. But Mr. Nelson was not the man for the job, and he wasn't a big enough man to have the type and kind of influence that was necessary to get the job done. However, within the War Production Board and the various industry groupings there, including the requirement committee which divided the materials, there were extraordinarily competent groups of young business executives from all over the United States. And although our superiors were fighting all the time with the help of these people, we were getting the job done.

COL ROGERS: I just mentioned Mr. Stimson and I wondered how much you had to do with him, and what you thought of him.

GEN CLAY: Mr. Stimson was one of the greatest men I ever knew. I saw him enough to know that it was his tremendous character and prestige that enabled us to have the support that we did have from the White House and from the Congress, and with a lesser man, General Marshall's job would have been infinitely more difficult. With a man like Mr. Stimson, whose character and service to the country over so many years was so outstanding, made it possible for General Marshall to devote himself to running the War Department. He didn't have to go out and fight for prestige and position. Mr. Stimson brought that to the Defense Department. He was a tough guy. Everybody always seemed to think of him as a wonderful old gentleman. He was old all right, but he was a tough guy. If he had to, he knew how and when to use profanity, if he had to. But it was his great dignity, finally I think, made him such an outstanding figure. As you know, it was Mr. Stimson who went down and got the authority for the billion dollars for the Manhattan Project without explaining what it was all about. I don't think anybody else in our history could have ever gone to the Congress and gotten an authority to spend a billion dollars on an unknown project for an unknown purpose, other than it was considered vital to national defense, and yet, he did. I don't think Mr. Roosevelt could have gotten it. But Mr. Stimson did. I had an amusing experience when we were on the Work or Fight Bill. We had worked out certain agreements under Mr. Byrnes' aegis, but then he had gone to Yalta with President Roosevelt, this left me running his office. Judge Patterson got a little bit over zealous and changed

the procedures. This came to my attention from the Senate committees and I would not go along. I said, "No, this isn't right. We can't go along here in this office." I got a telephone call from Mr. Stimson. He says, "I understand that you are opposing the War Department's position on the Work or Fight Bill." And I said, "I am opposing its immediate position. Yes, sir," and started to explain. I didn't get a chance to explain because he said, "General, you are a General, aren't you?" And I said, "Yes, sir. I think so." Well, he said, "You better make up your mind, because you may not be!" Well, I was amused in a way. I wasn't really too concerned about it, although I wasn't happy about it. About an hour or two later I got a telephone call from his aide saying that he was calling a meeting. So I went over to the meeting. Judge Patterson came in very contritely, confessed to having left the agreement and violated and that he was all wrong. He was very sorry for it and so forth, and that ended the little blow up. But I only recited to show you that Mr. Stimson was a man of strong convictions and strong emotions. Well, I'll say we became friends, because the difference in ages. I had tremendous respect for him, and when I came back from Germany, I'd completed my tour and made a talk before the Council on Foreign Relations here in New York. He came in his wheelchair. To me it was one of the greatest compliments I ever received.

COL ROGERS: In view of your World War II experiences with the manpower problems we had then, what do you think of the all volunteer Army project?

GEN CLAY: Well, I'm personally very much opposed to it. Although most *M* of my service in peacetime between World War I and World War II was with

a voluntary Army, I would immediately say that the volunteer Army we had during that period was never at anytime comparable to the type and kind of an Army we've had since. Two or three things: to create an entirely voluntary Army of the type and size that we now want is almost certain to become a mercenary army, this I don't like. Secondly, I don't like the idea that we should even for a moment take the position that every citizen isn't responsible for our national defense. Even though we are not using the draft, I think it will be a great mistake to take it off the books. And I also think that this applies equally to our officer personnel. I think that if you're going to have a reserve, it has got to be a reserve that gets some real experience during the peacetime years. And we have, of course, probably had what? Fifty-sixty percent of our officers have been from the reserves in the low ranks, I imagine, for the last good many years. I don't know exactly what the percentage is, but it seems to me that every real experience that we have had as an Army shows that we did better with national service than we ever did with voluntary forces.

COL ROGERS: I have a few other random questions here, not in any particular order, on the war. But there was a proposal for a Supreme War Council<sup>c</sup> for the United States, somewhat like the British use, do you recall this proposal and your reaction to it?

GEN CLAY: Well, we practically had it, really, in the Joint Chiefs of Staff which was formed during the war under the chairmanship of the Chief of Staff to the President. We had pretty close to a war council, and as a matter of fact, this later led to the creation of the defense council

in the office of the President which was pretty close to a Supreme War Council. I don't know what else you'll call it. The Supreme War Council.

COL ROGERS: Earlier we talked about the ammunition problem, and it might be interesting to go back into this for a minute. How accurate were your predictions on the ammunition requirements, in retrospect?

GEN CLAY: Well, I would say that as far as the rates of fire we employed, we were under rather than over. However, the war ended more quickly than we could have expected, let me put it that way, on both fronts. So, we were left with a supply which might look as if we over calculated. Particularly as when you end the war, your pipelines compress and the long line of distribution is closed in and here all of a sudden you have huge stocks that you never saw in one place before. This also makes you look like you over procured. I don't know how you run a war otherwise. If you knew when a war was going to end, you could come out pretty well. But if you don't know when it's going to end, and with a long distribution line you have set up . . . I think we did very well. But the actual days of expenditures, the rates of fires for a weapon did indeed exceed anything we were set up for. I think this came from several reasons. One, of course, and one of the most important ones is, it's amazing how quickly our commanding general learned that firepower is the answer to saving lives.

COL ROGERS: You mentioned this compressing of the pipeline. Isn't this what you did when you had this storage over there in Europe? When General Eisenhower sent you . . . ?

GEN CLAY: Yes, I went back and reported to General Marshall after my study that, as I said, we could compress the pipeline and give him all

the ammunition that he himself felt that he needed for approximately ninety days, and that during this period we would have to get production going again. Ordinarily, your pipeline is a matter of perhaps three to four months production, and particularly when you had a pipeline that extended from Watervliet Arsenal to the Rhine to the Philippines.

COL ROGERS: In 1944, Mr. Avery of Montgomery Ward was evicted from his office. I understand that this really was your decision.

GEN CLAY: No, it wasn't. The decision to evict him from the office was made by General Somervell. The telephone call came to me from the evicting officer as to what they were going to do because the gentleman himself would not move. And I said, "Remove him without using force on him." The line went, "How do you do that?" and I said, "That's your problem, not mine," and that's when they decided to pick up the chair and move the chair with him still in it.

COL ROGERS: Justice Byrnes accompanied the President to Yalta. It appears that in the position that he had at the time that he really shouldn't have been there. I'm just curious to know why he went. Did the President just feel better with him around?

GEN CLAY: Yes. Didn't want to go at all. He told the President he didn't feel he should go and the President said, "Jimmy, I want you," and that was that. He wasn't even a part of the delegation, but when he got there, with the President sick, Mr. Hopkins sick, and Paul Watson died on that trip, Mr. Byrnes wound up sitting on our delegation -- really, leading the delegation -- although he didn't go there for that purpose. And, of course, this put a double burden on me because I had a letter from Mr. Byrnes

giving me all his powers in his absence, in which I would have been ashamed if I'd had to use it. I didn't use it. I still have the letter.

COL ROGERS: During World War II, the racetracks in America were closed. Was your office involved in this?

GEN CLAY: Yes, we closed them, Mr. Byrnes' office. We closed the racetracks and we put a 12 o'clock curfew on nightclubs. The reasons for that were several: one was, as far as the racetracks were concerned, the appearance of an awful lot of cars at the racetracks made it look like an awful lot of people were violating gas rations. And you didn't have to have too many examples of that for it to become even more common. That was one of the primary reasons for doing away with the racetracks. Second is that racing does take manpower, and we did have a shortage of manpower. But the trainers, the grooms, the ushers, the whole works does require the consumption of manpower which is not an essential use in wartime. The same thing was true with respect to 12 o'clock closings, but primarily it was done to get the workers who went off shift at 12 o'clock home, to keep them from feeling that they had to stop at the neighboring club or bar or what-not and have four or five drinks before they went home.

COL ROGERS: I understand you had some opposition on this from your old friend Mayor LaGuardia of New York.

GEN CLAY: Well, he was very much opposed to it. He said he wasn't going to issue the orders, which he didn't. But it's an interesting thing to do; by getting the MP's and Shore Patrols to go into these nightclubs in New York and tap the service people that were there on the shoulders and tell them it was time to go, it was surprising that everybody else went

with them.

COL ROGERS: Do you feel that there were any mistakes or any particular problems in the procurement in World War II? I think the tank is one thing that comes to mind. We really had some problems with tanks, in getting them.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think, when we had problems with tanks in that we were trying a product, perhaps too complicated a tank, without the adequate time for testing and research. Our armored men always maintain that both the German and Russian tank with their heavier armor and heavier guns were deadly when we had to oppose them in a tank battle. When a nation is caught with as few weapons as we were when we went in World War II, I don't think that it's remarkable that we didn't have a good tank. I think it's remarkable that we did as well as we did. We didn't really have any modern artillery, modern self-propelled artillery. We didn't really have any anti-aircraft artillery. All of this had to be developed while we were building it. And by the time we were really fighting the war, our equipment was pretty good on the whole, I think. We learned one thing which we have kept up, I think, much better since World War II, and that is far better research today than we ever had prior to World War II.

COL ROGERS: Some of the Air Force's successful aircraft, like B-17 for instance. They were built back in the 30's, so we really were in a refinement.

GEN CLAY: Well, the B-17 had left the design board somewhere around 1938-39. I don't think we'd had one delivered until 1940, but we had had some delivered before we were in the war because we had a few in Hawaii, and 

we had some that went out to the Philippines.

COL ROGERS: In practically every war, there had been charges of war profiteering. Were there charges of this during World War II? I don't particularly recall any.

GEN CLAY: I don't really remember any serious charges of war profiteering, at least as far as the Army was concerned. Of course, we had our contract renegotiations and this was pretty well organized. We were watching the profits and keeping very excellent records of all that was going on. I can't remember a single instance of any serious profiteering charge being leveled against us during World War II.

COL ROGERS: Contract renegotiations did present serious problems during World War I, at least this is my understanding.

GEN CLAY: The trouble with it, we didn't go into World War I having a procedure for contract renegotiations. It was only as the profits began to get very, very high that we determined that we had to go in and renegotiate these contracts. So you were applying a new procedure, and this, of course, was something that is always resented. If you take away from people something that they have already gotten, it's much worse than not giving them something. Now, in contract renegotiations in World War II, we started out with a contract renegotiation division. It was built into the original contract. The procedures, and what would happen, all of that was spelled out. And a wise contractor kept revising his prices to be sure that he wasn't going to be caught in a huge renegotiation. It was obvious that he was going to be allowed a larger profit, a somewhat larger profit, if he kept it low than if he let it get way out of sight

and the board had to come in and take it away from him.

COL ROGERS: Sir, this completes my list of prepared questions. I wonder if you have any general thoughts or any comments on your service during World War II that you'd like to make at this time?

GEN CLAY: Well, I serviced in World War I as a very junior officer, but I did not see any real professional approach then to our problems. In World War II, from the very beginning, we were a professional Army. I think that I've already said, in a previous recording, that much of this was due to the school system which we had developed in the Army. This, at least, had provided mental competition for people who otherwise would have had very little chance to have really used their powers of analysis to develop as they did develop. I think, too, that the depression had given the Army an opportunity to look at itself. Now this sounds paradoxical because we certainly had less money to do anything with, but we did have a sort of a mobilization in the work we did for the Civilian Conservation Corps; taking the young people, putting them into camps, housing them and equipping them. The big lesson we learned from that though was that we were doing this with young men over whom we had no disciplinary control really, and somehow or other, we learned through leadership to still keep fairly decent discipline in those camps. And this, I think, had a great effect in giving us better leadership in World War II.

COL ROGERS: That's a very interesting observation. I never heard that before, the contribution made by our participation in the CCC program.

GEN CLAY: It is amazing that in the CCC camps, and they were not the best bunch of boys in the world, all in all, without any means of punishment

those camps were kept clean, the people were kept at work, kept busy doing constructive jobs, and all this had to be done by example and persuasion, not by just the issuance of orders. I do believe that this had a great deal to do with developing a better quality of leadership.

COL ROGERS: Thank you very much, sir. That completes our second tape.

GEN CLAY: OK.

Section three

INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL LUCIUS D. CLAY

by

Colonel R. Joe Rogers

This is tape #3, side one of interviews conducted with General Lucius Clay by Colonel Rogers at New York on January 24th, 1973.

COL ROGERS: There were several candidates for the position of Deputy to General Eisenhower and High Commissioner, Judge Patterson. Mr. John J. McCloy and Justice Roberts were some of the candidates. Mr. Robert Murphy said that your selection was primarily the result of Justice Byrnes' conviction that the military governor should be an Army officer and that you were the best man for the job. I wonder if you'd comment on this, sir?

GEN CLAY: Well, I really didn't know anything about it until long afterwards. I believe that Secretary Stimson was the man, above all, who felt that the first military governor should be an Army officer. Right from the beginning he felt that until it was firmly established, the military government job was necessarily an Army job. The choice of me came completely by surprise to me. I knew nothing about it until I was called up and told that I was to go. As a matter of fact they didn't even tell General Eisenhower and Mr. McCloy had to go over there on a very special trip to tell him.

COL ROGERS: What was General Eisenhower's reaction to this? vpc

GEN CLAY: I think General Eisenhower had a right to feel disturbed at the Department of the Army or the War Department inasmuch as they would send him a Deputy without even asking him if he wanted that Deputy. However we were old friends. We had worked together many times in the

past so the question didn't really develop. I think he was satisfied.

COL ROGERS: General Bedell Smith, General Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, was interested in the job and reportedly he was a protege of General Marshall. Do you know if General Marshall pushed him for the job or favored him for it?

GEN CLAY: Well, I never even knew that he had wanted the job until years later, at least at that time because, of course, when General Eisenhower left General McNarney came in as the Military Governor. General Smith was still the Chief of Staff of the theater. Of course, General Smith and I had completely different views on how military government would be run. General Smith wanted it run as a staff function directly under the Chief of Staff reporting through the Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief and military governor whereas I felt that military government should be run by the Deputy Military Governor completely separate from the staff activities of the Army in Europe with the Deputy Military Governor reporting not through the Chief of Staff but directly to the Military Governor and Commander-in-Chief. This was also the way General Eisenhower finally approved it.

COL ROGERS: Mr. Robert Murphy said that you had no briefing from the State Department before you went to Germany and that you had no idea as to how the occupation authority was to be divided between State and War Department. I wonder if you'd comment on this? voc

GEN CLAY: Well, I didn't even go over to the State Department to see if they had any comment. I was appointed and my orders were cut for me to go to Europe and to join General Eisenhower. I think that if I had gone to the State Department they wouldn't have known whom I should have seen.

They hadn't really given any thought to the occupation in the State Department. Actually in the War Department a great deal of thought had been given to it by the Civil Affairs Division under General Hildring.

COL ROGERS: In your book Decision In Germany I don't believe that you mentioned any briefings by the Army on your duties prior to your going over although you did mention that you spent considerable time with General Hildring. Did you receive any briefings during that period?

GEN CLAY: Not in the sense that we think of briefings today. There certainly were no formal presentations. However, again, Hildring and I were good friends. I'm sure that Hildring told me everything that he knew about the policies, the papers that were being prepared to include JCS 1067 or whatever it was that was our governing policy all during the period.

COL ROGERS: Well, then you really had no firm guidance until you received JCS 1067 and this was sometime after you had arrived in Europe.

GEN CLAY: Well, not too long after my arrival in Europe because it was before we actually took over. When I arrived in Europe I found that there was a group assembled called the US Group Control Council which was to become one of the then three and later four power governments, which was operating in Paris on the basis that when the Germans surrendered it would go in and take over the German ministries with the German civil servants or others continuing in their office. It was quite VBC obvious that under an unconditional surrender very little government would be left, but it seemed to me that all of this was just wasted effort and actually it was.

COL ROGERS: Would you discuss JCS 1067 and it's effect on your efforts

to get Germany back on it's feet?

GEN CLAY: I think it's effect was more psychological than real. For example, I went over with later Ambassador to England, Douglas, as my financial advisor; and after reading 1067 he came home and resigned. He wasn't going to have any part of a policy which, in effect, ordered us to do nothing to improve the financial and economic situation in Germany. However, since we couldn't really unite Germany, the endeavor to raise food--the necessity of bringing in large quantities of food because Germany was never self-supporting in food--very quickly indicated that there had to be some way for Germany to raise money or else it was going to have to live on the charity of others forever. Thus within a very early period we were actually doing everything we could to export from Germany to raise a little bit of money to pay for some of the food and to reduce the drain on the United States. Therefore, in a realistic sense, the formula was never really put into effect.

COL ROGERS: One of the authors that has written about this period has said that one of the members of the administration said that JCS 1067 must have been made up by a group of economic idiots. So it's kind of an interesting comment on it.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think you could say that. But if you really were looking at it in a realistic way, of course, it was made much more difficult for us when the eastern part of Germany was taken over by the Soviet government and was not included at any time in the distribution of food stuffs throughout Germany. As you know, Eastern Germany had been, agriculturally, the most productive part of Germany other than Bavaria and with it's loss the shortage of food to supply Western Germany was more

acute than it would have been otherwise. From the very beginning our real battle for the first three or four years was to get enough food to keep people alive and I was convinced then and I am convinced now that the American people would not have stood by and seen even an enemy starve to death.

COL ROGERS: I understand Secretary Stimson tried to get JCS 1067 changed. Are you aware of this, sir?

GEN CLAY: I am aware of it because shortly after the surrender when the Potsdam Conference was on, Secretary Stimson visited Germany and I remember him spending several hours with General Eisenhower and myself at General Eisenhower's quarters talking about occupation. As you know, he had been the Governor General of the Philippines and had had a great deal of experience in the War Department and in the State Department. He told us at that time that he didn't consider it a realistic policy, that he did not believe that it would be in effect for a very long period of time and that it was very obvious that we had to do the best that we could to get the country back on it's feet and under it's own political controls. He didn't say, "Don't carry out your orders," but he did say, in effect, "Don't put too much effort in carrying them out the way they're written because you've got a job to do first which is to bring about law and order and the ability of the people in this country to live."

COL ROGERS: You were present at the surrender ceremony at the end of the war. I wonder if you'd describe your recollections of that historic occasion. VBC

GEN CLAY: Well, I wasn't present at the actual ceremony and I don't think you would really say there was a ceremony. It was very interesting.

I was in Paris and I also had an office at General Eisenhower's headquarters which was in Reims. I got a telephone call in the late afternoon from General Smith and he said, "Lucius, come on up here to Reims. There's something interesting going to take place." I said, "Bedell, I've got all sorts of appointments for tomorrow." He said, "Lucius, you'll be sorry all your life if you don't come up." Well, I knew then something was up so I jumped into one of the liaison airplanes, one of these little airplanes that could land anywhere, and went up to Reims. I got there quite late; I mean by that six or seven o'clock in the evening and went right to the school house where the offices were and when I went to my office and opened the door there was a very immaculately dressed German General behind my desk. Well, I thought the intelligence people were really putting something over on me so I backed out. Then I went out and saw Carter Burgess who was Secretary of the General Staff and I said, "What's going on in my office." And he told me that that was General Jodl and that the Germans were down there to surrender. Well, the surrender documents were practically completed by that time, but until they got permission from Admiral Doenitz--official permission from Admiral Doenitz--to sign, General Smith and the Americans and the British who were accepting the surrender were unwilling to accept the signatures and indeed the Germans wanted that authority themselves. So it was about two o'clock in the morning when the authority finally came back and at that time General Eisenhower had designated General Spaatz to accept the surrender and to sign the document since it wasn't being signed by the German Commander-in-Chief. That was a very interesting experience, but I think hardly, there really wasn't any ceremony involved other than

General Smith and General Spaatz being on one side of the table. I think Air Vice Marshal Tedder was there with them and the two Germans, the Admiral and the General, on the other side. The next day it was an interesting thing. General Eisenhower had all of his senior staff officers at a luncheon at his quarters. And, of course, this is an occasion where you had the commander of a victorious army with his staff obviously very pleased and happy that they won a great war but at the same time realizing that their job was over, that the alliance would be broken up, that they would go their separate ways. So it was on one side a day of jubilation and on the other a day of sorrow in many ways.

COL ROGERS: When you assumed your duties in Europe, you certainly faced a monumental task in view of the lack of guidance before you left the United States. Did you receive adequate guidance and assistance as time went on?

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't know that we received very much guidance. We received a lot of assistance, yes, and support--not only in the recruitment of the type and kind of people that we had to have to do the job (and the War Department really worked on getting people for me as I needed them), but in providing me with all of that was needed to carry out the job. We had to do the development of policy really and make the recommendations back to the department instead of vice-versa almost during the entire occupation, and I think this is probably the way it should have worked. VOC

COL ROGERS: What was it like working for General Eisenhower as his deputy?

GEN CLAY: Well, of course, I'd known General Eisenhower for many years

and we were very close friends. I had great respect for him and I think he did for me. General Eisenhower gave me almost complete authority for the daily operation of military government. He was our representative on the control council. He came up for the meetings well in advance. I would spend several hours with him bringing in the appropriate people to brief him and to keep him up to date. He was what I would call a quick learner. It didn't take him very long to absorb. He had a very excellent mind, a very receptive mind, and he kept himself informed. He read the staff papers and it was really a pleasure to work for him. He gave you full support and full responsibility and yet he was abreast of everything that was taking place in the broad sense, and therefore the support he gave you was intelligent support, not just blind backing.

COL ROGERS: In Decision in Germany you wrote about Doctor Pollock, your coordinator of regional government. As the Military Governor, did you pick men such as Doctor Pollack or were they there when you arrived?

GEN CLAY: Well, it was a combination of both. Doctor Pollock happened to have been picked before. I think at one time he had been picked to be one of the instructors at the Military Government School. He was a Professor of Political Science, however, in our own recruiting program and I <sup>had</sup> ~~also~~ had this recruiting set up in the War Department. We did try to get professors of political science and economists from colleges and schools because, among other things, they were available. Schools, universities are usually very glad to give their professors a year or two years leave when it means that the professor is getting really valuable experience. This is not quite as true of the business world where they can't let them go without replacement and not as willing to grant

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this type and kind of leave as are the universities. Hence, we had a great many university professors and faculty members on our staff in Germany.

COL ROGERS: Also gives them an opportunity to test their theories in the real world.

GEN CLAY: Yes, I think this is why the universities are so happy to let them have the vacation and the leave so they can do these kinds of things.

COL ROGERS: In Doctor Pollock's case, would you discuss his contributions?

GEN CLAY: Well, Doctor Pollack was a Professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan. He spoke German quite fluently, had a very broad knowledge of German history, particularly of German political history. So when we established, shortly after taking over, a council of the Minister Presidents of the states that we had created in the American zone with its headquarters in Stuttgart, he was the logical choice to be a military government representative to this Council of Minister Presidents. This was the first effort we had to create an over-all German authority, even if limited, over the entire American zone, and it was a very important part of the later development of a new German government.

COL ROGERS: Where did the Non-Fraternization Rule come from? Did this come from Washington? VMC

GEN CLAY: It came from Washington before we entered Germany.

COL ROGERS: What did you think of it and were you consulted on it?

GEN CLAY: Well, I wasn't consulted on it at all. At the time that the

rule was issued I was over with Justice Byrnes as his deputy and had nothing whatsoever to do with the issue of the rule. I can say this, it was quite obvious to me from the very first day that the only thing it was going to do was to keep apart the better American and German people who might have been able to have formed some associations which would have been meaningful because it could not possible keep boy away from girl and the boy meet girl. All you had to do was to look around and you knew it was going on and you'd had to have practically the whole Army in jail if you would have been truly enforcing that part of the rule.

COL ROGERS: Later on, when you took action to get dependents to Europe-- this was of course after the war had ended--there was opposition from both the War Department and the State Department. Would you discuss their opposition?

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't know. I don't remember that there was opposition to bringing our dependents over and you see when that was done I was not commanding the theater. I was deputy commander, General McNarney was commanding the theater and the initiative must have come from him rather than from my office. Actually I, of course, was very much in favor of it. I think that you couldn't possibly go into a long occupation, and it seemed to me it was going to be a long occupation that would be satisfactory if we did not have our families there, particularly for our own morals and morale. MAC

COL ROGERS: Would you comment on the affect of our rapid withdrawal of troops from Europe?

GEN CLAY: Of course, I think that this was disastrous in the sense that

it led the Russians to believe that we didn't care about Europe and I think that many of their subsequent actions were really based on the fact that they knew we had left Europe after World War I and our actions after World War II indicated we were going to do so again. I'm quite convinced that in their early moves, particularly in Eastern Europe, they truly believed that we were going to withdraw from Europe.

COL ROGERS: Were you optimistic about quadripartite government for Germany when you first started?

GEN CLAY: In the first place, I want to assure that we quite well understood that it was our job to try to make a go of it, and General Eisenhower and I did everything we could to make a go of it. We found that General Marshal Zhukov was a very reasonable person, and in the first phases of setting up the allied government we had his help and cooperation, and I think it was at least four or five months later when it became evident that this was all superficial cooperation and that there was no real intent on the part of the Russians to establish a unified Germany.

COL ROGERS: That was going to be my next question. When did you begin to feel that the four power government was not going to work?

GEN CLAY: It is difficult to answer that because our first obstacle was not the Russians, it was the French. You see, the French had been accepted in four power government, had been given part of the occupation area that had been originally assigned to the United States and to the United Kingdom, but they had not been invited to Potsdam. It was at Potsdam that the agreements for the quadripartite government of Germany were ratified by the three powers. As we went to propose to put these

into effect with the establishment of occupied ministries, really, to be presided over by committees of the control council, it was the French who would not go along. And so for the first five or six months, when we couldn't get any machinery going for four-power government, it didn't resolve itself into an impasse between Russia and the three westerners because it was the French that were providing the obstacle. It was only as the French began to move into closer cooperation that the Russians really showed their hand.

COL ROGERS: I understand initially that they challenged the validity of the big three agreements on Germany and then they even set out to incorporate the French zone into metropolitan France. At least that's the accusation that has been made.

GEN CLAY: Well, they certainly took great delight in telling us in Berlin in the control council meetings that they were not bound by the Potsdam Agreements since they had not been a party thereto. And, of course, they did take the Saar region and moved it over into France. This was done arbitrarily and without any knowledge on my part that it was to take place, although I did subsequently find that Mr. Bidault had told Justice Byrnes that it was going to be done, and apparently Justice Byrnes had not objected to it. Of course, the French later on saw the impossibility of really making the Saar a French territory and withdrew, but that was several years later.

COL ROGERS: Was there any effort to control France economically or otherwise of which you're aware?

GEN CLAY: No, I'm sure there wasn't. There were several times, and my cablegrams will show, that I urged the War Department to get the State

Department to bring pressure on France to observe the Potsdam Agreement but I don't think it ever resulted in any real pressures being brought on France.

COL ROGERS: General De Gaulle didn't change a whole lot through his lifetime, did he?

GEN CLAY: Well, General De Gaulle wasn't running France at that particular time. He had thrown up his hand and moved off into dignified exile at least in theory. And, of course, that was one of your real problems because France was changing government every few months. It was not until Robert Schuman came in that we really began to get cooperation from the French. Schuman was completely convinced that we had to restore sound government to Germany, that it had to be given the economic opportunity and, of course, it was because of his views on this matter that we were finally able to conclude the agreement which led to the so-called "basic law" and the granting of, at least in 1949, partial sovereignty back to the Germans.

COL ROGERS: I have a couple of questions you touched on earlier a little bit. The first one is when did Soviet intentions to control Eastern Europe become apparent?

GEN CLAY: Well, of course, you know the peace treaties with the satellite countries were being negotiated in '46 and Justice Byrnes worked very, very hard to get all of these peace treaties in effect. We, of course, would not let the Russians participate in the peace treaty with Italy. In fact, we had already had a treaty with Italy, armistice or whatever you want to call it, but in all of the satellite countries the treaty involved the setting up of coalition government from the exiles from

those countries that had gone to the west and from those exiles that had gone to Russia. This was true in all of the satellite countries, less true in Czechoslovakia than Poland and Bulgaria and Rumania and Hungary and so on. And, of course, these coalition governments were under the terms of the treaty to set up the conditions under which free elections could be held to establish elected governments. Actually, the banging of the Iron Curtain and the huge numbers of Soviet troops around created an atmosphere under which the communist governments in each one of these countries kicked out the western exiles without ever holding the elections and established communist countries. This was taking place in '46 and '47 and, of course, it proved beyond a doubt, to my mind, that Russia had no intention of putting Eastern Germany back with Western Germany because in every such instance the satellite countries would have been frightened to death of a unified Germany.

COL ROGERS: In your opinion did the Soviets ever plan to treat Germany as an economic unit.

GEN CLAY: I don't think they had a plan or a policy when the war ended to keep Germany divided or that they would be able to establish communist governments and join them in a common pact, military pact as they did. I think that this developed for several causes. One, because of the economic distress that was in Germany, it was easy to keep it apart. Two, our rapid withdrawal of troops led them to believe that we didn't really care. Three, they saw their communist political parties in France and Italy gaining tremendous strength politically with every opportunity for a successful political penetration in those countries and out of all of this their policy began to solidify and to gel to create now what is

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called the Warsaw Pact countries and this I think resulted in the real formation of a boundary right down through Germany.

COL ROGERS: Do you think there was ever any intention that they would try to get the four power government to work with the unified government with the idea that they might take over the whole . . . all of Germany later on?

GEN CLAY: Oh, I suspect that they had no more specific foreign policy with respect to the future of Germany or mid-Europe than we did.

COL ROGERS: A major impediment to the rebuilding of the German economy was the requirement for reparations during the occupation period. What was the background of your decision to stop these payments?

GEN CLAY: Well, the real problem was this. Germany was supposed to be treated as a whole and we were supposed to draw up a reparation program which would still allow enough industry to remain operable in Germany for it to keep alive, but the Soviets were taking whatever they wanted out of Eastern Germany, were making no accounting and we really didn't know what they were taking and what they had or what they were going to continue to take. And because they would not give this accounting, I simply announced that until they did we were going to stop reparations. Actually, reparations never truly hurt Germany. The plant that was taken--and there were plants taken--was at the time not operable. There wasn't enough fuel and enough material and whatnot for any more to have been operated than we were operating and, of course, by the time that the materials, power and other things, were available, we had already dropped that policy. The Marshal Plan provided capital for the Germans and indeed they were able to rebuild the steel mills and other plants so

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much more modern than any others in the world that they had no trouble capturing a very substantial market almost over night.

COL ROGERS: When you stopped these reparations, did you take this action without consulting Washington?

GEN CLAY: I advised Washington what action I had taken. I didn't consult Washington because I think that it was entirely within our purview in Germany to refuse to further dismantle in the American zone until we got accounting from all other zones.

COL ROGERS: Was there any particular reaction in Washington to this?

GEN CLAY: If so, it was only to support our position. There was no criticism that I know of of our position.

COL ROGERS: When the United States and the British zones were merged, a German economic committee was created in which the Social Democrats gained the majority and promptly pushed for state ownership of all major industries. State ownership did not happen. What happened to prevent this?

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't remember any real push for state ownership. There was a great push in Hesse particularly for establishing by law, how boards of directors would be formed to include both management and labor. These were done by separate states and if there was a movement to state ownership it would have been done by state, not by national government. My position in HESS~~e~~<sup>e</sup> in vetoing one of their acts was simply that we could not let a single state determine what the future of Germany would be. That, in my opinion, socialistic measures, if adopted, had to be adopted for Germany as a whole and not by the separate states and that therefore I would not permit such action to be taken in the several

states. And if at any time it was taken by properly constituted German government, that would be entirely proper. But it was not proper for it to be done by states, and I still think I was correct in that decision.

COL ROGERS: What did you think of the Denazification Program?

GEN CLAY: Well, it was ordered when we went in and I certainly went in with every desire to carry it out. I had wanted to turn it over to the Germans as soon as we could and this we did do. I think the whole problem of denazification has been discussed so many times with much criticism by some--for one reason that it was too deep and lasted too long and hurt the German economy and political scene and by the other side that it didn't really go deep enough and that too many Nazis escaped. I suppose that the real answer was that for this type of a job it was about as well as it could be done, particularly since none of the other zones were particularly interested in it.

COL ROGERS: The next question I was going to ask was about how this Denazification Program affected you and your ability to get leadership to run Germany?

GEN CLAY: Well, it made it very, very difficult because all of the, not all of them, but many of the very able Germans had been members of the Nazi party when it was not being used for disreputable purposes and yet they were down-listed on the records as being members and therefore were ineligible under our rules to take positions in government. It certainly narrowed the field down. I think this is one of the reasons that we wound up with a great many people from academic life holding offices in Germany again--I mean from the German Universities where the Germans had not, on the whole, been as Nazified as they had in other areas. However,

in the long run I suspect that we came out better by getting an entirely new and different group of people into the political life of Germany and subsequently, as you know, the Germans--even in the British and French zones--took to extend the denazification laws and any denazification that was taking place in the French and British zones was a largely German process.

COL ROGERS: When you replaced General McNarney as Military Governor and Commanding General of US Forces in Europe, to whom did you report?

GEN CLAY: I reported to the Secretary of the Army for Military Government and to the Chief of Staff for my command of troops, Chief of Staff of the Army. I think that very shortly after I became Commander-in-Chief, General Eisenhower retired and General Bradley became the Chief of Staff.

COL ROGERS: Was this the first time you'd come in contact with General Bradley?

GEN CLAY: Oh, I knew General Bradley off and on, but I never had served with him. I had known him off and on for quite a few years and with a great deal of respect. Actually, when I took over the Army in Germany it was scattered all over Germany. The 1st Division, which was our strongest and largest unit, was in battalion posts all over Germany. It had not trained or had any field maneuvers since the end of the war and our so-called constabulary was very lightly-armed frontier troops who were also stationed all along the frontier and never had any training as combat teams. They were well-trained for police duty, but I saw immediately that this theory that we needed the battalion posts and the constabulary for protection purposes was just not true; we didn't need

them and we did need an Army. So the first week that I happened to be in Moscow at a Foreign Minister's Conference, I sent a wire to General Huebner and said that I wanted immediate planning, so that within 30 days we could start assembling the 1st Division at Grafenwohr for work together and for training and this was done. And we also immediately turned in, immediate I say, as quickly as we could work out tables of organization, a proposal to turn the three constabulary regiments into three armored regiments. I think we still have them. I think that they were probably the strongest units we had in the Army for a long, long time in fire power per man. But the result was when I left Germany I think we had as well-trained troops in Germany as we had ever had at any time. Of course, General Huebner was an expert on training and he didn't at first like the idea of not having troops in every place where we had dependents living, but within a week or two he was as enthusiastic about the training program as I was.

COL ROGERS: What were your major command problems when you took over the US Forces?

GEN CLAY: Well, our major command problem was training and discipline because with your battalion post not having any field training, soldiers were becoming sloppy garrison soldiers and there was too much drinking, too much playing and not much work. When we really began to get these soldiers out in the field, it was impressive to me how much better soldiers they were, how much discipline improved. We also put on quite a program of appearance--the uniforms. If I found, and this was quite a problem at the time, that the quartermaster was issuing trousers and blouses that didn't match, why we just went after that 'tooth and toe

nail' because it made for sloppy-looking force. I think we got over those problems pretty well. We even had a place where every soldier-- whether he was in clerical duty or quartermaster duty or whatnot--had to have some military training and had to have a military assignment in the case that anything did develop.

COL ROGERS: Well, when you became the CG of US Forces and the Military Governor, how did you divide your time between the two responsibilities?

GEN CLAY: Well, I never thought of it in dividing the time. I'll tell you what I did do, though. I had visited every barracks and establishment of the military department in the first three months after I took over. Bob Murphy said no diplomat had ever been in as many Army latrines and kitchens as he had. He used to go with me on these trips because we would combine them with meetings with our military government people and German officials and whatnot. I think the one thing that we needed over there was to get personal inspection back into being, and it's the same old story; if the commanding general comes around to look, the people down below are going to be damned sure that they've been there a few days before and the first thing you know, you've got the inspection going back and forth up and down the line. I think that we were all very proud of what we had over there by '48 and I think this is also why during the blockade there never was any higher morale than there was in the American forces in Germany. mde

COL ROGERS: It must have been a good feeling to get back in harness as a commander. Your last command tour was a company commander in Panama.

GEN CLAY: I think it was as a matter of fact and, of course, I was exceptionally well-provided in leadership. I had General Huebner as my

Senior Army Commander and Deputy. I had at that time Curt LeMay as my Air Commander, later followed by Cannon, and they really were delighted to go back to work again to get the troops and everything in tip-top shape, and they did.

COL ROGERS: I was going to ask you about General LeMay in terms of the airlift later on, but since you brought him up we might talk about him a little bit. It would seem to me that he would be an ideal man to have working for you when the airlift came up. You needed a real tough, good man there.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that's true. Curt . . . in the first place he believed that the Air Force could do anything and this was a very important factor because I know when I called him on the telephone and asked him how many planes could he put at my disposal, he told me that he had these 60 or 70 DC-3's that could be brought back in shape. They weren't being used, they were just parked out in the field. Well, I said, "I want them to start carrying coal." I don't think he believed me at first but, in any event, he quickly got into the spirit and we were trying to prove that we could land enough of the smaller planes so that if we had the larger planes we could provide the 4,000 tons a day that we had calculated as essential to keep West Berlin alive. Curt had the drive and the energy to get the job done. I must say this, though, when he left and Joe Cannon took over--Joe, a much older officer and a splendid officer, did a great deal to improve the conditions under which the individual pilot lived and worked, to provide better quarters and more comfortable facilities. Curt, you know, didn't care how he lived and he didn't think anybody else should.

COL ROGERS: When Justice Byrnes became the Secretary of State, I believe he asked for you to become the Assistant Secretary of State. What was your reaction and also that of the War Department?

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't know that the War Department ever played any part in it, really, because it came to me in a telephone call from one of his assistants, Donald Russell, and I turned it down immediately so that it never really got to the War Department. I don't think that . . . although the Justice had asked for me for his deputy during the war and I had told I didn't want the job and he'd gone ahead and comm<sup>and</sup>ered me, I don't think that he felt that after the war was over that he could do that. In any event, I turned it down and I turned it down for several reasons, but the primary one was at that time I was so immersed in the German problem and so concerned that the Army would get it back under its staff wing that I just wouldn't leave. I felt that the worse thing in the world that could happen was for the Army to make the military occupation a part of its military life. I felt that Army occupation and military government in Cuba, the Philippines and other places had succeeded because the military governor had been removed from the ordinary chain of command and I don't think it would have worked if we had had to follow the ordinary chain of command.

COL ROGERS: Would you discuss your relations with the press when you were the Military Governor? *WAC*

GEN CLAY: Well, I had what I called a fish bowl which was a room across from my office where any and all data that we had was made available for the press at all times. I held a, I think, bi-weekly press conference in Berlin and also in Frankfurt. We had a large American coverage at

that time, 30, 40 reporters in the two places, maybe. And they had a very active interest in whatever went on in Germany. Also my door was open to them at all times and they knew that, so they didn't use it very much because they knew that if one of them started trying to get exclusives then they all would and the competition between them would not be helpful to any of them. So, except as follow-ups in the press conferences, they didn't use that privilege so much. But all of my relations with them were extremely pleasant and I think this is one of the reasons why in many ways it was a gradual change of newspaper attitudes towards the occupation. We couldn't do anything right, you know, the first six months or the first year and I think during the last year we were overpraised for what we were doing.

COL ROGERS: You also introduced the press conference to the German press I believe.

GEN CLAY: Well, I did that by first inviting them to . . . I wanted to invite them to come in with our press and our press reporters were very indignant. They didn't want the Germans there and I finally got a meeting with them and I said, "Now look, you people believe in the press conference, you believe in freedom of the press, you want this to become an established part of life everywhere and here I want to let these Germans in and get a taste of how you operate and you say no. I think you ought to be ashamed of yourselves." They admitted it and so we let the Germans come in and, as a matter of fact, it's now become a German institution, and I understand that the German reporters are just as tough in seeking out the answers to their questions as our reporters are over here. vnc

COL ROGERS: Today we are aware of many of the activities in the American

Civil Liberties Union and I was quite surprised to learn that the ACLU went to Germany to investigate alleged discrimination against the Germans during the occupation. I wonder if you'd comment on this?

GEN CLAY: Well, I remember the Civil Rights people being over there and I met with them and talked with them but I don't really remember that they found anything. I don't think they did.

COL ROGERS: The story that I heard was that there was some kind of a complaint about toilets and toilet paper . . .

GEN CLAY: I don't remember it.

COL ROGERS: That the Germans were complaining they weren't getting their fair shake on the same kind that our people were or something of that nature.

GEN CLAY: I don't remember that--it may have been.

COL ROGERS: Mr. Murphy said that you maintained a seven-day-a-week schedule at Berlin and even though you did have some medical problems, did you have any diversions or were you keeping the same schedule that you did during World War II?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think the whole time I was in Germany I kept pretty much to a seven-day schedule. Of course, with the blockade of Berlin obviously I had to be available at all times but I had no diversions--no golf, no tennis. As a matter of fact that was probably a mistake on my part. I probably should have taken exercise. I started out when I first went to Berlin riding every morning but I begin to get going to the office so early that to go riding I had to get up so damned early that I gave it up. It was a seven-day week but it had to be. You see, we took over a country without government and chaos. We couldn't select

and put, overnight, Germans in charge because so many of them were tainted under our own rules. So we really had to start from scratch and I doubt if there had ever been a complete collapse of government anywhere as there was in Germany. You see, Japan still had the emperor and they still had cabinet members, they still had the machinery of government to work with. We had none. We had to recreate everything from scratch and it was a rough and difficult job. The running of the military side of it after I became commander was always a pleasure. I mean by that it didn't really bring any problems, not any real problems. You had the problem, obviously, of wanting to have a good military force but once you got that on its way you didn't have the daily problems. But the military government in a country that was in chaos was always a problem. Financially we were always battling to get our budget in balance. As a matter of fact, I also had to sit there as a referee between what I thought the Germans' economy could provide to the occupation and what the occupation wanted.

COL ROGERS: When you were first given this job did you have any idea that it was going to turn out to be a problem of as great a magnitude as it did?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that's an interesting question and I don't really know quite how to answer it, but let me put it a different way. You see, I had had a <sup>chance at field command</sup> shot at Germany under General Eisenhower and had gone over to operate the Normandy Base Section for two or three weeks. In managing to get that straightened out, General Eisenhower had grabbed me to determine the real extent of the ammunition shortage and to go back home and see what I could do about it and that he would give me a

letter that would get me back to the theater. At that time I would be given an opportunity for a field command. Well, I rather told him that if I got back to Washington I didn't think I'd ever get back to Europe and he said, "Oh, this letter will bring you back." The letter didn't bring me back. I went back to Washington and reported to General Marshall. He was greatly disturbed that we had to start ammunition lines again and Justice Byrnes said, "Alright, you give me General Clay to do it and we'll go ahead." And that was that. Well, after I had been there some three or four months everything pointed to a very early end of the war. I told Justice Byrnes that I felt it was time for me to go back to the military and he agreed and about this time is when this thing came up. But my idea of going back to the military was to go back for a field command and I was really horrified at the thought of going over for military government. It wasn't what I wanted to do at all. But, you know, you don't get too much choice in the military, in wartime particularly, so there I was. Well, when I got over there and I saw the type of planning that was going on, I knew at once that we were not going to have that kind of a country, that we were not going to have any organs of government at the national level through which to work. I also knew that what we had in the tactical military governments which was doing an excellent job in preventing chaos behind our troops was temporary and expedient and couldn't last forever. So it was obvious that we had to move in there and get machinery going. It was also equally obvious to me that the quickest and best way to do this was to get German machinery going. And because of the Nazi prisoners and so forth I wanted to start from the bottom and this is why we moved to have

early elections.

COL ROGERS: When General Marshall became the Secretary of State, did this cause any changes in policy which affected you?

GEN CLAY: Well, not in that sense. Of course, I went to Moscow with him when he first became Secretary of State, and at that time his views with respect to Germany were not very firm. He was tempted to accept the Dulles idea that maybe the Ruhr should be made into a separate state under the four-power control and later to become independent and not a part of Germany which, of course, would have made Germany a dependent nation on the rest of the world forever, if it had happened. I think also, I really believe that maybe he was going to be able to get along with the Russians. He had solved some problems with them during the war. I think it was only after the breakdown of that conference--the Molotov denunciation of the United States in London in the fall conference--that he began to realize that we had to have a separate policy for Western Germany and that's when he approved the full merger of the British and American zones and the moving ahead with the creation of a constitution for a German government of partial sovereignty. So he did that in the early stages as Secretary of State and that certainly changed our policies in Germany to a great degree. Then he followed that with the Marshall Plan which gave further support and help to a broken-down economy and really and truly started the almost unbelievable German recovery. So I would say yes, General Marshall's movement as to Secretary of State brought about wide changes. Now maybe these changes would have taken place anyway, I don't know. I can't answer that. But nevertheless it was General Marshall and later Secretary of State Acheson who put together

the Marshall Plan, let us put together the three zones of Germany and to write a "basic law" and in turn develop certain controls with respect to armament, to restore German sovereignty in '49.

COL ROGERS: You had some disagreement with him over this . . . the status or the future status of the Ruhr.

GEN CLAY: Yes, we were. I'm sure that when he left Moscow one of the first things that he was going to do when he got back to the United States was to get General Smith in General Clay's place.

COL ROGERS: As a matter of fact, this was about the time that General Smith called you and asked you about his quarters?

GEN CLAY: Yes, yes. By the time that we were in London in the fall and Robertson and myself made a presentation to Marshall and Bevin on the full merger of zones, on the setting up of a constitutional assembly and so forth, from then on out I had complete support from the Secretary . . .

COL ROGERS: Had General Smith actually been told that he was going to come up and replace you?

GEN CLAY: Well, he was in Moscow at the time as Ambassador and I'm sure that yes, I'm sure of that. Of course, I don't blame him. I think he knew that I had asked to be relieved.

COL ROGERS: I think someplace in my readings I read that you attempted to resign several times during this period.

GEN CLAY: Well, I tried to resign on several occasions, retire rather, but the first one was really in '47. The fight between myself, a Deputy of Military Government and the Army Chiefs of Staff over there as to who was going to control was just getting to the point that it was almost unbearable. It was just a constant battle and I didn't want any more of

it and General Eisenhower would not have permitted it to have occurred. But General McNarney was a little less positive and a little less sure as to what he wanted to do. I think perhaps, too, being an Air Force General and the Air Forces having then achieved their independence, he didn't like to overrule his Army Chief of Staff so much. I think this was part of the problem. I'm sure that General Bull was very sincere in what he wanted to do but . . . and I am equally sure that if it had happened Germany would have remained in chaos for a very, very much longer period of time. Government doesn't lend itself to that type and kind of a chain of command. I think that also an occupying force, as a part of its occupation duty, is also responsible for military government and is inclined to take too much for itself. I think it has to have an arbiter or somebody that says, "Look, this is what you can do and you can't do anymore." In any event that was part of the problem.

COL ROGERS: I wish I could recall where I read it but also I think some place it was written that you were giving some kind of a directive from the Secretary of the Army and you said, "Yes, I'll do it but you'll have my resignation in the morning," and then they backed off.

GEN CLAY: Well, I doubt if anything was ever quite as abrupt as that but there were several occasions when I did say on orders I received that of course I'd carry them out but that after I had executed them I was going to ask for my withdrawal. This came up I think once or twice during the currency period with respect to the issue of new currency. But I never at any stage refused to carry out an order.

COL ROGERS: No, I didn't mean that. I wonder if you'd discuss your responsibilities concerning the War <sup>Criminal</sup> ~~Currency~~ Trials.

GEN CLAY: Well, we had two different responsibilities. Of course, the Nuremberg Trials, the Control Council--and at that time I was the deputy to General Eisenhower--had the power of disapproval but not of approval. In other words, the sentences could have been set aside or modified by unanimous vote of the Control Council. And, as a matter of fact, I think it's important to know really and truly that three of the Western powers tried at least to get General Jodl's sentence changed from hanging to being shot which was something that was very important to him and to his wife. But the Russians wouldn't permit any changes so, in effect, we had no authority. In other words, Nuremberg--whatever the courts decided there--was the law. But then, of course, after that we had our own War Crime Trials which included such things as the trial of those responsible for the Malmady Massacres and so on and at that time I was the Military Governor and I had to approve or disapprove or modify or change the sentences, but my responsibility was that of a head of a state.

COL ROGERS: Now sir, to get to the blockade in 1948. At the start of the Berlin Blockade, what was your initial reaction when you learned that the rail and autobahn traffic had been cut off?

GEN CLAY: Well, of course, my initial reaction was to test it. This was done by sending a train through which got quite ignominiously sidetracked where it couldn't move, but my next reaction was to get organized to go in with a convoy, by armed convoy. I set up under General Trudeau the ~~composition~~ <sup>TASK</sup> to compose a combat team for this purpose. I then almost concurrently, if not concurrently, started an airlift to do what we could do with respect to the air while we were doing calculations as to how much tonnage would be required and how many landings and so forth.

I then recommended and asked for permission--I'll put it that way--to send an armed convoy into Berlin. In this particular instance I asked permission because I felt that if it was stopped and had to shoot its way in we would start the shooting, not the other side. I was turned down; let me put it another way, I was advised that I could send a convoy in unarmed and I decided that that would mean it would be stopped by Russian presence--obstacles and other things--and that if we had to retire under those situations or to stop, the resulting loss of prestige would just be impossible for us to take. On the other hand, I had no hesitancy in starting the airlift with what airplanes we had because the only way that an airlift could be stopped would be by Russians taking the actual aggressive action to stop them. And this I didn't believe would happen, but if it did happen I knew, of course, that it meant that we were in for war anyway.

COL ROGERS: If we had gone in on the armed convoy, what do you think would have happened?

GEN CLAY: Well, I'm sure that it would have gone through. I don't think there's any question but that it would have gone through without being stopped. As a matter of fact, Mr. Murphy has always said that if we had done that at that time we probably wouldn't have had a Korean War. I don't know whether that is necessarily true, of course, but I think that our failure to respond on the ground cost us a great deal in the long run. On the other hand, the decision was basically a military decision. I think the President would very much have liked to have done it but the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended against it. The service chiefs and the secretaries all recommended against it on the grounds that if it did

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mean war we did not have the troops in Europe or elsewhere to fight a war; we weren't ready. Now this is one of your problems--to determine when a decision is a political decision or when it is a military decision. The wise political decision in my opinion would have been to have moved in on the ground by force.

COL ROGERS: What instruction did you have from our government concerning the formation of a West German government?

GEN CLAY: Well, the authority to set up a constitutional convention and the generally loose statement that we wanted a federated type of government in Germany. That's about all.

COL ROGERS: How did you get the ball rolling to get one?

GEN CLAY: Well, we had an election. We set up, in the British and French and American zones, elections for the Germans to elect representatives to a constitutional assembly. That's what we called it; they called it a "basic law assembly" because they didn't want to call a constitution for a part of Germany; they didn't want to really call it a constitution until they had a unified Germany. So the first procedure was the election of representatives and after these representatives were elected we had designated a time and place for them to meet, and from then on it was in their hands. We all three, I mean by that the British and French opposites and myself, all kept very knowledgeable political scientists, advisors there available for such consultation as the Germans wanted with them. And very frequently we would get some word from a German committee of a proposal of theirs to be sure that it would meet with our approval. I think that it was quite evident they didn't want to have a conflict by coming up with a "basic law" that was unacceptable WKC

or that was changed too much by a military governor.

COL ROGERS: On July 20th, 1948 when you and Mr. Murphy went to Washington to report to the National Security Council on the Blockade, you met President Truman. In your book you said that you left the President's office inspired by the understanding and confidence that you received from him. Do you have any other recollections of President Truman?

GEN CLAY: Well, I'd known President Truman when he was a senator, of course, and when he was, during the War, Chairman of the Truman committee I was one of the, I guess, most frequent witnesses because whatever went on in procurement that was to be criticized, General Somervell and Judge Patterson would always make me the witness whether it was in my bailey-wick or not. So I had seen a great deal of him in that capacity and then, of course, he'd come to Potsdam right after he took office and he had raised the flag over our Berlin office. I'd had breakfast with him and saw him several times during that conference. He was a very easily approachable man, but of course at the meeting at which I came to ask for the additional airplanes <sup>from</sup> of the National Security Council the . . . ~~after the meeting,~~ after I had made my presentation and Murphy had made his, the President went around and there wasn't a single member of the council that supported us. They were all against us. Vandenburg put up a plea that this would endanger all the rest of our transport fleet and that if we got into war there they were highly vulnerable and we'd be without any air transport. I knew that without the DC-4's it was hopeless. We couldn't possibly do the job. So I felt really down as the conference ended but as we were walking out the President said to me, "Secretary Royal, you and the General come in with me." And we went

into his office from the Cabinet Room and he said to me right away, "You don't look like you were very happy, General," or words to that effect and I said, "I'm not, Mr. President, because I see that this would be the end of Berlin and I think it would mean the communist domination of Europe." And he said, "Don't worry, General, you are going to get your airplanes." It was just that simple.

COL ROGERS: When you left Berlin, you left as certainly a hero of the Berliners and it must have been quite an experience. I wonder if you'd like to . . .

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't think I really thought too much about it until the last day. The day before I had gone down to the German magistrate, as they call it--City Council or whatever you want to call it, assembly--and Mayor Reuter and several of the members of the assembly got up to express their appreciation and I thought this was very nice. We had a habit in Berlin that I had started of having a little parade every Sunday afternoon in front of our headquarters and the troops in Berlin rotated being in this parade. We had always quite a few Germans, but on this particular day, which was the day I was leaving right after the parade, they were there by thousands and it was quite overwhelming, I must admit, and I suppose a rather unusual departure for an occupying soldier. But I think it's become a rather enduring friendship of the Germans, not only in Berlin, but a great majority of the German people for the United States. Obviously there is some fear of Russia that has had a part of that but nevertheless I don't know of many instances of history where an occupying army has turned into a protective army and has been received over a period of 25 years with good grace by a population

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of another country.

COL ROGERS: What do you think were the most important achievements of the military government?

GEN CLAY: Well, first I think the basic and probably most important full recovery of Germany was the Currency Reform which had to be drastic to be successful and which no political government could have made drastic enough. Only a military government could have made a currency reform as drastic and as effective as a currency reform in Germany. Number two, and I think this has also been proven as our contribution to the development of a federal constitution, which has given Germany the most stable government in Europe I would say over the last quarter of a century, and it gives every sign of being a lasting type and kind of government--I think that's perhaps the second. The third, I think, was the creation during the period of a knowledge of willingness in the United States to remain in the European picture as essential to its own future and to its own protection. We didn't have that in mind. We wanted to pull out of Europe when World War II ended. But by 1949 I think the United States was, as a whole, convinced that the future of peace and security of the world and of the United States depended upon our remaining in Europe. I think this, of course, resulted in NATO and many of the other far-reaching agreements. I think that all told the United States grew of age in that period following World War II when we were caught in the middle of Europe and problems that we didn't realize were going to be there and which we found ourselves having to live with and to solve. *WAC*

COL ROGERS: The Cold War has been a favorite subject of modern day

historians and the war in Vietnam has no doubt added to the enthusiasm with which the revisionist historians have attacked the US role in the origins of the Cold War. I believe the following is Schlesinger's comment on this. He said the revisionist theory in it's extreme form is that after the death of Franklin Roosevelt and the end of World War II the US deliberately abandoned the wartime policy of collaboration and, exhilarated by the possession of the atomic bomb, undertook a course of aggression of its own designed to expel all Russian influence from Eastern Europe and to establish democratic capitalistic states on the very border of the Soviet Union. As the revisionist sees it this radically new American policy, or rather this resumption by Truman of the pre-Roosevelt policy of anti-communism left Moscow with no alternatives but to take measures in defense of its own borders. The result was the cold war. Since you were there and were involved in the policymaking and the negotiations with the Soviet Union, I'd be interested in your comments on this, sir.

GEN CLAY: I think that any close examination of the papers of the period will show that this is just not true. The basic and unbelievable attacks on the United States came from the Soviet Representatives, not the other way and indeed my instructions were to try to get along with the Soviets in every way that we possibly could. General Eisenhower and I both did everything in our power to make four-power government work in Germany. I can't think of a single thing that the United States did to stop the takeover in Eastern Europe. I've often thought that a very slight show of interest on our part, perhaps even the movement of troops along the border, might have stopped the takeover in Czechoslovakia but we kept our hands

free on the basis that these were internal affairs. Whether we should have or not is another matter. But the fact is I don't think we lifted our hands to help the cause of the anti-noncommunist in the countries behind the Iron Curtain. Everything that I know about in the period that I was there was based on trying to get along with the Soviets, trying to find a way in which we could live with them.

COL ROGERS: Lloyd Gardner, a revisionist, makes a major point of President Truman's atomic diplomacy. He said that the bomb made it possible to take more risks in dealing with the Soviet-American political and economic conflicts. I wonder if you'd comment on this?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think if that had been true we would have certainly used the threat of the bomb to have lifted the blockade at Berlin and, in part of fact, I think any examination will show that it was two or three years before we had enough bombs for them to have been enough to have insured us a victory over Russia.

COL ROGERS: Some writers like Wohlstedter and Schelling have written about the problem of communication in diplomacy--the signals which one nation by word or deed gives inadvertently or intentionally to another. Do you believe there was a communications problem between the US and the Soviet Union?

GEN CLAY: I think there's always been a communications problem between the United States and Russia and it's leaders primarily because they haven't wanted to communicate. I think if you will read the history of the war you will find that Ambassador Harriman and General Deane complained constantly of their inability to get information from the Russians about their military plans which were vitally needed to assure

coordination with our own planning. There's no question but that getting information from the Russians was always an extremely difficult task and I think still is.

COL ROGERS: Most historians of the Cold War, at least those I have read, state that the clashing views of world order made conflict inevitable. America is a universal's view by which all nations shared a common interest in the affairs of the world and Russia's fear of influence view by which each great power would be assured of an acknowledged predominance in it's own area of special interest. Now certainly the US was interested in a world organization to insure peace, but was the conflict really that simple? Were our efforts to achieve self-determination of Eastern European nations based on our opposition to Russia's fear of influence or was it motivated by such noble purposes as to insure freedom for those people or was it, as Schlesinger writes, "Roosevelt believed that no administration could survive which did not try everything short of war to save Eastern Europe," or was it fear that if Russia was alive to overrun Eastern Europe without argument, what would satisfy them? I wonder if you'd comment on that, sir.

GEN CLAY: Well, I happened to have been present at a few of the meetings that were being held with the Russians during the development of the peace treaties for these several countries and just happened to be there because Justice Byrnes was representing the United States and I was there to tell him about conditions in Germany. Not to be a participant but I was, nevertheless, there during these conferences. And it is my sincere belief that we were trying to set up conditions under which, under freely held elections, these countries could make their own choice

without fear or intimidation from anyone--to do this and realizing that the people who had had to flee from these countries as they went over to become German allies had gone both ways, that you had governments in exile in Moscow and governments in exile in London. The only logical course, I guess, seemed to be that you would form government--coalition governments--out of both of them and charging them under the treaty with the holding of these elections. And this is what was done. The elections were never held and were not the ones that prevented the elections from being held. We certainly had no part in the takeover of the government, the exiling of the anti-communist from Poland and Czechoslovakia and elsewhere. This was done by the communists in those countries, political action which I doubt very much could have been successful had it not been for the huge Soviet armies that were on the borders of these countries. And while they did not use force there was always the threat of force behind everyone of these takeovers. I can't conceive of how anybody could say that the United States had tried in any way to interfere with these countries' resolving their own future. We certainly tried in every way in the peace treaties to insure that they would have that right of choice, and the fact that they did not have that right of choice was entirely a communistic action, not one taken by ourselves or indeed by the anti-communist forces who lost out in the formation of these coalition governments. WMC

COL ROGERS: Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. sites Stalin's paranoid personality as a factor in the origin of the Cold War. What were your impressions of Stalin?

GEN CLAY: I saw Stalin at Potsdam on several occasions and, of course,

when I went to Moscow with General Eisenhower. He was a guest of the Soviet Nation and was received at the Kremlin by Stalin who gave a dinner for him. I think that my impression of him was that he was really a rough, tough customer. He looked tough, he talked tough and I think he was tough. I don't think there were any doubts about that.

COL ROGERS: In 1950 you wrote Decision in Germany. Have any of your thoughts on the origins of the Cold War changed since that time?

GEN CLAY: No. I think that there's nothing in that book that I would rewrite in connection with our relations with the Russians. I think that I still believe that if we had kept ten divisions in Europe there never would have been a Cold War and I think that was where our mistake was made. We played it too quietly and too peacefully, really. But if we kept ten divisions in Europe, just keeping them there would, in my opinion, have prevented the Cold War and I'm sure would have prevented Czechoslovakia and probably Hungary and Poland from going communist.

COL ROGERS: Thank you, General Clay. This concludes interview number three.

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Section four

THIS IS TAPE FOUR, SIDE ONE OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH GENERAL LUCIUS CLAY BY COLONEL ROGERS AT NEW YORK ON FEBRUARY 28, 1973.

COL ROGERS: Tex McCrary wrote about your ticker tape parade in New York after returning from Europe in 1949. That must have been quite a moving experience for you.

GEN CLAY: Well, it was a very moving and thrilling experience. I came over from Governor's Island, where I spent the previous night with General Smith. I told him, coming over, that I felt very foolish embarking on a venture like this and that I didn't believe that there would be anybody out on the streets. I couldn't see any reason why there should be; and yet, when we got there and the streets were crowded and the confetti began to come out of the windows and so forth, it really had quite an effect.

COL ROGERS: When you retired from the Army after returning from Germany in 1949, did you have any plans for the future?

GEN CLAY: I had no plans for the future at all except to complete a book which I had drafted up in my last days in Germany, a book on military government which I deliberately wrote in a form of a text book in the hopes that it would be a real value if such situations ever developed in the future. While I was writing this book I stayed at Cape Cod and I think I finished it to turn it over to the publishers around the 1st of September in 1949. In that interim, some friends of mine had contacted me, and I was offered the job as president of the Ecusta Paper Company in North Carolina. At the time, I felt that I wanted to go to a small town rather than a large city, and this seemed to be the type and kind of a thing that I would like to do. After I had been there for a short time the Ecusta Paper Company was sold to Olin which was a large company

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and which had been heavily involved in the defense work in which I had a major part during the war. So, I felt that I could not and should not work for Olin, and I resigned.

COL ROGERS: Did you entertain any thoughts of running for political office?

GEN CLAY: Never at any time did I ever have any thoughts of running for political office. I was contacted by some political people down in Georgia who sought to encourage me to run for Governor of Georgia, but I did not have any interest in running for office.

COL ROGERS: Would you discuss your selection as Chairman of the Board of Continental Can?

GEN CLAY: Well, after I had resigned from Ecusta Paper Company, I always had to come to New York monthly because I was on the board of one of the New York banks; and, of course, I began to look around to see if there was anything else available as I did not want to remain idle. It was during one of these visits that Mr. Sidney Weinberg, an old friend, called me and asked me to have lunch with Carl Conway, who was then the Chairman of the Board; and this led to my invitation to become the Chairman of the Board of the Continental Can Company. It is interesting. I met with the board the night before at dinner, and the next day the board had a meeting. I was asked to stand by while they had the meeting, and it was during the early process of this meeting that I was elected. Mr. Conway and Mr. Weinberg came in to get me, and I took over and presided for the rest of that meeting. As an amusing "by note" at the end of the month when it came time to write the paychecks, the financial vice president came to me and said, "General, what is your compensation?"

and I had to say to him, "I don't know." I had forgotten to ask the board to fix it, and the board had forgotten to fix it. So, I was a chairman without a set compensation for a period of about two months.

COL ROGERS: When you went to this meeting, you had no idea that this was in the mill? The chairmanship?

GEN CLAY: Yes; yes, I think at the time that I went to the meeting I knew that it had been in the mill; but I did not know that a decision had been made nor even that a decision was imminent. So, I really was caught by surprise.

COL ROGERS: Did you have any concern about taking charge of Continental Can, since you did not have any previous business experience?

GEN CLAY: Not really, because I think that if I had I would have gotten out of the Army because for the last ten years of my life I never had a job in the Army that I knew anything about when I took the job.

COL ROGERS: While you were Chairman of the Board, Continental Can tripled its sales and became the largest manufacturer of containers in the United States. Would you discuss how this was accomplished?

GEN CLAY: Of course, it was a period of economic growth for the United States, and that made it possible for Continental Can to participate in that growth. Our competitive gains, I think, came primarily from the fact that we had the sense to decentralize. I think, perhaps, because we didn't know how to run it any other way. Then through the decentralization process which involved the setting up of four major divisions throughout the country we gained tremendously in our ability to maintain pleasant relations with our customers. I think the decentralization program in Continental Can, which I put in as soon as I joined Continental Can which

went right down to the plant level, did more to make Continental Can grow than any other one thing.

COL ROGERS: During your business career, you've also been Chairman of the Crusade for Freedom, involved with the Columbia Presbyterian Hospital Fund raising; Trustee of the National Fund for Medical Education, the Eisenhower Exchange Fellowships, and many, many more, and I know recently you spent considerable time on the New York Charter Commission. Do you believe that business has a public responsibility or are these activities strictly the result of your own sense of public awareness and responsibility?

GEN CLAY: I think a combination of both. Certainly, I think business leadership that simply concerns itself with business progress and profits is a failing leadership, because if the business community is to be heard from in this country, it must also play its part in this country. Yes, I think it's essential for business leaders to participate in national life, community life, and political life. If they don't, they are going to lose for business the role that it has always had in our country in the past. I think this is absolutely essential. Above and beyond that, I felt a real personal responsibility to do something for the public because certainly the public and the United States has been very good to me. I had to do my share in seeing what I could do in return for the good I myself had received.

COL ROGERS: I've heard that you encouraged personnel of Continental Can to run for public office, and you even allowed them to take leave to campaign.

GEN CLAY: Yes, I thought that it was essential that our people all along the line participate in public life. To make it possible for them to

do so if they did run for public office, we were prepared to give them leave without pay wherever that was permissible while they were on active service and, indeed, for the regular leave periods; leave with pay. Moreover, we were willing during political campaigns to make certain of our people available at their own request to actually take a role in those campaigns regardless of their political affiliations.

COL ROGERS: Did you have any serious problems with organized labor during your chairmanship?

GEN CLAY: You don't run a business like Continental Can Company where your employees, for the most part, belong to the very powerful steelworkers without having a constant problem with labor. We had our negotiation; usually every second year. They were always protracted. They were very difficult. There were several occasions in which there were minor strikes, and one major strike. Out of all this of course, you had arguments and differences. I must say, however, that in the long run after we had settled our differences the steelworkers and their leaders went right back to work and gave us a good performance under the new contracts whatever they were.

COL ROGERS: Did you get personally involved in any of these negotiations?

GEN CLAY: Almost all of them. It finally arrived to a personal settlement between myself and the head of the Steelworker's Union, at that time, Mr. McDonald.

COL ROGERS: Were there any basic differences in the way that you ran Continental Can as opposed to the way that you ran occupied Germany and ran the procurement activities of the Service of Supply during World War II?

GEN CLAY: If you're speaking in terms of administrative principles, no.

Of course, administrative principles, I think, for a large organization are and must be very similar particularly if you're so large that you must decentralize. It's a question of developing how your budget can start at the bottom and go all the way to the top and how the carrying out and utilization of that budget can start from the top and go all the way down. When you've got that solved, you've got a workable organization. This is true in whatever field of administration you are involved. However, there were many differences in many respects. Running the Continental Can Company represented the utilization of very knowledgeable and experienced men who had been well trained in the fields in which they were working. It did involve the finding of new people to be trained to take their places, to moving them up the ladder, to the selection, of course, of the better for the top positions. You had, however, a trained and experienced and knowledgeable organization. You also had specific projects to sell. You knew what you were marketing, and you knew who your customers and potential customers were. This enabled you to have specific objectives. In the Army supply program during the war, we were always buying the tools of war which we had really never yet seen. The tank that we were ordering was the tank that had not yet been used on the battlefield. Everything was new, and you had to be prepared for a certain number of these to be unsatisfactory--not to be the things that the combat teams really believed was the best. Out of it all, I think we came up with a pretty good average, but you were never quite specific in your own mind as to what your needs for tomorrow would be. The difficulties of planning are far greater than the difficulties of planning in the business world. On the other hand, the price of failure was not so great. The

price of failure of any particular project in the business world is immediately reflected in the little statistics down in the lower right hand corner, and if they turn out red, you're just about through. It doesn't take very many mistakes for that to happen. So, you can't take the risk. Whereas in a supply program for war, you must take great risks. The fact that your successes are more numerous than your failures is all that matters. You don't have that little figure over in the right hand corner to measure your degree of success. Here, again, your personnel was not as highly trained. They had to be picked up. Your organization had to be improvised. You didn't exist over long periods of time. At least we didn't before World War II. I don't know if that's been so true since World War II. So, we were always operating with fine personnel, personnel willing to assume responsibility, but personnel not particularly and specifically trained in the program of that magnitude and size. In government, and particularly in the military government of Germany where we were involved with three allies, so-called, and also the Germans, as well as responsible to the American people, we had one of the most difficult assignments that I can think of. It was very difficult to organize because you couldn't run this country with your own people. You had to utilize the Germans. You had to reestablish and develop German administrations, and yet, you couldn't possibly have the control over those administrations that you have had over your own administrations even though you could establish the general policy and could rectify any great mistakes, errors that were made. I would say that organizationally and administratively the German job was much more difficult than either one of the other.

COL ROGERS: My next question was going to be to discuss the similarities or differences in the role of the senior Army commander-manager and the civilian business executive-manager. I think you pretty well covered that already!

GEN CLAY: I think you've got that one point that I perhaps didn't cover, and this is that the one thing that I think that the Army can bring to the business world is the feeling of inspection--of visiting the field--of what we used to call "going to see the troops." In the business world, this has been somewhat neglected, and I think that where a manufacturing company's head fails to get out to the manufacturing plants where he can meet the people who are really manufacturing his products and they can see him, you're never going to have the type and kind of morale we have in good Army units. I think one of the greatest things that business people from the Army have brought into business is this desire to go out and visit the plants, to visit the field, to know the people in the field, and to have a feel of the company as a whole rather than just its business operations and its headquarters.

COL ROGERS: There have been over the years some studies run on this sort of thing in the business community and every time they show an increase in productivity in proportion to the amount of interest shown by the supervisors.

GEN CLAY: Of course, it's a very difficult job. When I was with Continental Can, I visited everyone of my plants once a year. I walked through the plants. I met with the foremen. I usually had coffee and doughnuts with the foremen, and it had to be very quick visits. At that time we had over 150 plants and if in running a company you also try to visit

all 150 plants every year you've got to keep on the move. Fortunately, the company airplane has made this possible. Without a company-owned airplane, it wouldn't have been possible at all. Sometimes I would do two and three plants in a day. Very often where plants were on the night shift, I would catch them on the night shift. I got to know my plant managers. I knew all of them, and I think this had a very real effect in welding the company together as a company, with high morale and a high sense of purpose.

COL ROGERS: Did you find yourself working the same kind of hours that you did in Europe and in the Army Services of Supply before that?

GEN CLAY: Well, I went to work about the same time in the morning. I put in a very busy day at Continental Can Company. I probably--well, I know I went to more so-called business dinners in business life than I ever did when I was in military life because, even in Germany--in fact although we had constant visitors, I dodged as many as I could and even when I did have dinner with some of our distinguished visitors, they usually had dinner with me rather than me with them. Whereas in the business life, you are constantly involved in large business dinners. This takes up a great deal of your evening time. On the other hand, much of my time in Germany was spent on the teleconference, and most of these teleconferences were in the evenings. You never knew when you'd be called to a teleconference, at 10 or 11 o'clock that would last to two or three o'clock in the morning. I don't know that you can have any real comparison. I happen to be--I think, I'm afraid--one who just naturally likes to work, so that long hours have never meant very much to me. I haven't minded them. I think that the successful administrator whatever

his job, puts in pretty much of all of his time on it.

COL ROGERS: During the Korean War you served in the Office of Defense Mobilization. Did you do this in addition to running Continental Can?

GEN CLAY: Well, not really. I did it on a part-time basis. I went down to Charlie Wilson, who had taken on the job of Director of War Mobilization, at his request to help him get his office set up; and during this period, I still kept in touch with Continental Can. I attended the board meetings, but I did not have my hands on the daily operations. I turned them over to the president, and the company was run for all intents and purposes, other than policy wise, for those three or four months by the president.

COL ROGERS: Would you discuss your role in the 1953 Presidential election?

GEN CLAY: Well, long before General Eisenhower had decided to run, Governor Dewey had called me and asked me to come down to his apartment in the Roosevelt Hotel and there with several others convinced me that the best chance for the Republican Party to win the Presidency was with the nomination of General Eisenhower. This group was prepared to move vigorously to get the nomination for him if there was any chance that he might accept. I undertook the job of convincing General Eisenhower that it was really his duty to accept if this came his way and from then on was the liaison between General Eisenhower and the group up, indeed, until the time of his nomination in Chicago. Of course, during the first two or three months of this as we were working, General Eisenhower had not agreed that he would run. It was not really until April that he finally made up his mind that he would run for the nomination; that he would resign, come home, and participate vigorously in the campaign to get him the nomination. As you know, the campaign was successful. I

still believe that he was the only Republican that could have been elected and without him we would have continuation of the Democratic administration. I'm not an anti-Democrat, but I was firmly of the belief that the time had come when in the interest of good government, we needed a change of parties. I could believe that again if any one party stayed in power too long because power does tend--I don't want to say and use the word corrupt--it tends to dull your imagination, to limit the scope of the activities that you believe that should be undertaken by government. In any event, the nomination was a success. I had an agreement with General Eisenhower, a very firm one, that if he became President, I was not to be asked to take on a government job which, in general, he lived up to very well indeed. However, I was frequently asked to come down to the White House to meet with him and others when certain subjects might be up for consideration in which I was supposed to have some knowledge, and we maintained our very close and warm friendship until his death. In fact, I went down to Washington, (I've always been glad that I did) just a week or two before he died, for an hour or two visit with him which I enjoyed very much.

COL ROGERS: What were your party affiliations prior to the '52 election?

I know that you've been very close to the Democratic . . .

GEN CLAY: Well, I was from the state of Georgia. That made me a Democrat. My father represented the state of Georgia in the Senate--he died in his third term--as a Democrat. So, my entire background had been Democratic. I had been very close to some of the Democratic leaders; particularly, the Speaker of the House, Mr. Rayburn, who was a very, very close friend, and in fact, Senator Russell and others. I would think that most of my

background and friendships were more Democratic. I had a great respect for Mr. Truman, but I did not have any respect for what I thought was a Democratic Party that had lost its sense of purpose. Therefore, I thought in the interest of good government we just had to have a change, and I thought General Eisenhower represented a clean, fresh, and highly honorable representative who could bring this type and kind of change about. So, I went to work to help and participate in it. Now, I think that no matter what liberal journalists say today that the day is still going to come when we realize what a great eight years of prosperity the United States had under General Eisenhower.

COL ROGERS: The reason I asked that question about your previous party affiliation; Professor Smith, in our discussion, said that you, probably more than any one else, were the Army's representative to the "New Deal" during your days in the office of the Corps of Engineers.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that in many respects I was one of the hardest working liaison agents between the Army and the so-called---and the "New Deal." Although I was at a very lowly capacity as a lieutenant and captain on the River and Harbor desk, I did have a part in helping Mr. Hopkins set up his WPA and persuading General Markam to lend engineer officers to be the administrative experts in major offices and, of course, representing the chief's office in the presentation of projects for both public works and works of progress administration projects. During this period since the Democrats were in office, I'd been dealing all of the time with either Democrat appointed administration heads, or with heads of Congressional committees who were always Democrats.

COL ROGERS: Did General Eisenhower know the role that was played by Governor Dewey, Mr. Brownell, and yourself? In his memoirs, he gives considerable credit to Cabot Lodge, and I just wonder . . .

GEN CLAY: I think this was probably the way General Eisenhower really thought about it. We selected Cabot Lodge to be the manager, to be the front man, and put him out there because he wasn't regarded with the same degree of feeling by the Taft people that they had against Governor Dewey and Mr. Brownell. Therefore, he was a more acceptable general front manager for us than anyone else might have been. Governor Dewey wanted no part in being out front. He felt that he could do much better by being in the background, and I think he was right. Of course, he was the most effective member of the group that went out to elect General Eisenhower. Certainly, the President knew that Mr. Brownell was the real strategist of the movement and that I was the liaison. On the other hand, it was Cabot Lodge, who was his spokesman. It was Cabot Lodge who was seen with him wherever he went, and I think that he felt that Cabot Lodge was the leading man. I think that Cabot himself would be the last man to claim to have been that. He's a very modest fellow, and I think Cabot would agree immediately that Governor Dewey had been the really effective leader of the forces in the nomination of General Eisenhower. Of course, Governor Dewey had declared that he, under no conditions, wanted to hold public office, too. Otherwise, I'm sure that he would have been a member of President Eisenhower's Cabinet. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Clay and I were General Eisenhower's guests at the White House the night he decided to run for the second term. He called me up. We had a dinner engagement in San Antonio--no, in Houston, --

I'm sorry--and were on our way to a week's vacation in lower California when we received an invitation to come down and have dinner and spend the night at the White House with just the President and Mrs. Eisenhower. We said we couldn't spend the night because we had to go on to Houston. We cancelled our Houston dinner and went down; had dinner with General Eisenhower and Mrs. Eisenhower and stayed there until about midnight, and it was at that time he said to us that he was going to make his decision that night. And Mamie spoke up and said, "It's going to be his decision because he's been trying to get me to say what I want him to do, and I am not going to say. This is his decision and he must make it."

COL ROGERS: In President Nixon's book, Six Crises, he said that you were instrumental in getting General Eisenhower to run for a second term; and your concern was primarily about General Eisenhower's personal welfare and that he needed this as a therapy.

GEN CLAY: Well, he's completely correct in that. I went to see General Eisenhower, first when he was in Denver still in bed. I'd had an ulcer operation and was down in Arizona recuperating. I got in a plane and went up to see him and made up my mind then that he was going to get over the heart attack, that it was going to be a rough time, but that he was already over the worst, and he was going to get over the heart attack. There would be pressures on him then not to run again, but I know this man. I know that he'd been busy so many years. He's been involved in so many decisions that if, at that stage of the game he dropped everything, it would have made the rest of his life miserable. There wasn't any question in my mind but that he had rather and that it was better for

him to run again, to go on with the job, even if he had another heart attack, even if he didn't live through it, than it would be for him not to run and particularly sit there and watch the government if it were being run by the other party. And I still believe I was right.

COL ROGERS: I do too, sir. To get back to the '52 campaign, C. L. Sulzberger in his book, What's Wrong with US Foreign Policy, wrote that he had talked to you in Chicago just before the Republican convention and said that you were very disturbed by the use of the word retaliatory striking power in a proposed platform because it indicated reliance on long range strategic atomic bombing and a fortress America theory. Would you comment on this?

GEN CLAY: Yes. I, at the time and I think I still do, believed in alliance of free countries to the fullest extent that such alliances could be developed with sufficient forces in the field to provide the certainty that if any side violated the other side, that we would have war rather than to back away from such alliances by the threat of using nuclear power in the event such an attack did occur. First place, I don't think you could ever be sure you would use the nuclear power or you would use it soon enough, and in the second place even if you did, I don't know whether either your ally or your opponent would believe that you would. So, that as a deterrent, I had grave doubts as to its value. Of course, with the knowledge that the Russians also had and would have atomic weapons, it made it all the more important to me that we have something other than the threat of using nuclear power to serve as a deterrent to aggression by anybody.

COL ROGERS: Well, General Eisenhower, of course, also objected to the

phrase and it was taken out of the platform.

GEN CLAY: Yes.

COL ROGERS: It seems ironic to me that during his administration, our overwhelming emphasis was on the Strategic Air Command, and I wonder if this was the result of a change of thinking or the influence of Mr. Humphrey's, on balancing the budget. Also, of course, Mr. Dulles was the one who originally advocated this in the party platform.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that this gets down to what is right, what is balance, and everybody has his different assessment. Of course, we've had a very large military establishment for the last eight or nine or ten years, but we also had a war on our hands for the last nine or ten years. When we shake down our end of the war, I think we'll probably have substantially less military forces than we have today. I think you have to say inherently anytime you reduce the size of your military establishment that you are depending more and more on your strategic power, whether that's air or nuclear weapon. Indeed, I think that within the next five or six years we'll be back nearer to the posture that General Eisenhower had than to the posture which we have during these intervening years. Now, I suspect that there was some influence in General Eisenhower's part of the fact that he didn't want to be known as the military President, the President who had gone in from the services and had built up an over-elaborate defense service. I think he probably and instinctively had rather be condemned for not having enough than to be charged with having too much. Now, of course, this was all aggravated out of all proportions as the campaign was waged against Mr. Nixon on the charges that we had a great lag in our missile weaponry. I believe that this was completely disproved when the

Decocrats went into power. They had to disprove it because they couldn't find any place to spend any more money.

COL ROGERS: As I recall, the figures were that we still had a 5 to 1 superiority.

GEN CLAY: At that time?

COL ROGERS: During the convention in 1952, did you follow the role call with General Eisenhower and was he concerned about the outcome?

GEN CLAY: Well, I followed the role call in the living room with General Eisenhower at the Blackstone Hotel. Mrs. Eisenhower wasn't feeling well. She was in bed in the back bedroom. I was there with several others including Herb Brownell. As the voting went on, we were, of course, keeping a tally; and when it got down to Wyoming, I think that Mr. Brownell and I were both greatly worried. At that stage of the game, we were in the lead alright, but we didn't have the clear majority. As you know, Mr. Warren was in the race with the California vote. At the same time, Mr. Stassen was in the race with the Wisconsin vote; and therefore, while we had the most number of votes, it hadn't broken, and we weren't getting the majority. We had put most of our absolutely assured strength in the first ballot. We had some reserves for the second, but we weren't too happy about it, and I think we were worried. I don't think the General was the least bit worried. He hadn't concerned himself with these kind of details. He had complete confidence in Brownell and myself and that was that, period. About that time, Wisconsin switched its vote and the landslide occurred and the whole thing was over, but believe me, we were on pins and needles waiting for Wisconsin to change its vote.

COL ROGERS: You were very close to General Eisenhower for a very long

time. What impressed you the most about him?

GEN CLAY: I think that there's no specific answer to that, because he was a man of so many parts that it was the overall rather than any particular trait that made him the great man that he was. If you want a general answer, I would say that with all of his abilities I have never known a warmer man. I never made a visit to the White House during the time he was there that he didn't come down to the front door to see me off. I've never been to the White House where any other President has, and I'm not saying that in criticism of other Presidents. I can well understand why they don't, but this was the kind of man that General Eisenhower was, with all that he had to do. Now, I can go on because I never knew anybody that believed more in the delegation of power, of responsibility, and the requirement of check ups and the increasing of the responsibilities to which he gave the subordinates when they proved they could handle it. This, I think, was why it was always talked about as if he didn't work when he was President. He didn't believe that working consisted in shovelling papers. I think when he came to spending the time to know his subordinates, their capacities, and capabilities, in selection of the right ones, he was equal to the best.

COL ROGERS: Well, I think this is certainly true of so many successful leaders and commanders in this--I understand this is the way you operate, too--you believed in a delegation of responsibility and picking the right person for the job and letting him go at it.

GEN CLAY: Well, I certainly learned that. I don't know whether I was ever able to stay as far away from it as General Eisenhower was really. I believed in delegating, and I did delegate, but I think I probably

got more nervous about it and maybe checked more than he did as a matter of fact. But in the long run he developed people. People who lived with and worked for General Eisenhower became bigger and better men by doing it.

COL ROGERS: Also in the 1952 campaign, how was Mr. Nixon selected to be the Vice Presidential candidate?

GEN CLAY: Well, at an earlier stage of the game, Governor Dewey and I had had breakfast in Washington with Senator Nixon--then Senator Nixon. We learned that he was definitely for General Eisenhower, that he wasn't going to break up the California delegation as long as Warren had a change, but that if the California delegation did break, he had many friends on the delegation that would come with him to the Eisenhower ticket. Now, this was a very important thing. We didn't want him to break with Warren in the first place because we didn't want Warren to break away from us and join anybody else. Warren as a neutral was not the danger as Warren would have been as an ally of anybody else. So, this impressed both Governor Dewey and myself very much. We also had been impressed by his youth, his military record. He had a very excellent record and service in the Navy in the Pacific. He was young and vigorous. He'd had an excellent record as a Congressman, particularly in the so-called exposure of Hiss. That isn't popular now, but it was then, and in many ways he represented what we thought was the ideal young man to attract the young people of this country. So, we thought that he was the right man. Now, the actual selection was made by a group of about 15 or 16 summoned by the leaders of the Republican Party, summoned by Herb Brownell, after the President's nomination and before the next session of the convention at which he would accept the nomination. Mr. Nixon was not invited

to that meeting; and Mr. Brownell, when he called the meeting to order, said that he called you together because the President has asked this group to recommend to him whom he should recommend to the convention to be his Vice Presidential associate. And Mr. Brownell said, "Of course, I think that if anybody in this room has that ambition they should say so now and absent themselves." They should not be in the debate. He had every other prospective candidate in there except Dirksen, and it was certain that Dirksen, although Taft would like Dirksen to have had it, he would not get it after his violent attack on Governor Dewey. So, there wasn't anybody else really. All the potential candidates like Lodge and Adams and so forth, they were all there, and they didn't want to lose their chance of participating in the selection as they would have if they left to be considered themselves. So, you never saw such a polite way of getting rid of a great many potential candidates as Mr. Brownell exhibited. Anyway, the unanimous agreement in this group was Nixon, and this was conveyed back to General Eisenhower, who accepted it immediately. The only thing I am emphasizing is that I am sure that if it hadn't worked this way, Brownell would have found some other way for it to have been Nixon because he was the man we had agreed we wanted.

COL ROGERS: During the 1952 campaign, of course, the Nixon fund caused a great amount of anguish in the Eisenhower campaign headquarters. What was your initial reaction when this was disclosed?

GEN CLAY: Well, I was very unhappy about it. I'm enough of a realist to know that there were many funds of this type and kind around. I didn't know where they were or who they belonged to, but I did know that people had raised money to help candidates maintain office, but not in

this particular fashion. I was not very happy about it, but I did not feel impelled to make any comment on it until it began to jell and create so much noise in the papers. At the time, General Eisenhower was on a train en route to Cincinnati--campaign train. I called him on the train, and it stopped at a small station, and he took my call. All I asked him to do was to make no judgement, to say nothing, because we would have Herb Brownell on an airplane who would meet him in Cincinnati that night and act as his counsel. I said, "Up until that time please don't do anything," to which he agreed, and Mr. Brownell went out there and by that time or that evening Mr. Nixon made his famous speech. But between Mr. Brownell, General Eisenhower, and his other advisors, they reached the decision to which they did reach. In that connection, I was not a participant other than to ask General Eisenhower to make no statements until he had talked face to face with Mr. Brownell.

COL ROGERS: After Mr. Nixon had made his address, did you feel he should stay on the ticket then?

GEN CLAY: I hesitate to answer that question because you never are sure what you really think when you're looking back that far. Frankly, I was not impressed with the talk. I hadn't made up my mind even at that time that I thought that he should go, but I was not impressed with the talk. I thought it was sentimental--overly so, as a matter of fact--but when I came out the next morning, I found that the elevator boy had listened to it with tears in his eyes. The doorman told me what a wonderful speech had been made, and I got in a taxi and the taxicab driver told me how he and his wife had both cried over the speech. By the time I got to the office, I knew I was as wrong as I could be.

COL ROGERS: That's kind of interesting because Mr. Nixon says the same thing. He didn't feel that he had gone over either and when he got into the taxicab going out, he just was all overcome because he felt like he really hadn't come across. It wasn't till later that he realized the same thing. Mr. Emmet John Hughes in his book, The Ordeal of Power, wrote that when Nixon discovered the success he scored in the political world his elation turned to shock and rage when Eisenhower failed to announce promptly and categorically his own satisfaction and confidence. Instead there came the General's summons to journey across the country to receive, at their personal meeting, at Wheeling, West Virginia, what seems to Nixon a needlessly belated benediction. From this and from his awareness of the hostility of the incident at Eisenhower's headquarters in New York, there came the stirring of emotions that would cloud much of Nixon's future relations with Eisenhower and the White House staff. Would you agree with this assessment? Was there a coolness? You certainly don't see it now, at least in the way President Nixon always talks about General Eisenhower.

GEN CLAY: I don't know quite how to answer that. I think that General Eisenhower brought the Vice President into all major considerations of government--Cabinet meetings, major matters that had to be discussed--he did everything he could to keep him fully informed of what was going on in the administration. I think that he, after his heart attack, did this even more than he did before because he felt that it was essential that he have someone fully informed as to what was going on in government. Now, I don't know that anybody is really close to a man who is going to take his place. I don't know of any chief that ever recommended his

vice chief to be the chief when he goes. This is a peculiar thing. You lean on your number two man very, very heavily, but you never think of that number two man as quite up to taking your place. So, I think this is something that you have to take into consideration in this relationship, and finally Mr. Nixon is not a gregarious person. General Eisenhower was. General Eisenhower liked to play Bridge. He liked to sit around after the golf match and play Bridge and talk with his friends and have a drink or two and so forth. He was gregarious. Therefore, when he went to the enjoyment of life, it was not a place where Mr. Nixon fitted or wanted to. He didn't want to be there. So, he wasn't intimate at play, and he was his number two man and therefore not as intimate at work; but outside of that, I'm sure that there was a great mutual respect, which after they ceased to have a relationship with each other turned into affection. But I don't think the affection was there until after they had ceased to have a relationship with each other.

COL ROGERS: What were your impressions of Mr. Nixon as a Vice President?

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't have very much of an impression of Vice Presidents because there's no way to measure what they do. Obviously, Mr. Nixon used his time skillfully to become an expert on foreign relations of the United States, by his constant trips abroad, by his studies, by his meeting with the leaders of other countries. He really left the office of Vice President with about as imminent knowledge of foreign affairs as any executive of the United States ever had. Now, this was something he did himself though and I couldn't answer you. I don't think there's any way to measure the actions of the Vice President as to what kind of President he's going to make.

COL ROGERS: Have you had any contact with Mr. Nixon since his election to the Presidency?

GEN CLAY: Yes, I've been down there a number of times socially; but in addition to that for a particular period of time when the pressure was on the Senate to reduce the forces in Europe, Governor Dewey, Mr. Acheson, and myself went down about once a month to be briefed and kept up to date on events that were transpiring. At most of those meetings, we would meet for three-quarters of an hour or an hour with the President and discuss what we had found out and what effect it had had on our views.

COL ROGERS: I've heard that after the elections you and Mr. Brownell were responsible for the selection of candidates for the Cabinet. Certainly one of the strong men in the Cabinet was Mr. George Humphrey, whom you recommended. What procedure did you use in selecting candidate nominees?

GEN CLAY: Well, President Eisenhower asked Mr. Brownell and I to be on a committee. We had a third member of the committee, the national committeeman from Wisconsin, but he never came to any of the meetings to select Cabinet members for his post. We went through an examination of both politicians and other leading Republicans with a view to making these recommendations. For example, when it came to making the recommendation for Secretary of State, I don't think at any time we would have any consideration for anyone other than either Dulles or Governor Dewey. Since Governor Dewey had stated he did not want, under any circumstances want a position, this almost made Mr. Dulles the sole candidate. That presented very little of a problem. We tried to distribute the Cabinet posts around the country so that the President would be surrounded with geographic diversification, people who knew all parts of the United States. This had to do with the

selection of the former Governor of Oregon as Secretary of the Interior, with the leading Republican from Utah as Secretary of Agriculture. When it came into the two big business operations, and we considered the Defense Department and the Treasury to be business operations, then we looked at the business and financial world. We felt that this is where you would get the type and kind of leadership needed for these two big enterprises. Obviously, when we thought about our Defense Department as our largest business establishment, we looked at General Motors. We felt that was maybe one of the places where we could find the requisite skills, and when we get involved in the financial world, one of the most successful of our business entrepreneurs was George Humphrey. Sidney Weinberg, who had been very active in the campaign, had particularly recommended him; and I knew him and thought very, very highly of him, so we recommended him. I think these are the motives behind us in our electing political representatives except for State, Defense, and Treasurer and they are men selected because of their administrative, financial, or knowledge of overseas.

COL ROGERS: Earlier you mentioned that you told General Eisenhower that you weren't interested in an office, and I had been told that he valued your advice very highly because he knew that you would tell him what you thought whereas this wasn't always necessarily the case when you went to Cabinet members. Did you get involved in a lot of White House consultation? You mentioned that you did make a number of trips down there.

GEN CLAY: Yes, I made a great many trips down there. I'd often have breakfast with General Eisenhower. We'd often have small stag dinners, which he'd often like to have, and to which he enjoyed very much. He used to say that I always gave him hell which is not quite a fair description

of our relationship by any manner of means, but I guess I was the most willing, if you want to put it that way, critic that he had. I think that this was a relationship which may have had some value to him. It didn't always go down with him, you know. He wasn't the very easygoing, affable picture he's always been painted. He could have a very high rise in temperature and temper very quickly at times. Although I was never a recipient of it, I have seen him let loose, and I was damn glad that I wasn't the recipient. I think that--I want to put it this way ---as time went on I went down less and less, and this was natural. I was not in Washington. He had a new staff, new advisors. He formed his own opinion of the people whom he went to. So, I would say that as time went on I became less of an advisor than I was during his first term particularly.

COL ROGERS: I've also read about your key role in the development of the Interstate Highway Program. Was the Interstate Highway Program your idea?

GEN CLAY: No, the selling of the Interstate Highway as a systems program for the government to adopt and take over was. The actual location and position of the highways had been done by the Bureau of Public Roads, and the only thing they hadn't done was to sell it as a system. So, after examining it and I think recognizing its importance to the complete development of communications in the United States, this became our job to make this a system, and to take this system and sell it to the Congress of the United States. Interesting enough the Congress itself added a part to that system that we had not added, and that was the trunk routings--the massive trunk arteries into the cities and around the cities. We had designed the interstate system really to take traffic away from the city, and the addition to the system to make it also take traffic into the cities,

which has probably had a very real influence increasing the rapidity of suburban development, was added by the Congress itself.

COL ROGERS: When you were involved in this, did you kind of feel that you'd been this route before, back when you were a captain in the Corps of Engineers?

GEN CLAY: Well, it was very similar, and as a matter of fact, that experience helped a great deal, because I did know where to go in government to find out the information that we needed. I did know the procedure that you had to go through in getting this report considered by the Congress and acted on by the Congress. So, I think, it was another one of those cases where a little past experience was very helpful. I chaired a committee on foreign aid that President Kennedy appointed and, again, had the same experience that having chaired an Interstate Highway Commission, I found out a lot of things that helped in the next go around.

COL ROGERS: Now, to move into the Kennedy Administration, after the Bay of Pigs Invasion and Castro offered to release prisoners in exchange for ransom, you raised about \$2 million on short notice. I understand that you wrote an unsecured note for the money. I wonder if you'd recap this?

GEN CLAY: Well, actually on Christmas Eve, I went out to LaGuardia to get into an airplane to go to Washington to spend Christmas Eve and Christmas with my son, who was stationed there then. As I reached the airport in LaGuardia, I was told that Attorney General Kennedy was trying to get me on the telephone. So, I went to the telephone and he said that this ransom of the Cuban prisoners had been held up at the last moment. We had transported down the \$35 or \$40 million of drugs, foods, etc., but the prisoners who had been released earlier because of ill health, the

families had agreed to pay Castro \$3 million dollars; and they had never paid him. He insisted that this also be paid before he let the prisoners go and that there had been so much time and effort spent on this and that the prisoners were supposed to come into Miami that night. The planes were set up to bring them in. Their families were down there to meet them and that it would just be tragic if they didn't materialize as planned, and he would appreciate it if I would help him raise the money. Well, I said, "I'm coming to Washington, and I'll be there in an hour or two. I'll come right to your office," which I did. I went right to his office. This was the story with the exception of the fact that we had the problem of--even if we raised the money by the time we raised it, it would be Christmas and it would be too late. It would be too late for them to come home and that the only way to get the money down to Cuba, and this was 11 o'clock in the morning--you know Christmas Eve, the banks are all closed--and that this would be highly impossible, if it could be done at all. We had no branches left in Cuba, but the Imperial Bank of Canada did have a branch there. So, we decided if we could raise the money that morning and get it transferred to the Imperial Bank of Canada, at their New York Branch, that their Canada headquarters could notify Cuba to pay; and all of this could happen. Well, having the Attorney General's office turned over to me with the White House telephone, which without it, it would not have been possible, and finding that they were working with the Grace Bank which had had many South American-Cuban affiliations, I got hold of the Grace Bank people and I asked them if I signed a note for the money--I think it was \$2,900,000--of course, would they honor it? Then they said they were not a big enough bank, under the rules of banking,

to lend that much to an individual, so they would have to see if National City would share it with us. Well, then we got in touch with National City and finally got somebody because as I said that the bank was closed. They agreed that they would have the responsibility for issuing the note and that the Grace would take a third of it and they'd take two-thirds, and they would arrange to get the money into the hands of the Canadian Bank. So, we then had to find some way of signing the note. Well, we finally routed the Washington representative of the National City, and he came down to the office; and we manufactured a note. We didn't have a legal form. So, we manufactured a note on the typewriter which I signed; and in the meantime, we got the head of the bank of Canada on the telephone and told him what was going on. He agreed to take one of his New York officers to get the check from the National City and to transfer the draft to Cuba, and they did. Period. All this happened in a course of a day and then I sat there 'til 6 o'clock that evening raising money to pay off my obligations. Well, I had, by the time I went home, raised about a million and a half dollars, but I still had over a million to go. So, when I got to my son's home and I told my wife, I said, "I'm entering Christmas with a new obligation. We now owe a little over a million dollars." I think she thought I was completely crazy, but it was raised. The next day the President was gracious enough to call and thank me, and I came on back to New York after Christmas and within two or three days managed to raise the rest of the money and pay the note off and that was that!

COL ROGERS: You must be one of the all time great and champion fund raisers!

GEN CLAY: Well, I don't know that. I had a very good cause and I had a

lot of people who responded to it. I think that the fact that I signed a note for that much money got a lot of people interested in contributing.

COL ROGERS: In 1961, when the Berlin Wall was erected, do you think that the United States and its allies should have taken any action when the wall was being constructed?

GEN CLAY: I've always disliked trying to second guess what people on the job have done. I think you've got to go back and remember a lot of things. In the first place, there was a tremendous erosion of authority in Berlin. At the time of the airlift, I was a theater commander, but I also had my military government headquarters in Berlin, lived in Berlin, and with the power of decision of the theater commander, I was in Berlin. At the time this wall was built, the Berlin commandant was at the end of a long line. He reported to General Clark at Heidelberg, but in addition to that on these kinds of matters Clark had to report to the American commander, who was also the NATO commander, General Norstad in Paris. As soon as it got there, General Norstad had to make a decision whether this was the United States decision he was making, or an allied or a NATO decision. Since there were two NATO allies that were also in Berlin, I guess it made it very difficult for him to make a decision. The result was that the buck came all the way back to Washington before anybody knew what to do about anything. By the time it got through the Chief of Staff and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and up to the President, it was too late anyway. By that time, you would have to go in to remove the Wall by force. Whereas with earlier action, you may have moved trucks up and down the road and whatnot as an indication of intent; might have stopped it. I don't know whether it would have or not, but it might have. In any event, it was

too late, and it came about because the original authority that was there in Berlin to meet situations as they arose, no longer existed.

COL ROGERS: You accompanied Vice President Johnson to Berlin shortly after the Wall was erected. Was this primarily a morale building trip?

GEN CLAY: Almost entirely. It was to show the American intent to remain in Berlin and it really had that effect. The morale in Berlin had gotten quite low as a result of the Wall, and Johnson's visit convinced them that the United States meant business. It had tremendous effect.

COL ROGERS: Did you get to know President Johnson well?

GEN CLAY: I had known President Johnson for a long, long time before that. He had been a protege of Mr. Rayburn and Mr. Rayburn was a very, very dear friend of mine. Through Mr. Rayburn, I had known President Johnson quite well.

COL ROGERS: We have already covered your involvement with the Kennedy Administration. Did you have any involvement with the following Johnson Administration?

GEN CLAY: Very little. We were invited down socially on several occasions when various foreign statesmen were here, particularly if they were here from Germany. The President asked me to go to Adenauer's funeral with him. So, I went to the Adenauer funeral with him. As a result of that, he asked me to come down to discuss a certain German troop matter that he had in mind, which I did on one occasion, but that was about it.

COL ROGERS: When you returned to Berlin as President Kennedy's representative, this in effect must have put you over the US commander there, General Watson.

GEN CLAY: Well, it really didn't. As a matter of fact the original letter

that send me there, gave me authority to take over in Berlin if I felt it necessary. I had the letter changed. I felt that if I went there under those conditions, I would have Clark and Norstad so damn mad and Dowling, the ambassador, so damn mad, that I would be creating in the long run, the worst possible conditions for Berlin. Certainly, Berlin wasn't going to be a place that in the long run could depend on a personal representative of the President being there. So, I personally had the letter changed because I said to the President, "As long as I've got your ear and you support me, it doesn't make any difference what my title is, really. If you don't at any time, then my title wouldn't be worth a damn anyway." I think the real problem came there from--and there was a problem--from the very real condition that I think is absolutely wrong, and that is for the commanding general of NATO to also command American troops. I don't think he should. I think that the commanding general of American troops should be in Heidelberg and that his communications to the United States government should not be subjected to going through the commanding general of NATO. It's obvious that the commanding general of NATO can't be completely objective. The British commander at Berlin sent his recommendations right back to the British government. He didn't send it through NATO anyway, but Clark had to send his recommendations through NATO. So, Clark just gave up on it. He abandoned Berlin and "Al" Watson communicated directly to Norstad. You know this isn't a healthy situation. I don't even know how, in NATO, you can keep communications separate. I suppose that they did, but it must have been an extremely difficult matter. You have to talk to Americans in secret while your British assistant chief of staff or your chief of staff or deputy wasn't informed.

COL ROGERS: I understand that during this period you wanted to contest the 10,000 feet ceiling limitation for the air corridors to Berlin, and also General Norstad was the stumbling block on this.

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that the Air Forces would have been delighted to have done it, too. They were very much in favor of it, but the fact remains--I guess now it's no longer there--but the fact remains there never was a 10,000 feet limitation established for that purpose. The purpose of the 10,000 feet limitation was that everything above 10,000 was free. Below 10,000, you had to report. So, this turned into just the opposite meaning, because up until the time of jets--of pressurization rather--no passenger airplane went up to 10,000 feet. You see, this was before pressurization.

COL ROGERS: What did you do about your position as Chairman of the Board of Continental Can, when you went to Berlin?

GEN CLAY: Well, I transferred my chief executive job to the President, Mr. Fogerty, and went on leave without pay.

COL ROGERS: Did it concern you to leave Continental Can for what appeared to be an extended period of time?

GEN CLAY: Well, it actually almost marked the end of my experience because I did not intend, when I left, to pick up the Chief Executive job when I got back. I knew when I got back I would have only a year to serve, and it didn't make sense to turn it over to an indefinite period to a man from whom you would take it back. On the other hand, I had no more idea than a jackrabbit as to how long I would be in Berlin. So, I felt it wise to completely turn over everything I was doing. In addition to that, I didn't feel that on this particular job I should continue to receive pay.

So, I took this leave without pay.

COL ROGERS: Were you consulted by President Kennedy about the Cuban missile crisis?

GEN CLAY: No.

COL ROGERS: How about the start of our involvement in Vietnam?

GEN CLAY: No, I was never consulted by President Kennedy except on European affairs. As a matter of fact, I would say that was with respect with President Nixon, too. All the times I've been invited down there, it's been in the consideration of what I call European affairs although they have included being briefed on the Middle East, but that's Mediterranean.

COL ROGERS: Is it fair to ask you your impressions of President Kennedy? Also his brother, the Attorney General?

GEN CLAY: Well, I wouldn't want to go into great detail on it because I think it's too early. All I can say about President Kennedy is; first, he was completely a gentleman. I don't know of anyone that could have gone out of his way to be more courteous and pleasant to me than President Kennedy did at anytime that I went to see him or visit with him. Secondly, I'm sure that he had the capacity to grow and that he was growing. Obviously, he had become President of the United States without any previous administrative experience of any kind, and this is the hardest and most difficult administrative job in the world. So, he had to learn the hard way from scratch. I, just in the times that I saw him, could see how much he was growing, how much he was developing; and I think that he did grow and develop a great deal. I think that if he had lived and served a second term we might have seen--I know we would have seen a far more capable administrator and President than we did the first time.

In saying this, I'm not being critical of his first term because I think it's far too early to judge that, but he was a man who was growing. His brother was not the same gentleman, and he was much more impulsive and much more determined outwardly, and I am sure more single purposed in mind and more ruthless than was his older brother. Whether or not this came from youth and because he still was very, very young when he died, and would have disappeared with more enlightening with more maturity, I don't think anybody could judge. I suspect it would have. I think that we pushed a young man into great heights when he had the mental capacity, but not the background and experience to adjust to being at that height so young, and I think this was probably the only real problem that he would have had to overcome to have been able to take his brother's place in the affection of the American people. Certainly, the most knowledgeable man of government, in taking office, that I knew was President Johnson. Although I must say that when it comes to going down to speak to Presidents, the present President is the best posted and the most well informed on the subject he wants to discuss with you, of any that I have known.

COL ROGERS: After your retirement from Continental Can, Mr. Lehman asked you to be the Chairman of the Executive Committee of Lehman Brothers, and I understand that again you accepted without any discussion of salary.

Is that a true statement?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that it's possibly a true statement, but it's not quite a true statement. When I came down as a partner, first, Mr. Lehman told me that I would have certain percentages of what we call the free percentages and a certain percentage of what we call partner's percentage or capital percentage and a drawing account of so much a year. I had no

more idea than a jackrabbit of what this percentage meant in terms of actual money. No! It turned out to be much more substantial than I had any idea of. It was never the run of the consideration, really, as to why I came. So, it wasn't very important to me.

COL ROGERS: Of course, you were going into the third career when you came to Lehman Brothers and another new field, and I assume that it didn't concern you either after the experiences you already had at Continental Can and Europe.

GEN CLAY: Well, I suspect my past experience probably fitted me for Lehman Brothers better than any of my previous experiences had for other jobs, in the sense that as an executive for a major company I had been through the industrial financing for that company on several occasions; and therefore, I knew something about the relationships that there had to be between the investment banker and his client and had a general familiarity with the field. I also had done sufficient time on bank and insurance company boards to also know the problems that are involved in lending the money. Of course, the investment banker is the broker in loans. So, it was not as strange a field as it seems, compared to other fields.

COL ROGERS: Now, I have a few general wrap-up questions. One subject we didn't touch in earlier interviews was the use of your staff during World War II and in Europe. In particular, what was the role of your chief of staff? How did you use him?

GEN CLAY: Well, in Europe I had two different chiefs of staff. I had a chief of staff for military government who was General Gailey, and in view of the fact that my deputy, General Hayes, was a representative on the coordinating group while I was our representative on the control

council and took care of many of the policy matters--really the basic house-keeping administration was, staff wise, supervised and done by the chief of staff, General Gailey. At the same time, my military chief of staff was Max Taylor. Huebner was my deputy--my deputy for the military command--and our chief of staff for the joint command was Max Taylor, who had his headquarters in Heidelberg. Now, there with the exception of inspections and policy, I completely turned the operation over to General Huebner. In the first place, he was an outstanding soldier; and the second place, Berlin was no place to have your military headquarters. It had to be down in the zone, and Heidelberg was a logical place. However, the policy of getting really ready to fight, move our troops out in battalion units into divisions and combat teams, to re-equip the constabulary divisions from light to heavy tanks, all the arrangements with Montgomery and deLaTassigny all of these I did handle personally. I also made it a point to inspect every one of our military facilities once a year, and again, there were lots of them. So, it took a lot of time, but I found some pretty horrifying things because no commanding general had been into some of these places at anytime. You didn't find them on my second visit.

COL ROGERS: Today we have a drug problem in the Army as you may be aware, and I wonder if there were any drug problems during your service. I'm thinking particularly overseas areas such as Panama.

GEN CLAY: We had a minor drug problem indeed in Panama. I remember in my company, there were five or six young boys there that were smoking marijuana, and this would usually show up around payday when the rest of the company might be going out to get a little bit of hard liquor in them. These boys would go off on a marijuana binge. It was serious enough so that we had

firm instructions to keep on the lookout for it, search for it, destroy it, and all that sort of thing. But it never got to the proportion that we're talking about today, and I never heard of a hard drug problem.

It was basically a marijuana problem, but that marijuana problem existed way back then in the 1920s.

COL ROGERS: Today we see evidence of erosion of discipline in the Armed Forces. Wonder if you'd comment on the importance of discipline in the Armed Forces?

GEN CLAY: I doubt if the erosion in discipline in the Armed Forces is anything but a reflection of the erosion of discipline in our daily life. We've had so much of the theory thrown at us by radio commentators and newspaper reporters that freedom is more important than law and order, that we've reached the point where parents are the only ones that can discipline their children, and they don't. The schools can no longer administer discipline. I think that after all of these years when you come up with a case that a cadet has to be given a hearing as to whether or not his demerits had been given to him fairly; and therefore, because he was over, he was being discharged without a hearing. To me this is completely contrary to the laws of discipline that we have always had in the Army. If the company commander can't punish at his own discretion within certain limits, he's not going to have any discipline. As a matter of fact, a company commander that could do his own and devise his own punishment without court-martialing his men was usually the company commander who had the best discipline. I used to get too many drunks at payday. The day after payday, I used to take everybody right after reveille on a 12-mile hike, and during that hike we would alternate walking and

running. Well, I can assure you that after two or three times I had very few drunks around there on the day after payday. I mean these are the type and kinds of things that give discipline, and which organizations are proud of when they have it, but we don't discipline our children anymore. We've had very poor discipline in our schools, and I think there's a general erosion of discipline in this country which is reflected in the unwillingness of the military command, and when I say the military command, I mean its civilian heads too, to take the strong and positive action that we must have if we're going to restore discipline to the armed services. I'm sure that as a result of the stand of the Marine Corps, years down the road, they're going to make the Army look pretty sick. And I hate to say that. If we continue, I mean as we are. I don't believe in the discipline of fear. I don't think that you have to have a discipline of fear, but I think that the whole purpose of civilization is to create a society in which we can live with one another. We can only live with one another when we have established the rules, surely the minimum; but we've got to establish the rules which guarantee our rights to indulge in those things which do not hurt the activities of others and not to be able to do those things which do interfere with the activities of others. This is the true purpose of discipline.

THIS IS SIDE TWO OF INTERVIEW NUMBER FOUR OF INTERVIEWS WITH GENERAL LUCIUS CLAY CONDUCTED BY COLONEL ROGERS, NEW YORK CITY, 28 FEBRUARY 1973.

COL. ROGERS: Sir, I wonder if you'd comment on the flexible response or the limited war strategy that we've lived through for the last few years?

GEN CLAY: Again, I think it is too early to comment on limited warfare. If what's taken place in the world today results in some control and limitation of armament and methods of warfare and some better degrees of understanding, I would suspect that some of our attitudes with respect to limited war might change, and we might have to say that what we have done in fighting limited warfare has accomplished more than we thought it could. However, as I look at it now, I think that limited warfare is something that should be avoided at all costs. If a war isn't important enough to win, it isn't important enough to fight. In fighting a limited warfare, which restricts the hands of your military service, you not only destroy their effectiveness, you create such a sense of inhibition, of frustration that indeed I think that you have undermined the capacity, if not even the integrity, of your military leadership. I think our limited wars have raised havoc with our military forces, really.

COL ROGERS: During your Army career, promotions were strictly on a seniority basis until World War II and then the most capable, such as yourself, were accelerated to the general officer grades. Today in the Army the outstanding officer receives accelerated promotions starting at the grade of major. I wonder if you'd comment on promotion policy during your career and also the present system?

GEN CLAY: Well, I have a feeling that we're doing everything a little bit too early, including final retirement. No business enterprise could afford the retirement of its people as young, as competent and able as people who are being retired from our military services. I think this is important. I recognize the desirability and necessity of young officers, and particularly, if war comes; but I'm not too sure that up until the time that war comes your officers who still might not be able to stand the rigors

of war will have done a very successful job in training and will still be available for training and the purposes that have to go on other than direct combat. I would be inclined to postpone--to continue seniority a little further and to continue the stay in the Army of its officers a little longer so that we are getting a better look at capabilities because people mature at different ages. We're making some of these decisions in which we've forced officers into positions where they couldn't show themselves as they became better. I'm not too sure that this is fair either. You know, in the business world we keep talking about selection on competency, but the fact remains that probably 70 percent of our promotions in the business world are seniority.

COL ROGERS: In recent years, the officer corps has been rocked by the revelations of the charges against Major General Turner, the Provost Marshal General, former Brigadier General Earl Cole, and of course, the My Lai affair also raised certain questions about some of our general officers. I wonder if there were any questions of the competency or the integrity of the general officers during your junior and field grade officer service. Do you have any comments on the current situation?

GEN CLAY: Well, of course, in the old Army, your word was accepted. On the other hand, if you ever gave it and it was found out that you had made a false statement you were out immediately. There wasn't any black or gray areas. Obviously, when you expand an Army with the speed with which we had to expand in World War I, when you bring in a tremendous amount of people, you neither can quickly establish the traditions of the past nor can you establish the methods to determine whether or not these traditions are being maintained. The result was that, I think, during World War II--

and I found it out very quickly after World War II--you couldn't any longer count on a report from an officer because it came from an officer as being necessarily factual and true. I don't mean that this applied to general officers. It did not. I think that the general officers in my day and time were men of exceptionally high integrity and had been trained all their lives to such high standards. I would welcome the return of such standards. I think that, here again, there has been an erosion in national standards. I don't know that you can ever have an Army that, relatively to the past, is any different . . . has different standards really, than those of the country relative to its past. If we are going to have a poorly disciplined youth, we're going to have a poorly disciplined Army no matter how we try to correct it. If we have irresponsible youth, it's going to reflect in our Army. These are the questions that bother me because, I think, that whatever erosion we had is not an Army erosion. If we see it in the Army, it is a reflection, and this is what bothers me even more, National erosion.

GEN ROGERS: Sir, you enjoyed excellent relation with the press during your service as Military Governor and Commander of US Forces in Europe. Today the Army is the subject of considerable hostility by sections of the media. Do you have any advice for present and future commanders concerning the media?

GEN CLAY: Well, I think that the only way to deal with the media is to tell it the truth or tell it nothing. I do think that we have been using the half truth too much on matters that we wanted to keep secret. I don't think you can do this. I think you've either got to say, "No, I won't tell you," or else tell the whole truth. I think this has been part

of the problem, and I think this in a large measure does flow to a degree from limited war. I think that we develop standards where you report victories by whether you kill more of the enemy than the enemy has killed of you. Well, this is a hell of a way to gauge the success of a military engagement. It really, it's in a sense, a part of their erosive process. You've got generals competing with their divisions as to which one has done the best, by which one has killed the most enemy. Well, I think it ought to be which one has gained the most position with the least casualties to anybody. This is a new and different type and kind of criteria. All of these have had their effect. However, I have never known a period in history, during my lifetime anyway, in which the average reporter, columnist, and commentator have been so violently and definitely against the establishment. The Army and Navy and Air Force are considered as part of the establishment, and so they get all of the attacks that would be and are intended to embarrass the establishment, the administration, whatever you want to call it. I don't know how this can be avoided until the people of the country determine they don't want that kind of reporting. I read the editorial pages of a very celebrated newspaper every morning, and I am shocked at the things they say about the President of the United States, absolutely shocked. It's just unbelievable to me, and then when I read about the fact that this paper believes that the prisoners have been brainwashed otherwise they wouldn't have come back and said that they believe in this war. To me this is just horrifying that this sort of thing could take place. I just don't happen to believe that. I can't believe the military establishment could be that stupid in the first place, but I also just don't believe these men are the type and

kind of men that put on an act because they're told to. But I suspect that is the opinion that has been created in many minds by these newspaper people and commentators. I don't know how you can have a good press under these circumstances because they're slanted before they come in to see you.

COL ROGERS: I assume that you probably don't have any good friends among the hierarchy of the New York Times or the Washington Post. I was going to ask you if you did, if you had any discussion of this problem with them.

GEN CLAY: Well, not in recent years. As a matter of fact up until five, six, seven or eight years ago, I used to know quite a number of people on both papers, but they hadn't taken that position. This is all an outgrowth of the last five or six years. I can remember when Homer Bigart was one of the greatest friends the Army ever had. I don't know what he's doing now. You know he's left the Times, but when he wrote for the Times over in Vietnam, they were great stories.

COL ROGERS: Sir, you've been described as an easy man to work for because subordinates always knew where they stood and knew that you would back them up; also, because you made decisions quickly, stuck to them, delegated authority, and were interested in the results, but not necessarily the mechanics of it. I won't ask you to comment on that assessment because to me it's the description of the ideal leader. I would be interested, however, in your thoughts on leadership.

GEN CLAY: I suppose that I would have to start off by saying that in my active life I never even thought about any principles of leadership or what you had to do if you were exercising leadership. So, I think that I would have to start off by saying I don't think there is any prescription for leadership. I have seen astounding results gotten by men of completely

different types. I've seen the utter disciplinarian, the ruthless determined driving leader accomplish tremendous results. I think that perhaps an example would be General Somervell because I think he probably did as much, if not more, than any single man to the winning of the war by absolute ruthless determination, to get for the Army the things that it needed to win a war; and he wouldn't have gotten them if he hadn't been that way. I have to think that that's one type and kind of a leader, but that kind of a leadership would never have been able to have commanded an allied force like General Eisenhower, who had the patience and understanding and the ability to draw people together and at the same time to take decisive action when anybody tried to break up the team. So, there's another and different type and kind of leadership. I think that there's only one fundamental principle and that is that a man who leads other men must be willing to give the time and effort to whatever the cause is that he expects them to give. I think that this is something that men respect more than anything else. Obviously, consideration of their care may be a factor. On the other hand, General LeMay, who couldn't care less about comfort because he didn't care whether he was comfortable or not, could inspire people to great heights by the very fact that he was willing to endure discomforts to accomplish his purpose. This isn't any prescription. The only thing is that you've got to demonstrate to the people who work for you what you expect from them, and the only way you can do that is by proving to them how much you are willing to give to bring that cause to success.

COL ROGERS: Sir, since our last talk, we've had the ceasefire in Vietnam. Earlier we talked about being involved in limited war. Do you have any

comments on our involvement in Vietnam or any mistakes that you believe that we've made or would you rather not even comment on that?

GEN CLAY: Well, I will comment. My comments might be proved completely erroneous by time. I would have to say this, that I think that President Nixon, in using power to bring about a settlement may have brought about a settlement that will prove an honorable settlement as far as the United States is concerned. I think that this is something that could never have been obtained at an earlier date. I'm not sure now, but I'm sure that could not have been obtained at an earlier date and without our utilization of force to bring it about. However, something went wrong with our thinking in which we could not visualize our inability to bring North Vietnamese to terms by attrition--an unwillingness to recognize that they were going to last longer than we were going to last--I think that this was a fatal--not fatal, but a very bad error of judgement on the part of our military people. Perhaps it was influenced by other factors that maybe we would be allowed to do the bombing indiscriminately or in closer proximity to targets. Perhaps, we would be allowed, as we were later, to mine Haiphong. Perhaps even we would have been permitted hot pursuit. Maybe all of these factors were in their minds, but it does seem to me that for the last three or four years that it has been quite obvious that we could not possibly win the war. We could only bring it to honorable terms by doing what we did by accelerating it, but we couldn't win it. So, I wonder if we shouldn't have made that decision maybe six, seven, eight years ago before we were so heavily committed. Finally, I want to say this--I want to say this off the record--I don't want to put this on the record yet. This is not the time for old soldiers to criticize. However, one thing that may have destroyed us in Vietnam was the

mental state caused by a limited war. The fact that we've gone over there and built a new Pentagon really, an air-conditioned building with apartment houses for generals and officers. I think that's apparent to build an office building in Vietnam to fight a war was a recognition that you expect to be there for years. How else could you justify it? And maybe, if you had people living over there in tents, the war wouldn't have lasted that long. Maybe if you hadn't had families of senior officers living in Bangkok, it wouldn't have lasted so long. This has been a luxurious war for the higher-ups. I'm surprised there hasn't been a reaction in the United States about that, but when I heard that we built a \$30-40 million office building over there, I thought that was the most awful thing I ever heard of. We wouldn't have even thought of building an office building to fight the Germans. It isn't the money that I'm talking about. It's the psychology that you're putting a concrete, permanent building there to fight this type and kind of a war. Well, I think I could have told the War Department, if they asked me six, seven years ago, that the American people will never fight that kind of a war. They're bored with it, and they are. They're bored. In the Korean War, they were getting bored, but it wound up before they were too bored. The military had handled this one. I don't know, but I am completely opposed to having the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I would have one Chief of Staff for the Defense Department and under him commanders of the Army, Navy and the Air Force. I wouldn't have the constant voting of four people to reach a decision. For, as you had so often when Max Taylor was there, the chairman having to make a separate recommendation from the Joint Chiefs as a whole. I'm not too sure that

this didn't occur often, of course, in Wheeler's time, too. Oh, well, that's enough of that. We must admit that the Army had lost a great deal out of this war.

COL ROGERS: Sir, that completes my questions, and I just wondered if there are any other subjects that you would like to address or do you feel that that covers it pretty well?

GEN CLAY: I have nothing to add. I do think that the armed services have lost some of their standing with the American people through the events of the last six or seven years, through the national policies which were not their responsibility but in which they played a part, both in formulation and execution. I think that it does behoove the armed services to make the greatest possible effort to regain the confidence of the American people. I think it can be done because, by and large, throughout the years, our services have enjoyed the confidence and respect of the people.

COL ROGERS: Sir, this completes the series of interviews and I want to personally thank you. It's both a pleasure and an honor for me to have these interviews with you, and I might add that it's been also a very educational experience.

GEN CLAY: Well, I appreciate it. I'm delighted to have done it, and I don't know whether it's been helpful or not, but whatever the Army asked me to do I liked to do.

# Oral History Transcripts

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