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PAUL C. WARNKE

Interviewed by: Dorothy Pierce
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INTERVIEW

Q: This interview is with Paul C. Warnke, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Today is Wednesday, January 8, 1969. It's three-thirty in the afternoon. We are in Mr. Warnke's office in the Pentagon, and this is Dorothy Pierce.

Mr. Warnke, I would like to begin our interview with brief background information on you that I've gone into and see if I have got the correct information. You were nominated

and confirmed as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security in June of 1967.

WARNKE: That is correct.

Q: Your first government appointment had been just eight months earlier in September 1966 as General Counsel to the Department of Defense.

WARNKE: That's also correct.

Q: And prior to that you were an associate and partner in a Washington, DC, law firm.

WARNKE: Yes.

Q: And since 1948. And I do have all correct information so far?

WARNKE: Yes, you do.

Q: Mr. Warnke, your predecessor in this office, Mr. John McNaughton, also served as General Counsel of Defense. Is there any relationship here with these positions, or reasoning, that the two of you have had a similar background?

WARNKE: I would say that the only comparison is the fact that Bob McNamara had the feeling that the General Counsel's spot was a good spot into which to introduce new people into the Department of Defense. His concept of the General Counsel's office was as a sort of a utility infielder; that you could utilize somebody who had been legally trained in a variety of sort of special missions. How, in addition to that of course, the Deputy General Counsel, Leonard Niederlehner, has been around the Department of Defense for many, many years. As a consequence, the general law work of the Pentagon is very competently handled, which leaves the General Counsel free to undertake special tasks for the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

So, as a consequence, Bob McNamara first brought Cy Vance in as General Counsel, then after a period made him Secretary of the Army, and then eventually Deputy Secretary of Defense. In John McNaughton's days, John was made General Counsel after having served, I believe, in Arms Control. And then he moved John to this job, and then had moved him to the Secretary of the Navy job before he was killed.

Q: Mr. Warnke, who brought you in originally?

WARNKE: Actually, I think it was more Cy Vance's idea than anybody else's. I had known Cy and, of course, Cy himself was a lawyer. The principal reason was that he and Bob McNamara anticipated that Senator McClellan was going to hold an extensive hearing on the F-111; so I was brought in to defend the F-111 program. As a matter of fact, those hearings were never held, or at least they have not been held as yet.

Q: That may happen soon. What made you decide to come to work for the government?

WARNKE: I'd say a couple of reasons. First of all, I practiced law in Washington for about eighteen years. I think I probably would have taken on a government assignment prior to that time if it hadn't been for the vast wasteland of the Eisenhower years. That came at about the time when I would have been eligible for a more junior position. Then when Kennedy came in 1960 I was quite available, but nobody ever offered me the kind of a job that I wanted. I was particularly interested in going with the Department of Defense because I had met McNamara, knew Cy, and was very impressed with the caliber of the people here and the nature of the problems. My specific interest was in the field of national security, and this struck me as being an ideal opportunity.

Q: As a lawyer, did you find government work a different type of discipline or requiring different techniques?

WARNKE: I would not say so. You have to first of all understand something about the nature of a Washington law practice. It's not like the law practice in New York City or in any other part of the world. You're dealing very basically with sort of the interrelationship between big American business and the United States government so that an awful lot of your contacts are government contacts. Not only that, but you get used to working the long hours in a Washington law practice that you find that you work in the United States government.

As far as the techniques are concerned, it seems to me -- and this is terribly parochial on my part -- that a lawyer's training really puts you in a good position to cope with governmental problems on a policy basis. In other words, your job as a lawyer is to take a look at an overall situation, try and isolate the salient facts, and then come to the best possible conclusion, or the best possible recommendation for your client. So, essentially, it seemed to me that what I was doing was changing clients, rather than changing techniques.

The big change however, apart from the change in client, was the nature of the problem. Your approach to the problem was the same. The only difference, and a very cardinal difference, was that the problem made an awful lot more difference. It was a problem of infinitely greater significance, so that it made the challenge greater and, also, the attractions greater.

Q: You've somewhat answered this for me already, but do you find the demands of public service distinguish themselves from private practice in any other ways than what we've covered?

WARNKE: Yes. I'd say that one other way is that you can approach them with a greater degree of objectivity because of the fact that you're trying to represent the national interest. If you're dealing with a problem of a client, you know in advance where it is that you want to come out. Then it's the question of trying to do the best possible job of advocacy in order to promote your client's obvious selfish interests.

Now if you're dealing, instead of that, with a problem in the field of national security, it's more important that you endeavor to be objective, at least until you reach the point at which your superior has come to his conclusions. At that point it again turns into an advocate's role because then you do the best possible job you can of marshaling the facts to support the conclusion.

Q: Are you in effect saying that there's room for greater development of idealism in the government?

WARNKE: Oh, of course there is -- obviously so. I think that's one of the great lures of government service. I've had a great number of friends over the period of my years in Washington who have found it impossible to leave government service even though they could make infinitely more money practicing law on the outside, just because of the fact that they had the appeal and the infinite attraction of working for what they regarded as being the best interest of the United States rather than the inevitably selfish interest of a large corporate client.

Q: Of course, power is rather attractive.

WARNKE: Yes, but power in the United States Government is sufficiently centralized in the President, and in his Cabinet advisers, so that you don't have that illusion of omnipotence yourself. You have a certain amount of authority but as far as power is concerned, your only real power is the power to recommend, and hence the influence. You have that degree of power on the outside. It's just that the affairs you're influencing are of a far smaller magnitude.

Q: Mr. Warnke, you've already mentioned that in coming on as General Counsel you believed you were going to work at the beginning on the F-111 series. Would you give me your views on how this case developed?

WARNKE: On how the case developed? Well, if you look at it as a case, I think you would have to say that it originated in a personality conflict. The entire matter since the initiation of the contract award developed because of the fact that there was a clash of personality between two very strong and two very stubborn men. That was Secretary McNamara on the one hand, and Senator McClellan on the other. Apart from that, it's hard to distinguish that contract, except in size, from any of the awards that take place. Anytime you make a decision on a major weapons system there are, quite clearly, competing contestants to whom it makes a great deal of difference whether or not they get the award. There aren't that many big weapons systems contracts open at any one time.

In this instance you had two competitors, both of whom had come up with what appeared to me to have been quite comparable proposals. A decision was made to give the award to General Dynamics. At that point Senator McClellan, I think largely at the instigation of Senator Jackson, asked that the award be held up. Bob McNamara figured that it was his position to determine who should get the award. The determination had been made and

he wasn't going to let the Legislative Branch interfere with the prerogatives of the Executive Branch. As a consequence Senator McClellan's nose got very far out of joint, and has remained so, and I think the pain has increased over the years.

Q: Did you have any views as a lawyer before you came to Defense on the developments as they had been so far because, of course, all of this was back in '62, I believe -- '61.

W: On the F-111 contract?

Q: Yes.

WARNKE: I had never had any acquaintance with the facts at all, so that I had no views except for my instinctive bias that Secretary McNamara was probably correct.

Q: Did you actively play any role in reviewing the contracts and the -- ?

WARNKE: Yes, I did. A good bit of my time during my first months in the Department was devoted to trying to deal with the investigation. And in that connection, of course, it was necessary to review the documents; to talk to the people who participated at that time; and to try and form some sort of opinion of what the issues would be in this hearing, which as yet has not been held. So that I became quite familiar with the background.

Then, in addition to that, as you probably know, Secretary McNamara had set up what was initially a weekly review meeting with the contractors. That was with General Dynamics, who was responsible for the airframe, and Pratt and Whitney, who were responsible for the engine. Now the purpose of those was not to deal with the McClellan investigation, but to solve some of the highly complex technological problems that are inherent in the development of a weapons systems of this complexity.

Q: You spoke of sort of isolating the issues involved here. What did you see them as -- the major ones?

WARNKE: First of all, you've got to sort them into the objective ones and the subjective ones. I've referred to the subjective ones. The subjective one was a clash in strong personalities.

The objective ones were, I would suppose, basically three in number. The first one was whether there had been any impropriety with respect to the award itself. In other words, had procedures been subverted in order to come to a preordained conclusion. It was pretty obvious to me that there had been no abuse of the procedural techniques employed.

A second issue was whether the entire project was a bad idea in terms of do-ability. In other words, the concept was one of commonality. That here you have the Air Force with one particular requirement- the Navy with another requirement- and the conclusion made that whichever of these two proposals -- by Boeing and by General Dynamics -- was

accepted, each one of them was to be evaluated in terms of whether or not you did have a common airplane. The real key technological issue was should you have endeavored to arrive at a common airplane for the two missions: one Air Force and one Navy mission.

And then the third issue, as I saw it, was the competence and efficiency with which the contract had been carried out by the contractor under government management. But those were the basic issues.

Q: What was your view on the practicality of a common plane for these two services?

WARNKE: I never arrived at any really satisfactory conclusion because I was never sure that the missions which were contemplated by the two services had been adequately defined. In other words, if you look at it in the abstract, there is no reason why you should not have a common airplane for certain missions where the objectives are reconcilable. In this instance, viewed in the abstract, the two missions were reconcilable. Both services wanted a plane which would be capable of flying very fast, flying very high, also flying very low at supersonic speeds, and with an appreciable range and loiter time. Therefore, there were as far as I could see, sufficient elements of similarity in the original concepts, so that you could aim at a single airplane.

After all, we do have instances of commonality at the present time. You have the F-4 which is utilized very extensively both by the Air Force and by the Navy. Accordingly you do have already a prototype of a plane which can be both land-based and carrier-based.

But the question that still remains in my mind is whether you don't end up with a problem -- when you start out trying to reconcile two missions -- because the chances are very great that either or both missions will be revised during the development process. And those revisions in mission may really frustrate your initial objective of arriving at a common airplane because the missions are no longer reconcilable. I think that that, to some extent, happened in this case.

Q: There has been recent publicity that, in effect, this series has cost the American taxpayer a loss of about one billion dollars. Do you feel there's any validity in that?

WARNKE: No, I think there's no validity at all. I think it's also impossible to prove or to disprove -- except in the sense that you cannot say that there has been a loss, because the loss is compared to what! It's sort of like a client of mine who told me one year that he lost five hundred thousand dollars. What he meant was that he made two million, five hundred thousand dollars, and he anticipated making three million; so he lost five hundred thousand dollars.

In this particular instance, what they are saying is that Bob McNamara initially said that by having a common airplane we could save one billion dollars. Now let's say, and these figures aren't exact -- maybe not even approximate -- let's say that the contract had cost us to date two billion dollars more than you initially anticipated. Well, then you could I

think by wholly flagistic reasoning come to the conclusion that your total loss had been one billion dollars, or three billion dollars, or you name it. It's just sort of playing with numbers.

Q: Did you feel any pressure from any area regarding your assessment of this contract award of the program?

WARNKE: None whatsoever.

Q: Just a general question. Were there some major legal problems that you faced during your appointment as General Counsel to the Defense Department that come to mind?

WARNKE: Yes. We had a variety of what I regarded as being quite interesting legal problems. One of them has not as yet been satisfactorily resolved. That has to do with the issue as to how you treat contractor personnel, or, let's say, merchant seamen who are caught engaged in illegal activity in Vietnam.

As you probably know, there are two sections of the Uniform Code of Military Justice which initially gave court martial jurisdiction over civilians under some circumstances. One was held to be unconstitutional, because it provided that in peace time people, such as dependents of members of the Armed Forces stationed overseas, could be tried by court martial. In a couple of instances there were service wives who would decide that they would do in their husbands on foreign soil, and the Supreme Court held that the court martial jurisdiction was not applicable under those circumstances.

There's another provision that states that in time of war court martial jurisdiction exists over civilians who are accompanying an Armed Force into the field. Now, in Vietnam, You've got a situation in which you have a number of American civilians who are in fact accompanying an armed force in the field. You have the Merchant Seamen. You've got in addition to that the contractor personnel who make -- may be working on building something like an Air Force base. In some instances regrettably they engage in black market activities; sometimes they beat up on one another; sometimes they murder one another. The Vietnamese see no particular reason why they should try and prosecute an American who has committed a crime against the United States Government or against another American, so that you're faced with the question that whether under those circumstances you should exercise court martial jurisdiction.

There has been a difference of opinion between the State Department and the Department of Defense on this issue. I felt as General Counsel, and still feel, that there is no more reason why you should shrink from bringing court martial proceedings against the civilian contractor personnel employee who is engaged in black market activities in Vietnam than you should about bringing court martial proceedings against somebody who is an involuntary member of the Armed Forces. As a matter of fact, you could make the argument that morally there is more reason to take the position that the contractor employee has submitted himself to court martial jurisdiction. He's there on purpose. In

many instances the nineteen or twenty-year old kid, who happens to be a member of the Armed Forces, is there very much against his will.

Then we did have a number of very interesting questions with respect to the law of the sea, which I think is much too technical for me to get into at the present time.

Another one that we did have that I thought was a very interesting problem had to do with whether you could declare segregated housing near Army bases, or Air Force bases, or Naval installations to be off-limits. Secretary McNamara wanted very much to insure that the colored serviceman did not encounter discriminatory treatment in endeavoring to find housing for himself and his family near a service base, so that over a period of time we developed a policy of requiring that real estate owners -- by that I mean people who owned apartments, trailer camps, anything of a multiple housing nature -- open up their facilities to all servicemen regardless of color, or else their particular facility would be declared off-limits. There was some considerable doubt, I think, in the minds of lots of people as to whether or not that was legal. In other words, could you tell one serviceman, "You may not rent from a particular proprietor because he discriminates against other servicemen because of their color." Also, which you might anticipate, Chairman Rivers and some of the other Southern legislators would not have been very enthusiastic about any such policy.

We decided that it had to be attempted because it was getting to be a very inflammatory issue. Not only that, we ran into a situation in which the State of Maryland, in connection with open housing legislation, called upon the Secretary of Defense to take action to insure that no discriminatory practices existed. We were able to point to this provision in the Maryland law as sort of the opening wedge, so that initially we evolved the policy of requiring that any housing near bases in Maryland be open to all service personnel or else be open to none.

As a matter of fact, since that time the policy has been made generally applicable and has been accepted, I think, with considerable cooperation of both the realtors and our service personnel.

Q: Has it been challenged?

WARNKE: It has not. And of course now, it cannot be because of the Fair Housing provisions that have been enacted into law since then. We were a little ahead of the Fair Housing Legislation, but were able to use the Maryland precedent to make it applicable on a nationwide basis once the Fair Housing provisions went into effect.

Q: Was your work as the General Counsel strictly legal, or in this position did you also get involved in policy matters?

WARNKE: As I've already indicated, Secretary McNamara did not visualize the General Counsel's job as being completely a legal position; so, as a consequence, I did get into policy matters of various types.

Q: What are some of the major ones that come to your mind?

WARNKE: Well, for one thing I was in charge of a review of the tactical aircraft study that had been put together by a panel of the President's Scientific Advisory Council. Then, frequently, I was asked by Secretary McNamara to consider various problems that arose with respect to the Vietnam War.

Q: What were these at that time?

WARNKE: I think that the first one arose out of a series of articles that had been written by Harry Ashmore and Bill Baggs based on their visits to North Vietnam and certain allegations that had been made either by them or by North Vietnamese to them with respect to the bombing of North Vietnam. So I was asked to talk with Ashmore and Baggs, and then to find out what I could about the facts which had been reported either through or to them.

In some other instances, I was asked to review various memoranda that had been prepared, again in some instances dealing with the efficacy of the bombing; in some other instances dealing with other aspects of the military campaign in South Vietnam.

Q: What were your conclusions from your meetings with Mr. Ashmore and Mr. Baggs?

WARNKE: It was really impossible to come to any kind of a conclusion about which you could have a real degree of confidence. I think it was very clear, and they admit it, that the North Vietnamese were reporting to them in a highly colored basis. But at the same time you had to concede the inevitability of some attacks on civilian targets in the course of any sort of a bombing campaign.

Typical, for example, was a charge with respect to a particular town, somewhat south of Hanoi. The North Vietnamese used that town as an illustration of an indiscriminate bombing attack that was designed to terrorize rather than to neutralize any sort of military facilities, or facilities that might have been more war supporting. Now I think that both Ashmore and Baggs, in all good faith, accepted that because, for one thing, some of the facilities that had previously been war supporting had been totally destroyed so that even their on-the-scene review did not put them in a position where they could assess the validity of the charge that was made by the North Vietnamese. But at the same time, it was very clear from some of the pictures that they had received and from some of their eye-witness accounts that some civilian targets had been attacked. Now, you never know whether that's inadvertence, or whether it's recklessness on the part of a particular pilot. People don't always behave terribly well under the pressures of war.

Q: Mr. Warnke, on what occasions have you met with President Johnson, beginning with the first?

WARNKE: Let's see. I think the first occasion was back in 1950, and that was when he came by and shook hands with the people who were sitting at my table at a luncheon intended to raise funds for Senator Wayne Morse.

Q [Capt. Robert Pace, Military Asst. to the Asst. Secretary of Defense]: Did you want to interject the chairmanship of the Defense POW Policy Committee as a General Counsel, or pick it up later?

WARNKE: I don't think that I took over that as General Counsel, did I? I think that came afterwards. I think, Bob, that that was after I became Assistant Secretary for ISA, wasn't it?

Q [Pace]: (Indistinguishable)

WARNKE: You're right. I did become that as General Counsel. While I was General Counsel, I was asked to become chairman of the committee which had been established by Paul Nitze. That was the Department of Defense Prisoner of War Advisory Committee. That consisted of representatives of the various services -- the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; Defense Intelligence Agency; Joint Chiefs of Staff. The objective was to coordinate all of the Department of Defense activities dealing with prisoners of war and to act as the point of liaison with the Department of State where Averell Harriman had primary responsibility as the President's representative on prisoner of war matters.

Q: This is primarily, of course, concerned with Vietnam?

WARNKE: Primarily concerned with Vietnam. Also, of course, it concerned itself with the Pueblo crew, and with the occasional detainees in Cambodia; and also the pilots -- I think there are three of them now, aren't there, Bob -- who are being held by the Communist Chinese.

Q: When was this appointment?

WARNKE: It was in the early summer of 1967.

Q: Until when?

WARNKE: It's still continuing.

Q: And are you still the General Counsel?

WARNKE: I'm still the chairman of the committee, right.

Q: I probably will come back to that. I do have some questions later on on the Pueblo, and we can draw on that. We were talking about occasions when you have met the President.

WARNKE: The occasions on which I have met President Johnson have been just about as intimate as that first one. I've had almost nothing to do with him directly. I think I sat in on possibly two meetings at which the President was present. I can't think of more than two, can you, Bob?

Q [Pace]: Of course, he recognized you when you came to OSD.

WARNKE: Yes, but my contact has always been with the President through the Secretary of Defense. I think I participated in one meeting on the question of whether or not to try and sell F-5's to Brazil and Peru in order to forestall their purchase of French Mirages.

I was an attendant at a meeting that the President held with respect to the Middle East crisis back in June of 1967, and I think one meeting in connection with the Pueblo. I think those are the only three meetings at which I've even been present when the President was in the chair.

Q: Did you offer any information or conclusions, or were any opinions requested of you in these meetings?

WARNKE: On the Middle East one, no -- I was there purely as an observer. In the case of the jets for South America, yes -- I interjected a remark or two of monumental triviality.

Q: What was your position?

WARNKE: That there wasn't a darned thing we could do about it. If they wanted to buy Mirages, they were going to buy Mirages, that we shouldn't get ourselves in a demeaning position by trying somehow to bribe them not to.

Q: And the Pueblo meeting? Was that a recent -- ?

WARNKE: No, this was immediately after the seizure. I think, you and I, Bob -- yes we were on our Far East trip at the time of the seizure. We were called back by the Secretary of Defense at the time of that crisis. And there was a task force that was set up, wasn't there, Bob?

Q [Pace]: Yes, sir.

WARNKE: The task force was set up. I think that Sam Berger, who is now Deputy Ambassador in Saigon, was in charge of the task force. At some of the initial meetings the President was a participant; and I was there in one of them.

Q: Were you a member of the task force?

WARNKE: Yes.

Q: How many were on that task force?

WARNKE: I'd say that the regular members during the fairly brief period of time in which it was in existence were Ambassador Berger; Walt Rostow; Clark Clifford, who had been named to succeed McNamara but who had not yet taken over the job; McNamara; Rusk; and I think Max Taylor was in at some of the early meetings.

Q: How long did you meet in this capacity?

WARNKE: I'd say for about a week, and after that period of time the task force -- . The task force at really the Secretariat level then disbanded. This was just, you know, to determine what the immediate steps might be that the United States should take.

Q [Pace]: It was to collect the facts in chronology.

WARNKE: Yes.

Q [Pace]: It was a task group lower echelon.

WARNKE: But then the task group continued at the working level.

Q: Did you participate in that?

WARNKE: No. I think that one of my deputies, Dick Steadman, participated at that point. Charlie Grosjean was in on it too, but I think that the one who went over and talked with Ambassador Brown, who succeeded Ambassador Berger as head of that task group, was Dick Steadman.

Q [Pace]: He participated as much as we participated through you to the Secretary.

WARNKE: That's right.

Q: With whom do you deal primarily on the President's staff?

WARNKE: I would say more with Walt Rostow than with anybody else except on things like balance of payments problems in which I deal with Ed Fried. Occasionally with Bromley Smith, but usually more directly with Walt.

Q: In your very few occasions -- this is kind of a general question -- of your associations with the President, do you have any impressions of him -- This is not meant to be a loaded question.

WARNKE: The finest President I have ever worked for.

Q: Over the almost year-and-a-half now, two years-and-a-half -- that you've worked in Defense, have you been on call; or what is your status in a crisis situation?

WARNKE: I've got a gray phone in my house, so I guess I'm on call.

Q [Pace]: He's on call twenty-four hours a day.

Q: And when they develop, you come to the Pentagon?

WARNKE: Yes.

Q: Stay here?

WARNKE: We're usually here anyway.

Q: Do they develop during the day primarily? Has the President -- Well, you've partially answered this -- appointed you to any other committees or panels or task forces outside of this one on the Pueblo crisis?

WARNKE: Yes. I was on a task force for the President when I was General Counsel that had to do with how you deal with labor disputes that affect the national security.

Q: Participating from Defense angle?

WARNKE: Participating for the Department of Defense, yes.

Q: Was this a very extensive panel, and was it for any Presidential messages?

WARNKE: It was called for a specific purpose in trying to determine whether there was a more efficient, more comprehensive way, of dealing with such things as steel strikes, railroad strikes, other types of strikes that might have an immediate adverse impact on the security interests of the United States. We went through the usual changes on compulsory arbitration etc., and came to the conclusion that there is no good solution to dealing with human problems.

Q: Have you ever traveled with Mr. Johnson?

WARNKE: Never.

Q: Ever been asked to travel for him?

WARNKE: No. As I say, I've always worked for the Secretary of Defense, so that if I was traveling for the President, then it would be through the Secretary of Defense.

Q: Do you travel much in your position? You did mention a Far East trip.

WARNKE: Not a great deal. I found it very difficult to leave town unless the Secretary leaves town, so that that has been primarily on NATO meetings and on a trip to Vietnam with Bob McNamara back in July 1967, and one with Clark Clifford in July 1968. The other occasions have been NATO meetings with the Secretary -- in one instance with Paul Nitze. This was after Bob McNamara had accepted the appointment to the World Bank and before he had left. Then on one occasion I went, without the Secretary, to attend a Security Committee meeting with the Japanese. That was interrupted about half way through with McNamara telling me to come on home. I haven't tried to get away alone since.

Q: This is sort of a duplication here, but have you been given any special assignments or responsibilities beyond what would be encompassed in International Security Affairs?

WARNKE: We've always interpreted International Security Affairs, Miss Pierce, sufficiently broadly so that nothing would be outside of the scope. We take a very expansive view of the charter.

Q: Then can you briefly give me an idea of what this broadly encompassed position is?

WARNKE: Well, I think that the charter, as far as the establishment of ISA is concerned, reads something along the lines that the function of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs is to identify emerging and existing problems throughout the world that may be of interest to the security of the United States. And unless you're very narrow-minded, you can expand that to take in just about anything.

Q: And how do you interpret it?

WARNKE: Very broadly. What I mean by that, to be serious about it, is that it's really impossible for any aspect of our foreign policy, for any international development, not to affect, one way or another, the national security. Now, under those circumstances, of course you've got to take a very broad view as to what is intended by the words that I've just recited. Now, as a consequence, also the Secretary of Defense very frequently finds himself in a position where he is examining the exact same problem that the Secretary of State is examining so that unless you're quite careful, you're going to get your signals crossed. That's what it's important that there be such a position as the Assistant Secretary of Defense in International Security Affairs, because he must act as a liaison with the Department of State and see to it that we are pursuing consistent policies on the various situations that arise.

Q: Does this type of interpretation and this coordination with the State Department make any difficulty in making effective and quick decisions on critical situations?

WARNKE: No, I'd say it certainly makes no difficulty. It eliminates difficulties that otherwise would develop.

Q: You have a great many bases to touch here, though, don't you?

WARNKE: No, because there's no official clearance procedure that has to be followed. But what you have to do is just make sure that the positions which you are taking on behalf of the Secretary of Defense don't run in conflict with the positions that are being taken on the part of the Secretary of State.

Q: Has this occurred?

WARNKE: No, because I've done the job so efficiently.

Q: Between the State and the Defense Department, in reaching an agreement on your policy decisions regarding foreign affairs, are you always in agreement?

WARNKE: Well, of course, we're not always in agreement. There'd be no reason for the President having a multiplicity of advisers if they're always going to be in agreement at all times. And no two human beings find themselves consistently in agreement, even on simple matters. These are matters of immense complexity, and there are often differences of opinion. But what you want to do is to expose those differences rather than to submerge them, and, if necessary, bring them to the President for resolution. And that frequently occurs.

Q: Does it come to a point of a determination of whether this is a military or a diplomatic strategy that should be considered?

WARNKE: I would say that on any problem that's of sufficient significance to be brought to the President of the United States, it's going to be both -- if it's either.

Take for example such a question as, as anything arising out of the Middle East crisis. Now, obviously you can't look at what the American options are in connection with the Middle East without looking at it from the standpoint of what's going to affect the foreign policy interests of the United States and also what's militarily feasible. In other words, let's say that we were to conclude -- which we won't -- that the thing to do at this stage would be to threaten the United Arab Republic. "If you don't sign a peace treaty with Israel, then we'll invade you."

Now, you have two questions on that. One of them would be, politically, is that a desirable thing to do? Would that tend to protect American interests in the area? Now that question as to whether it would be politically desirable would have to be one that would be primarily determined by the Department of State. I'm quite confident that they would determine that the answer is "No", that it would not be in our interests. But let's say that they were to lose their mind and say that the answer is "Yes." Well, then you'd have to make a military determination as to whether or not this could be done. In other words, do you have the capability of invading and occupying the United Arab Republic and, also, in the event the Soviet Union were to take exception to your contact, are you in a position where you can repel any connected counteraction on the part of the Soviet Union!

So on any question of that sort, you've got political matters which are primarily the determination of the Department of State, but on which the Department of Defense certainly would express a position. We would have to express a position because we would have the fundamental responsibility for military implementation of that policy in the final analysis.

Q: Is the order in which you've given these the way you would address the situation, politically and then militarily?

WARNKE: It would, I would suppose, be that more often than the other way around. But it would not be the inevitable order. In other words, there would be come instances in which it would be so clear that your military capability was inadequate so that you would never resolve the political question as to whether or not it would be in your interests to take that kind of overt military action.

Oh, I might cite for example something like Czechoslovakia. I would say that nobody ever really addressed the political question as to whether it would be in the American interest to try and repel the Russian invaders because of the fact that it was so apparent from the military standpoint that you couldn't do it

Q: I believe that our Military Assistance Program comes within your area of responsibility.

WARNKE: That is correct.

Q: I'd really like to just let you talk a little about your views on it in terms of its having done what it is meant to do, and in the light of the fact that it has been sort of a continuing controversy.

WARNKE: Well, let's start out by trying to state what it is that military assistance is intended to do. Part of the trouble, of course, is that it's intended to do a variety of things, not all of which are consistent.

The general genesis of military assistance was in the post-World War II period, where it was important to us to restore the military capability of Western Europe. You had a situation where in the aftermath of World War II their economies and their military machines were virtually decimated. Not only that, but they didn't have the economic capacity to provide for their own defense. And you had the challenge of Russia which was clearly, at that time, in an expansionist mood.

Now, under those circumstances, what you were doing was to shore up the defense of Western Europe. And we had already discovered twice in the twentieth century that the security of Western Europe was vital to our security. I don't think anybody had any doubts about the validity of that objective; and that that program at that time received very widespread support, even from quarters that were opposed to the economic programs that they regarded as being "give-away" programs. In other words, the

relationship of our own national security is sufficiently clear so that even opponents of foreign aid would support a military assistance program.

Now you've got elements of that classic motivation in military assistance still. We still have Greece and Turkey who are members of the NATO Alliance, and who don't have the economic self-sufficiency to provide for their own defense.

Now on other elements that are involved in the Military Assistance Program -- the second one, let's say, are base rights. In some instances our military assistance enables us to enjoy access to bases throughout the world. We are not, in the case of Ethiopia, for example, primarily concerned about Ethiopia's ability to defend itself. Ethiopia's security is not crucial to the security of the United States. Not only that, but they are not subjected to the kind of threat that Western Europe was subjected to subsequent to World War II. But we have certain facilities in Ethiopia which are of value to the United States of America. So in those instances military assistance constitutes a quid pro quo for base rights -- again not very controversial.

And then a third type of military assistance involved training programs, which are designed to preserve American influence over the military machines of foreign countries. You're beginning at that stage to get into a more controversial area. You get people who maintain, for example, that our military training programs and our small materiel aid programs in Latin America have the effect of shoring up military dictatorships.

I think they're totally irrelevant to the existence of the military dictatorships. They would exist because of the internal problems of those countries in the absence of any military aid whatsoever. And we've had recent examples of that. We don't have any substantial military aid program in Peru, but nonetheless you had a military coup. In the case of Argentina, certainly the Onganía coup was, in no respect, subsidized by military aid.

But those who quite rightly look with dismay at the existing internal situations in Latin America tend in some instances to attribute the shortcomings -- that are totally indigenous shortcomings -- somehow to our very small aid programs. I happen to think that the aid programs are valuable, and they're good value for the amount of money that is involved in them. But they are controversial, and we have to recognize that they're controversial.

And then finally you've got military assistance, which I think everybody accepts, to such countries as Korea, or -- maybe everybody doesn't accept it -- to Taiwan, the countries that border on the Communist world; and where we feel that their ability to defend themselves is important to our security -- not as directly to our security in those instances as it is with respect to Western Europe. But nonetheless experience has indicated that if the Communist nations in Asia try any sort of expansion we tend to be drawn in, and from that standpoint it's certainly in our interest to see to it that they've got their own self defense capability rather than our being faced with the very tough decision as to whether to intervene on their behalf as done in the past.

So that you've got a whole collection of different kinds of things under the overall head of military assistance. Now the Grant Aid program itself, the military Grant Aid program, has gone down very substantially in the past several years. I think at one point, Bob, it was what? -- On a comparable basis, something like one-and-a-half billion dollars.

Q [Pace]: 1.532

WARNKE: Yes. And it's now down to something like three hundred and seventy five million dollars. Of that amount some one hundred and sixty million is for Korea; another almost one hundred million is for Turkey; and some thirty-five to forty million is Greece -- So that you can see there's not a great deal left in military assistance.

Q: In grants.

WARNKE: In grants. Now, the more controversial part of the program in recent years has been military sales. And that's what has taken most of the heat. The reasons, I think, are probably more psychological than they are practical.

Really, the controversy back in 1967 originated in the hearings on the Export-Import Bank legislation, because at that point the Banking and Currency Committees stumbled over the facts that the Export-Import Bank had a category of loans that they referred to as "Country X loans." And some of the members of Congress thought that this was an effort on the part of the Export-Import Bank, and more importantly on the part of the Department of Defense, to hide the fact that the Export-Import Bank was making loans to finance sales of military equipment to lesser-developed countries.

As a matter of fact, that was not the case. The Country X Loans were thoroughly known by the Armed Services Committees, and the purpose of classifying them as Country X Loans had to do more with the bankers' caution than it had to do with anything else. The Export-Import Bank wanted them classified as Country X so that neighboring countries would not recognize that their neighbors were receiving credit assistance. But nonetheless this is what started the particular controversy back in the summer of 1967.

And I think that essentially what it showed was the great sensitivity of Congress, reflecting the great sensitivity of the people of the United States, with respect to American involvement. We had all become, I think, influenced by the experience in Vietnam. And some Congressmen have even said to me, in hearings at which I've testified, that the way we got drawn into Vietnam was first of all through military assistance. So as far as they were concerned, all military assistance was bad because it had the potential of dragging us into another Vietnam.

Now the fact is that no military sales on either a credit or a cash basis can be made without the approval of the Secretary of State. So the Department of Defense is not in the position where it's an unfettered arms merchant. It never has been. Our military transfers are all dealt with as a part of the total foreign policy of the United States.

Q: The area that I think comes to mind concerning this most strongly right now, of course, is your Middle East situation. I would take it this would be like what you were referring to in your Latin American countries, except that we've seen a rather dynamic explosion of our arms being used against each other. And it comes down to the question, and I think you may have partially answered this, but that in supplying arms are we not running the risk of generating conflict and not just promoting security?

WARNKE: I'd say the answer there is a categorical "no." That our supply of arms cannot be blamed for any of the conflicts that have existed during our time. Let me give you two examples, and they're the two examples that are cited most often in criticism of our arms supply policy. The first of them is India-Pakistan, and the second one is the Middle East.

Now let's take India and Pakistan. Prior to 1965 the United States supplied major end items both to India and to Pakistan. We did so because of our view that it was important that both of these countries have the capacity to deter any aggression by either Communist China or by the Soviet Union. That's a classic consistent ingredient of our foreign policy. It's sometimes referred to as "close-in containment". It's sometimes referred to as "shoring up the defense of the free world." I don't think anybody really objects to it.

Now the problem, of course, is that the traditional hostility between the Muslims and the Hindus makes the Indians and the Paks look at one another as the other's greatest threat, rather than the Soviet Union or Communist China. Back in 1965, after a series of border incidents, you ended up with a shooting war; and they were both utilizing, to a considerable extent, American military equipment. That war was brought to a halt. One of the reasons that we could help bring it to a halt was that we were the supplier, and we could shut off the tap.

What sort of situation do we have at the present time? You've got one in which the major supplier of Pakistan is Communist China. The major supplier of India is the Soviet Union. Now, let's say that they got back to shooting at one another! Are we any better off because India is firing Soviet bullets, and the Paks are firing Chinese bullets? Or haven't we just put ourselves in a position in which we have lost the ability to influence the conduct of each country to a considerable extent.

Now, I don't happen to advocate a restoration of our role as a major supplier of arms to either the Pakistani or the Indians. But I don't think that that has lessened the degree of tension between the two countries, nor has it diminished the risk that they may shoot at one another. It's just that I feel that from our standpoint we don't gain anything by being a major supplier of arms to either country. It doesn't give us the ultimate control, but our position as an arms supplier or as a non-arms supplier is really irrelevant as to whether or not there's going to be a further outbreak of hostilities between the Indians and the Paks. There are bullets enough in the world, and there are people enough to supply them, so that our role in that connection -- where you've got this sort of a traditional rivalry -- is a matter of irrelevance. Or as a matter of fact you could contend that you had some marginal greater influence by continuing to supply arms.

Now the second instance, of course, is the Middle East. But again you have to look at it in terms of what the alternative is. We are presently supplying the Jordanians with some military equipment. We are supplying some to Saudi Arabia. And we're supplying Israel. And there's no question of the fact that the possibility exists -- a real possibility -- that military arms will be used by one side against the other side. But what's your alternative? The alternative obviously would be not to supply Israel, or not to supply any of the Arab nations.

Now let's say that it were politically possible, which it is not, to cut off Israel at the present time. Would that, in fact, diminish the risk of a flare-up in the Middle East? Or mightn't it -- in fact, wouldn't it almost certainly -- encourage the Arabs to feel that they could now overrun Israel, or try to overrun Israel? Wouldn't they be the less deterred than they are at the present time. We would then be in a position where France has cut off Israel, where we've cut off Israel, and where the Soviet Union is continuing to supply the radical Arab States. So that I would say that the chances of a really prolonged bloody war in the Middle East would be increased.

All right then, your other alternative is to continue to supply Israel, but to say that it's silly for us to supply Israel and also supply Jordan which is shooting at Israel which is returning their fire. But then what happens?

All that then happens is that the Jordanians also begin to receive arms from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union now supplies the UAR; it supplies Syria; it supplies Iraq. Do we want really to add Jordan and Saudi Arabia to the list of the Soviet's clients? Would that promote the chances of peace? Or wouldn't it instead just increase the polarization in the area so that all of the Arabs are looking toward the Soviet Union, and only Israel is looking to the United States. And wouldn't that in turn increase the risk of confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States?

So that obviously none of us likes the idea that the Jordanians may be firing American bullets at the Israelis and possibly at planes that have been supplied by the United States to Israel. But if the alternative is that the Jordanians are going to fly Russian planes, drop bombs on Israel, and the Israelis are going to be flying American planes and drop bombs on Jordan, and then you end up with Soviet military advisers in Jordan and American military advisers in Israel, and then you're off to the races! So you just have to consider what will happen if you don't continue to pursue a policy which admittedly has got distinct limitations and distinct objections.

Q: That answered my other question. You could make a pretty strong case, although it wouldn't weigh the balance of the fact that it would take us out of the atmosphere of being the "big brother" dictating and supplying. But as long as you approach it in the terms that you accept this as a thing we must do in order to keep a balance of --

WARNKE: I'm not saying it's good. All I'm saying is that it's less bad than any other option which is available to us.

Q: In your judgment could there be any changes in this arrangement, or do you see that as the way it is, as it has to be?

WARNKE: In which arrangement specifically would that be? With regard to the Middle East specifically? Yes, sure! All you've got to do is to get the cooperation of the Soviet Union! That's the answer to an awful lot of problems of the world. If we could get the cooperation of the Soviet Union with respect to Vietnam, we could bring the conflict to an end quite rapidly. If we could get the cooperation of the Soviet Union with respect to the Middle East, we could certainly do a great deal to dampen down the tensions that exist in that area at the present time.

Q: But in our own MAP (Military Assistance Program) program you don't see any areas that should be changed?

WARNKE: Oh, I think that there are probably a lot of areas that should be changed, and I would hope that there will continue to be a very careful review. All I'm saying is that it is under very careful review at the present time, and if we make mistakes it's not because we're not trying not to make mistakes. I'm sure that we do make mistakes, and I'm sure that people will continue to. But the question still is the fact that because there are imperfections in our arms supply program doesn't necessarily mean that we would be better off with no arms supply program. I think you've got to pay the price of making some mistakes to get the benefits that, in my opinion, very clearly outweigh the mistakes.

P: Do you see any change in this posture in both military assistance and foreign aid in the future?

WARNKE: I would imagine that the Military Assistance Program as a grant aid program will virtually fade out of existence within the next several years. I think we will continue to supply arms on a sales basis and on a credit sales basis.

Q: You mentioned, of course, the military bases in this. Due to events that have happened within the last couple of years, I know there has been considerable talk about re-thinking or re-evaluation of the need for bases, especially in Europe. What is your assessment of this?

WARNKE: First of all, of course, it depends upon what you feel is a sound American foreign policy. There are some people who feel that the United States ought to withdraw essentially from its foreign commitments -- that our intervention causes more harm than it brings about good. Now if that's your view, then obviously we should withdraw from bases to implement that view.

But let's say that instead of that you feel, as I feel, that it's important that the United States continue to try and exercise some influence on world events; that on the whole our record is good rather than bad; and that, although as we have in the case of military assistance -- we've obviously made mistakes -- our batting average is pretty good. Then

the question is, do we have more bases, or bases in places that are unnecessary to protect the security interests of the United States.

Let's start off with Europe. The fact of the matter is that our bases in Europe have helped preserve the peace now for some twenty- three years. I think that most of our allies in NATO feel that the principal check on Russian ambitions is the presence of a substantial number of Americans overseas; and that if there were to be any marked change in that posture, that that would encourage the Russians into a more aggressive policy than they have been following by-and-large. And that that might lead them to feel that they could with impunity take over Hungary, Romania, even Yugoslavia, conceivable Austria; and bring additional-pressures to bear on West Germany. Now under those circumstances obviously the security and independence of the rest of Western Europe would be threatened, which would impinge unfavorably on our own security posture.

Now the real issue, and I think it's an issue that is real and ought to be debated, is how many Americans does it take in Europe to continue to deter the Russians. And I don't think that there's any good answer to that. At the present time, we've got approximately three hundred thousand. I would say that if you could wave a wand and create a situation in which you didn't have three hundred thousand there and hadn't had three hundred thousand there, but had instead something like two hundred thousand, that we'd be in just as good position as we are now; that that would be regarded by the Russians as a sufficient number of Americans to indicate American concern about the security of Western Europe and American willingness to put American lives on the line. But we don't have two hundred thousand there. We have three hundred thousand. If you had two hundred thousand instead of three hundred thousand, you could cut down on the number of bases.

But if we were to take one hundred thousand troops out of Europe and cut down on the number of bases, what sort of an impression would that give to the Soviet Union! Wouldn't they regard a thirty-three percent cut as indication of American intent eventually to make a sixty-six percent cut, and then a ninety-nine percent cut; and wouldn't they feel -- and wouldn't our NATO allies feel -- that this was evidence of an American adoption of what I've referred to as the first of these theories as to American foreign policy -- that America ought to disengage, become non- involved!

So that I don't think that under existing circumstances you could safely make any substantial reduction in the American presence in Europe, and particularly in the aftermath of Czechoslovakia and the evidence of the Soviet willingness to employ military force to achieve what they regard as their political objectives.

Then you look at the bases in the rest of the world, and you've got quite different atmospherics insofar as our other bases are concerned. You've got some bases which are important because of their location and the intelligence gathering potential that they have -- bases such as those in Ethiopia, some of those in Turkey, and so forth. So that in evaluating the continued necessity for those, you've got to take another look what the

technological state of the art is, and whether there's any acceptable substitute for the intelligence gathering potential of these bases.

That, of course, was the issue with respect to Peshawar in Pakistan. Now at one point, Peshawar was very important from the standpoint of the intelligence that we were gathering, particularly about the Communist Chinese missile activities. It has over a period of time, because of technological advances, become less important. So that this is the sort of base that you can evaluate strictly in technological terms and find out whether the existence of the base, the economic cost, sometimes the political liability, is worth incurring because of the value of the intelligence that you cannot gather through any satisfactory substitute.

Then, finally, you've got the bases primarily in the Pacific. And you'd have to split those into two categories. There are obviously some bases which are of crucial importance as long as the Vietnam conflict continues. So we can put those to one side for the time being. Obviously we're not going to pull back from them.

Then you have other bases such as most of those in Japan, which are important for many of the same reasons that our bases in Europe are important. They are evidence of American interest in the area, of American willingness to become involved in any sort of a security situation that develops in that area. Now your determination as to whether those bases should be retained or whether they should be reduced or whether they should be eliminated, turns on your view of the importance of Asia to the security of the United States.

Now again, I suppose from where I sit I could not be expected to have any other kind of a position -- I regard them as important! I think that it's desirable that the United States continue to indicate its interest in the area. And I think that any sort of a sudden change in our posture with respect to Pacific bases would be misread, primarily by our allies. I wouldn't even attempt to guess what the Chinese would do if we were to eliminate our bases in the Pacific. They might very well do nothing. They've not exhibited, since Korea, any particular inclination to try and expand beyond their own borders. But I think that it would terrify the other independent nations of the area. They're not ready yet for us to go home. I think some Japanese would immediately begin to press for some sort of an accommodation with China; and that this might impact adversely on the security of the area.

So the net of what I think I'm saying is that obviously bases are expensive. They cost us heavily in terms of balance of payments. They bring about a whole lot of unfortunate political situations. It sort of arouses the leftist students in Japan. There's more anti-Americanism because there's more Americans in evidence. But to me it's a pretty cheap price to pay -- net -- in terms of our overall security.

Entirely apart from your views of Vietnam it's clear that the Malaysians, the Indonesians, the Thais, the Japanese, the Australians, the New Zealanders, all take great comfort from American presence in the Pacific. And I like to have them comfortable, because if they're

comfortable they're going to expand. They're going to get stronger themselves. They're going to be in a position where eventually they can take over regional security with our playing a very subordinate role. I think if we were to pull out now this would discourage growth, progress, expansion, on the part of these stronger independent countries in Asia.

So I have come out very strongly for a retention of a substantial American presence and substantial American bases in the Pacific, as well as in Europe. Now that doesn't mean that you shouldn't study to determine whether there are ways in which you can diminish our expense and our exposure. I think we should; I think we are; I think we will continue to. But as far as the overall is concerned, I think it's got to continue to be important for the foreseeable future that we maintain a very evident American presence.

I'm sorry. Mr. Clifford is calling for me.

Q: Mr. Warnke, this is our second interview; and today is January 15, Wednesday, 1969. We are in your offices, and it's just a little before three p.m. in the afternoon.

We had concluded our first discussion talking about Military Assistance Program. I'd like to pick up with that point and ask you more or less a concluding question of your assessment on this program as to what you think the future is for military assistance and foreign aid.

WARNKE: I think if you take military assistance as meaning just some degree of subsidization of military equipment for foreign countries that the future is quite dim. I think that you've got two basic problems. One is that foreign aid has become a highly unpopular subject with the American public. Another one is that when you're dealing with foreign aid at the present time, you necessarily are dealing with the lesser developed countries; so that the normal supporters of foreign aid are the normal opponents of military aid to countries whose economies are lesser developed. So that much of the support that you would anticipate receiving is, in fact, opposition. Now from that standpoint I would anticipate that within the next several years we will find that military assistance in the traditional sense, that is the actually furnishing of hardware either on subsidized credit terms or a grant basis, will be restricted to the instances in which there is a current military situation involving the security of the United States.

You see, the way we stand now, military assistance is basically concentrated in four countries. You've got Korea; you've got Turkey; you've got Greece; you've got Taiwan. In each of those situations we have a direct American interest in the defensive capabilities of the country.

Now the parts of our program that receive major criticism at the present time involve military aid to such countries as Ethiopia and to countries in Latin America. I think I've explained earlier that our military assistance in Ethiopia is basically the payment of rental, for an intelligence installation.

Latin America is basically not directed toward an American security interest in the sense of our fearing that the security of these nations is endangered by external attack, or that this would in any sense jeopardize our security. Instead, the purpose of our military assistance is, quite frankly, to maintain American influence in those countries. Military assistance has been important in that regard because the countries unfortunately are dominated by military regimes. Therefore it becomes more important that, since there is going to be some military influence on them from the outside, that it be our military influence rather than somebody

But when you use that as a rationalization for a military assistance program, you immediately invite the criticism that what your military assistance program does is to preserve military dictatorships. Now that doesn't happen to be the fact, because the military dictatorships obviously would be able to exist whether they received any military assistance from us or not. But nonetheless it does involve us with regimes which are unpopular with the American public. As a consequence, every time you have something like a coup in Panama or a coup in Peru or a coup in Argentina or a reversion by the Brazilian government to a military dictatorship and a turn away from parliamentary democracy, you add fuel to the fire, and you give ammunition to those who oppose military assistance.

So I would anticipate that within the next several years you will have phased out on our military grant aid programs and the soft credit terms on sales of military equipment to most of the lesser developed countries. I would think that, in view of the continued importance of NATO to the national security of the United States, that you will have some grant aid programs for Greece and Turkey. Certainly unless the North Koreans decide that they want to wear white hats instead of black hats, you're going to have military assistance programs to South Korea. I think certainly that as long as the Generalissimo survives that we're going to have some sort of a military assistance program in Taiwan. I think over a period of time whether or not that continues depends upon the activities and, perhaps even more, the pronouncements of Communist China.

Then, of course, we have certain programs which are not at present time legislative encompassed within military assistance. They're the ones where we're involved in shooting wars, and that's South Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos. In those instances, military assistance has been transferred from the Foreign Assistance Act to the Department of Defense budget. I think that's appropriate because I don't think the military assistance should be used to finance wars. That's not its purpose. Now those programs, of course -- and their duration and magnitude -- will depend upon what happens in Southeast Asia. If hopefully we end up with a satisfactory political settlement in Paris, then you would be able to phase those down, and I would imagine that there would be a good chance that they would be transferred to regular military assistance programs of much smaller magnitude, and would belong more in the category of Korea.

Q: Mr. Warnke, one of your responsibilities is as advisor to the Secretary of Defense, on Vietnam. There are so many things to ask really on this. What are your views on the

course and the strategy of the war and the cost to the U.S. with our own resources and our relations abroad?

WARNKE: Well, I would suppose that I should respond to that question on the assumption that this is going to be tightly held -- is that correct?

Q: Yes, it is.

WARNKE: And that it only gets revealed to those people to whom I authorize its revelation?

Q: Yes.

WARNKE: Let's also take into account the fact that I am five days before leaving office. So as a consequence I can speak, I think, without in any way reflecting adversely on the views of any of my colleagues; and without intending at least in any way to be critical.

I have regarded our Vietnam policy as constituting a massive mistake by the United States -- an understandable mistake, but nonetheless a miscalculation. Now, it's easy to say that in hindsight. It was not easy to say it before the fact, and I'm quite confident that I would have participated in making the same mistake that was made. But I think that we should learn from our mistakes, and that we ought also to face up to a mistake when one has been made. The mistake, I think, came in two parts. One was conceptual and one was tactical.

I'd say that the conceptual mistake was that we reasoned -- as we always tend to -- from analogy; and analogy is very treacherous in foreign policy. I've said before that to some extent in foreign policy we emulate Captain Queeg. You'll remember in the Caine Mutiny that all he could do was to hark back to his experience with the cheese -- where earlier there had been a theft of cheese. He had found out then that somebody had copied a key, and therefore anytime anything else disappeared from the wardroom, as did the frozen strawberries, he immediately assumed that somebody had duplicated the key.

Now in the case of Vietnam, I've always had the feeling that 'we reasoned from the analogy of our experience in post-World War II Europe. We looked at Communist China as though it were Russia; we looked at SEATO as though it were NATO; and we looked at South Vietnam as though it were West Germany. And the analogy just turned out not to be apposite. In the first place, I think experience has shown that Communist China does not have the same apprehensions as Russia had about being surrounded, and about wanting to create friendly buffer states. The Communist Chinese have not really dominated North Korea even to the extent that Russia continues to dominate Eastern Europe. Despite the apprehensions of the North Vietnamese they have not in fact been submerged by China. And despite the well-founded apprehensions of the Nationalist Chinese on Taiwan, there really has never been any sort of a determined effort even to take over the offshore islands. I think what it reflects is that China is so big and so

amorphous and so impossible to conquer that they don't entertain quite the really disproportionate fears that Russia entertained, and to some extent still entertains.

The other mistake in the analogy, looking at it from the conceptual point of view, was that we had in South Vietnam a sufficient social and political structure so that reasonable amounts of American assistance would enable us to create a viable permanent functioning government. Now that again turned out to be incorrect. There had never been a country of South Vietnam. What it had been was the more agricultural and the less developed part of just a portion of the French Indochinese empire, so that we were working with less than we thought we were working against a threat which was less than we thought the threat was. And as a consequence, in my opinion, in terms of American security interests we invested more money than the objective was worth.

Now having made that miscalculation of course, it's awfully difficult to change course. It's awfully difficult at some point to say: "Enough is enough; the auction has now reached the point at which I am not going to raise my bid anymore." So in this particular instance I think that we have in fact devoted more of our resources than the prize was worth, because you have to recognize that our objective was a very limited objective.

Now, to me, the vice of the criticism of our effort in Vietnam has been that it has been directed towards our intentions, rather than towards our, I would suppose, evaluation of its actual importance. Our intentions have been laudable. We haven't wanted anything in the way of bases, further territory. I've had a number of people, including some college students, including some Congressmen, say, "Just what is our strategic interest in South Vietnam." I'd say, "The strategic interest is limited to the present war. Those bases aren't worth anything to us except as bases from which we can fight the war in South Vietnam. We would have no intent to ever use them in any kind of an aggressive campaign, and we don't apprehend any sort of a threat emanating from that particular region for which those bases would be of any strategic importance of us."

Similarly I've had college students and some Congressmen ask me, "our interest in the natural resources of Vietnam?" And there is one school of thought, which I think is represented by some of the left wing press, that says that really what we're doing in Vietnam is protecting American business interests -- that we've got some kind of an interest unspecified in the rubber or in the minerals or in something else. Now if that were our objective, we're damned fools, because obviously you could never recoup the amount of money that we have spent with respect to Vietnam.

So our objective, it seems to me, was totally unexceptionable. We believed in what we announced that we were trying to do; and that was to preserve the independence of a small country against external aggression. But, in my opinion, it was a miscalculation, because there was not something there that you could identify as a small independent nation in that sense. All that they've ever really had have been city governments that did not have the apparatus which could be extended into the countryside to exercise control and provide services to the people in the country.

But then, tactically, it seems to me that the trouble with our policy in Vietnam has been that we guessed wrong with respect to what the North Vietnamese reaction would be. We anticipated that they would respond like reasonable people. We anticipated that they would respond, if you will, the way the Russians respond -- that when it becomes apparent to the Soviet Union that we will exact a price which is disproportionate to the goal that they're seeking to achieve, then they change their goal. They don't worry about saving face. They did an about-face in the Cuban missile crisis because it was apparent to them that it was going to cost them too much, and that having missiles in Cuba was not worth facing the risk of a nuclear exchange with the United States of America. The Russians in the various Berlin crises have responded the same way.

There was thus reason to believe, again reasoning from experience and from analogy, that the North Vietnamese would react in that fashion too. They were smaller. They were infinitely less strong than Russia; therefore when faced with the fact that the United States really meant it and was going to exert its power, they should have responded differently than they did. So, as a consequence, following the Tonkin Gulf episodes when we began first of all a reprisal bombing of North Vietnam, that should have been enough. It should have persuaded them to cease and desist from their effort to take over South Vietnam.

But what we could not understand was the importance that they set on that goal, and the amount of hardship and loss that they were willing to endure in order to achieve that goal. So, as a consequence, we had constantly to raise the ante, and eventually -- as I say in my opinion, and it's certainly an opinion with which my colleagues would differ -- we raised the ante too high. We were betting on this particular episode more than we should have.

Then let's look at it in terms of where we go from here. My ex post facto conclusion that it was a miscalculation doesn't mean that at this point we just abandon the game, and accept the fact that we have lost over thirty thousand American lives [and] a very substantial number of billion dollars, in a game that was not worth it, because I think something can be salvaged out of it and something should be salvaged out of it.

Having done what we've done, Vietnam has now assumed an importance that it did not have *ab initio*. It's more important now for us to achieve something in the way of the original American objective than it was when we first started, because a total American failure and a palpable American failure in Indochina at the present time could impact adversely on our ability to do those things that in my opinion we ought to continue to do.

In the first place, the American public is not used to failure. If this were to be regarded as a failure, then there would be a tendency again to reason from analogy and to find in every other world situation another potential Vietnam. Now I think that would be calamitous. Because I think that what we have to recognize is that a power of the size of the United States, and with an influence as pervasive as that of the United States -- we're bound to make mistakes and it's better to make mistakes than it is not to engage in world affairs.

After all, if you again reason from analogy and experience -- which I've just said you should not do -- then you have to look at the example of the other powers that have dominated the world really in the world's interest. For example, the experience of the United Kingdom. Great Britain over a period of years, I would say, exerted on the whole a benign influence. It prevented more misery than it caused -- which is really about all you can expect a world power to do. Nonetheless, she obviously made some very serious mistakes. But at least she did not let herself become discouraged until she had, for reasons beyond her control, to give up her empire, and then found that she could no longer support on an economic basis her continued involvement in world affairs.

But what would concern me would be that a palpable acknowledged failure in South Vietnam would prevent us from doing those things in the Middle East, for example, or would prevent us from continuing to do those things in Europe that are important to our national security and to world peace and progress. So that what I would hope is that something satisfactory can be worked out at a political level in Paris.

I say at a political level because it, to me at least, seems apparent that from the military standpoint you aren't ever going to be able to achieve any kind of a meaningful objective. By that I mean that despite the fact that we never lose any military engagements, we don't have any military way of bringing the conflict to a conclusion.

Now that's because, certainly, of self-imposed limitations. It's because of the fact that the enemy forces, if they get the hell beat out of them in South Vietnam, can always retreat across the borders into either Cambodia, where they get a total sanctuary; North Vietnam, where they now have a total sanctuary; or Laos, where they've got a partial sanctuary.

And it's also attributable to the fact that you can't restore security because in many of the areas security in that sense never existed. So driving the North Vietnamese intruders out does not give you any kind of effective security unless you've got continued occupation.

So that really from a military standpoint, you'd only have two possible courses of action. One would be the geographic expansion of the war, which I don't think would be supported by the American public and which would pose a severe risk of extending the war by bringing Communist China in. Or, alternatively, maintaining a large scale American occupation of South Vietnam for a protracted period of time while you painfully nurse along the political processes so that the indigenous forces could themselves maintain security. Again I don't think the American public will support that sort of a long range effort.

A further problem which you've got is that, as far as Southeast Asia is concerned, a total resolution on favorable terms of the situation in South Vietnam would not in fact achieve our objectives. Our basic objectives are to promote stability in the area and permit the independent countries in Southeast Asia to remain independent.

Now supposing that the North Vietnamese were to say, "Okay, you've licked us; we quit; we're going home; you can put in UN troops lining the border all at arms length." And

you will end up with an independent autonomous anti-Communist South Vietnam. And supposing that as a result of that the North Vietnamese really lived up to their word, pulled every troop out of South Vietnam and brought them all to bear in Laos. Now, they could obviously overrun Laos within -- It might not be a period of hours, but it wouldn't be much more than a period of days, particularly if they took their battle trained forces from South Vietnam and applied them against the Royal Laotian government forces.

And then you'd have a situation in which Thailand and Cambodia would be in even greater jeopardy and in greater fear than they would be if North Vietnam were to take over South Vietnam, but were to leave Laos as at least sort of a pale neutral, state. So that what you need is a political settlement that will permit a resolution of the situation in Laos, and will eliminate any kind of external threat to Thailand and hopefully to Cambodia.

Now that can only be done politically, because I don't think that the will of the American people would be exerted to permit the introduction of ground forces in either Laos or Thailand. So that I have to look at the Paris talks as representing not only the best, but really basically, the sole hope of achieving American objectives in Southeast Asia.

Q: In achieving these objectives the way you are speaking, that includes the complete removal of our presence in South Vietnam?

WARNKE: No, I don't think it does necessarily at all. And I don't think that we need to do that except as part of a total political solution in which there is some other form of assurance of continued stability in the area. I would think that the American public should support a continued American military presence until then, and that it would.

But I'm saying that it won't support either an increased effort or the indefinite prolongation of the present effort, particularly under circumstances in which between one hundred and two hundred American boys are being killed each week. I couldn't set for you just what the price is that the American public would pay, but I would think that if you could scale down gradually the cost of our effort in Vietnam, and could scale down dramatically and permanently our casualties, then the American public would support it for quite a long period of time, and it would be in our interests to do so.

In other words, what I'm saying is that, on the question of Vietnam, I am neither one who says that what we have tried there was totally ridiculous, nor one of those who says that it's vital that we achieve our initial objectives. To me you have to look at Southeast Asia the way you look at anything else, and that's in terms of the overall security interests of the United States. It's worth something to us to preserve an independent South Vietnam. And really the argument, as far as I'm concerned, is not over principle at all. The argument is over price. And what value you set on achieving a single one out of the entire shopping list of American objectives. I think that there are other interests of the United States that are of greater value than having our way in Southeast Asia; and that we have to take those other interests into consideration in determining what our course of action should be in Vietnam.

Q: To go back to what you said about wrong analogies that we've perhaps applied in this area, the domino theory comes in this light, too?

WARNKE: That again is a purely subjective kind of an issue. In my opinion, yes, the domino theory would be an instance of using inapposite analogy.

First of all, what's going to be the moving force that's applied against the so-called dominoes? I've already suggested that nothing in our experience with Communist China indicates that Communist China would be that force.

Q: What about Indonesia?

WARNKE: Indonesia, as the applier of the force? It's hard for me to see how Indonesia would be able to mount that kind of an aggressive campaign against any of its neighbors.

Q: I'm sorry -- I meant the Chinese threat that occurred in Indonesia a couple of years back.

WARNKE: There again, I think I would have to disagree that that was a Chinese threat. I'd say that the threat to Indonesia arose because of the erratic nature of its own ruler; and that certainly Indonesia is no stronger in terms of materiel resources now than it was under Sukarno. What you've had is a change of leadership, and a collection of leaders who A, are strongly anti-Communist; and B, are not subject to some of the personal eccentricities that Bung Sukarno was.

Q: I thought that this was a Chinese Communist attempt to take over the government that was failing.

WARNKE: No, I would not say so. I would say that what you had was a movement within Indonesia which was backed very substantially by Indonesians of Chinese origin who happened to be Communists. But there's nothing to indicate that you had either any substantial number of Communist Chinese who had infiltrated into Indonesia or that the motivating force came from China rather than from within Indonesia. Now obviously it was encouraged by the Communist Chinese; it was applauded by the Communist Chinese; it was supported to some extent by the Communist Chinese.

Q: And it would have set up an alignment with Communist China.

WARNKE: That's correct. But that still would have been done by Indonesians. So a different group of Indonesians got in control, and they were oriented in directions other than towards Communist China. In other words, I think you have to make a distinction between native Communists and Communist aliens.

Now you could say certainly that with respect to Cuba, that this is something that was encouraged and applauded by the Soviet Union, as well as by Communist China. But you

could not say with any degree of veracity that the Castro take-over and the overthrow of Batista was either inspired or executed by either the Soviet Union or Communist China. They did it for themselves.

There's a difference between suicide and homicide. Maybe you've got a responsibility to prevent homicide; certainly to try and prevent homicide. But if somebody's determined to commit suicide, eventually he'll pull it off.

Q: This is what I was thinking about in terms of the domino theory. I didn't mean to interrupt you.

WARNKE: Well, I say it depends really on what you mean by the domino theory. If what we mean by it is that, were the United States to withdraw its military presence from Asia and the United Kingdom were to withdraw its military presence from Asia, a number of changes would take place; those changes would have an escalating effect; they would feed on one another. And you would have, I would suppose, quite radical changes in both the composition and the disposition of the governments.

Under those circumstances you would have to anticipate that Thailand and Cambodia and Laos would be more oriented towards Communist China. Communist China would then be the strong physical presence in the area. I don't think they'd be occupied by Communist China. I don't think they'd become provinces of China. But I think that they would look toward China as being the one great power left in the area. And in that sense they would be "dominoes" because they would fall more and more under Communist China's influence.

But I think that the usual meaning of the domino theory is one of aggression -- and of external aggression. And again we reason from our post-World War II experience that East Europe fell like dominoes under Soviet Russia's pressure. Now I don't see a similar development occurring in Indochina.

You also would have opinions that would vary as to what would cause the dominoes to fall. Now I've already suggested that I have not seen any evidence that China, -- as China and as an external force -- would try and take over the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

I think there's more question as to whether the North Vietnamese might. And certainly one of the apprehensions that the Cambodians and the Thais would have would be that if North Vietnam were to succeed in uniting Vietnam under Hanoi's control, that then the Vietnamese have traditionally been more aggressive than anybody else in Indochina.

But then also you'd have to consider what would that mean in American interests. Would you really feel that San Francisco was jeopardized because of a North Vietnamese-dominated Indochinese peninsula!

Q: Let me ask you that question. What do you think our national interests or strategic value in Southeast Asia?

WARNKE: I'd say it resides in two separate things. First of all, it certainly would not be in our interests to have Communist China control the entire peninsula. That would give them really almost the entire seaboard, and it would I think represent a real threat to the independence, and the western orientation, of not only Japan but also Indonesia, the Philippines, and potentially even Australia and New Zealand.

But what I've suggested is that our fear of aggressors is directed not only at Communist China, but also at North Vietnam. Now let's suppose that North Vietnam were in fact to dominate the Indochinese peninsula. I'm nowhere near as sure that that would be adverse to the national security of the United States. Under those circumstances you'd have to find out what way the Vietnamese hegemony evolved, and whether it constituted perhaps the best buffer against China; or whether it was going, instead, just to be the prelude to Communist China's takeover in the area. And what I submit is nobody can be quite sure which of the two is true.

Q: What were your opinions and views of our bombing? What activities did you play in it, and also do you think we could have stopped the bombing of North Vietnam sooner?

WARNKE: Now, let's break it down chronologically. As I've said, I think that the real purpose of the bombing, initially, was to show North Vietnam that it was going to be very expensive for them to continue on their course of action. It didn't work. And I don't think it ever would work, because I think that once it became apparent that they were willing to pay a disproportionately high price, that then we had to find some other rationalization for the bombing. Now the other rationalizations turned out to be inadequate.

You can look at the purposes of the bombing campaign, it seems to me, in basically three separate ways. One of them is this idea of exacting a toll; showing the other side that it's going to be very costly for him to continue aggressive conduct. Okay, we tried that. I think it was worth trying. It turned out they were willing to pay that price.

A second possible objective is to destroy their war-making potential. We destroyed their war-making potential, but it didn't put them out of the war because of the fact that the war supplies did not emanate from North Vietnam. They emanated from cities that we weren't bombing. And unless we were prepared to bomb the Chinese cities and the Russian cities where the war supplies were in fact manufactured, we couldn't destroy the war-making potential of the other side. As I've put it, I think, on a number of occasions, North Vietnam was not a source of supply, it was a conduit.

Okay, that brings you to the third possible purpose of bombing. Can you so impede and block the conduit as to prevent the flow of men and materials to the battlefield? And I say the answer to that has been proven to be "no." You cannot. You can make it more difficult. You can make it more costly. But you can't prevent it.

Now when I say "can't," I would have to amend that and say that you can't do it by any means that you are willing to utilize. It's possible that you'd be able to do it with nuclear

weapons. But there we would be paying what everybody would concede would be too high a price to achieve our objective.

Now as to whether the bombing should have been stopped sooner; again, that's just a kind of a question on which you're going to get as many different answers as you interview people. I would say that I personally felt for some time that we ought to stop the bombing. I thought we ought to stop the bombing because I thought the greatest value of the bombing was that it was something you could stop. And stopping it, you could demand a price. So that the question you had to ask yourself was at what point would you get the best possible quid pro quo for stopping the bombing.

Now, I think it's pretty clear that, at some point of time in the past, stopping the bombing would not have brought us anything at all. After all, we did have a bombing pause of I think it was thirty-five days back in 1966 -- early '66. That didn't buy us anything because they weren't prepared at that time to make the kind of a deal that would have any appeal to us.

Now, no one will ever know whether if we had stopped the bombing maybe a year before we stopped it, it would have brought us something. I personally thought it was worth trying, and that it might have bought us something. And that it would, in any event, have prevented some erosion of public and world opinion in support of our position in Vietnam.

As it was, when we did stop the bombing, it seems to me that it worked. The bombing first of all was dropped down geographically to the twentieth parallel; and that brought the North Vietnamese to Paris, and to, at least, preliminary discussions about peace talks. Then when the President on October 31st stopped the rest of the bombing, it certainly brought them to the position where they were willing to get into substantive negotiations, and I think those substantive negotiations will take place and that they will eventually succeed. So in that sense the bombing campaign could be said to have been a success.

It achieved a fourth objective. As I said, you could have three possible immediate objectives: One, to raise the price; the second, to destroy war-making potential; the third, really to interdict the flow of men and supplies. A fourth one is that it can be used as a bargaining tool. It has proven, in my opinion, to be an effective bargaining tool.

Q: Along this line, thinking in terms of Vietnam, do you think that our commitment there has caused us to sacrifice other interests in the world that we should have been pursuing?

WARNKE: No, I don't think it has. But I'd say it could. And the consequences of it could be adverse to our interests in other parts of the world. That's why it's important that we salvage something out of it that can be looked at as having been a success.

If you look at what we've done elsewhere in the world while we've been conducting the war in Vietnam, I think you'd have to say that we have protected our position. Take for

example, the situation in Europe. We've maintained over three hundred thousand American military personnel in Europe during this period of time. That has continued, I think, to serve as a very effective deterrent to any sort of overly ambitious ideas on the part of the Soviet Union.

As far as the Middle East is concerned, I doubt like the devil that we would have taken any direct action in advance of the June 1967 war -- even if there had been no Vietnam -- because I don't think that our interests would have led us make any kind of direct intervention by military personnel or that it would have been effective. And as far as other areas of the world are concerned, it's hard for me to see how we have in any respect shirked either any responsibility or failed to take any kind of military acts that might have been called for. So as I say, up to the present time it hasn't cost us in terms of other interests in other parts of the world.

The real risk is that if we don't end up with a solution that the American public accepts as satisfactory, this might eliminate, or at least impede, the appropriate public support for other courses of action that we should take in the future.

Q: What is your opinion of the idea of our involvement in limited wars?

WARNKE: I'm not sure I understand the question. Let me handle it in two different ways: First of all, if what you're asking is whether I think that wars ought to be limited, or whether we ought to apply the full force of American power, I would say that the wars should be limited. Limited wars are infinitely better than unlimited wars, and you're going to have many more of them. You'll have only one unlimited war, and that'll be the last.

Secondly, as far as whether the choice is between limited war and no war at all for the United States, we still have to pick our cases. I don't think that we can assume that our interests can always be protected if we are unwilling ever to apply military power. I can conceive of just a whole variety of situations in which I think you'd have very widespread American support for the application of our military power. Now maybe opinions would vary on most of them; but let's suppose, for example, that the Soviet Union were again to try to establish a power base in the Western hemisphere. And let's say that they picked some place like Guatemala. And they actually intervened physically in Guatemala. Is there any real doubt in your mind that the United States would respond?

We'd respond, I'd say, for a whole host of reasons. First of all, because we could respond quite easily. They'd be playing the game in our ball park, and with a real hometown audience and with all of the umpires really hometowners. So that you would be able to intervene; you would intervene successfully; and you would intervene in a matter which was crucial to the security of the United States.

Okay, then you can pick a whole lot of closer cases. Let's take the present situation in Europe, and let's take a whole series of examples in sort of ascending order of importance.

We did not intervene when the Russians moved into Czechoslovakia. I think that that was just an eminently correct decision. We then would have been playing in their ballpark under the most unfortunate of circumstances, and we would not have been successful.

All right, supposing that they were encouraged by this, and were to say to themselves, "Let's clean out all the heretics; let's really make it a clean sweep!" So the next move is against Romania. Again, I would say that the American public would not and should not support American military intervention under those circumstances. Again, you'd be dealing with a Russian occupation of a contiguous country. Your chances of success would be minimal unless you were willing to brandish the nuclear weapon. Then you might provoke nuclear preemptive strike on their part. Moreover, we don't owe Romania anything. It's essentially still a Stalinist regime, and its basic display of independence has been of an economic rather than of an ideological nature. So that in no sense would there be any commitment, either implied or explicit.

But then you start getting into the harder cases. How about Yugoslavia? And on that, I think you'd begin to find a number of Americans that would say, "Yes, we have to do something." That would be because of a whole variety of factors again. First of all, the Yugoslavs would fight, so you'd be confronted by the situation of an independent country willing to fight for its existence against a powerful aggressor. It would have tremendous emotional appeal.

A second reason would be that the strategic situation of Yugoslavia is of much greater importance to Western Europe than is the case of Romania or Czechoslovakia. So I would think that there would be some cause for actual American military intervention.

All right, then, Austria! Austria is a neutral nation. And we have, although no security commitment, nonetheless we were one of the occupying powers and one of the participants in the arrangement that restored Austria's independence. And there once again, you'd be bringing Communist power closer to Western Europe and to the jeopardy of the security of Western Europe which we've always regarded -- and which I still regard -- as integral to our own security. So you'd have pressure there again for American military intervention.

All right then, take it a step further. Supposing that instead of picking on any of these, they pick on their real Bête Noire and pick on West Germany. That would be regarded as an attack on the United States. Now I for one under those circumstances would support immediate American military intervention and the utilization of the American forces that are presently in Germany. And the standing instructions, of course, for the American commanders there are to fight under those circumstances, and I think we would. And I think that we'd have American support.

Then your question would be -- is that a limited war, or is that an unlimited war! I would do my best to keep it a limited war for as long as I could.

So that I think that the issue is as between unlimited war and limited war, I'm a limited war man. As between limited war and no war under any circumstances, I'm still a limited war man.

Q: Mr. Warnke, when the world stops fighting over what land belongs to whom -- which pretty soon they'll have to do -- do you view the world in terms of spheres of influence, even if the influences haven't quite been determined in some cases?

WARNKE: Meaning no insult, that's a kind of meaningless cliché: The world is always spheres of influence, but the question is what do you mean by spheres of influence. Now normally when people talk about spheres of influence, what they are doing is justifying at least a partial isolationism; that what they're saying is, "We ought to look at this geographically. We're in the Western hemisphere. We include Latin America as under our sphere of influence -- and Canada (although with some unwillingness I would suppose on the part of the Canadians), and give up everything else."

Q: Mr. Warnke, my question was prompted by what you've used as "ball parks."

WARNKE: I'm talking about a ball park in terms of logistics rather than in terms of either cultural or physical assimilation. What I'm just saying is that it's an awfully lot easier for the Russians to fight a war in Romania than it is for us to fight a war in Romania. Now if you recognize that as a sphere of influence, I don't. I recognize that as being a geographical fact of life.

But this sphere of influence theory, as I say, is really an excuse for doing nothing in instances in which you probably ought to do something. Because if you were going to draw any sort of a circle showing the logical sphere of influence of the Soviet Union, it would encompass, I submit, all of Western Europe. And I don't think that would be acceptable to us.

Q: It's not an excuse then to sort of cut up the world and say, "We don't go there, and we can go here."

WARNKE: No. I think that geography is one of the factors that you have to take into consideration in determining the permissible limits of the extension of American military power. But that is not the same as saying you cut up the world into spheres of influence, and recognize some kind of an inherent right on the part of the great powers to exercise dominion in the contiguous countries.

Q: And the other great power is to exercise a hands-off.

WARNKE: I think that great powers ought to keep their hands off whenever they can, yes.

Q: Mr. Warnke, have you expressed these views to the two Secretaries of Defense that you've served under regarding Vietnam?

WARNKE: I would say never in that sort of detail, no. I think that I have expressed to both Secretaries of Defense, at repeated instances, what I would regard as the practical consequences of those views. In other words I have advocated courses that were consistent with those views. But nobody has ever seen fit to draw me out at quite the length that you have, Miss Pierce. I don't think that that exposition of my views would come as any surprise to either Mr. McNamara or Mr. Clifford.

Q: I'd like to ask you about a couple, in the last few years, just specific events that happened in terms of crisis situations. This is the seizure of the Pueblo and the Tet Offensive. These were all early in 1968. What is your assessment of them and view of them, and what did you consider the impact both militarily and psychologically?

WARNKE: Let's deal first with the Pueblo because I think it's the simplest. The Pueblo I regard as being sort of a security sport. It bore no resemblance to anything that came before and had very little impact on anything that came afterwards. I can't of course, know what the motivation was of the North Koreans in seizing the Pueblo. I suspect that it was not planned out in advance. I suspect that it was an on-the-spot impulsive decision. And I suspect that they were surprised that it turned out to be such a coup. I think that it, on the whole, up to the present point has hurt us more than it has hurt them; and as a consequence, they probably still regard it as quite a coup. I think long-range it will do them no good because it was really irrational and motivationless.

At the time, actually, I was in the Far East. We were coming from Japan where I had been at a security subcommittee meeting, and we were landing in Okinawa just as the planes were taking off in the totally vain effort to see if there was anything they could do about the seizure.

Something as irrational and outrageous as the seizure of the Pueblo presents a country like the United States with a problem for which there is no satisfactory answer. There is really nothing intelligent that you can do about it. In the first place, you can't prevent that sort of thing happening any more than you can prevent episodes such as the assassination of Bob Kennedy or snipers getting up in the tower of the University of Texas. But if people behave badly enough and with no motivation that you can discern, then you can't predict their conduct; and it's almost impossible to deter their conduct.

In the case of the Pueblo, of course the immediate impulse is to do something to them in return. Now the question is, what can you do! Immediately after the seizure, there was really the highest level concentration on the available courses of action. There were lots of things that you could do. You could bomb Wonsan Harbor; you could sink the Pueblo you could launch some sort of an attack across the DMZ; you could try and seize a North Korean ship. There were a lot of things that you could have done. The question is, what would any of them have achieved!

Now, we had found in our experience in the bombing of North Vietnam, and our previous experience for that matter in the bombing of North Korea, that a relatively undeveloped

Asian country with a surplus of men can stand an awful lot of bombing without saying “uncle!” So that the net result probably would have been to increase the plight of the Pueblo crew without really achieving any sort of a realistic American objective.

Another thing that you could do would be try and retaliate against the Soviet Union. In other words, supposing that you were to adopt the thesis that all of these Communist ploys are part of an overall orchestrated effort aimed against the Free World, which some people believe and which in some instances may be the case. What you then might be able to do is to seize a Soviet intelligence ship.

Now, if the United States were to seize the Soviet intelligence ship, you would immediately create a confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States; and I would suspect would convene a court of public inquiry in which we would lose because the world as a whole would say, “Here you’ve jeopardized the peace of the world on a thesis which is unproven and unprovable,” namely that the Soviet Union inspired the North Koreans to do it.

An alternative I would suppose would be to have the South Koreans seize a Russian ship. But there again, would the risks that are implicit in that be worth the chances of any kind of gain or profit from it! And I would submit that they would not be.

So, as a consequence, about the best that you could do -- and an unsatisfactory best it was -- was to negotiate with the North Koreans over a protracted period of time and eventually secure their release under less than I would regard as magnificent circumstances.

But looking back at it, it’s impossible for me to see what could or should have been done. But I think that what we did was correct.

All right, then the question is, what can you do about it! Well, you can do a variety of things. In the first place, once outlandish conduct of that sort has occurred, you can no longer regard it as unthinkable. You have to assume that if they had behaved that egregiously at one time, they’re apt to behave that egregiously again, and you have to take steps to protect yourself against the consequences of such conduct.

The other thing that you can do is to try to leave them worse off than they were before. Now that involves, of course trying to strengthen the Republic of Korea. Their real objective, and the only possible motivation -- if there is any kind of a rational explanation of the seizure of the Pueblo -- was that this would somehow advance their cause against the Republic of Korea. Whether it was their intent in the first place or not, obviously they sought to capitalize on the seizure of the Pueblo by worsening relations between the Republic of Korea and the United States; and to drive a wedge between the two; and really to weaken the respect of the Republic of Korea for the United States; and possibly to bring down the government.

Now it didn't have that consequence. It didn't have that consequence because I think we behaved intelligently. The President sent a high level Ambassador, Mr. Vance, over to Korea to deal with the government, to try and calm them down, to try and show America's continued support for the Republic of Korea; and to show that we viewed with just as great distaste the Blue House raid -- which was designed to assassinate President Park -- as we did the seizure of the Pueblo.

The other thing that we did was to get a one hundred million dollar supplemental for military assistance to the Republic of Korea so that instead of appropriating one hundred and sixty million dollars in fiscal 1969, we appropriated two hundred and sixty million dollars. Now that left, I would say, North Korea at least one hundred million dollars worse off in its confrontation with the Republic of Korea -- so that they succeeded, it seems to me, on the whole in winning kind of a propaganda battle up to this point. But in terms of military actualities, they lost ground. I think also that eventually we can make them lose the propaganda value by showing that their conduct was totally unjustified; by showing that the Pueblo did not intrude on their claimed territorial waters, and by showing their abuse of the American prisoners.

Now the Tet Offensive, it seems to me, is an entirely different species of event. The Tet Offensive of course has to be placed in the context of the Vietnam interlude. And to me what the Tet Offensive was, was really just the corroboration of the military and political facts of life -- that you were engaged in a war that could not be brought to a satisfactory military conclusion within any sort of a reasonable period of time. Now all Tet did was to confirm that fact, and make it more apparent to more people. So long range I would say that the Tet Offensive really just hastened the realization of the ultimate facts of the Vietnam predicament.

It showed that although you could make progress in pacification, that this progress could be reversed by the enemy making that kind of a large scale offensive. It showed, also, that whatever your ability to beat the enemy on any kind of a sustained basis, the enemy would still retain the capability of launching this kind of an attack; and that you could not provide the sort of continued security in South Vietnam that would enable the government to make steady progress as far as extending its control where the countryside was concerned. So that the net impact was to make us face up to where we were in Vietnam; and what our prospect was of achieving a wholly unilateral military solution. As a consequence of course, it had a great deal to do with the decision first to cut back the bombing, and then eventually stop it.

Q: During the course of this answer, you spoke about 'things being sort of related to orchestration of events. Do you see that in any of the crisis situations that have arisen? Is there a relation between something like the Pueblo and Vietnam?

WARNKE: I have not been able to find any satisfactory evidence that this is part of the coordinated, worldwide Communist plan. It may be. But if so, certainly the evidence is unpersuasive to me at the present time. I think there are some people who quite rightly speculate as to whether or not there is some relationship between, say the seizure of the

Pueblo and the Tet Offensive; and whether this is all being coordinated in Moscow. If that's the case, they do a better job in security than we do.

Q: During crisis events such as this, do you work with the White House; do you contact them, or do they contact you, on standby --?

WARNKE: Well, I think as I said in our first interview my participation is almost exclusively through the Secretary of Defense and through the Deputy Secretary of Defense. So in most instances somebody like Walt Rostow will be directly in contact with the Secretary or with the Deputy Secretary. In some instances I have worked directly with the White House. And, of course, I do work directly with my counterparts over in the State Department. But the White House contact is at the Secretarial level.

Q: You mentioned earlier that you were Chairman of the POW committee? Could you tell me a little bit about what you were doing in that area?

WARNKE: Well, the Prisoner of War Committee was set up by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Mr. Nitze, and I think it was in July 1967. The idea was to coordinate the various activities of the Department of Defense in the prisoner of war field and to provide sort of a regular group that could coordinate these policies and do what we could to promote the welfare of our prisoners. It also gave the Department of Defense a point of contact with Governor Harriman over in the State Department, who of course was appointed by the President as the overall supervisor of prisoner of war matters.

Now what we've endeavored to do is to, of course, do what we could to promote the release of American prisoners of war, and see if we couldn't take advantage of any kind of openings that did exist. We've had very limited success in that regard.

Another thing that we've endeavored to do is to bring to bear such pressure as could be marshaled to achieve some betterment in the conditions under which the prisoners of war were being held. We really know what our success has been in that regard. All we know is that prior to the formation of our committee I think that Governor Harriman's public affairs campaign against the proposed war crimes trials of the prisoners of the North Vietnamese was successful. I think that it did indicate to the North Vietnamese that this would be an unfortunate development for them, and would cost them in terms of world opinion. Therefore they did not proceed with those trials.

I would hope that the various efforts that we have made to get them to live up to the Geneva Conventions may have had some impact on their treatment of our prisoners of war. But so few have been released at the present time that we just have no evidence in that area.

Q: You spoke about working and coordinating with your counterpart in the State Department. How does this work? Is there any overlapping, or is there any difficulty in arriving at decisions when you need to touch base in the various areas, and yet formulate your own?

WARNKE: I would say no difficulty in reaching decisions; if by that you mean is there some sort of a procedural impasse. There is not. I have a telephone with a direct wire to the State Department. It's very easy to dial any of the Assistant Secretaries or the Under Secretaries or anybody else, and they will usually answer the telephone. If by difficulties you mean are there differences of opinion, there frequently are, of course, just as there are differences within this building and within the Department of State. I have found that the relations on the whole have been quite harmonious, and that we've been able to resolve any of these issues.

Q: Can you generalize in saying that the position of the Defense Department and the State Department is such, or has differed on these Occasions?

WARNKE: No, I couldn't say that there has been any sort of a consistent pattern of difference. There's no secret of course of the fact that Secretary Clifford, having come into office in 1968, was not as personally committed to the course of events in Vietnam, as say, Secretary Rusk, who had been in office since 1961. Now that frequently has been reflected in positions taken, but that's just really a chronologically inescapable situation.

But if by your question you mean, do we reflect essentially the military point of view, or a Defense security point of view, whereas State represents a diplomatic point of view, I'd say "no" that we're both working after all in the interests of national security, and that really there is a degree of similarity between the approaches of almost everybody in the national security field which insures that there are going to be many more coincidences of view than there are disparities of view.

Q: I believe in your capacity in this position that you worked with the National Security Council. Could you give me your opinion of the effectiveness of this institution?

WARNKE: I'm a tremendous iconoclast when it comes to organizations. I don't think it really matters a darn what sort of an organization you have. And a National Security Council is effective if you utilize it effectively with effective people. But it would not be indispensable, and no formal organization is indispensable.

An awful lot of the national security decisions have been made at the so-called Tuesday lunch. That's because the President of the United States elected to meet on Tuesday with the Secretaries of State and Defense and with his National Security Advisor and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Now that was an "institution" that, as far as President Johnson was concerned, worked. Now if President Nixon wants to have regular meetings of the National Security Council at which he brings together those people and some added starters and he in fact uses that as an institution in which differences of opinion can be aired, worked out, and resolved, then he'll have an effective National Security Council. But you could have a Friday night tea party and it might be just as effective an institution.

I'd say one of the problems of something like a National Security Council is that it acquires sort of an institutional life of its own, and builds up a momentum that sometimes continues beyond the period of utility. For example -- here I really demonstrate my iconoclasm -- the Cabinet, as a working group, years ago outlived its usefulness. At one point of time the Cabinet consisted of the President's closest advisors; and therefore you could get the Attorney General and the Postmaster General and the Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of State and the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy -- get them all together -- and hash out issues of national security. The Cabinet at the present time, as an institution dealing with national security, would be a terrible anachronism. There's just no way why the Postmaster General would have anything pertinent to say about what you do in response to the Pueblo seizure, for example.

Now the National Security could -- I'm not saying it ever has -- but it could acquire some Cabinet status. You might find that some of the people who participated in the regular deliberations were just making no contribution, and that, as a consequence, the existence of a national security council and the necessity for undergoing its meetings and living through them turned out to be an irrelevancy, and even a diversion in the orderly administration of the national security. I think it would have to do with the experiment and not be committed to any particular organizational structure, and then, finally, find some sort of formula and some way of working which in fact works.

Q: Has President Johnson used the National Security Council much in order to make his decisions?

WARNKE: I don't believe he has, at least not during the period of time that I've been with the Federal Government. I think it has been used more as a body which endorses decisions which have previously been reached.

Q: I have a nice broad question for you. What do you see as the future in the importance of NATO in regard to our national security?

WARNKE: Certainly as far as the immediate future is concerned, NATO is going to have very direct relevance to our national security. I think that the conduct of the Russians during the past summer indicates that they're not really housebroken yet. As a consequence NATO is not an anachronism, but NATO as a defense alliance does serve a direct purpose in preventing the Russians from doing things that they might otherwise be motivated to do.

Now as far as its future is concerned, it depends of course on what happens in Russia. And that's something I just plain could not predict. I don't know enough about the power structure in Russia to make any kind of a guess as to how decisions are made, by what sort of majority they're made, and whether this majority is one which is firmly entrenched or whether it's one that's apt to be supplanted. We can't even tell whether these supplanters would be more militant or less militant, so that I couldn't make a guess at the present time. All I can say is that under this present circumstance of uncertainty, it's certainly in our interest to continue to maintain a strong NATO.

I'm afraid I've only got about five more minutes.

Q: In your judgment why are we having such slow progress on the question of disarmament?

WARNKE: There again, you'd have to ask the Russians. It's in my opinion, totally imprudent for the United States to disarm unilaterally, and we have never really been able to engage in any sort of a meaningful dialogue with the Russians on bilateral disarmament. The one area in which they have indicated a willingness to talk, as you know, is in the strategic missiles field, and I would hope that some progress could be made at a very early date in those discussions.

I think that they've recognized that in term of any kind of realistic application of military power, strategic missiles don't buy you anything -- that their one value is in their ability to prevent somebody else from using their strategic missiles to achieve their political and military objectives. Now I would suppose that they have become sufficiently sophisticated in the strategic field so that they would recognize that you can achieve this same mutual deterrence at less cost. In other words, it doesn't matter whether each side has got one thousand ICBM's, or whether each side has got fifty, as long as they're in a position to inflict on one another the same degree of damage. And under those circumstances, it's going to create the balance of terror which exists at the present time. But it would be less costly and really less dangerous; because even then the nuclear exchange, although it would inflict commensurate degrees of damage, would not be so totally devastating to one another's society.

Q: Then your views on the deployment of something like the ABM missiles are that we should continue negotiations before we escalate our use of them?

WARNKE: I'd say my view on the ABM is a somewhat a schizoid one. The ABM really doesn't buy you anything long range vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. By that I mean that all that it does is force the Soviet Union to increase its offensive strength so that they can neutralize your deployment of the defensive system. There is no effective system that you can build that will really be enough to meet the Russian offensive potential.

All right, then the question is why do you build an ABM! Well, I can think of two good reasons. The first one is that vis-a-vis the short range and even reasonably long range Chinese threat, it is effective. So here for something like five to six billion dollars you can buy an insurance policy. Now it's an insurance policy against a relatively unlikely disease. But nonetheless, if the premium is not excessive, it's worth our while to buy that sort of an insurance policy. So vis-a-vis the Chinese threat I agree completely with the decision, to deploy what we refer to as the Sentinel system. It costs five billion dollars, and I think its five billion dollars well spent.

Then what you have to consider is whether buying that insurance policy has got any kind of negative implications insofar as our relations with the Soviet Union, the possibility of

strategic talks, a Soviet- United States arms race, etc., are concerned. And that really depends upon whether you're able to engage in any sort of meaningful dialogue with the Soviet Union.

Now the Soviets themselves have deployed a limited ABM system. The only one that can be identified as such is around Moscow. It really won't work against an American threat, but nonetheless they have one. Now if you were going to have talks with the Russians, you are probably better off if you've got an ABM system that you can trade off against their ABM system in terms of limitations. So, again, as a bargaining tool, it's useful vis-a-vis Russia. As a defensive system, it could be rendered useless against Russia.

But I don't think that our decision to deploy an ABM lessens the chances of getting into a meaningful dialogue with the Soviet Union. I'd say that the real risk of a decision to deploy an ABM is that those who have not thought the problem through may be encouraged to the illusory view that you can build a better system that would be effective against the Soviet threat; and that it may result in pressures to spend forty or fifty billion dollars when that additional thirty-five to forty-five billion dollars will really be wasted.

Q: Would you like to cut here?

WARNKE: I'm afraid that's it.

Q: Mr. Warnke, we had left off in our last interview discussing deployment of ABM systems. I want to continue and conclude our interview today, which is Friday, January 17. We're in your offices. It is around quarter-of-four in the afternoon. I'd like to ask you about your views regarding our national security and international security affairs relating to the Nonproliferation Treaty.

WARNKE: Well, obviously, the Nonproliferation Treaty is very much in our interests. Now, I don't think that it's a substitute for some type of agreement with the Russians over the control of strategic weapons. I don't really think that it provides you with an insurance policy against proliferation. What you can say for it is that it's about the best you can do under the circumstances.

Now, obviously, any treaty is just as good as the will of its adherents to live up to it, and I think that you would have to anticipate that pressures could develop in various parts of the world that could lead to repudiation of the treaty by the countries affected. The great advantage of the NPT is, in my opinion, that it takes political pressure off such countries as the Federal Republic of Germany to acquire a nuclear capacity. They can point to the Nonproliferation Treaty. They can point to the fact that it does contain some guarantees insofar as the nuclear powers are concerned. Therefore, they can avoid doing something which might be regarded by them as undesirable, but might prove to be politically necessary in the absence of an NPT.

I think, similarly, countries such as India, which again would be one of the threshold countries, can rely on the NPT as eliminating a political push to do something which the

leaders of the country might want to resist. The same perhaps to a lesser degree would be true of Japan because, of course, the political pressures would take longer to build up because of the Japanese aversion to all things nuclear. So that the NPT, it does seem to me, will have the effect of deterring the entry of other countries into the nuclear field. Now, that's only one step in eliminating the danger that nuclear weapons pose, not only to us but to the rest of the world.

Q: Of course, we have China to consider at this point, too.

WARNKE: You have to consider China, but fortunately the Chinese are still several years away from having a deliverable nuclear weapon. Not only that, but we have the capacity at the present time to develop and deploy an ABM system which would put them several more years away from any capacity to strike us with nuclear weapons. What you have to hope is that time wounds all heels and, as a consequence, the Communist Chinese may acquire a degree of political maturity which would make them more willing to enter into such things as an NPT. That's all you can do, really. In international security, all you can do is live from year to year. But consider the alternative.

Q: Mr. Warnke, what do you see as our future pressure points in the world?

WARNKE: Well, a major one, of course, at the present time is the Middle East. I say the Middle East because, although there are a lot of other areas which are of tremendous importance to the people of that area, the Middle East is the potential cockpit for the confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States. Now certainly as far as the Biafrans are concerned, they're much more concerned about the Nigerian civil war than they are about the Middle East. But from our standpoint, and from the standpoint of third countries and non-participants in present combat, the Middle East has to rank easily first on the scale.

As far as Southeast Asia is concerned, that's really sort of eliminated as a source of potential confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States. Instead of that, it's an area in which the Soviet Union and the United States, probably, in the long run will develop a common interest. But whatever we are doing there now will not bring in the Soviet Union. Whatever the Soviet Union is doing there now will not provoke us into an extension of that war. So in terms of the overall threat, and the basic threat, the ultimate threat -- that of a confrontation between the Soviets and ourselves -- Southeast Asia has now been canceled out.

As far as Europe is concerned, that would have to rank number two, because I think we said the other day that although the United States has to recognize the geographic facts of life and cannot intervene effectively in either Czechoslovakia or perhaps in Romania, there are points beyond which the Soviets could not push without bringing about a confrontation. I think, however, that Europe is more within the control of the great powers than the Middle East is. We know the limits of permissible activity in Europe. We know, for example, that were we now to try and free the captive nations that, obviously, the Soviets could not stand for it. You don't hear anybody anymore talking about Latvia,

Estonia, and Lithuania. On the other hand, although the Soviets make occasional threatening gestures towards the Federal Republic of Germany, I think there's no realistic expectation that they would push to a point at which the NATO guarantee would be called into play. We know what the ground rules are pretty much in Europe. They know what we will stand; we know what they will stand.

In the Middle East, however, we don't have the ground rules established, or sufficient control over that which the indigenous people do, to avoid this ultimate risk of confrontation. That's why that is potentially the most incendiary issue that we've got.

As far as other pressure points go, it's pretty hard for me to identify any that I regard as being terribly serious. Again, they're serious for the people of the area, but they're not really serious for American security. They could become so, but under the present circumstances they are not. The traditional enmity of the Muslim and the Hindu, for example, doesn't really pose any immediate risk to our security. The chances are that if you had a confrontation between India or Pakistan at the present time both the Russians and we would want to see it end. That's what happened in 1965 in Tashkent, and I think it would happen now.

I don't think that the Communist Chinese pose any immediate threat to their neighbors on the west. I don't think that they're apt to invade either India or Pakistan. After all, they've worked out quite a satisfactory relationship with Pakistan. And as far as India is concerned, I would think the last thing in the world the Chinese would want would be the job of trying to administer India. It's no more likely than India wanting to try and administer China. They've both got troubles enough as it is, and why should they buy more! It would be like somebody with fifteen children going into the adoption business and seeing if they couldn't acquire another fifteen.

So that you don't really have in that part of the world anything of immediate concern to our national security. You do have, of course, a long range threat, and that's that any area like that -- teeming as it is with people -- represents at a minimum a very poor market for American products. And the long range ability of the United States to maintain our standard of living requires a peaceful and prosperous world, so that we do retain a distinct interest in the area. What I'm talking about is immediate military threats.

As far as Africa and South America are concerned, I remember George Ball, I guess it was, said, "Their problems are impossible, but not serious." And you say that there's a good bit of truth in that. They're not serious from the standpoint of national security interests of an immediate nature. There is no real prospect of widespread war in Latin America. They're not faced with any threat from outside the hemisphere. Certainly the Russians, as I say, recognize that as one ground rule that has been in effect for some time. And they're not about to challenge the Monroe Doctrine.

There is, of course, the threat of Cuba's effort to export revolution, but that's a threat really of internal security within each of the Latin American countries. And even if the worst should happen and some of those countries should, by their own decision, go

Communist, it's a situation that we could tolerate with no real risk to our national security. We again would be faced with the possibility that the Russians might try and exploit that situation, to bring Russian power closer to us the way they did in the Cuban missile crisis, and we would have to respond to that. But if you have just a native Communist state in, for example, Bolivia, it would be a matter of concern to us, but not a matter of security danger.

In Africa, I think that the best you can say is that over a period of time they'll work out their own destiny, but I think that they will have to do it without our military intervention. And they can do it without our being concerned except on humanitarian grounds.

Q: Mr. Warnke, do you see our national security geared to the impact and response from the other superpowers, mainly Russia? China is, of course, coming along.

WARNKE: Well, I'm not quite clear what your question is. Certainly Russia, by taking an aggressive stance in almost any part of the world, could intimately involve our security interests. If Russia were to try and seek to extend its influence, as I say in Latin America, clearly we'd have to respond and respond immediately and respond strongly. And I don't think that we could look with any equanimity on an effort by the Soviet Union to take over any country in Africa. That sort of external aggression would be something to which we would have to respond. What I'm saying is that there is no indication of that at the present time. There's no indication even that the Soviet Union intends to try and take over any country in the Middle East. I don't think there is any risk that they would try and occupy the UAR or Syria or Iraq, which are the three countries --

Q: Their presence is in the Mediterranean very strongly.

WARNKE: Yes, but, really, do you have to look with terrible apprehension at the fact that the Russians have got forty-five ships operating in international waters in the Mediterranean. We've had more ships than that operating in international waters in the Mediterranean for a long time, and that particular lake is a lot further from our shores than it is from Russian shores. It's something that we would prefer not to see but you can't regard it as being either unnatural or necessarily evidence of incipient hostility.

Again, Cyprus is the kind of area in which we've got an interest from the standpoint of not wanting to see hostilities break out any place in the world. Also, we've got a unique interest in Cyprus because of the fact that the potential adversaries are both members of NATO, and it would certainly not do much for the eastern flanks of NATO to have Greece and Turkey fight one another, particularly since they would utilize American military equipment in that combat. But if you look at it in terms of immediate impact on our national security, you'd have to rank it behind, I think, the Middle East because it's not an area in which the Russians would have really any great chance of either immediate exploitation or immediate involvement. I can't see Russia coming in in any sort of a Cyprus dispute on the side of either Greece or Turkey.

Q: I'd like to shift from this area and ask you what your assessment is of the relations of the Defense Department with Congress, and whether it has hurt, helped, hindered, our progress either in national security or international security affairs.

WARNKE: You really can't isolate or identify in any one category the relations of the Department of Defense with Congress because you're dealing with too many different things. Obviously each of the Services has relations with Congress, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense does. And these are very delicate, very close, and very constant relations. I'd say that by-and-large we get along pretty well with Congress, considering that we're spending so much of the total federal budget and considering the fact -- which we do -- that this will affect so closely both the national welfare and also the individual welfare of the particular states. We're spending an awful lot of money. The way in which we spend it has direct impact on the constituents of every member of Congress. So consequently they're never going to be totally happy with what we do. All you can really do I think, as Mr. McNamara put it once, is to try and build up a certain store of good will, recognizing that you're going to draw very heavily on it, and recognizing that at some point you're going to become overdrawn with any individual member of Congress. And that does occur.

One of the continuing problems, of course, is the fact that the members of the Armed Services Committee acquire a degree of expertise and acquire strong opinions on Defense matters. They don't like to see those opinions running contrary to those of the current incumbents in the civilian slots in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. And they're never persuaded that they would not make better Secretaries of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Secretary of Defense than those current incumbents. But I think that it works reasonably satisfactorily.

Q: Do you feel it has deteriorated at all over the last few years?

WARNKE: No, I'd say that during the last ten-and-a-half months, during Mr. Clifford's term, that they have improved greatly. But some people would say that they had no way to go except up at that point. But when a Secretary of Defense is in office as long as Mr. McNamara was in office, his relations with Congress are just bound to worsen. During that period of time he becomes overdrawn in the good will account with just about every Senator that there is, because he is bound during that period of time to have done things that have stepped on their particular toes, and Congressional toes are extraordinarily sensitive.

Now Mr. Clifford, I think, has profited both by the fact that he was new and by the fact that he is extraordinarily good at getting along with people. And he has been able to reach accommodations on certain issues that were of major importance to the more powerful members of the Armed Services Committee. He has been able to do so without compromising the overall objectives of the Department of Defense. I would anticipate that Mr. Laird, because first of all he comes from Congress himself and is familiar with the way they operate -- the way in which they think -- and also because he too will be new, will be able to get along quite well with Congress for a period of time. I would say

that if he stays for seven years that he will be in about the same parlous state with respect to his Congressional relations as Mr. McNamara was at the end of that time. It's a great argument for rapid turnover in Cabinets.

Q: You spoke of certain issues in regard to Mr. McNamara's having problems with Congress? What were they?

WARNKE: Oh God, I couldn't conceivably go through the inventory. But, you know, there are a variety of chronic things. For example, like the size of the attack submarine fleet, or the extent to which you're going to go for nuclear propulsion on surface vessels. And then a whole host of things that fortunately belong under the jurisdiction of Assistant Secretaries other than me.

Q: Since you're speaking of two Secretaries of Defense and you've served under them both, I'd like to ask you how you would compare these men in terms of style, pace, decision-making relations with their staff and the Services.

WARNKE: I would say that the similarities far exceeded the differences; that, in the first place, both of them have been prodigious workers. I don't think that it would be easy to find any two men who have worked as hard as both Mr. McNamara and Mr. Clifford worked. The only two that come to mind immediately are Mr. Vance and Mr. Nitze.

As far as their relations with their staff are concerned, in both instances they were men with a talent for human relations. They had an ability to draw, I think, the devotion and the dedication from their subordinates; and had an awareness of people as people.

There's a great difference in style. Mr. Clifford is a much more deliberate man insofar as his manner of speech and his manner of approach is concerned. I think oddly enough, and quite contrary to the public image, that Mr. McNamara had a tendency to shoot from the hip to a greater extent than Mr. Clifford. He was more apt to reach a decision on a spot basis and on the basis perhaps of less information.

But the basic similarity is that they are both great human beings, men of extraordinary intelligence, extraordinary comprehension -- and that both have served their country, I think, superbly.

Q: Have you had any changes in this particular office with the changeover in Secretaries?

WARNKE: No. I would say that the basic work of the office has continued pretty much without change. There are, of course, certain differences in the demands that any Secretary places on any part of his total empire. In the case of Mr. Clifford, one thing that we've had, of course, is the fact that he has had a morning staff meeting every morning at which I was one of the participants. So as a consequence that has changed my daily schedule -- And also the fact that there has to be preparation for that.

Q: Every morning?

WARNKE: Yes, every morning. This has made some change in the operation of ISA, wouldn't you say, John? [Lt. Col. John Conlee, U.S. Army, Assistant Executive Officer to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA)]

CONLEE: Yes.

WARNKE: But that's the principal difference.

CONLEE: Yes, sir, I think so. And of course the gap was filled by the presence of Mr. Earle to pick up a lot of things which you could no longer _____.

WARNKE: That's right.

Q: Would you repeat that? That won't be on the tape.

WARNKE: Well, what Colonel Conlee has brought up -- and it is a fact -- is that because of the fact that every morning for about an hour-and-a-half I sit down with Mr. Clifford, this means that a lot of the functions that I would have performed during that period of time have been performed by my principal deputy, Mr. [Ralph] Earle [II].

Q: Mr. Warnke, how much do you think that our commitment in Vietnam has affected this Administration in terms of reputation and popularity both here and abroad?

WARNKE: That's an awfully difficult question. I would say that it has affected it very dramatically, and very adversely; that there's no question in my mind of the fact that it brought about the premature retirement of President Johnson from public life; that were it not for Vietnam he would have run for re-election and been re-elected. So in that sense, it not only affected the Administration, it changed the Administration!

As far as world opinion is concerned, I think that the impact has been far less dramatic. After all, we're quite a responsive democracy, so as a consequence changes in American public opinion bring about direct political change. Changes in world opinion do not bring about that kind of dramatic change politically in the United States. We've been able to withstand unpopularity abroad over a period of our total history.

What it has done, I think, is to bring about certain changes in the reactions of our allies. I would say, for example, that it did have for a period of time somewhat of an adverse effect on NATO, because the Danes, for example, found our Vietnam effort to be unpalatable -- and because of the fact that there was great criticism within some of the other NATO countries about America's participation in Vietnam and accordingly, some resistance to the continued participation of these countries in NATO.

Those pressures, however, did not have any lasting effect for two reasons. First of all, the Russian's misbehavior, and the fact that NATO became more important to its

participants. And secondly, the decision of the President to cut down the bombing drastically in March of last year. That took an awful lot of the public opprobrium away from our Vietnam effort.

So that I would say that the principal impact has been a domestic one; and what it did is really put a premature end to the career of President Johnson.

Q: I don't think I've asked you what your activities were in the assessment of the Middle East crisis as being a particular crisis situation that erupted during your tenure. Could I have your views on that?

WARNKE: My views as to what my participation was.

Q: Your activities, and your assessment of it.

WARNKE: Well, ISA, of course, acted as the principal adviser to the Secretary of Defense during the June 1967 crisis. I can't say what my own reactions were because that was two months before I took office. I was General Counsel at that point.

Q: I knew there was a reason for not asking it.

WARNKE: I did, however, participate on certain task forces as General Counsel at the request of Mr. McNamara. I worked with McGeorge Bundy during the brief period of time that he was down here helping the President's evaluation of the crisis.

Q: What was your view of the sinking of the [USS] "Liberty"?

WARNKE: Obviously, it was the kind of inexplicable and indefensible action that occurs in wars. I found it hard to believe that it was, in fact, an honest mistake on the part of the Israeli air force units. I still find it impossible to believe that it was. I suspect that in the heat of battle they figured that the presence of this American ship was inimical to their interests, and that somebody without authorization attacked it. It's a reason why you should try and avoid wars.

I'm afraid that we're going to have to terminate this now.

Q: Could I ask you a final question?

WARNKE: Yes.

Q: Have you been interviewed by any other historic group, another Presidential history program, or anything along that line?

WARNKE: No. You've got an exclusive on this, Miss Pierce.

Q: In any sort of public statements that you've been quoted, do you have any changes or corrections or additions?

WARNKE: I can't think of any now. I think that I can say safely that I had read all of my speeches before I delivered them, and as a result they were consistent with my views.

Q: The only thing I haven't asked you about is your activity surrounding the transition of government. Do you have a moment to answer that? That's my final question.

WARNKE: Well, of course, neither Mr. Laird nor Mr. Packard has been able to spend a tremendous amount of time over here. I have had the opportunity to talk with both of them to give them my views as to the functioning of the operation; and I have undertaken to spend the next ten days at this job. And I will endeavor during that time to ease the transition to the extent that I can.

Q: Do you have any further comments?

WARNKE: I have no further comments.

Q: Thank you very much.

WARNKE: Thank you very much, Miss Pierce.

End of interview