

Dean Rusk Oral History Collection  
Rusk 7B: Part 2 of 2  
Dean Rusk interviewed by Uri Ra'anan and Richard Rusk  
circa 1985

The complete interview also includes Rusk 7A: Part 1.

DEAN RUSK: When the Czechs--when the Russians moved into Hungary and into Czechoslovakia, initially there was a good deal of fraternization by Russian soldiers with the local people and in the case of Hungary they had to go out to central Asia and bring in some central Asian forces in order to finish up that job.

RA'ANAN: In fact, some were told that they were coming to Suez. They didn't realize they were in Hungary.

DEAN RUSK: (laughter) Well, I remember--I think this was about Czechoslovakia--the picture of a woman talking to a Russian soldier on a tank, "What are you doing here? This is my country!" Very dramatic.

RA'ANAN: Back to the question now of policy implementation and the monitoring thereof: can that really be institutionalized? I suppose it can. In a crisis that's easy. There is a crisis body. It's managed. It is certainly micro-managed from day to day and probably from hour to hour.

DEAN RUSK: Well, there's one aspect of that which interests me. I've thought about trying an article on it sometime. I am skeptical of sweeping generalizations for describing policy. You'll notice that during my eight years of Secretary of State I didn't come up with any slogans.

RA'ANAN: The "so and so" doctrine. The "such and such"--

DEAN RUSK: That's right: massive retaliation--

RICHARD RUSK: It might have helped if you did.

DEAN RUSK: --that kind of thing. But--there are certain guidelines of policy which are well understood, taken for granted, and which do not require much monitoring from the top. For example, it is known throughout the Department of State that the United States prefers that disputes are settled peacefully, not by violence. It is known that we traditionally comply with our treaties. It is known that if there is a major natural disaster or catastrophe somewhere that it is our inclination to try to be helpful. There are dozens of those guidelines of policy which operate more or less routinely in the operations of the Department. But, bear in mind that a Secretary of State usually has a daily meeting every morning with his senior colleagues, and at that time we go around the table and take up a lot of questions as to where we are, how are we getting along, what's being done, and that is a monitoring process which helps to take a look at what is actually being done. Now, every morning, also, I would have on my desk maybe thirty-five to fifty of the

more important outgoing cables that went out the day before, even though a number of them I had not seen before they went out. That gave me a chance to keep in touch with what was happening and to intrude myself where I thought such intrusion was necessary. Now, I think the-- it is not--although the process is not institutionalized in the sense that there is a staff whose primary function is to monitor--nevertheless, the process of monitoring is a continuing process that does, in general, work.

RA'ANAN: Now, I know that there have been a number of cases where we gave body signals that weren't intentional but were read by the others, and it led to serious consequences, and I think one, of course, is the famous speech by President [John Fitzgerald] Kennedy in July of '61 about Berlin that mentioned access. It mentioned all kinds of questions, but never mentioned the question of an obstacle between the two Berlins and clearly the Soviets must have read this as being by default, at least, a reasonably green light. I happen to know at least one other case which must have strengthened it and that was a member of the Administration. Actually, it was Arthur [Meier] Schlesinger [Jr.]. It was at a cocktail party and I happened to be there and there were at least five people there who could be absolutely relied upon to carry to the Soviets--

RICHARD RUSK: Hey! Let's tell one on Schlesinger, here. I'd like to hear this.

RA'ANAN:--and he started to deliver himself. I mean, by that time, the truth was he wasn't that well in with the Administration anymore, but they didn't know that. Everybody thought, "Well, the mouthpiece of the Administration." He said something to the effect that we have to be understanding if the Soviet Union regards Berlin as a running sore and in order to deal with this problem--it's a very serious problem for them--there are a number of steps that they would probably have to take and we would have to be understanding of these steps. He mentioned (unintelligible), the radio station, of course, in Berlin, and he mentioned the creation of an "obstacle" or "wall", which I quote. There was some third point, which, unfortunately, I have forgotten. Now, here we had two signals coming out: one, from the President, himself, by default--simply by omission, which is a little reminiscent of the famous [Dean Gooderham] Acheson speech in Korea; but the other one, also, not so much by omission but by commission. And when I'm talking about monitoring, I am also talking about how does one monitor that kind of thing and say, "Wait a minute--let us see how all this traffic is likely to be read by the other side."

RICHARD RUSK: Were you aware of Schlesinger's comments, Pop?

DEAN RUSK: No, but urn--

RA'ANAN: But not surprised, I'm sure. (laughter)

DEAN RUSK: There was another factor which--

RA'ANAN: You can excise that if you want to.

DEAN RUSK: --which was overriding in that situation. Urn.--Berlin had provided for a number of years a gateway through what Mr. [Winston Leonard Spencer] Churchill called The Iron

Curtain, which extended from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea across Europe. Now, in 1960 and '61 the movement of people through that gateway from East to West became a hemorrhage. The numbers just mounted very rapidly and the East Germans were losing a great deal of their professional talent in terms of doctors and lawyers and engineers and skilled workmen and so forth.

RA'ANAN: I think it was thirty thousand in the first half of '61.

DEAN RUSK: Thirty thousand a month, wasn't it?

RA'ANAN: Was it a month?

RICHARD RUSK: I think so, yeah.

DEAN RUSK: Thirty thousand a month. Well, it was our judgment that from their own point of view the East Germans and the Russians would have to do something to stop that hemorrhage. We didn't know exactly how or what they would do, but here they were with an Iron Curtain all the way across Europe and here was a hole in it through which people were voting with their feet in rapidly increasing numbers. East Germany was bleeding to death and so we thought that it was almost inevitable that the East Germans and the Russians would take steps to plug that hole to stop it. We didn't predict exactly the throwing up of the barbed-wire and the building of the wall at the time it occurred, but we were not surprised, really, from a strategic point of view when the action occurred. But, I suppose, that if the Russians got notice of Arthur Schlesinger's remarks, because they might well have, this is part of what you call the body language where they made the judgment that if they built that wall in Berlin that we would not--we would not try to use force to knock it down.

RICHARD RUSK: Had you anticipated the possibility of the wall being built, would you have tried to signal that that development would not be welcomed by the United States and perhaps you would have resisted it in some fashion?

DEAN RUSK: Well, we might have expressed our strong views but not in language that would promise action to resist it, because you don't make such promises unless you are prepared to follow up on it. [sic]

RICHARD RUSK: Was it an issue when Kennedy's speech was being written?

RA'ANAN: In other words was your omission deliberate?

RICHARD RUSK: That's right.

DEAN RUSK: No, the omission was not deliberate. It was not deliberate. You mentioned Dean Acheson's speech on Korea. When you couple that with the final withdrawal in 1949 of our last remaining regimental combat team from Korea, I think it is possible there that the Russians and the North Koreans took that as a signal that they could move on South Korea with impunity. Indeed, after the North Koreans simply stopped for a period of about ten days because they had

to go back to P'yongyang and maybe to Moscow and even Peking to take a look at the political aspects of this movement of the American forces. Had the North Koreans simply continued to pour south, there's no way that we could have stopped them. We could--

RA'ANAN: (unintelligible)

DEAN RUSK: We could not have built up in time.

RA'ANAN: I remember vividly. I had just started at the monitoring services--

DEAN RUSK: But, uh--this is a little story that you may not have heard: after the Korean affair was all over, an American businessman was sitting at dinner in New York next to Mr. [Andrei Yanuarievich] Vyshinsky of the Soviet Union. In the course of conversation the businessman said to Mr. Vyshinsky, "Why do you Russians pretend to think that the United States is going to attack the Soviet Union? You know perfectly well that the American people have no interest in attacking the Soviet Union." Mr. Vyshinsky replied, "Well, we don't know what to think of you Americans about something like that." He said, "Look at Korea. You did all you could to tell us you were not interested in Korea and when the North Koreans moved, you put your troops in." He said, "We can't trust you Americans." (laughter)

RA'ANAN: But there is some virtue in that: the "inscrutable occidental" from the Soviet point of view gives some strength to our deterrence because they always--

DEAN RUSK: I agree with you. I think--I'm sure that there have been crises which have not occurred because people in other capitols have said, "Now, wait a minute, comrades, we must be a little careful here because these damn fool Americans may do something about it."

RA'ANAN: Right. Right. Now, you said something at the time of the Chinese intervention in Korea for which you were criticized. Now, I don't know whether you were aware, but, in fact, you were correct. Remember, at the time you interpreted Chinese intervention as being essentially at Moscow's behest and not indigenous and there has been a great deal of ink spilled saying this is absolutely untrue. Allen Whiting wrote his book and so on. We know from some intercepts that, in fact, the Chinese intervened at the direct behest of Moscow. They were most reluctant to come in and what is more interesting in the polemics that were exchanged between 1963 and 1965, the Chinese as good as said so and the interesting thing is, as you know, originally there were supposed to be secret messages between the two central committees. So, clearly, the Chinese would not have said that if [Nikita Sergeevich] Khrushchev's entourage would have known this to be incorrect and would have said, "What the heck are you talking about?" But, the Russians, in fact, reacted to it as if accepting the claim. What the Chinese said was "Hey! You sent us in to the front line to bleed for you and what did you do? You then charged us high commercial prices for the weapons you gave us for this great privilege of dying for you." Which makes it crystally [sic] clear that they are saying we did this on your behalf. So, in fact, the comments you made at the time--however much criticism there may be--turn out in retrospect to have been correct. Did you know that?

DEAN RUSK: I wasn't as completely sure of that at the time, but some of the comments I made at that time were part of the--what were in part a polemical retaliation against the Chinese and Russians.

RICHARD RUSK: You're saying that the PRC [People's Republic of China] really was a Soviet-Slavic Manchukuo.

RA'ANAN: Yes, and at that time not really wanting to be, but being made to be.

DEAN RUSK: That--that came earlier, yeah. But--(laughter)--there's one little factor there that bears on this question--what bearing. I'm not sure I know--but in Korea we captured a considerable number of North Korean and Chinese prisoners and that prisoner interrogation disclosed the fact that for several months prior to the North Korean attack they had combed the armies of North China to find the--

RA'ANAN: Ethnic Koreans.

DEAN RUSK: Ethnic Koreans and people of Korean origin and sent them over to join the North Korean forces. Now, to what extent that meant that the Chinese were involved in the planning of the North Korean attack is something that, on which I'll be glad to have additional information someday.

RICHARD RUSK: Can you identify the source for these intercepts? Where is this reported--

RA'ANAN: The British had some intercepts which one of their people came to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] in 1966-67 and gave me some quite detailed stuff on this.

RICHARD RUSK: Is this in published form somewhere?

RA'ANAN: No, it's not. He was, I fear, a very ill-disciplined officer. He really shouldn't have talked about it. (laughter)

RICHARD RUSK: It's not in the public record.

RA'ANAN: Nope, not that I know.

RICHARD RUSK: (unintelligible)

RA'ANAN: But the exchanges and the polemics are, of course. They were published subsequently.

RICHARD RUSK: Well, I'm sure it's nice for an old man to realize that he's been right about something.

DEAN RUSK: Can you turn these tapes off for a second?

RICHARD RUSK: Yeah, you bet.

[break in recording]

RA'ANAN: The sign of Soviet conflict--pardon my doing this in a sort of partisan way, I drop into more specific subjects from the more general ones as they occur--but, I think there is a natural flow to the discussion. To what extent--

RICHARD RUSK: (unintelligible) has a question for you.

[break in recording]

RA'ANAN: I have to remember that on is off and off is on on this.

DEAN RUSK: Yeah, right.

RA'ANAN: Um, I didn't intend to get a great deal into Vietnam because it's been covered so many times and so well and particularly on that day you spent at the Fletcher School, and there is a saturation point. I'm just wanting to concentrate on the phenomenon that was very evident during this period and it had a cultural influence, and I have a feeling that [Robert Strange] McNamara played a considerable part in that--maybe Mac [McGeorge] Bundy, too--and that was the general feeling that somehow the primary adversary--to use [Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov] Lenin's terms--had become the Chinese, not the Soviet Union. And that puzzled me always at the time because in good Leninist terms the primary adversary is not the one who says nasty things, it is the one who has the power to inflict damage. And one could see the fallout of that here, on Hollywood, on films, on television serials. If there was a villain, he had Chinese features. And it was somewhat unusual because of this long love relationship that the American people have had with China. It's a very deep one. I think it can be seen again today and it could be seen, of course, in the novels of the thirties and it seemed to me at the time it was a little unrealistic simply in terms of the power relationship because China was then, as it is even today, relatively a second-rate power, not one that really has the ability to inflict a great deal of damage and appeared to me at the time to be some misreading even of the kind of material that was coming out: the famous (unintelligible) essay along with the victory of People's War. If read very carefully, it's a purely isolationist document. It even says it is a mistake for a revolutionary people to accept outside assistance even though this comes from a properly revolutionary country, meaning China, not the Soviet Union. In other words, it is bad for your morale. Fight on your own. It's like the father saying to the son, "It's bad for you to get a larger allowance. Why don't you go and earn it?" And for some reason that didn't come across although, in fact, the villains of the great cultural revolution, the Gang of Four, the ultra radicals, were also the most isolationist, the ones that were least inclined to engage in adventures abroad. Now was there any awareness at the time? I'm not speaking specifically of 1965-66 when much of this material came out.

DEAN RUSK: We never, in my period, substituted China for the Soviet Union as our number one problem. We had in the Kennedy years, had to deal with two extraordinarily dangerous crises with Moscow: the Berlin crisis of '61 and '62--

RA'ANAN: And Cuba.

DEAN RUSK: And the Cuban Missile Crisis. But even in the face of those two deadly crises, President Kennedy and his two senior colleagues felt that it was just too late in history for the two nuclear superpowers to pursue a policy of hostility across the board. And so we set in motion things that produced the Nuclear Test Ban treaty of 1963, a civil air agreement, a consular agreement, a very important outer space treaty, negotiations which led to the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and to the ABM [Anti-Ballistic Missile] Treaty. Urn--because we felt that since we and the Russians share that fundamental common interest of preventing a nuclear war, that we should try to find points of possible agreement on large matters or small which could broaden the basis of common interest and reduce the range of issues on which violence might occur. Now, with China, getting along with the Mao [Tse-tung] regime was very difficult indeed.

RA'ANAN: To be sure.

DEAN RUSK: Because when Mao and his colleagues took power, they chose America as enemy number one. You mentioned that long-standing friendship between the Chinese and the American people. That was there. But they tried to erase all memories of that long-standing friendship at the grass roots level and they seized consular officers, beat some of them up: Angus [Lorin] Ward, for example; and pursued a policy of almost complete hostility toward the United States during the Mao period. But we did not really think that they were going to move into Southeast Asia unless we approached their borders by invading North Vietnam on the ground. As a matter of fact, there were various signs that the Chinese had taken their losses in Korea very seriously and that that had made them more cautious than you might expect them otherwise to be.

RA'ANAN: And particularly they (unintelligible) of the POWs [prisoners of war] to come home.

DEAN RUSK: That's right. That's right. So, I don't think it's correct to say that we ever replaced the Soviet Union with Communist China as our problem number one. But, after all, you cannot be certain of these things. You cannot surely know whether or not they might have intervened in North Vietnam, for example. But the polemics continued at a pretty high level. You see, when I first joined President Kennedy in January, 1961, very soon I had a long private talk with him just the two of us about China and I went over with him the various alternative policy attitudes that we might take, but he had in front of him a congressional resolution which had been passed about two years earlier unanimously, I believe, in the Congress strongly opposing the recognition of Peking and the membership of the People's Republic in the United Nations. And just before inauguration, President [Dwight David] Eisenhower had said to President-elect Kennedy, "Now, I will try to support you as much as possible on foreign policy matters, but on one point I must oppose you publicly and strongly and that is the admission of Peking to the United Nations and our recognition of Peking." Well, President Kennedy decided that there was just not enough advantage in a change in China policy to take on the bitter domestic fight that that would incur and so, he told me he did not wish to reopen the China question, and I was leaving the office

following that conversation. As I got to the door he said--he called out and said, "And what's more, Mr. Secretary, I don't want to read in the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times* that the State Department is thinking about a change in China policy." So, I went back to the State Department and when people like Adlai [Ewing] Stevenson [III] or Chester [Bliss] Bowles or others came to talk to me about a change in China policy, I just played the role of the village idiot because I did not tell them of my conversation with President Kennedy because I would have read that in the *Washington Post* or the *New York Times*, you see? So, it was quite clear that President Kennedy simply did not want to reopen the China question. But that's a long story. Although no one now living has done as much as I have in the executive branch of the government to support the position of the Republic of China on Taiwan, I agreed with President [Richard Milhous] Nixon's visit to Peking and the normalization of our relations with the People's Republic. Because, during all those years, Chiang Kai-shek and his government imposed upon us an intolerable diplomatic burden--that is, their myth that they were the government of all China, that they would somehow go back to the mainland and in going back would have our support.

RA'ANAN: And by opposing your concept of the two-China policy, which, actually I think, was the sane answer to your--

DEAN RUSK: Well, as late as 1965, we could have had broad international support for a two-Chinas policy. Two Chinese seats in the United Nations, for example. But that was the one point on which both Peking and Tai-pai agreed--

RA'ANAN: Were united--

DEAN RUSK: There was only one China and Taiwan was a part of China. And so the two-Chinas policy was frustrated by the Chinese themselves. But, um--I think that's behind us now and--there were a good many difficulties there over that issue because, see, our recognition policy came to be too much variance from the obvious facts of the real world, and we just could not sustain it indefinitely. Back in the Truman Administration, you might be interested to know that I played the major role in inventing the parliamentary tactics which we used in the United Nations to block Peking from taking the Chinese seat in the United Nations. But when I did that in the Truman Administration, I thought that that tactic might last four or five years, that kind of thing, and I was astonished to see that that tactic succeeded all the way into the Nixon Administration--into the early seventies, because I thought that at the weight of diplomatic attitudes would be that you cannot have this much of a distinction between the theory and the real facts.

RA'ANAN: It's interesting that the essay by Lin Piao [?] that I refer to--which is quoted so often but very few seem to read it carefully--actually managed to smuggle in a reference (unintelligible) that the United States had given to China during the war. It's a very remarkable document in its way and the implication is there are times that you need to deal with the adversary. So that there were signals, but I have a feeling that they somehow didn't get across partly. Also--and here I come back to an implicit critique I have about simplification of Soviet affairs--we somehow thought that the radicals, being extremists, were necessarily bad guys. But

you can be an extremist at home and an isolationist abroad, and in that sense being very helpful abroad.

DEAN RUSK: Here's a little story that you don't know about which might be of interest: Um--in the mid 1950's when I was president of the Rockefeller Foundation, Secretary John Foster Dulles called me down to Washington and talked to me about whether I would be willing to serve as an intermediary between himself and Senator Walter [Franklin] George, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, with a respect to a possible change in China policy. I told him that I would, if he wanted me to, and he and I talked about possibilities, pretty much with a considerable emphasis on a two-Chinas approach. Well, at just about that point, then Governor Herman [Eugene] Talmadge of Georgia announced that he would be running for the Senate against Senator Walter George. And Walter George made the decision that he would not run again. Would not take on Governor Talmadge. Whereupon, John Foster Dulles decided, under those circumstances, George would not, himself, take up so controversial and difficult a problem as changing China policy, so the whole effort was abandoned. But John Foster Dulles was thinking about change in China policy during the Eisenhower Administration.

RA'ANAN: I have always thought that he is a much vilified man and a much misunderstood for who, really, I think history will be much kinder to him than many of his contemporaries were.

DEAN RUSK: Yes well, John Foster Dulles, among other things, was a very shy man, and now that caused him to say things occasionally which caused him some difficulty, but I agree with you. I think he was a misunderstood man and I'm one of the few people who was a friend of both Dean [Gooderham] Acheson and John Foster Dulles although they did not like each other. I think both of them rather thought I lacked--

RA'ANAN: Seventy-five maybe eighty percent or more of all foreign affairs revolved around the question of security in one way or another, including arms funds first, including the question of non-proliferation. And the result was that we got two institutions in State and in Defense which were really on the edge of that question alone and that's, of course, political military affairs at State and ISA [International Security Affairs] at the Department of Defense, then plus the larger increase of the staff of the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs as I think starting with General [Andrew J.] Goodpaster, really. Was the question of the purely security element in foreign relations something that became gradually divorced from the normal functions of State because of these institutions?

DEAN RUSK: I would doubt that partly because national security properly conceived is all-inclusive. In other words, it carries with it an economic element, political elements, psychological, cultural elements: the attitudes of peoples. And so it is very difficult to separate out national security from the normal flow of business because of--I mean, for example, if there is a devastating earthquake somewhere and we send American planes with blankets and tents and medicine and so forth, that in its own way is a contribution to national security in the sense that it makes an impact upon the attitudes of the people directly involved. We sent a team into one of the African countries to vaccinate every child in the country against measles. The president of the country told President [Lyndon Baines] Johnson he did not know what the men of his country would think of the United States, but he knew what the women would think about them for

generations to come because of this vaccination effort. That, itself, is a contribution to national security in a somewhat indirect way, but nevertheless, it's important. So, it is almost impossible to isolate out concepts of national security and deal with them alone when you're looking at foreign policy issues.

RA'ANAN: Well, at the top level, of course, you had coordination, sometimes more real, sometimes a little more on paper through the National Security Council and participation of Secretaries of State, Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and so on--to what extent--other than in special action groups--did ISA and PMA work together as units?

RICHARD RUSK: Could you identify those two?

RA'ANAN: International Security Affairs at the Pentagon and Political Military Affairs at State.

RICHARD RUSK: Thank you.

DEAN RUSK: Well, when Dean Acheson was Secretary of State and Louis Johnson was Secretary of Defense, Louis [A.] Johnson insisted that every communication from the State Department to anyone in the Pentagon come across his desk. And that was a great burden to the relations between the two departments. When Robert McNamara became Secretary of Defense, he and I sat down almost on the first day of the Kennedy Administration and we agreed that we would encourage maximum contact between people in the State Department and people in the Defense Department at all levels on the theory that we may not always agree but that if we had such contact we could at least better understand the other fellow's job and could avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. You see, the safety of the American people is a prime purpose of foreign policy. And that, of course, involves the Pentagon. The primary missions of the Defense Department is to support the foreign policy of the United States and that involves them in the State Department. So, I think that it is very important that there be these multiplicity of contacts between officers of the two departments at the level of majors and country officers as well as Assistant Secretaries and all the way to the top. Now, one thing that is, I think, not generally known is that Robert McNamara and I sat down almost literally once a week, usually on a Saturday or Sunday morning, just the two of us to spend two hours or so in going over the events of the past week and the problems that were coming up the next week because we felt that it was very important for the two of us to reach some common understanding of where the, what the goals were and what the problems were and how the two of us together could best serve the same president and the same country. And I think that worked out very well. For example, I never had to, as Secretary of State, to wrestle with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on particular issues. Robert McNamara would take care of that in the Pentagon. So, I think the fullest flow of information between the State and Defense Department is of great importance. Now, at the very end of World War II there was a temptation for the Defense Department to send something over to the State Department saying so-and-so is contrary to the national security interests of the United States and for the State Department to send something back to the Defense Department saying so-and-so is contrary to the foreign policy of the United States. Well, those are almost empty slogans and it's very important that on both sides of the river such notions are looked at, analyzed, looked at very closely so that phrases don't substitute for policy.

RA'ANAN: So (unintelligible) is at the top, except for unusual cases, it would be the Secretaries, themselves, who would do the coordination and I presume that to some extent that--

DEAN RUSK: A great, a great deal of it. Now, we had--in my period--we had Llewellyn [E.] Thompson [Jr.] and [U.] Alexis Johnson who would keep in very close touch with opposite numbers in the Pentagon. But, you see, when you get toward the top, national security and foreign policy concepts merge into an indivisible whole and it's very difficult to separate them out and say this is national security and this is foreign policy because it's policy. It's national interest and all elements are involved.

RA'ANAN: The main problem here is, I suppose, is definitional and what you've got really starting with the [James William] Fulbright era is the attempt by the Congress to redefine national interest and national security. And if I may, here, intersperse--we have to bring the Congress into it obviously--it has always appeared to me that Fulbright's definitions were curiously reactionary, by which I mean a period in which the United States was very far from being a global power with global interests and to say, essentially: if it has a naval station there--if we think in nineteenth century naval terms--if it is a potential base; if it has some very rich and vital source of raw material, then it's in our national interest. If it isn't, then essentially it's a far-off country of which we know so little as [Neville?] Chamberlain used to say. But isn't that really a nineteenth century concept which had been completely superseded by the global interests and capabilities of the United States in the post-World War II period where you couldn't really say that there was a country that was of no interest to us at all because of a global, if I may use the Soviet term, correlation of forces was involved?

DEAN RUSK: There is a good deal of truth in what you say, but on the other hand, the United States should be careful about looking upon itself as the scoutmaster of the world, the world's policeman. Our responsibilities cannot be world-wide and all-encompassing partly because other nations have not elected us for such a role and the American people would not accept such a role. Before I left office, I was told by my staff that there had been something like, something like four hundred situations of violence somewhere in the world since 1945. The United States was directly involved in about six or seven of those. We have not gone around the world looking for places in which to intervene. Now the communications explosion has meant that these problems that arise in distant parts of the world are before us and before the American people instantaneously- In the old days, in the nineteenth century we would not even hear about some of these occurrences until four or five or six months later. One of my favorite remarks by Thomas Jefferson was his remark that "I have not heard from our minister in Spain this year. If I do not hear from him next year, I shall write him a letter." Or a Secretary of State at the beginning of this century could send an ambassador or minister off to China and he knew that he would not and could not hear from him in another four or five months. Today you send an ambassador to Peking and the very next day a cable comes in saying, "Have arrived at my post and have assumed responsibility of the embassy." So--

RA'ANAN: Plus the famous example of Jackson taking New Orleans, not knowing that the treaty had been signed.

DEAN RUSK: That's right. That's right. So, the whole process has become more universalized and has tremendously speeded up by this communications explosion. But there will be many questions arising in the world which are really not our questions. We have a kind of interest in a better rather than a worse solution, but we are not the prime movers and should not attempt to be the prime movers.

RA'ANAN: But I'm thinking of an example and it comes to mind only because it's recent (unintelligible). Turns out, at the moment, that there is a major Soviet interest in the southern Pacific and there have been some very close relations with both of these mini-states and given Soviet naval expansion in the Pacific it clearly is a matter of considerable concern at all levels of government at the moment. Fulbright would have looked at that on the map and he would have said, "Why in heaven's name should we care?" But in the meantime we've had an infrastructure in the Pacific which is slowly disintegrating. There's the New Zealand relationship. There's a much more (unintelligible) with Australia than was the case and suddenly these tiny specks do become important enough though they don't have intrinsic wealth, intrinsic natural resources and so forth.

DEAN RUSK: Well, one has to watch that thing rather carefully because there is a cumulative effect which could be important. Now, Bill Fulbright to begin with was an instinctive maverick. Perhaps as a student at Oxford he learned that it is "infra dig" to agree with anybody else. That's what makes conversation at high table in Oxford so interesting.

RA'ANAN: Home of lost causes, yes?

DEAN RUSK: That's right. Now, there's room in the Senate for mavericks. There should be some mavericks in the Senate, but when a maverick becomes chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, you tend to have some problems. Further, Bill Fulbright was primarily interested in the North Atlantic: United States, Canada, and our relations with Western Europe. He was very much like Dean Acheson in that respect. And, well, he once, on Vietnam, he made the remark that these are not our kind of people. He was not all that much interested in the little brown, yellow, black peoples in smaller countries around the world. And so that whereas George [Catlett] Marshall had a catholic view of the world, John Foster Dulles had a catholic view of the world. I tended to be concerned about the world as a whole, but others have concentrated on these North Atlantic relationships. One has to be interested and occasionally take some action of one sort or another in a far distant place because of the cumulative effect which could be built up over time and lead to a situation that we would find very disagreeable. I personally believe and have always believed that it is in the interest of the United States for us to be able, if necessary, to control every wake in the Pacific Ocean. But I don't do it in a jingoistic spirit. I just think that it is safer that way because I have more confidence in the purposes of the United States than I do in the purposes of some other countries.

RA'ANAN: I was talking about capabilities before and I meant it not only in the purely physical sense of military forces, but another kind of capability which still brings us back to decision-making. You remember, of course, that one talked of Washington as a one-crisis town and then we escalated to become a one-and-a-half crisis town. Did you ever find a--incidentally, it's from a student of mine, very brilliant. You probably know him, John [Jonathon Trumbull] Howe, who

worked at Political Ministry of Affairs, worked with Al [Alexander Meigs] Haig [Jr.] in the White House. Now he's an admiral in the Pacific. [He] wrote a book called *Sea-Power in Multi-Crisis* [*Multi-crises: Sea Power and Global Politics in the Missile Age*] and he was dealing primarily with the Navy, but made it fairly clear that once one reached a two-crisis situation and then something else came along that really the decision-making machinery was not capable of keeping its attention focused maximally on more than any two crisis points at one time. Is that something that--

DEAN RUSK: No, I don't--I don't accept that. There are those who think, for example, that Vietnam was such a preoccupation that it diverted attention from other important issues in the world. I don't accept that at all. Now, the President, Secretaries of State, and defense paid a lot of attention to Vietnam. In any situation where you have Americans in uniform in combat you must pay a lot of attention to that situation, but on the other hand, there is a limit to what you can do on such a problem on any given day as far as time is concerned and there were times when Lyndon Johnson would spend much more time on our European relations or our Latin American relations than he did on Vietnam. You can deal with several important matters simultaneously because there are limits to the amount of time which you can profitably invest in one particular crisis. Even during the Cuban Missile Crisis President Kennedy and I decided that we would meet our regularly established program in terms of visitors from other countries and other commitments, but that did not keep us from putting in an enormous amount of time and attention to the Cuban Missile Crisis.

RA'ANAN: I suppose I would have defined Vietnam in certain periods as being chronic rather than acute, if I may use the medical analogy. The question is how many simultaneously acute situations could one deal with? By which I mean situations that were literally changing from hour to hour. Now, I don't know to what extent we've ever been tested by having three such situations simultaneously. It may never have occurred. He never came up with more than two and a bit, in other words, two major ones.

DEAN RUSK: Yes, and there are some important questions about even one crisis. For example, the Cuban Missile Crisis lasted for thirteen days, and during that crisis, our leadership was calm and cool, not emotional as Bobby [Robert Francis] Kennedy's book *The Thirteen Days* tended to reflect. But, nevertheless, by the end of those thirteen days we were short of. We were weary. We were feeling the effects of not knowing for certain exactly what the other side was going to do. Things of that sort. I have later speculated as to for how long a period of time can human beings handle a crisis of that intensity and that danger. At what point does fatigue set in so that someone simply says, "Oh, to hell with it," and let [sic] the situation fly out of control? I think that's something that does need attention and I say that as a direct result of the experience of the Cuban Missile Crisis. See, we were getting only two or three hours sleep at night, at most.

RICHARD RUSK: Pop, you told me once that one of the most difficult things about your job as Secretary was the necessity for having to deal with twenty or thirty major problems in a day's time and how you would have to unload your mind completely and reload.

DEAN RUSK: Yes, my appointment books, which are available in the JFK and LBJ libraries, show that I talk to a person or group on the average of about thirty times a day for eight years.

Now, in that situation you are emptying your mind of one set of data and filling it with another set of data for the next conversation or the next meeting. I, personally, think that that process produces some nervous fatigue. I don't know how the psychologists can make a study of it, but I have no doubt that that very process itself becomes tiring after a time and it is something that has to be looked at. There have been times--I don't remember the exact substance--when I would say, "Well, I will take a look at that tomorrow morning because I want to have a fresh start at it" and not do it at a time of day when I might be a little fatigued by the parade of things that I had to deal with and the variety of problems and the sheer burden, intellectual burden of changing subjects so frequently during the day.

RA'ANAN: That's an extremely important point. I don't think it has been covered well enough in the literature. I've tried to do it for the Politburo and their meeting once a week for three hours and they deal with subjects that we would consider trivial: should a novel be published like *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*? That would occupy them for a year. And I came to the conclusion that, actually, major decisions at that level couldn't possibly be made.

DEAN RUSK: Yes, well you know, as I have said, my appointment books are at the JFK and LBJ library [sic]. I'm a little surprised, quite frankly, that some Ph.D. candidate has not undertaken to make a study of the minute to minute schedule of a Secretary of State, to analyze it and draw some conclusions from it and see what it means, but so far as I know, there has been no interest in those appointment books by anybody.

RA'ANAN: There is a very important point that came out in the literature you gave me last night and that is the degree to which the Secretary also had to take on the burden of ambassadors who felt that they had to write home at least once a month that "I've seen the President or at least the Secretary of State," and that very often in cases where there was not a special chemistry between them and the president as Kennedy had in two or three cases. The Secretary of State had to take on this emotional burden of enabling them to say, "We've gone to the top. We saw the Secretary even if we didn't see the President." Did that become a real nuisance at any point?

DEAN RUSK: Well, it became a burden as far as time is concerned, but I felt that a foreign ambassador representing his country in Washington, had the right to access to the Secretary of State and if he insisted, access to the President. We, ourselves, are constantly instructing our ambassadors abroad to see the Prime Minister or to see the President, the Chief of State, whoever it might be. And in order to do that you have to extend reciprocity. Now, I received a great many foreign ambassadors during my eight years, but quite a number of them realized that there were limits to my time and they would typically call upon an Assistant Secretary of State, rather than upon myself, and some of them were very considerate in that respect. Then there are--there is another factor involved: our system is so complex that the process by which we reach decisions is something of a mystery to foreign embassies. Now, an embassy like the British Embassy understood this process and you would find the British ambassador coming in to talk to a relatively junior officer of the Department because he knew that that was where at that point, the action lay. So that he would try to get his views in during the formation of policy because after we have concluded our policy judgments, the process is so complicated that we become a little musclebound. It's very difficult for us at the final stage to take into account the views of other governments. And so, the astute ambassadors try to get the views of their governments in early in

the process, before we become frozen in concrete, because there are times when a foreign government might come in with a good idea, but it's just too much labor for us to go through our own process all over again to make the adjustments that might be indicated. You see, when we form policy we've got to keep the Congress in mind. We've got to discuss the matters with key senators, with key members of the House. We've got to look at it from all points of view. The several departments of the executive branch may have different views on the particular issues involved. They have to be coordinated and brought to a single conclusion. So, the process with us is complex and this has a bearing upon how a foreign embassy can best represent the views of its government as far as American policy is concerned.

RA'ANAN: And the answer is obviously at the earliest possible stage--

DEAN RUSK: The earlier, the better. The earlier, the better.

RA'ANAN: I'd like to come in now on the specific issues we have discussed--

RICHARD RUSK: Can I ask one question relating to what we just discussed?

RA'ANAN: Sure.

RICHARD RUSK: Pop, I was very much aware of this as your son, because I never saw you while you were Secretary, but, Professor, why is it that the historians, the writers, the academic community, are not fully appreciative of the demands of time and pressure and responsibility upon men such as these and the implications of that on the decision-making process? Why has this not been developed in the literature?

RA'ANAN: There is an answer to that and namely that that is beginning to change and the vehicle that has made it possible to change it is simulation exercise, because we find all of these aspects suddenly replicated in role-playing to an amazing extent. I have never found, incidentally, a better teaching school, never mind a research school, and there in writing up a critique of a simulation for the first time you find those critiques replete with references to this element of fatigue, of endurance, of the ability to keep in mind what is going on. We found teams that would send off their foreign minister for an important meeting, would forget all about it. There would never be any follow-up at all. And these are--I am talking about professionals. So, yes one is beginning to get aware of it and what I would like to see is a series of simulation exercise critiques written up as major books. Now, I think, Bloomfield of course, wrote up the Cuban Missile Crisis as a simulation exercise, but I don't mean to replicate historical incidents. I mean to just show through the simulation exercises what are these personnel factors of time, energy, fatigue, etc. And I begin to look at bodies like the U.S. Senate in those parameters by saying how important (unintelligible). The answer is tremendously important because of these factors.

RICHARD RUSK: Pop, you took part in a few simulation exercises. Do you care to comment on your experiences?

DEAN RUSK: Well, I think simulations, models, game theory exercises, things of that sort are quite useful particularly for those who participate in them and sometimes they will raise questions which the policy officer may overlook. I, myself, have not found that they were particularly useful in giving you the answer to the problem that is on your desk today, because there usually are factors involved in that problem that of which the people conducting such exercises are unaware. For example, a conversation between the Secretary of State and a very important senator may be a very important factor in the decision and that may not be included in a simulation exercise.

RICHARD RUSK: You tell an anecdote about simulations and war games. One that you took part in was--

DEAN RUSK: No, I remember one games theory exercise where it turned out that the proper move was to have American fighter planes escort a Soviet bomber to drop a nuclear weapon on Chicago and that it would spoil the move if the people of Chicago were told about it ahead of time. Well, at that point the gap between the exercise and the real world was so great that I just left the exercise.

RA'ANAN: I would say so. No, that's exactly why I meant as a research tool it has serious limitations. As a teaching tool of what is involved, it's tremendous.

DEAN RUSK: I think it's very important that in these simulations and other exercises that people avoid manufactured words and arcane language and try to conduct them in direct simple English so that one can test whether there's any kind of meeting of the minds, but I don't care much for jargon that grows up in connection with some of these things.

RA'ANAN: I would like to comment on specifics. Now, there's one particular episode during the Johnson period that worried me at the time and still does to this day and I'm referring to Cypress and I'm referring to the famous letter the president sent, I believe, in June of 1964 to the Turks in which he said essentially, "O.K., you say that your people have been mistreated on the island. There's been a blockade of some of the villages. There's been starvation under the London and (unintelligible) agreements. You say that you have every right to intervene. In fact, there is such a reference in those agreements and we say, however, if you do so and since you may be doing so without getting consultation and approval from your NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] allies, know "--and I'm paraphrasing that--

END OF SIDE 2