

Dean Rusk Oral History Collection

Rusk 7S: Part 5 of 6

Dean Rusk, autobiographical sketch told to Richard Rusk
circa 1985

The complete interview also includes Rusk 7O: Part 1; Rusk 7P: Part 2; Rusk 7Q: Part 3; Rusk 7R: Part 4; Rusk 7T: Part 6

DEAN RUSK: --had an invitation there from the lord and lady of the local manor house to come and have tea with them the next afternoon. Well, we all had been growing beards and were pretty crummy, so we debated whether or not we would get cleaned up and accept. We decided that we should because part of her invitation was motivated by the fact that there were some Americans nearby and she wanted to extend some hospitality. So we got cleaned up and when we got over there we found that the hostess, the lady of the manor, was that same lady who was in the car at the filling station the afternoon before. During a lull in the conversation, she said, "Oh, young gentlemen, I must tell you; yesterday I saw the most horrible creature I have ever seen in my life." Then she proceeded to describe me in some detail. Well, we all laughed and then we told her about it, and she was a very good sport and thought it was very amusing. I didn't care very much for the food in England.

They would serve watery beef and veal and lamb and they didn't pay much attention to preparing their food in a tasteful fashion. I thought that their facilities, such as their bath and toilet facilities, were much more primitive than they need have been in that kind of society which had, after all, launched the industrial revolution. There was a general absence of central heating which, coming from the South in this country, I found a little difficult at times. But I also thought that the British, despite their worldwide empire, were relatively indifferent to customs and manners and cultures in other parts of the world. As far as many of them were concerned, I was still from "out there in the colonies" and many of them had very few up-to-date ideas about what America, the United States, was all about. One little example of the kind of arch attitude that they sometimes took: My tutor in politics, W.C. Costin, in tutorial one week, made a rather nasty remark to me about the fact that our Supreme Court justices are appointed to the Court because of politics, that most of them had come through the political track. Well, I went off to the library and did a thumbnail biographic sketch of British law lords, who are the equivalent of our Supreme Court, over a period of about two hundred years and found that about ninety percent of them came through the political track, junior members of the ministry or cabinet or attorney general or something of that sort. When I presented that evidence to my tutor, he was utterly surprised because they had sort of assumed that somehow their law lords were appointed within the framework of political purity.

During my first term at Oxford, the Japanese seized Manchuria. I felt instinctively that something very important was happening and I spent an enormous amount of time trying to follow the Manchurian dispute in great detail. I studied the reports that came out in the League of Nations, such as the Litton Commission Report. I spent an awful lot of time on it. As I look back on it, that time give a general half the troops he asked for and then double his mission and he

smiled, "That rough rule of thumb worked out pretty well." He was very familiar with the military commander to want everything including the kitchen sink for any kind of operation that he might undertake and Marshall had to use a good deal of discipline in allocating resources to various commanders in World War II. When Marshall was secretary of state, he was in a meeting once with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and some matter came up on which one of the generals pounded the table with a very strong line of argument and at the end wound up by saying, "And I will stake my military reputation on that." Secretary Marshall simply leaned back in his chair and looked at this gentleman and said, "That's very interesting General. Tell us about your military reputation." General Marshall was in no sense a tough thumping militarist. For example, I remember once in the State Department at a morning staff meeting he said to us, "Gentlemen, let's not begin to discuss this problem as if it were a military problem, that tends to turn it into a military problem and that must always be the last resort."

During the Korean War, he knew that it would make no sense to open up all-out war against China despite the fact that General MacArthur was pressing for just that action. Truman's military advisers told him that the only targets in China which could affect the war in Korea would be the mass destruction of Chinese cities with nuclear weapons. Truman simply wasn't ready to go down that trail and those of us who had experience in China knew that we could have remobilized millions and millions of our armed forces and even then would have been able to occupy only a few cities on the fringes of the eastern coast of China, that we couldn't subdue this nation of several hundred million people. The Japanese had found that out; we would have found that out. I just might inject the thought here that I think I know something about how the decisions were made to employ American forces for the last forty-five years and I can't think of a single occasion when they were used on the initiative of our military. Those decisions were made by civilians; they were not made by military people banging the drums saying, "Just turn it over to us and we will wind this thing up." There is one little aspect of the Korean War that I might put on the tape at this point: We reached a point of almost stalemate in Korea after American forces had retreated from the north in that disastrous advance into the far north of Korea, but General Ridgeway was given command and stabilized the retreat and headed back north and we had position fairly close to the original 38th parallel. George [Frost] Kennan, who was then in the Department of State, had some very quiet talks with Ambassador Jacob [Iakov Alexandrovich] Malik, the Soviet representative to the United Nations up in New York. The basis of these talks was to wind up the Korean affair on the basis of the original position--the status quo ante.

Mr. Malik was the first to announce publicly that there would be talks so the Russians got a certain amount of credit for initiating those talks but actually it was George Kennan, on the instructions from the Department of State, who actually started them. But then when the talks got underway at P'anmunjom, President Truman made two decisions that had not been covered in the original talks between Kennan and Malik. The first one was that we would not go back exactly to the 38th parallel but would stop the fighting at the existing line which in some places was somewhat north of the 38th parallel--there was high ground there and our military thought that it would be advantageous to be in that position rather than further back where the terrain would be more disadvantageous. Truman agreed with our military on that and we proposed that the new demarcation line be slightly different than the 38th parallel. The other decision Truman made was that we would not return North Korean and Chinese prisoners against their will. We had had

an unhappy experience at the end of World War II with respect to German and Russian prisoners and Truman just decided that he wasn't going to do it. Well, that was a wholly new point, a very difficult point, from the point of view of the North Koreans and the Chinese. And I have no doubt that those two decisions by President Truman played a considerable part in prolonging the talks at P'anmunjom for about a year during which very substantial additional casualties were taken on both sides. I was not able to adopt George Marshall's techniques nearly to the extent that I would have wanted to when I, myself, became Secretary. Among other things, the world had gotten considerably more complicated. There were explosions of new members in the community of nations, erupting out of the former colonial empires. The membership of the United Nations was growing rapidly--

END OF SIDE 1

BEGINNING OF SIDE 2

DEAN RUSK: --reflect methods used by a president. Harry Truman considered George Marshall to be the greatest living American; he had unlimited regard for him and he delegated to him massively in the foreign policy field and that made it possible for George Marshall to delegate very extensively to people beneath him. When I became Secretary under John F. Kennedy, he had a much more informal way of administering his office in the Executive branch of the government. For example, on one occasion he was reading a little squib in the morning newspaper from page ten or twelve or something that interested him and he picked up the phone and called the desk officer on that particular problem at his home. Well, when he did that, two things happened. One was that it scared the hell out of that desk officer to be called by the president of the United States and second, it meant that whatever that problem was it had to come up to my desk because I had to be interested in and involved in anything that the president was personally interested in. Well, that kind of informal administration tended to get in the way of delegation downward to my own colleagues. Lyndon Johnson was a different administrator. If he had been reading that little item in the morning paper, he would have called me, not the desk officer, and left it up to me to take care of that problem as far as the Department of State was concerned. George Marshall was remarkable in that he had no false sense of prestige of face; he did not care about things that might, to be expected, would embarrass most people. For example, I went down with him to attend a hearing before a committee of the Senate; we met in a large caucus room there in the Capitol. Since I was the person who was supposed to be most familiar with the particular subject matter, he took me along to sit at his right hand at the witness table and he suggested to me early on that when he got a question from a Senator, I would whisper my proposed answer to him; but the old man was getting a little deaf by that time and so as we went along, he would turn to me and say, "Louder, louder."

As my voice got louder, it was picked up on the microphone in front of Marshall and everybody in the room could hear what I was saying. But he would listen to what I was telling him and then he would simply sit there and without any embarrassment at all, repeat exactly what I had said to the Committee, even though everybody in the room had heard me say it the first time. It just

didn't faze George Marshall at all to do that. General Marshall brought with him from his army experience the concept of completed staff work, and he injected that into the State Department. He wanted you to develop a recommendation to him in complete detail, not only with respect to the policy to be adopted but to the measures by which it was carried out. He wanted a paper in front of him which he could simply sign and then everything would be put in motion. His view on that was that unless you had thought out all those things, you had not sufficiently thought about the problem because very often the means are just as important as the subject, and so he required us to think things through by presenting matters in sufficient detail so that his decision would lead to actual operation being undertaken, diplomatic or whatever. Soon after he became secretary of state, Marshall was at a morning staff meeting with about fifteen of us and someone down toward the end of the table remarked about poor morale in a certain part of the Department. Well, you could see the old gentleman straighten up in his chair a little and he looked at us around the table, "Gentlemen, it has been my experience that an enlisted man may be entitled to a morale problem, but an officer is not. I expect the officers of this Department to take care of their own morale. No one is taking care of my morale."

And when word got out around the Department that there was no shoulder up there on which to cry, the morale of the Department went to the highest point that it had ever been before or since. Since Marshall's day we have become somewhat familiar with the kind of guerilla war going on in Washington about respective responsibilities and authority and competition for influence with the president. That was no problem in Marshall's period during the Truman administration because everybody in town knew that Marshall was the adviser to President Truman on foreign policy matters and his commanding presence and style was such that he just wasn't challenged. The only exception to that, I would have to say, would be the influence of the Jewish community exercised through a staff officer in the White House working directly with Truman and there were times when that channel cut across what Marshall was trying to do. On those Palestinian issues that gave rise to the birth of Israel, Truman was somewhat schizophrenic. On the one side, he had been deeply impressed by the horror and tragedy of the Holocaust; he was strongly in favor of a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine where such things could not occur and he was also aware in addition to the Holocaust that in almost all societies, there are elements of anti-Jewish prejudice; a good deal of which he could see in our own society during the years in which he lived. But on the other hand, Truman agreed with George Marshall that we ought to do our best to try to find a solution out there with which both sides could live so that there would not be simply a succession of wars between the Jews and the Arabs.

So those two points of view sometimes led him to take, what appeared to some, contradictory positions. But this stemmed from the problem in Truman's own mind and not through any discipline on the part of the Department of State as some members of the Jewish community have charged from time to time. For example, just before the British mandate in Palestine was to expire, the British had announced that they were just leaving Palestine on a certain date regardless of what the situation would be. The United Nations had already passed its partition resolution but we still were trying to find a way to get these two sides to work things out between them. So President Truman and Secretary Marshall asked me to undertake a very private negotiation in New York between what was then called the Zionist group and the Arab delegations. These talks occurred in the old Savoy [?] Hotel in New York. The Arabs had quarters down at one end of the hall and the Zionist the other end of the hall and I had rooms in

between. I would shuttle back and forth, up and down the hall trying to work things out for a political and military standstill to take effect when the British mandate expired, to get some more time to try to find a solution everybody could agree with. Of course, the problem was to work out the conditions that would [obtain] during the standstill. And we made considerable progress on a good many of those with the exception of the rate of Jewish immigration into Palestine during the standstill.

We finally got the Zionist side to agree to a figure of twenty-five hundred a month which was nothing; a very small figure given the circumstances of the period. And so with some confidence I went down to the other end of the hall to put this to the Arabs and when I did one of them said, "This is impossible, if we agree to that, they will simply bring in twenty-five hundred pregnant women and that would make it five thousand." We could never get an agreement on the rate of Jewish immigration into Palestine. But while these talks were going on, Secretary Marshall down in Washington, with a slip of the tongue, referred to these talks going on in New York. Well, that was the first time the existence of such talks had even been known by anybody and when that happened the talks simply collapsed because the constituencies on both sides, both among the Zionist followers and among the Arabs, were not prepared to consider such talks in the first place and so leaking the existence of these talks brought them to an end. When I went to Oxford in the fall of 1931, I was admitted to St. John's College, Oxford University being largely a federation of more than thirty colleges.

The College itself was the center of your student and academic life. They arranged for your tutors who were relevant to the exam you were planning to take. I, myself, started out to do the honors course in philosophy, politics and economics. At that time, Oxford was very skeptical of the so-called research degree. One hundred and fifty years ago the British Masters and the German Doctorate were the same degree; they were licenses to teach. The Germans went off in the direction of meticulous research which has made some powerful contributions to the natural sciences, but which may have had a baleful influence on the social sciences and the humanities [I can talk about that a little latter] but the B.A. Honors Degree was the central focus of Oxford teaching in those days. For your first two years you lived in the college itself. My first year I shared a living room with separate bedrooms with an American from North Carolina, Grady Frank, who became a lifelong friend.

And then my second year I shared a similar living room and two bedrooms arrangement with David French, who also has been a lifelong friend who succeeded me at Mills College, later became Dean of the University of Michigan's branch at Flint, Michigan; I visited him recently in Cincinnati. He was Dean of the Faculty at Mills, as I was, before he wound up at Michigan. The Oxford term is roughly two months and each term runs for about eight or nine weeks so that there are relatively long vacations at Christmas time and at Easter time and a very long vacation in the summer. The fall term, for example, did not begin until early October. A typical day at Oxford during those days was to be awakened by your servant, they were called scouts in those days. They were long-time employees of the college, each scout would serve eight or ten students. My scout would come in and light a fire in my fireplace, there was no central heating, and would put the kettle on to boil water for tea and would serve breakfast in my room. Usually it was something like eggs, bacon, bread of some sort, coffee, if you wanted beer, you could have it. Then during the morning, you would usually go about your academic work. You would read,

work on the paper you had to present every week to your tutor, your Don. Then, typically, you would have lunch in your room, usually with some friends and the scout would serve that lunch; bring the food up from the kitchen downstairs which was called the battery. That was a very simple lunch; maybe some sliced ham, some cheese and a roll, maybe a piece of fruit. After lunch, it was almost required that everybody take some part in sports. The afternoon was given over to all kinds of athletic activity.

Almost everyone participated. Each college had its own playing fields and clubhouse. St. John's playing field was out on Woodstock road. They had tennis courts, of course they had soccer, cricket and rugby and all those things. And on the river, each college had at least one or two boats. The Eights and the boat race each year was a big event, but I never took part in rowing. I played college tennis, horsed around with a little college cricket and rugby. I did go out for the University lacrosse team although I had never played lacrosse before and found that the lacrosse team was made up mostly of Americans and Canadians. Lacrosse was played in England but perhaps more by girls than by men. The tactics of lacrosse are not too different from basketball, of course you play on a huge field and there is an awful lot of running, but I went out for lacrosse and made the University team, and I was very much impressed with the way University teams were handled; there were no professional coaches. Each year the team would elect a captain for the next year. He would be a student and when the next year came around, the Captain would post an announcement indicating when, what they called trails, would be held, at such and such a field and anyone who wanted to try out for the University team would simply turn up. We would go out and scrimmage and practice.

The captain would make up his mind as to whom he wanted to invite to take part in the games. If we had a game coming up on a particular day, you would get a little note from the captain saying, "Dear Dean, we are playing so and so on such and such a day, such and such a place, I would be glad if you could take part." Now if you were busy with an especially important paper or something, you would just write him a little note back saying, "Sorry I can't make it this time, but maybe you will think of me for another time." Oxford University awards blues and half blues for what we would call letters in this country. The major sports like cricket, soccer, rugby, boating, were given full blues. Some of the minor sports, like lacrosse, were given half blues. Tennis was, I think, was a full blue. But I thoroughly enjoyed the lacrosse. It was during my period that we introduced headgear into lacrosse in England; before that, they had played bareheaded. So when we introduced headgear, that changed the style of lacrosse considerably, because it got to be a much rougher game.

But the blues and half blues are given to only those who participate in matches against Cambridge. You can play in every other match during the season, but if you don't play against Cambridge, you don't get a blue or a half blue. Well, my first two years there we beat Cambridge pretty handily in lacrosse. Once at Oxford, the other time at Cambridge. But the third year, Cambridge had, by that time, picked up a good many Canadians. I remember the third match with Cambridge, I was playing directly opposite of a huge fellow, big, brawny, tall, fast, he just beat the hell out of me and Cambridge won that match. There were no training rules although we ran for the duration of the game and there were no substitutes. We ran like the dickens, but there were no training rules. The only training rule that I ever encountered was the admonition not to drink more than one pint of beer at lunch the day of the game--that we called matches. [Has all

that stayed the same at Oxford?] I think it has all stayed pretty much the same. I gather that occasionally one of the alumni they call "Old Boys," would come up and work with, say the crew that was going to row against Cambridge, or something of that sort. It was just so very relaxed.

For example, if our lacrosse team had a match down in London, you get a note saying the match will be at three o'clock on a certain field and it was up to you to pack your gear, to get yourself down there and turn up at the field. It was just very relaxed and loose and I think it was a much more wholesome kind of sports activity than the highly organized, highly disciplined, pressurized collegiate sports that we tend to have among so many colleges and universities in the United States. The University teams were drawn from all over the University but underneath that each college would have its own team in all the sports and they would have a kind of regular rather intensive program of intercollegiate competition in tennis, soccer, rugby and all the rest of it. I played tennis for my college, St. John's, but I didn't quite make the Oxford University team. My roommate Grady Frank was captain of the University tennis team. He had grown up as a missionary in Japan and had gotten in a lot of tennis over there before he came to the United States.

But it was very curious, one of my athletic disappointments was that I had gone to Oxford from North Carolina, and had I been able to make the sixth position of the University tennis team comprising six players, there would have been six men from North Carolina representing Oxford University, the other five were from North Carolina throughout; Teddy Burwell, Marion Cunningham, Grady Frank and two others, but an Englishman beat me out for the sixth spot on the University team. But afternoons were taken up with sports and whatever you were playing, tennis, cricket or whatever; you took time out around four o'clock to have tea. You would have tea in the clubhouse and take a break--very good relationship among opposing teams--they all had tea together, it was quite good fun. After that you came back to your quarters and got showered and rested and maybe a bull session with some of your fellow students, maybe a game of bridge. Then about seven o'clock came dinner and dinner was in the dining hall, the main auditorium that each college had. It was rather formal. Everybody put on coats and we wore our academic gown into dinner.

At the end of the hall was a little platform on which was what was called the High Table at which the Dons sat for dinner, they were in black tie. Dinner was a rather formal matter, we always had a Latin grace, the grace was said by one of the so-called senior scholars, the rest of us kept a stop watch on him and if his grace went for more than a number of seconds, he had to buy beer for everybody. Conversation at dinner was very lively and interesting. You could not discuss girls or women in the Hall, if you did that you had to buy beer for everybody, but dinner would last for maybe an hour, hour and a quarter, then the evening was free for study, or bull sessions or bridge or whatever it was. Many colleges had debating societies. St. John's had one and I participated in the college's debating society but once a week the Oxford Union held one of its debates. The Oxford Union was a very famous undergraduate debating society, sometimes has been called "the womb of prime ministers." Those debates are rather formal. The debaters themselves are in white tie and tails and it is conducted more or less like a debate in the House of Commons. Each week a particular subject will be tabled for debate, the subject being chose by the president of the Union after some advice from some of the other officers of the Union. There

were times when the subject was very serious, there were other times when it was laid on just to have a good time. I remember one debate while I was there: "Resolve that this House regrets Christopher Columbus," and this was a rip-roaring debate pulling the legs of the Americans. In those days, Britain was still presiding over a vast Empire.

It was only in 1931 that the Statute of Westminster had begun to clarify the independent status of old members of the Commonwealth, such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and commonwealth status came into being. Of course large areas like India, Malaya, and Burma were still in effect colonies although the beginnings of home rule were already on the way in a number of these places. So it was still customary for young Britains, particularly those who came to Oxford and Cambridge, to look upon the Empire as part of their career. They were looking toward public service in say the Foreign Service or the Civil Service, they were looking toward a life of politics, most of them were from English upper classes in those days, to whom politics would be kind of a normal expectation; some were headed for the clergy, some were headed for the armed services. It was just taken for granted that there was a British world out there which needed services and would be calling upon young Britains to go overseas to do various jobs. As a result of that, in addition to the British Foreign Service as we know it and Civil Service or the Sudan Service, or the Egyptian Service and appointments to those were valued very highly. A good many of my friends went off to overseas duty immediately upon graduation. Of course, the Oxford Union usually included in its debates some distinguished person from the outside; maybe one on each side of the question. So we got to see a good many of the people whose names were in the newspapers in those days, particularly from British politics.

I think that British politicians accepted invitations from the Oxford Union with alacrity because it was looked upon as a distinction to be invited to come there. In the 1930s, the British tended to take their Empire for granted although there began to be stirring which brought about far-reaching changes later on. For example, the drive of the old members of the Commonwealth, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, for a high degree of independence was already well on the way and that was registered the Statute of Westminster in 1931. There were also stirring in India. Mr. Gandhi had already begun his movement out there and by the 1930s there were so-called Round Table conferences between the British government of the day and Indian nationalist leaders so that there were stirring in the Empire. It is not surprising because when the British, largely in the 18th century, built their Empire in all parts of the world they took along with them in their knapsacks the seeds of destruction of was wasted because it was merely one of the episodes that produced World War II. But there was a strong sense of pacifism during my time at Oxford. The League of Nations was not looked upon as an instrument for enforcing the peace. I remember Wellington Coö, representing China, standing before the League of Nations, pleading for help of the world community against the invasion of Japan, and it was help that never came. In the early 1930s, the scars of World War I were still very apparent and frequently discussed. In World War I, Britain, and I suppose Britain was not alone, lost a high proportion of its young manpower in that dreadful trench warfare. Wars in which maybe 200,000 men would be lost in only 400 yards of ground.

I have heard the term "decimated" about the youth of England in that war. Since decimated means reduced to a tenth, I think that word is somewhat exaggerated, but nevertheless they lost a great many of the flower of their youth in that World War I, and it made a very deep impression.

That was very much in Churchill's mind when he was one of the leaders in World War II; he simply wasn't going to go through that kind of war again. No, I think that Britain suffered dreadfully in that war and one could feel it; it was on people's minds. Almost no family was without a casualty in World War I.

RICHARD RUSK: Did they have any clue as to what was coming in 1931?

DEAN RUSK: No, not really. Because when you look ahead the trigger point in World War II was almost surely the seizure of Manchuria by the Japanese and the refusal of the world community to take any action against Japan. That was repeated again when [Benito] Mussolini in 1935, I think it was, marched into Ethiopia. And again, there was the frail little figure of Emperor Haile Selassie standing before the League of Nations pleading for help. At that point, at least, the League of Nations began to discuss economic sanctions against Italy, but in America the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would not even let Cordell Hull make a statement saying that if the League of Nations imposed sanctions upon Italy, we would not frustrate those sanctions by insisting upon our right to trade as a neutral nation. We weren't ever willing to go that far.

RICHARD RUSK: The League itself was a brand new idea, brand new concept, but prior to the creation of the League, was there ever any incident where the international community would come to the aid of a country that was under attack?

DEAN RUSK: No, I suppose that the closest to collective security prior to that was the loose federation of European forces which finally put themselves together to oppose Napoleon, at least in anything like modern times. But after Mussolini went into Ethiopia and got away with it, there was the Civil War in Spain. [Francisco] Franco's forces moved to overthrow the Republican government of Spain; Mussolini and Hitler actively participated with Franco with airplanes, weapons, personnel, but the democracies simply looked the other way and pretended that this was nothing but a civil war; finally drove the supporters of the Republican government in Spain into the hands of the communists. During Oxford vacations, I spent a good many of those in Germany and that was the period when the Nazis and Adolf Hitler were rising to power. I watched the Storm troopers take the streets and the public platforms away from the democratic parties of Germany. In political campaigns, the Nazis would break up other people's meetings and they would guard their own. They would put on these big parades through cities and would attack anybody else's parades who would try to do the same thing. My first excursion to Germany was to Hannover, where I went to study the German language. I had been told that in Hannover they spoke the purest German spoken in Germany, and I took German lessons at the University of Hannover.

The next vacation, I went up to Hamburg and studied economics, Hamburg being a great trade and economic center. In both instances I lived with families and pretty much concentrated on my studies because the vacation was limited in scope. But already the Nazis were stirring and you could see the attraction of the Nazi party and the program to many Germans who had suffered through the trials and tribulations of the Weimar Republic. You see, during the 1920s there had been this devastating inflation which had wiped out the value of any kind of currency or savings or anything of that sort and Britain, France, the United States did less than might have been done

to help the Weimar Republic get back on its feet. Then I went to Berlin to study, first at the Hochschule fur Politik because I wanted to do a seminar with Professor [Viktor] Bruns in international law but by that time the Nazi momentum was gaining a great deal of momentum. Nazi students in this seminar insisted that we do nothing in the seminar but study the illegality of the Treaty of Versailles, which was one of the doctrines of the Nazi party. Then I moved across to the University of Berlin, but even there the Nazi influence was beginning to be felt very strongly. I remember attending a lecture given by a professor in the University of Berlin on the subject of how best to incorporate the Germans in the United States into the Third Reich. He debated in his lecture seriously about whether they should demand territorial enclaves in places like Milwaukee, St. Louis, or whether they should try to do it simply through party organization as branches of the Nazi party. It was almost ridiculous to see how serious he was about something which was almost nothing but wild dreams.

One of the tragic recollections I have was that many young Germans my own age, student age, in the beginning supported Adolf Hitler for what might be called idealistic reasons; they wanted to see the public morale of Germany restored; they wanted to see Germany respected among the nations of the world; they wanted to get away from some of the despair and lethargy and economic problems affecting Germany. They didn't really believe what Adolf Hitler had written in Mein Kampf. It was not until later that they realized the extent to which they had been betrayed. So, Adolf Hitler came in partly through the use of pressure, use of force on the streets, but partly through a kind of seductiveness that took into camp an awful lot of people. That, I think, is one of the tragedies of the German experience during the 1930s and World War II. While I was studying in Berlin, I lived with a family out in Neubabelsberg near Potsdam, and this was a place of many lakes. So one day I was out in a canoe, and I pulled the canoe up on a little sand bank to go into a little restaurant to have lunch. When I got back my canoe was gone. I notified the water police and about an hour later, they came pulling up in their little boat towing my canoe and they said to me, "Here is your canoe; we have caught the thief and he will be punished, but we are fining you five marks for tempting thieves."

I had not tied or locked my canoe. I thought of that often afterwards because when you look over the events and sad story of the 1930s, I think that we democracies, with our pacifism and indifference to aggression elsewhere, were guilty of tempting thieves. For example, when Hitler marched his army into the Rhineland, contrary to the Treaty of Versailles, we learned later that in his orders to his troops he said that if the French show any sign of resistance, you German troops come back home. But the French did not show any sign of resistance and he occupied the Rhineland and discovered that he could get away with it without being punished. That helped to build the momentum of aggression in his mind, then Austria, then Czechoslovakia, then his attack on Poland which finally triggered World War II. This matter of tempting thieves is a problem that we have to think about in terms of preventing war, particularly the larger wars. There was one thing at Oxford that I particularly enjoyed: Professor Alfred Zimmern was professor of international relations at Oxford, and almost every Sunday he would have an open house in his own home for any students who wanted to drop in. Often he would have some distinguished visitor from the continent or someone up from London to be there to visit with students and talk things over. For example, he had [Edvard] Benes from Czechoslovakia on Sunday; we all enjoyed that. Professor Zimmern, later upon his retirement from Oxford, became a professor at Hartford College in Connecticut in the United States, and I corresponded with him

until he died. But that kind of informal discussion and contact at Oxford was very valuable. I had one lucky break at Oxford which helped me get out of there without winding up in a debtor's prison. The Rhodes scholarship stipend was just enough to cover essentials and you had to watch it very closely to be able to get by on it. I had no further resources of my own to call on. But my travels in Germany proved to be a little expensive so I had run up some bills at Oxford.

The spring of 1934, I was in Germany about to come back for my final term at Oxford, and I got a telegram from David French, my roommate and friend, who reminded me of the Cecil Peace Prize competition. A prize established by Lord Robert Cecil for the best essay among British colleges and universities on any subject dealing with international affairs. David French told me in this telegram that the deadline for getting in a paper was about one week away, and I could not come to Oxford unless I submitted a paper. So I holed myself up in a little hotel there in Berlin and wrote for about five days straight. I picked as my topic some reflections on the relationship between the British Commonwealth of Nations on the one side and the League of Nations on the other. I got this paper off just ahead of the deadline and shortly after that I learned that I had won the prize. The prize was one hundred pounds. Well, a hundred pounds was five hundred dollars in those days and that allowed me to pay my bills and just squeak home.

Once at Oxford I was having some American friends in for breakfast, and when I put in the order with my scout for breakfast I asked him to serve cantaloupe as the first course. He went down to the battery and came back and said, "The Master of the battery wants to know if you really mean that you want cantaloupe." I said, "Yes, of course that is what I would like to have." So he served the cantaloupe and my bill came in at the end of the term and those cantaloupes were five dollars a piece. They probably were hothouse cantaloupes or had been shipped in from the tropics somewhere. But that was a pretty expensive breakfast as far as I was concerned in those days. St. John's College had a marvelous wine cellar. I am sure that the fellows in the college, the Dons, spent a fair amount of time sampling the wines all over Europe and getting some of the best ones into St. John's College. St. John's was noted for having one of the best wine cellars in all of Oxford. While I was at Oxford, I really had beamed at college and university teaching in the international field.

It seemed to me that that was where the action was; that was where the really important things were going on. I had come to have a real appreciation for the quality of life in academia with its relatively free time in between class sessions and fairly long vacations and so forth. I had long since given up any idea of going into the ministry and I had no taste whatever for going into the rat race of business competition. I had not, at that point, really begun to think of government service as such. As a matter of fact my government service began while I was on the faculty at Mills. I got a little summons from Uncle Sam to report for duty as a reserve officer in December of 1940. It was those six years of military service which led to my going to the State Department. I began that trail. But my ideas were really aimed at college and university teaching in the international field. During my first term at Oxford I think I was hazed a little by my fellow students because I was appointed to chair a committee of the Junior Common Room--the Junior Common Room being the organized students of the college--to wait on the president of the college to petition for a powder room for ladies in the college. There were no such facilities and if you had a lady guest and she needed to withdraw, you would have to take her outside the college, across the street down into an underground and put a penny in the slot and let her do

what she had to do. The president of the college at that time was old Dr. James, a heavily bearded man in his eighties whom we called the Bodger and so I, with two other members of the committee, went into call on him. We went in to see him, and I made my speech asking for a powder room.

When I got through he simply glared at us and said, "What a monstrous proposal." And that was the end of that. I am quite sure that the officers of the Junior Common Room knew very well what would happen to me if I were on this committee but they nevertheless stuck my nose into it. When we all had finished our final exams at Oxford, the Dons of the college gave an wing-ding of a party for those who had-just gone through the exams, wine and other liquids were flowing freely. I remember at that party that one of my tutors made a rather stuffy remark about what fine lecturers they had at Oxford. So I said, "Well, I suppose not all of them are. I remember the fellow who was lecturing on [David] Hume. I went to his lecture and the first day there were about 225 students there and this young man came in with his back to the audience and mumbled; the second lecture there were about 75 students there and he did the same thing. For the third lecture we were about down to 30 and he did the same thing and I quit. He wasn't a very good lecturer." And my tutor said, "Well what did you do about Hume?" And I said, "I had to work it up on my own." So he said, "Well, that might have been the best lecturer you had." We would meet our tutor at Oxford once a week and for a time you might have two tutors going at the same time and have two tutorials a week.

But at each tutorial you would bring in an essay, maybe 18 or 20 pages, long on a topic that had been agreed on the week before and the procedure of the tutorial was for your tutor to go over your essay and criticize and discuss it and to branch out from there into other things. But these weekly essays turned out to be exactly the kind of writing that was required in the final exams. So that you had that practice in getting ready for the kinds of essays that had to be written for the exams. Richard, I don't think you should use this in any of your writing but on my final exams at Oxford, I remember that about halfway through one of my philosophy papers, I simply tore it up and started over again, I did not think that I had done very well. Well, when the written exams were over in ten days or two weeks, you come up before a board of oral examiners for the oral part of your examination. When I went before the oral examiners, they made such complimentary remarks about my exam and didn't press me on any additional questions. I went back and reported to my Dons at my own college what the oral examiners had said. They said, "Oh well, you are a certain first." The grades being first class, second class, third class, fourth class. However, when the results came out, I found myself with a second.

Then I got a note of apology from the examiners because apparently the philosophy reader on the exam had gotten my paper mixed up with somebody else's. I may be the only person who has had a note of apology from the examiners at Oxford University. But I got the gentleman's second, which is a very respectable outcome. One little matter not related to anything we have been talking about--I had been a friend of John Foster Dulles during the Truman administration, during the negotiation of the Japanese Peace Treaty. When I was at the Rockefeller Foundation he became secretary of state. At the end of the 100th day in office, I wrote him a long letter, about three pages, commenting on how he was doing with respect to the various parts of his job. Eight years later when I had finished my own 100 days, my secretary Phyllis [D.] Bernau, who had been John Foster Dulles' secretary, very quietly came in on the 100th day and laid on my

desk a copy of this letter which I had written to John Foster Dulles eight years earlier. So just for fun, I sent a copy of that letter to Mr. Shultz when he took office. When I arrived in New Delhi to serve under General Stilwell, I was assigned to the G-3 section in the New Delhi headquarters, so-called Rear Echelon, the Forward Echelon was up in Assam and there was another headquarters over in China, but the headquarters in New Delhi was the headquarters for all American forces in China, Burma and India.

Since I was directly involved with war plans from the very beginning, I spent a great deal of time traveling into Assam, to China, down to Ceylon where Lord Louis Mountbatten's headquarters were. I usually travelled in a small, converted bomber that had been turned into a staff plane but they were piston planes and very slow and there were times when it seemed that I spent more time in the air getting from one place to another than I did on the ground. My direct superior at the beginning was General Frank [Dow] Merrill, who later became commander of Merrill's Marauders and took that group into Burma. But he was my immediate chief, and I found him a very able and agreeable man for whom to work. We remained friends until his death from a heart attack quite a few years ago. We had two major missions. One was to try to encourage the Chinese as well as the British army in India to take on the Japanese as quickly as possible and the other was to cut through a supply line to China. The Japanese had interrupted the old Burman Flying Tiger days. We thought it was very important, as did Washington, to try to get some supplies into China to keep China in the war because if they simply dropped out of the war, it would release very large numbers of Japanese forces to be turned against MacArthur and [Chester William] Nimitz who were coming across the Pacific.

RICHARD RUSK: What kind of war making potential did China have back in those years?

DEAN RUSK: We sometimes forget that China had been fighting the Japanese for a decade prior to Pearl Harbor. After all, Manchuria was seized in 1931 and following that the Japanese moved in on the coastal areas of China and imposed great losses upon the Chinese forces. I think many people underestimated the erosion of the ten years of warfare on the political and economic structure of China itself. That was a decade when China was getting no help from the outside. As a matter of fact, we ourselves continued to send scrap iron and oil to Japan to be used in making arms for the attack on China; pretty disgraceful story. But when Pearl Harbor came along, we needed for our own purposes that idea that there was a China, a great country that was a local ally, strongly fighting the Japanese, and we created a kind of idealized picture of what was left of free China because things were very grim for us just after Pearl Harbor. For example, think of March 1942, three months after Pearl Harbor. Imagine that President Roosevelt might have gone on a nationwide radio hookup and said the following: "My fellow Americans, I have some very serious things to say to you. Hitler's armies are smashing at the gates of Leningrad, Moscow, Stalingrad; [Erwin] Rommel is rushing through north Africa toward Cairo; my intelligence people tell me [because they were at the time] that Russia will be knocked out of the war in the course of the next six or eight weeks.

We cannot mobilize our own armed forces except at a snail's pace because we simply don't have the arms and equipment for them. The Japanese have just destroyed the heart of our fleet at Pearl Harbor and they are rushing through Asia and we see no way to stop them; the jig is up." Now based upon certain present day standards of something called credibility, had Franklin Roosevelt

said that in March of 1942, he would have been telling the truth; but had he said it, he would have been telling a profound lie because he and Churchill and Joseph Stalin and millions of others built upon hope and confidence and necessity and we defeated the Axis powers. I mention that because China was very important to us during the first part of the war both psychologically and militarily and it was not until MacArthur and Nimitz managed to come right into the Philippines and into Okinawa and places like that that we knew that we did not have to rely upon China for help in the actual defeat of Japan in the main islands of Japan.

RICHARD RUSK: What percent of Japan's war power was tied down there in Asia?

DEAN RUSK: It is a little hard to say but at least there were hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, Japanese soldiers in China in one capacity or another. Some of them were line of communications troops to supply the Japanese effort farther south but, I think, during the war itself, we exaggerated some of the Japanese forces. For example, we thought there was an elite Japanese route army in Manchuria.

Well, at the end of the war, when the Russians got into the war against Japan for about four days, we found that the Japanese army in Manchuria had become something of a shell because they had drawn a lot of officers' men out of it to reinforce their forces in the Pacific. Nevertheless, it was a substantial effort so our job was to try to find some way to get supplies into China. We looked at all possible ground routes. As a matter of fact, we even looked at the possibility of going up through Afghanistan and coming through extreme western China. We scoured Asia for ways of getting into China, but cutting a road back through Burma seemed to be the only really feasible way to do it. On one occasion, while I was still in the Pentagon back in Washington, Madam Chiang Kai-shek came to Washington and she went in to see President Roosevelt.

After her visit we got a note from FDR in the Pentagon saying that Madam Chiang Kai-shek had proposed that we open up a coolie pack route from India into China over the mountains and that the Chinese would furnish whatever number of people, one to two million, to carry loads into China by foot. Well, it didn't take us long to figure out that on that three or four week journey, that each Chinese soldier would eat two or three times his load and there was no food in that area; it was an utterly desolate area. We sent a little note to FDR saying, "Mr. President, this is not feasible because these coolies would eat more than they could carry on this kind of journey." Back came a little note from him saying, "Then drop their food to them by air." And we had to send back a little note saying, "Mr. President, if we had the planes to drop their food by air, we could take the supplies into China to begin with." That just illustrates how desperate people were to try to find some way of getting into China. But the route from Assam, through Burma into China was very difficult terrain indeed--beautiful country in the dry weather but when the monsoons came up and the rains began to fall, it just became a quagmire so the engineering problems were formidable indeed.

I personally was not involved in the planning and construction of this road although it was within our theater, but we had General [Earle Gilmore] Wheeler, particularly, and one or two others, whose names I will dig out, in charge of the actual construction. The road was about three hundred miles, but it was winding, the ground was treacherous, there were many streams to be bridged and of course there were Japanese taking potshots. There were times when men had to

drive bulldozers with a little piece of metal up in front of them as protection against snipers. We used a great deal of Indians in front of them as protection against snipers. We used a great deal of Indian labor and Burmese labor.

The Karens and the Kachins, two north Burmese tribes were available to us and were very helpful to us in trying to mobilize some forces to get that road built; but that was a two-year effort and required an enormous amount of toil but it was a contingency kind of effort, somewhat like the Alkin Highway built into Alaska, we built that in the event we needed it. But as I said earlier in another tape, we couldn't be sure that if we defeated the Japanese on their own home islands that the Japanese forces in China would then surrender, the war might be continued in China itself. After all, all of our experience with Japanese forces, up to that point, had been that they were fanatical in their conduct of the war and that they just fought to the last, so we just didn't know. We had a big problem with our line of communications back to the United States. It was long, it was slow, and there were periods when we would lose half of our ships trying to come to the China-Burma-India Theater to submarines down in the south Atlantic.

I remember once Lord Louis Mountbatten was furious that among three ships which were on their way out the only ship that survived happened to have a good deal of its space taken up with a box of chocolates for every American in the theater, whereas the ship with arms and other crucially needed supplies got sunk. But Washington was a long way away, and it was not easy to get the Pentagon to understand the circumstances in which we were operating. For example, we could see that we and the British were going to return to Burma from the north, we would find ourselves on these narrow gauged rail lines but without any engines, without any rolling stock, and so quite early in 1943, we sent a cable back to the Pentagon to ask them to prepare for us some small locomotives for a narrow track which could be moved in by air and the Pentagon just pooh-poohed us on the idea of an airborne locomotive. But when we actually got in Burma and got hold of a part of that rail system, we needed such things and so we had to construct some light locomotives out of jeeps by putting flange wheels on them and pulling whatever we could. Another instance of lack of imagination in the Pentagon: We had a homing pigeon communications company out there. Under the circumstances we were faced with in Burma, that homing pigeon company was very useful at times. One day some of the Chinese troops got into the pigeon coops and they made pigeon stew out of all the pigeons, so we sent a telegram and asked the Pentagon for a complete replacement for the pigeon compliment for the such and such Sigma Company.

Back came a telegram from the Pentagon saying, "Request denied. It is the assumption of the tables of organization that the pigeons would furnish their own replacements." We had not told them that the Chinese troops had eaten these pigeons. In 1944, the Japanese became aware of the continuing build-up of Allied potential in India and so they launched a major offensive against eastern India to try to break that up. An account of that campaign is fully described in General [William Joseph] Slim's fine book on the subject and you will have to read that for it. General Slim was a fine British commander. During that operation, when the British forces were very hard pressed, we used whatever air we had in support of British forces, and it worked out very well. We defeated the Japanese in that campaign and opened the way for us to move much more deeply into Burma. By the time the road to China was completed, it was safe and secure from a military point of view, and we had driven the Japanese much farther south. For operations in

Burma and India we were under the control of the British chiefs of staff who were the executive agents for the U.S.-British combined chiefs of staff for that theater, just as the American chiefs of staff were the executive agents for campaigns in Europe and in the Pacific.

Being under the British chiefs of staff meant, in effect, that we were under Mr. Churchill's command and he tended to follow things that were going on out there in considerable detail. I had a little long range exchange with him at a time when he didn't know me from Adam's off ox. We received an order from him to launch a long range penetration group, a [Orde C.] Wingate-type operation, into Burma. This group would involve about 3,000 men who would wander around shooting at whatever Japs they could find, but they weren't going to seize any terrain or capture any particular objectives, they were going in there for four or five weeks and then come on back, supplied by air the entire time. It was an operation that had no perceptible influence on the outcome of the war. So as Chief of War Plans, I gave this operation the code name PINPRICK. Well, when that got back to London, out came a rocket from Mr. Churchill saying, "Change of name of PINPRICK to GRAPPLE." Well, that may be one of the differences between Mr. Churchill and myself. General Stilwell kept pressing Washington for at least two divisions of American ground forces to be used out there. He thought it would greatly speed up the effort to break back into Burma, recapture Burma and open up the road to China, but the European and Pacific theaters, quite rightly, had much higher priority for such forces and he was denied them.

But he was finally given a brigade that came to be called "Merrill's Marauders." These were volunteers from the European and Pacific theaters. I think these fellows came out there with the idea that they would have one operation and then they would all go home; but it was sort of a patchwork kind of operation with a good deal of gallant people in it. In any event, since that was the only ground force that General Stilwell had, he used it much more than perhaps commanders are entitled the use of such a force. He drove them unmercifully and they were operating in extreme conditions. For example, they encamped in one area where there was typhus on ticks and a lot of the men came down with typhus. Fortunately, we discovered that if they were treated up at the 20th General Hospital, up in Assam under air-conditioned equipment, that they could do pretty well in bringing them out of it; there was malaria, there was nothing but emergency rations for them to eat; it was a pretty tough operation and General Stilwell expended Merrill's Marauders and they wound up being a unit which really had no further combat capability. General Stilwell was a foot soldier.

He didn't like headquarters, he didn't like the political relationships involved in high command. He was always out in the field with the troops. I suppose he might have been a superb division commander in combat, but he was impatient with all the things that go along with the highest levels of command. He got the nickname "Vinegar Joe" because of certain mannerisms he had. In fact, he was a very warm human being with great compassion. For example, he spent a good deal of time in China before World War II and he had a great feeling for the Chinese people. He felt, and I think quite properly, that if Chinese soldiers were properly equipped, properly trained, and properly led that they would be good soldiers. I think he proved that with some of the Chinese troops in Burma, but he was deeply distressed by the inadequacies, the corruption, the failure of the Chiang Kai-shek government to do what ought to have been done for the Chinese people and he was always on the side of the common people in China rather than the government

and the high command. Corruption was a serious problem there. For example, when we furnished Atabrine to the Chinese forces as protection against malaria, we had to have an American in the mess line to put this Atabrine down the throats of the Chinese so that their officers wouldn't collect all the Atabrine and send it back to China and sell it on the black market.

We could never separate a Chinese unit from its arms and equipment. For example, if we wanted a Chinese unit to move as fast as possible from point A to point B and we told them to leave all of their stuff and we would fly this stuff to them when they reached point B, they simply wouldn't do it. They had almost a fanatical sense of property and one of the instructions we gave to our men out there was never try to take anything away from a Chinese soldier, he would kill you. There were times when General Stilwell had to take unusual measures to spur the Chinese to advance even in the area where we thought there were few, if any, Japanese. There were some occasions when we told them that their supplies for the next day would be dropped at such and such a point, which might be fifteen miles farther down the road and if they wanted their supplies, they would have to go down there to get it, so they would move. On one occasion General Stilwell wanted a Chinese unit to move and they were bucking the move so he just took his carbine and headed down the road toward the Japanese and left it to the Chinese as a matter of face to trail along with him.

But in general, the Chinese forces in Burma, given all the circumstances, performed creditably and well and paid off the effort we made to get them trained and armed. It is hard to say to what extent the mission of the China-Burma-India theater was actually performed because before we had any real opportunity to capitalize on what was done there, MacArthur and Nimitz were well on their way across the Pacific and the brunt of the war shifted to the frontal attack on Japan. I have no doubt that if war continued for a much longer period what was done in Burma would have been very useful. One little matter that left some impressions and stuck with me: As Chief of War Plans, I was the person who was supposed to give advice to other staff officers who had their own problems and the chief signal officer and the chief ordinance officer, chief quartermaster, and people like that would come in and say, "Look, we have got a long line of communications back to the United States; we have got to know something about how long we are going to be out here in order to know how to do our planning." In effect, they were asking me when the war was going to be over.

But I would look at them very solemnly and say, "You should plan on our being here until April 1946," and they would go away very happy. But one day, one of them on their way out of the door turned around and said, "Oh, by the way, how do you know that it is April 1946?" I said, "I don't know, but I am being paid to give you an answer." Of course I did know something about the general war plans for the war itself, and I knew something about the preparations for the invasion of the main island, so April 1946 wasn't too bad a figure.

RICHARD RUSK: Was there anything about developments of World War II, specifically your theater, that surprised you at all? Did it go pretty much as you expected it to back in the early 40s?

DEAN RUSK: I think, in the first place, I was surprised as everybody else by the attack on Pearl Harbor. I had been assigned to G-2 military intelligence in the War Department in October 1941, two months before Pearl Harbor. But as I said earlier, I was assigned to keep track of the British areas in Asia, not in Japan specifically, but the Japanese section of G-2 was just down the hall from us, and I had friends and fellow officers there. On Pearl Harbor day, I had come into the office very early, six o'clock in the morning, because we had pretty good information that the Japanese were going to attack the southwest Pacific on that weekend, and we could track a substantial naval force that was moving in the direction and since this involved Malaya and almost certainly Indonesia, I turned up quite early. But when Pearl Harbor came some of the junior officers in the Japanese section of G-2 were up and down the hall laughing over the first flashes that came in from Pearl Harbor, they simply didn't believe it. Some of them didn't believe it until President Roosevelt went on the radio and actually announced to the nation that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. Well, after Pearl Harbor Day, my own colonel, Colonel [James] Compton, came to me with a memorandum in his hand and he said, "Dean, you might want to see this, it is very interesting.

Take a good look at it because you won't see it again. All the copies are being gathered up and destroyed." It was a memorandum that had been prepared about five days earlier in the Japanese section of G-2 indicating points in the Pacific which the Japanese might attack and Pearl Harbor was not even on the list. Had General [Walter C.] Short and the Admiral [Husband E. Kimmel] at Pearl Harbor been brought to trial, had they been court-martialed, some of us would have had a problem of conscience as to whether we should clarify the fact that G-2 simply did not anticipate an attack on Pearl Harbor. One of the successful parts of our operation in the China-Burma-India theater was flying material across the hump to China. We used air fields in northeastern India, up in Assam, but to get the supplies from the port at Calcutta up to Assam was itself a major problem because it was about a 1200 mile journey. There were large rivers to be crossed such as the Irrawaddy, which in the rainy season might be eight or ten miles wide, and of course there was a problem of building air strips on a very difficult terrain. We had little or no heavy equipment, some of them had to be built by hand. And the railroad that went up to that area from Assam was very poor and was very poorly operated.

For example, it was just taken for granted up until we got there that when the engineer driving the railroad train got to his own little village, he would just stop the train for three or four hours and go and visit with his friends and family, or when they got to a river to be crossed they would pull up a railroad ferry, broadside along the dock and then they would load these cars onto the ferry one at a time, crosswise on the ferry. Well, we did a lot of things; we multiplied the tonnage being moved on that railway by putting some trained personnel on there to run the trains, and we put the tracks on these ferries in the longitudinal direction so that we could put five or six cars on the ferry at one time and not just put cars on one at a time crosswise. Now there were times when we perhaps overstrained that railroad.

We had one or two wrecks because our fellows would try too hard to make the trains move, but all those problems were pretty well licked in due course, but it took a lot of doing and involved some occasional friction with the Indian authorities and with both the British and Indians who were technically responsible up in that part of India. I found India to be a fascinating country; extraordinarily complex with all of its ethnic groups and languages. I started taking lessons in

Urdu, which was used typically in the British army in India, but after I had quite a few lessons, one of my Indian friends told me that I was simply learning the Urdu of British military command and that I could not use it for any polite conversation among the Indian themselves so I sort of lost interest in learning Urdu. The British army in India was made up of many, many different tribes. Many of the best battalions came out of the hill country, people like the Gurkas, the Garhwali's and regiments of that sort. But, I think the Japanese might well have penetrated deeply into India had it not been for the fighting capabilities of those native Indian forces. The British also brought over their East African battalion--all black--and they were an extraordinary group because they could put their packs on their heads and just dogtrot along all day long and just cover enormous amounts of ground and were a very valuable unit in that situation.

The terrain was such that armored forces simply weren't very relevant to the fighting out there. It was not tankable country in the usual sense, there was too much water, too many swamps, too much soft ground and so most of the fighting had to be done by an infantryman with a rifle in his hand. None of these kind of modern warfare techniques were very relevant except by air and air supply and techniques of that sort. On one occasion we received word from the Pentagon that several light tanks were on their way to us. Well, we hadn't asked for them and we sent a message back saying that we needed light tanks like we needed holes in the head and for heaven's sake send us some things we really could use because that was very scarce shipping that was being consumed by sending us these light tanks. They were such light tanks that they had no relevance whatever to the European theater. But the light tanks arrived, the Pentagon insisted. Well quite some time later I tried to run down why it was that we got those light tanks and I learned, whether this is true or not I can't personally vouch for it, that a congressional committee was out in the West somewhere looking at military supplies and stores and things of that sort and they saw a large number of these light tanks just sitting out in the field and they asked somebody in the military what these light tanks were for and they were told that those were for the China-Burma-India theater.

So we got these tanks that they simply had to get rid of somehow, somewhere and they set outside of Calcutta and rusted and became scrape iron at the end of the war. I would have to say that I personally was not in combat in the China-Burma-India theater. There was one time when three or four of us were in a jeep with General Stilwell going down through the woods in Burma and we got a couple of sniper shots across our brow. General Stilwell stopped the jeep and looked around his staff people who were with him [he had a signal man, and an ordinance man, and people like that] and looked at me and said, "Rusk, you are the only infantry-trained man here so let's go and see if we can find those snipers." So here I went off with a three-star general scurrying around the woods in Burma looking for Japanese snipers; we never found them, but that was a brief encounter that proved to be nothing. When the Japanese Zero planes came over our airfields, the drill was that every plane that could do so would take to the air to reduce the chances of being destroyed on the ground. I was in one of the western airfields in China, the name of which I could check on a map, when the red ball warning went up that Zeroes were on the way in, and so my pilot and I jumped in our little DC-3 aircraft and took off.

As we headed north to try to get away from any Zeroes that might be coming in, we saw a Zero coming in behind us and there was another DC-3 aircraft off about two miles to our right and for reasons best known to the Japanese pilot, he choose to attack that plane rather than ours and by

the time he had shot that plane down we had gotten into some clouds and he was never able to find us. But actually flying the hump was something I was not supposed to do during the period when the Japanese were still in Burma because I was aware of general Allied war plans. There were quite a few of us who were forbidden to fly over enemy-held territory on the theory that we might get shot down and get tortured into revealing some of this material; but the only way we could get from India into China was over Japanese-held Burma. Fortunately, I wasn't faced with a problem arising from that factor.

RICHARD RUSK: You say you never had a great deal of actual combat experience over there; did you have opportunity to see the actual carnage of what modern warfare does to people?

DEAN RUSK: I did not visit the front when the Japanese were involved with their offensive against the British forces along the eastern frontier of India, but in the part of Burma that our forces were in and the Chinese were in, the fighting was more or less open country kind of fighting, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians. There were no pitched battles of any major importance except for the seizure of Myitkyina, which was a key airport road center up in northeast Burma. I did see Myitkyina shortly after it was taken when it was pretty battered and blown up and saw something of the destruction, but it was nothing like the kind of destruction we are familiar with in western Europe or in a place like some of the Pacific islands where everything was just destroyed. The ratio of military forces, both Japanese and Allied forces, the geography in Burma, was so small that it was almost happenstance that you ran into an enemy. I mentioned the Karens and the Kachins in North Burma; they had been heavily involved with Protestant missionaries who had established mission stations up there.

Down in the southern part of Burma around Rangoon, where the predominate culture was Buddhist, there were various movements among the Burmese, some of them sponsored by the Japanese, that were not particularly friendly to the United States. But the American forces in Burma, in our effort to build the road, did not really come into contact with those and those problems did not arise until the end of the war when the question of Burmese independence had come up. One little interesting matter: President Roosevelt felt very strongly that the major colonial areas of Asia should come out of World War II as independent nations: India, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, Indochina. He had tried to press Mr. Churchill very hard to make a commitment to the Indians that this would be the result at the end of the war, but Mr. Churchill was very resistant. One can remember his famous remark, "I did not become His Majesty's First Minister to reside over the liquidation of the British Empire." And so he resisted this notion. That meant that there was some tension between the American and British forces in India about psychological warfare and in effect public relations kinds of problems because we were there solely for the purpose of trying to fight the Japanese and the British did not want to come clean on their desire to restore British rule in India at the end of the war, so that led to a good many frictions. Indeed, we devised a shoulder patch for the China-Burma-India theater which was worn by every American in the theater and was worn by no one but Americans out there. This shoulder patch showed the star of India, the sun of China and some red and white stripes for the United States.

The theory was that with this theater-wide shoulder patch, it would make it easier for the Indians or anybody else to distinguish the Americans and to understand that we were there solely for the

purpose of fighting the Japanese. But that was the subject of some controversy. While I am at it, I might say that there is reason to believe that President Roosevelt gave up on his desire to see these areas of Asia emerge from the war as independent nations, somewhere around the beginning of 1945, whether he was getting old and sick or whether he was just tired of butting his head up against Mr. Churchill, I don't know. I saw that because around the middle of 1944, various Frenchmen began to arrive out in the China-Burma-India theater asking to be parachuted into Indochina. Well, we didn't know what the policy drill was back in Washington, so we sent a telegram back reporting that these Frenchmen were there wanting to be parachuted into Indochina and asking for policy guidance as to U.S. policy toward Indochina. Well, weeks passed, months passed, follow-up telegrams produced no result and when a staff officer had to go back to Washington for something, we would ask him to try to get the answer and nothing happened.

Finally around the beginning of 1945, there came out to us a joint chiefs of staff paper--light blue fool's cap paper--and the subject of the paper was U.S. policy toward Indochina. On the first sheet it said, "The Joint Chiefs of Staff have asked the President for a statement of U.S. policy toward Indochina; the President's reply is contained in Annex A." So I flipped over to Annex A and there was a sheet of paper that said, "When asked by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a statement of U.S. policy toward Indochina, the President replied, 'I don't want to hear any more about Indochina.'" So there was a gap in policy for a full year there which had very considerable consequences as far as the history of that area was concerned. [As a follow-up question to that; as Chief of War Plans over there, did you have to make policy to fill that gap or take any actions not necessarily approved by Washington but simply had to be made at the scene by somebody? Incidentally, were these organized French military units?] No, just individuals, probably OSS [Office of Strategic Services] type characters. But when Franklin Roosevelt lost interest in pursuing his anti-colonial policy about those areas, bear in mind that American forces out there were under British command and so for the last year of the war and the immediate postwar period, the arrangements out there were determined by the British and that led to the return of the British to India, Burma, Malaya, return of the Dutch to Indonesia and the return of the French to Indochina.

The whole history might have been different had those countries come out of the war independent. They became independent very quickly after the war, but a lot of things might have happened differently. For example, while I was in China-Burma-India, I personally authorized the dropping of arms and American cigarettes to Ho Chi Minh in Indochina because we were ready to help anybody who would shoot at the Japanese, so we encouraged him in his effort to resist the Japanese. We had in the CBI theater a very able group of the Officers Strategic Services, the wartime predecessor of the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], and they conducted a good many clandestine operations. They had an extraordinary combination of bluebloods and thugs in the OSS during the war. People right out of Wall Street on the one side, people who probably ought to have been in a penitentiary on the other. And they did many extraordinary things to help out and make things difficult for the Japanese. Their operations were under General Stilwell's command, and it was my job to keep in close touch with them, help them to decide which things to do and which things not to do.

When the war was over, just after the French returned to Indochina, we soon found ourselves in the United States launching the [George Catlett] Marshall Plan and NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] and in those two great enterprises the active and casual participation of the French was indispensable and what was happening in Indochina itself tended to move on to the back burner because our relations with France were extraordinarily important, say from 1946 to 1949. We did, however, in providing aid to France, some of which went off to help their position in Indochina, we did try to press them to come to a political settlement with the nations of Indochina, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. But we did not want to press them to the point of having them say to us, "Alright, we're leaving, but this is your baby," because we didn't want that problem in our basket. They made various moves, but we had a succession of French governments during that period, not one of which was strong enough to take the action to really cut the ties between those countries and France and let them move ahead as independent countries. Now, we entered another chapter when the North Koreans attacked South Korea in 1950 because it was clear that this was a major attack by the North Koreans of a broad front for the purpose of seizing South Korea.

At the time the attack occurred, we didn't know what else was involved; what China, the Soviet Union might have in mind in addition to Korea, so President Truman put the Seventh Fleet between Taiwan and the mainland and said that we would resist any attempt to use force across that strait there in either direction, and we substantially increased our aid to the French in Indochina because we were trying to discourage the possibility that the operation in Korea might be broadened into a general Communist assault on neighboring areas in Asia. In retrospect, I think that fear was unfounded because we never got any real evidence that they were planning to attack either Taiwan or Indochina. Nevertheless, that North Korean attack gave rise to stepped-up assistance to the French in Indochina. Some of that assistance we tried to channel directly to the indigenous governments in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, but there were great difficulties with the French when we would try to do that. That was the situation until during the Eisenhower administration and the French were driven out of Indochina and Vietnam was split in half at the Geneva Conference. I mentioned on an earlier tape the running dispute that General Stilwell had with Chiang Kai-shek and General [Claire Lee] Chennault on the use of the tonnage coming over the hump. That was a battle that went all the way back to Washington and there were also some controversies between the British and the Chinese with respect to the role and activities of the Chinese forces in Burma.

The British were convinced that the Chinese forces had come into Burma carrying boundary stones in their knapsacks and that they were determined to make good on China's historic claim to a good part of northern Burma. So there was suspicion and friction between the two. Well, I had to carry the brunt of drafting most of General Stilwell's cables back to Washington on both of these disputes. I was told in the summer of 1945 that I had been transferred from the CBI theater back to the Operations Division of the War Department's General Staff because they had found that I had been the principal author of those cables. British-American cooperation out there was not very close up through 1943 and well into 1944. As a matter of fact, it was not until it became clear that Hitler was on the way to being defeated that cooperation significantly increased. As I indicated earlier, Churchill was simply determined that not very much was going to happen out in India and Burma until Hitler was defeated because the British Army in India was the only imperial reserve he had. But when Allied forces began to roll following the

Normandy landings, then cooperation became really quite good and Lord Louis Mountbatten contributed greatly to that because he was determined to see to it that the Americans and the British worked well together.

He had both British and Americans on his own staff down in Ceylon, and he followed what the Americans, and indeed the Chinese, were doing in Burma closely and with interest, but there were problems really until Hitler was on the way down. I suspect that Mr. Churchill achieved some of his policy of delay simply by sending British commanders out to India who he knew simply were not going to do anything. General Auchinleck came out, General Wavell came out and there was a lethargy about the British headquarters in India that had to be seen to be believed. I think instead of arguing these things out as a matter of policy with Franklin Roosevelt, he just achieved his purposes in that fashion. We were very fortunate in having Colonel Mike Saunders, J.S. Saunders, as the British liaison to the American headquarters and he had an office right alongside of mine. He was a remarkable fellow, friendly, energetic, understanding. He had married an American wife from Michigan, Mel Saunders, lovely woman, and he helped us avoid a great many problems after the war.

END OF SIDE 2

