

CH-511

Ann Whitman, Exec

Martin Mack Treasury

Feb 15 1971

Mrs. Ann C. Whitman, 2-15-91

MRS. WHITMAN: Everything. He would take home with him scripts of speeches and they'd come back the next morning almost indecipherable because he'd go around . . .

Q: Around the whole page.

MRS. WHITMAN: It would take you hours to figure out what he really meant. Unlike this girl in the Pentagon, I wished I'd saved many more, but I didn't.

Q: But you did retrieve several things from the wastebasket?

MRS. WHITMAN: I wish I'd saved the drafts of the last speech.

Q: The military-industrial complex speech?

MRS. WHITMAN: Yes. What do you think about the Military-Industrial-Complex speech? Who do you think coined the phrase?

Q: Well, we have an interview with Captain Ralph Williams . . .

MRS. WHITMAN: Who was he?

Q: He was in the speech writers office. I think the consensus is that Malcolm Moos wrote the phrase. Why? What do you think?

MRS. WHITMAN: I have a suspicion that the president's brother had a hand in it.

Q: What makes you think so?

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MRS. WHITMAN: Nothing definite or tangible. The phrase just is fitting with his philosophy.

Q: Would he have come to the White House to work on it?

MRS. WHITMAN: We sometimes sent things to the university and sometimes he came over.

Q: Did he write most of those himself?

MRS. WHITMAN: No. He took a draft and went over it. He changed it enormously.

Q: Well, you probably got to know his style so well that, did you do some editing yourself before things went in to him?

MRS. WHITMAN: Sure.

Q: Memo, or drafts, would come to you and then you could pretty well re-do them?

[Interruption]

MRS. WHITMAN: . . . asked her [Mary Stephens] to polish it up.

Q: So Mary was . . .

MRS. WHITMAN: What I couldn't figure out--when he'd bring home something and it was all over the pages.

Q: Deciphering. Was Hagerty's writing any better?

Twining: LeMay was there. Toohay Spaatz went over about the same time, you know. They set up over there the Strategic Air Command to run that part of the war, and Toohay was sent over to run the 8th Air Force, Doolittle the 8th Air Force, and the 20th, which I was taking over. Those two Air Forces would comprise Toohay's command, like they had in England, see, the 8th and the 15th. He was to operate from Guam, and that's where he was, as I reported to him, as commander of the 20th. Doolittle had the 8th, and LeMay went up as Chief of Staff. In only two or three weeks, it was over.

Q: You were briefed on the atomic bomb before you went out?

Twining: Yes. They told me that they were going to drop the atomic bomb. I said, "What's that?" "Oh, it's terrific--" they told me what it would do. I said, "Yeah, why don't you people drop it? Why should the 20th Air Force take on this responsibility, knowing nothing about it?"

"No, it's got to be a military operation."

I said, "OK, give me the airplane and the crew, and you people drop the thing."

Q: Who were "they"?

Twining: The scientists. They had a special place, 509 special,



on Tinian. That's where they were building this thing. I said, "I don't know anything about this bomb. Why should we take responsibility for something like this?"

So finally they said, "Well, first of all, we'll show you what it is."

So I went up and saw. They took me all through what they were doing, showed me the thing, took me in the room where the bomb was that they were going to drop. I said, "What is that thing? Is that pumpkin a bomb?" Damnedest looking thing you ever saw, stuff sticking out all over it, you know, no shape, no ballistic shape at all. I said, "I'd be worried about hitting anything with that."

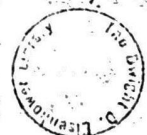
They said, "You don't have to hit very close." They told me the story. The chief scientist there, a wonderful man -- and I'll tell you that everything they said it would do, it did. They were right on the button.

I went to the crew that was going to drop the bomb, and talked to the crew, and you know who the bombardier of that airplane was? My top bombardier in the 15th Air Force in the war in Italy. I said, "You're going to drop ~~that~~ this thing?"

"That's right, General."

I said, "Can you hit anything with it? Have you practiced any with a bomb like this?"

He said, "Don't worry about that. That's an awful looking thing. We call it the 'pumpkin'. But we have actually taken bombs



built exactly like this, and practiced dropping them, and we can put it right on the button, just like you can a 15."

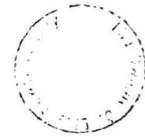
I said, "Are you sure?"

He said, "Yes, Sir. Don't worry."

"OK. That's one problem off my mind."

Then the other terrible thing was, it had to be dropped on a clear day, unlimited visibility, and we never knew what you had in Japan. We were 2000 miles away. We could never predict with certainty what the weather was. And the other thing was, you couldn't bring the bomb back.

Q: Because you couldn't land with it?



Twining: That was the idea. Of course, that was going to be right up to me. That was one of the things that I had to deal with. Like buying a pig in a poke.

Well, of course, everybody said, "That's all right, that's all right." So I said, "OK." I don't know what we'd have done. If you didn't drop it big, you were supposed to not drop it. Lord, if anything -- It was off all alone, naked; no escort, nothing. That was all right, because we'd done that with our reconnaissance ships and the Japs hadn't touched them, same kind of an airplane. So that was all right. Nobody got near it.

Q: Couldn't you be privileged to drop it in the ocean?

Twining: Oh, that was practically nothing. That was a place ^{we?} they put me temporarily. They were juggling officers coming and going out of the service.

Q: Kind of a holding operation?

Twining: That's right. They were adjusting, wherever we'd go.

Q: But it was a real job you took over at Wright Field.

Twining: Yes, that was a fine job.



Q: That was December of 1945.

Twining: That's right.

Q: What did that entail?

Twining: That was called the Air Materiel Command. The Engineering School there -- they trained young engineers, and then they had laboratories, a series of laboratories there. In the old days, that was our center of technology. Now it's kind of shifting over to Andrews Field, taking part of that load over. Now it's kind of a logistic command at Wright Field. But in those days and during the war, it was where the technology centered around. The whole Air Force technology was there--developing

equipment, new equipment, perfecting old equipment, and helping the commanders all they could in a materielle way.

Q: Well, by the nature of it, then, where it involved research, you were not so vulnerable to the letdown in postwar spirit, were you?

Twining: Oh, no, we were busy as the dickens out there. It was wide open. That was a terrific big force, you know--oh, tremendous. And they procured all the equipment through Wright Field for the Air Force. They had a procurement section there, the largest force in the country, and they had some of our real old timers, civilians, as kind of consultants, helping them on some of these big contracts. I was there about a year and a half. Very busy place. Of course, we were cutting down. We had mostly civilians employed there, you see, civilian employee status. We had 131,000 -- this is a rough estimate, very rough -- 131,000 civilians when I got there, and that was less than it was at the wartime peak. And all of a sudden, we went through a reduction in force. This was political. Cut the place down. I had to go from 131,000 civilians to 32,000, practically overnight. You talk about firing the wrong people -- we did it! In many cases. Many of these people were old and had a lot of seniority. Practically impossible to get rid of those. They weren't effective. There were a lot of young men, relatively young men, who were eager, smart, and good -- and they went out. That was a sad thing.

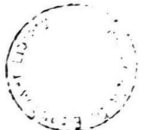


That happened in many cases. We had to get rid of the young people. It wasn't the right thing to do.

Q: Did you find that assignment as compatible as actually fighting the war?

Twining: No. It was something new to me.

Q: You're a man of action.



Twining: I wasn't too happy in it. But it was a wonderful group to be with, very close friends of mine, enjoyed that, very pleasant. But the type of work isn't the thing I'd been trained for. General Oliver Echols was the wartime commander out there, a wonderful man.

Q: It involved a relationship, I suppose, with lots of scientists.

Twining: Lots of scientists, and many many dealings with the Congress, defending the budget, which was very very large. Biggest budget of any command. A lot of things had to be proven. We were all involved in those days, ^{on} with some of our stations -- Cape Canaveral was one of them. Canaveral was an outfit. All the missiles, all the new things, the ~~challenge~~ ^{new} things were at Cape Canaveral. Abandoned a big Air Force base ~~that~~ ^{than}

and if they believed in it, they'd help us, and they did, I think, very well; up to ~~1960~~ 1960 when I was in, we were getting all this money. I was chairman of the (Joint) Chiefs in those days, and we got practically everything we wanted. It's changed since then. Since 1960, we're not getting the things I think we ought to have. We're not going into space like we should go into space today. We're not putting the money into it or the effort. The space for peaceful purposes is a program which is a fine thought, and let's have it that way, but let's be prepared as we go to protect ourselves in space, just as we did during the war on the surface. I don't think we ought to block off our protection. Let's have it for peaceful purposes, have all the rules you want, but let's be prepared and keep up to date on the technique, technology that we need for space. Because if you lose this technology time, you never get it back. You can lose ten years in building something. See, the other fellow is building, he's ten years ahead of you. And a war comes. You can't make it up. You've had it. That's what worries me. It worries a lot of us. Not that you have to go crazy, but in each one of these fields -- the Secretary of Defense is spending all his money, going broke. So he is very allergic to anything that costs money. He has Vietnam on his hands, he's got some other problems, and he's cutting everything down, and the technology is not moving, see. Our technology is not moving like it should, at all. And that means we're losing all the time -- in time.



units weren't big, and you could see them all in a short time, if you had an airplane. We had it divided into south and north of the range, they called it. North of the range was the cold part. That's where Fairbanks -- everything centered around Fairbanks and Eilson Field. Eilson Field was where they had the big reconnaissance, flew over the North Pole all the time. They had B-29s and then they went to B-52s and cargo type a now. It's a very large base. Long runway. Handle anything.

Q: Well, that assignment, plus the one at Wright Field, were more or less essential in the development of your career, weren't they?

Twining: Oh, yes.

Q: When you became Chief of Staff you had this intimate knowledge.

Twining: That's right. That's right. Another important thing is, you know the people who are implicated in these specialties, see. It's a pretty good way, pretty good position to be in. If you don't know anybody, if you just come up in one service and stay there all the time, you don't broaden ~~up~~ out very much, and finally ~~22--it can happen --~~ get up to be Chief, say, ~~at/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49/50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65/66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/74/75/76/77/78/79/80/81/82/83/84/85/86/87/88/89/90/91/92/93/94/95/96/97/98/99/100/101/102/103/104/105/106/107/108/109/110/111/112/113/114/115/116/117/118/119/120/121/122/123/124/125/126/127/128/129/130/131/132/133/134/135/136/137/138/139/140/141/142/143/144/145/146/147/148/149/150/151/152/153/154/155/156/157/158/159/160/161/162/163/164/165/166/167/168/169/170/171/172/173/174/175/176/177/178/179/180/181/182/183/184/185/186/187/188/189/190/191/192/193/194/195/196/197/198/199/200/201/202/203/204/205/206/207/208/209/210/211/212/213/214/215/216/217/218/219/220/221/222/223/224/225/226/227/228/229/230/231/232/233/234/235/236/237/238/239/240/241/242/243/244/245/246/247/248/249/250/251/252/253/254/255/256/257/258/259/260/261/262/263/264/265/266/267/268/269/270/271/272/273/274/275/276/277/278/279/280/281/282/283/284/285/286/287/288/289/290/291/292/293/294/295/296/297/298/299/300/301/302/303/304/305/306/307/308/309/310/311/312/313/314/315/316/317/318/319/320/321/322/323/324/325/326/327/328/329/330/331/332/333/334/335/336/337/338/339/340/341/342/343/344/345/346/347/348/349/350/351/352/353/354/355/356/357/358/359/360/361/362/363/364/365/366/367/368/369/370/371/372/373/374/375/376/377/378/379/380/381/382/383/384/385/386/387/388/389/390/391/392/393/394/395/396/397/398/399/400/401/402/403/404/405/406/407/408/409/410/411/412/413/414/415/416/417/418/419/420/421/422/423/424/425/426/427/428/429/430/431/432/433/434/435/436/437/438/439/440/441/442/443/444/445/446/447/448/449/450/451/452/453/454/455/456/457/458/459/460/461/462/463/464/465/466/467/468/469/470/471/472/473/474/475/476/477/478/479/480/481/482/483/484/485/486/487/488/489/490/491/492/493/494/495/496/497/498/499/500/501/502/503/504/505/506/507/508/509/510/511/512/513/514/515/516/517/518/519/520/521/522/523/524/525/526/527/528/529/530/531/532/533/534/535/536/537/538/539/540/541/542/543/544/545/546/547/548/549/550/551/552/553/554/555/556/557/558/559/560/561/562/563/564/565/566/567/568/569/570/571/572/573/574/575/576/577/578/579/580/581/582/583/584/585/586/587/588/589/590/591/592/593/594/595/596/597/598/599/600/601/602/603/604/605/606/607/608/609/610/611/612/613/614/615/616/617/618/619/620/621/622/623/624/625/626/627/628/629/630/631/632/633/634/635/636/637/638/639/640/641/642/643/644/645/646/647/648/649/650/651/652/653/654/655/656/657/658/659/660/661/662/663/664/665/666/667/668/669/670/671/672/673/674/675/676/677/678/679/680/681/682/683/684/685/686/687/688/689/690/691/692/693/694/695/696/697/698/699/700/701/702/703/704/705/706/707/708/709/710/711/712/713/714/715/716/717/718/719/720/721/722/723/724/725/726/727/728/729/730/731/732/733/734/735/736/737/738/739/740/741/742/743/744/745/746/747/748/749/750/751/752/753/754/755/756/757/758/759/760/761/762/763/764/765/766/767/768/769/770/771/772/773/774/775/776/777/778/779/780/781/782/783/784/785/786/787/788/789/790/791/792/793/794/795/796/797/798/799/800/801/802/803/804/805/806/807/808/809/810/811/812/813/814/815/816/817/818/819/820/821/822/823/824/825/826/827/828/829/830/831/832/833/834/835/836/837/838/839/840/841/842/843/844/845/846/847/848/849/850/851/852/853/854/855/856/857/858/859/860/861/862/863/864/865/866/867/868/869/870/871/872/873/874/875/876/877/878/879/880/881/882/883/884/885/886/887/888/889/890/891/892/893/894/895/896/897/898/899/900/901/902/903/904/905/906/907/908/909/910/911/912/913/914/915/916/917/918/919/920/921/922/923/924/925/926/927/928/929/930/931/932/933/934/935/936/937/938/939/940/941/942/943/944/945/946/947/948/949/950/951/952/953/954/955/956/957/958/959/960/961/962/963/964/965/966/967/968/969/970/971/972/973/974/975/976/977/978/979/980/981/982/983/984/985/986/987/988/989/990/991/992/993/994/995/996/997/998/999/1000/1001/1002/1003/1004/1005/1006/1007/1008/1009/1010/1011/1012/1013/1014/1015/1016/1017/1018/1019/1020/1021/1022/1023/1024/1025/1026/1027/1028/1029/1030/1031/1032/1033/1034/1035/1036/1037/1038/1039/1040/1041/1042/1043/1044/1045/1046/1047/1048/1049/1050/1051/1052/1053/1054/1055/1056/1057/1058/1059/1060/1061/1062/1063/1064/1065/1066/1067/1068/1069/1070/1071/1072/1073/1074/1075/1076/1077/1078/1079/1080/1081/1082/1083/1084/1085/1086/1087/1088/1089/1090/1091/1092/1093/1094/1095/1096/1097/1098/1099/1100/1101/1102/1103/1104/1105/1106/1107/1108/1109/1110/1111/1112/1113/1114/1115/1116/1117/1118/1119/1120/1121/1122/1123/1124/1125/1126/1127/1128/1129/1130/1131/1132/1133/1134/1135/1136/1137/1138/1139/1140/1141/1142/1143/1144/1145/1146/1147/1148/1149/1150/1151/1152/1153/1154/1155/1156/1157/1158/1159/1160/1161/1162/1163/1164/1165/1166/1167/1168/1169/1170/1171/1172/1173/1174/1175/1176/1177/1178/1179/1180/1181/1182/1183/1184/1185/1186/1187/1188/1189/1190/1191/1192/1193/1194/1195/1196/1197/1198/1199/1200/1201/1202/1203/1204/1205/1206/1207/1208/1209/1210/1211/1212/1213/1214/1215/1216/1217/1218/1219/1220/1221/1222/1223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Interview with General Nathan Twining
Arlington, Virginia

by John T. Mason, Jr.
August 17, 1967

Q: General, it's certainly good to see you again today and to see you looking so well. Last time, Last time, when you broke off, you had just told me about your postwar assignment at Wright Field in Ohio, and then briefly about your assignment in Alaska. After that I think you returned to Washington, where you were obviously being groomed for Chief of the Air Force. You came back to Washington for a spell as Deputy, I believe.

General Twining: Yes. I returned to Washington in July of 1950 as Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, and I held this position till the 10th of October. At this time General Vandenberg was Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and he wanted me to be the Vice-Chief of Staff. That's the position directly under General Vandenberg, which I was certainly very honored to accept. I worked for General Vandenberg until he retired.

Q: Tell me about General Vandenberg. I've not had anyone talk about him in any detail. Tell me about him as a person.

Twining: Well, General Vandenberg and I took our flying training together at Brooks and Kelly Field, Texas. He was the class of 1923 from the Military Academy, and I was class of '21, so he was a couple of years younger than I was. He was a wonderful man, a very fine athlete, excellent pilot, good tactician and a wonderful leader of men, and he did very well all the way through and ended up Commander of the 9th Air Force in World War II, did an outstanding job under General Spaatz. He worked pretty close with the ground forces. He had the tactical command, with Patton and Bradley and so forth and they were all very very fond of him. Very capable officer. Then he became Chief of the Air Force in early 1950, and then he became ill, as you remember, and died a very young man.

Q: I suppose his career wasn't harmed in the least by the fact that he was a nephew of the Senator, and of the same name.

Twining: No, not a bit. He was very fond of the Senator and they were very close. And Van did a wonderful job. Very popular, right to the end. Too bad we had to lose him.

Q: He was an exceedingly handsome man too, wasn't he?

Twining: Very fine. Very fine man. Good-looking man, tall,

slender, good athlete.

Q: What were your actual duties as his deputy?



Twining: Well, as Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel. At that time the Air Force was divided into Personnel -- first there was Vandenberg himself, the Chief. Then you had the Vice-Chief of Staff, who was a four star general, also ~~appointed~~ appointed by Vandenberg, whoever he wanted, and he had the OK of the Secretary of Defense. Then he had the Chief of Personnel, the next echelon. They called ^{them} ~~him~~ Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Deputy Chief of Staff Operations, Deputy Chief of for Training and Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics. They were the next echelon. They were three star generals. That was the crowd that ran his headquarters. Vandenberg of course went to duty on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but when he was absent, at any time, the Vice-Chief of Staff (who was me at that time) would pinch hit for him on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, so you were getting training in both jobs, really a good thing. You were keeping in touch, close to what the Chief was up to. I also attended many formations on the Hill, Senate or Congress, for the Chief, when he couldn't go or when he was absent. I served there as, till I was named Chief of Staff, and that was the 30th of June, 1953.

gauge man, great understanding, and I thought he did a great deal of good for the Defense Department. Not only popular with the service but popular with the Congress, and he knew how to handle people, and he was smart and strong. I think he was a wonderful Secretary of Defense.

Q: Who were your particular friends on Capitol Hill at that time, when the Air Force was battling to achieve this?



Twining: Well, I think it was Russell and Synington and -- that Texas boy, Mahon. I worked very close with all of them.

Q: How did the President react to the aspirations of the Air Force?

Twining: He was quite in sympathy with us. He had real good position. He'd ~~wanna~~ watched the Air Force work and knew lots of leaders in the Air Force, and he supported us very well. And the Congress did too, in those early days, trying to build it up. The Army was bucking us pretty hard, to keep us from getting all we wanted, and in general the Air Force got what they wanted, in spite of the Army opposition.

Q: Did you have any sessions in the White House at the time when Truman was still there?

Twining: I was over there -- I was the Vice-Chief then, you see. There was a great man, too, entirely different type. I was Vice-Chief of Staff, had just gotten into office, and we were having quite a discussion about overflights of Russia. This was of course a top level secret. I didn't know anything about it. In the discussion, the man who was handling that was (Omar) Bradley. Bradley was chairman then, and they were having a meeting with Truman, and they were going to have the final decision. Truman didn't know exactly what the plan was, and the Chief would go over and tell him about it. So Vandenberg was away, and I went down to one of the meetings, and Bradley was there presiding and he said, "Where's Vandenberg?"

I said, "He can't be here today. He's had to go some place."

Bradley said, "You're elected, then."

I said, "What for?"

"To go over and tell Harry Truman about our overflight plan. It's got to be an airman who knows what he's talking about." I didn't even know what the plan was! I said, "This is new to me. I'd better not go because I don't know anything about it."

He said, "You're not going to get off the hook. We'll tell you what it's all about. You go over and tell Truman and see if we can . . ." (a order for it?)

I read up on everything I could, and they gave me a map about three or four times as big as this chart, about the size of that, that showed what the overflights were going to be, with a B-47. I was scared to death. I went in there, waited about a half an hour, and I thought, "He'll run me out of town. He won't buy these overflights."

Well, the first time -- all over the place.

"Well, what have you got, General?"

"This is something very important to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It's vital to our success. They wanted me to brief you. General Vandenberg is away, and I have to do it. I'm sorry, I may not have all the answers, but if I don't, I'll get them for you." I was scared to death, too.

"Go ahead." I started talking easily, and he looked at it for a while, looked up. He said, "Chiefs all buy this?"

I said, "Yes, sir. We're very anxious to start on this program right away. We realize the seriousness of it, but we feel this is the only way we're going to get this information."

He said, "OK." He said, "You got any paper there for me to sign?" He grabbed the paper. He said, "Listen, when you get back there, you tell General Vandenberg from me, why in the devil hasn't he been doing this before?"

Never got such a shock in my life.

Q: He had a great understanding.

Twining: On the big picture -- he might have made some small ones, but on anything of a major nature, he went in with both feet and he didn't hesitate, if he thought it was going to help the country, and the people wanted to do it. Now, if he'd had tough opposition, it might have been different. The Army wasn't too strong for this -- you know, the selfish thing -- but they didn't buck it. But Truman -- I saw him, a couple of times, when he was up against it, and he believed something and the Chiefs believed it, the military wanted it -- bang, it went through, and he put everything he had behind it.

Q: He relied on his advisors, then.

Twining: I think he'll go down in history as a pretty fine President, in the end.

Q: That was the beginning of that program, then.

Twining: Yes.

Q: -- that came to such a disastrous end with Jerry Powers.

Twining: Yes. Well. But we ran it initially. The Air Force ran the program, and the CIA took it away from us.

Against my advice. They got too big for their britches. They did not know how to handle this kind of an operation, and we had to take care of the airplanes and all the stuff anyway, so we might as well run it. In the final showdown, they made a mistake. They made a mistake and went in twice. Maybe I shouldn't put this on the record, but they went in twice from the South, over the same course with Powers, and we screamed and yelled. The first one didn't go. You know damn well the Russians knew something was going on. And we insisted that they change the plan and come in over Norway and Sweden, and get closer to the target area on it. We asked for this area. It was vital. The Chiefs did. Come in from Norway and hit it and get out. Nobody'd ever know you were there. "You can't go back and violate the neutrality with the Swedes and the Norwegians."

I said, "What differences does it make? They wouldn't even know we were in the country. You come in from the south, you're going to get caught." That's what happened. And we told them that ahead of time. And that's what ruined it.

Listen, one day I had 47 airplanes flying all over Russia, and we never heard a word out of them. Nobody complained.

Q: There's some inference that the Russians did know about this program, later on.

Twining: Oh yeah. Yeah, but they couldn't do anything about it.

These are things you can't get your hands on really and prove, but they are facts. And at the same time we're, you know, kind of disarming, unilaterally, in the background. We are actually unilaterally disarming the United States, and a great group of people are pushing it pretty hard. This is a dangerous thing, to a lot of people, and the Congress is worried about this. But it's an insidious thing to stop. People want peace, they want to stop building these armaments. Well, that's all right, if Russia will do the same thing. But you can't believe them. And most of us know you can't. If we build on trust with these people, we're going to be a very unhappy nation before it's over. And I am convinced of that and most of the people in Congress are. But you have these intellectuals who think they've got the answers, and if we'll just lead the way, the Russians will follow suit. If we'll take down all the barriers, like we gave the missiles -- this story's coming out now, on Jack Kennedy. We had missiles in Turkey (our missiles) -- Turkey, Italy, England, and some in France. Without any word from anybody, these missiles were removed, on Kennedy's orders. This has come out now later from Cuba. They were taken out of England, taken out of Spain -- not Spain, Italy -- taken out of Turkey, and the Turks and the Spaniards and these people raised hell. Why? Kennedy said, "The missiles are obsolete." Can you imagine, a half a megaton missile, within range of Moscow, being obsolete? It was the biggest thing we had. That was the Kennedy story. He took them



out unilaterally, without the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff or anybody.

Q: This was as per agreement with --

Twining: -- yeah, with Khrushchev. We shouldn't do this. We got joked on that thing, boy! Well, that's it -- we lead the way, then they'll do it. It just doesn't work. These people get you over a barrel. And the British, there it is, the same thing with the weapon we promised to British -- Kennedy did that. They made a deal on the ? No had the one that was built, and the British were in on it with us. McNamara didn't like it, told Kennedy, "Wash it out, it costs too much money," so they unilaterally scrubbed it, and called the British down and Kennedy announced it to them. That wrecked the poor God damned British. Those are terrible things.

Q: Johnson is a realistix, however, is he not, about such things?

Twining: Yeah, he knows. Johnson knows more than anybody in this country we've ever had as President, what's the right thing to do right now, about anything. He's had the training. He understands it. He's come up through the committees. He's come through the whole God damn thing. And he just won't use his judgment. He is just not playing the game. He is playing the

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know what people we can trust. The French couldn't handle it."

When it came to Dienbienphu, we were called in and told we must save Dienbienphu at all costs, as a large gasp. You know, that famous Frenchman was up there surrounded by Vietcong. And what are you going to do? We had meetings. We split on what to do, Radford and I, versus



(plane noise)

-- said, "You must save it at all costs." That was the order. Well, you couldn't march in there and attack them and fight. You had to do something drastic, and the thing to do was use about three A-bombs. You could fly around in a circle, pick the right place, and drop one. Fly around and drop two, the third one -- then the bands would start playing, the French would march out in glory. That should have been done. And had we done it, we wouldn't have killed anybody but Chinese Communists, and those people would have thought a second time before they got this thing going, now. This is something. I've got that in my book. That's something to think about, because, by God, that was the time to do it. With a military target, saving the French-- and of course that busted up us with the French for forever, not helping them. These things are important. Now, here we are again. Now we're going to back out again. This time with planes and I hope we don't get caught on the beaches.

you know them, you've helped train them, you've got confidence in them. But the big job of the Chief is working up, with the other Chiefs and the Congress, and getting number one the money; the number one job of the Chief is to get that money. If you don't get that you might as well not be there, in the service. You've got to get the money. That's the way you spend most of your time -- your briefings, and your people you talk to most, are the air staffers who are working on that end. The Logistics thing, sure, is vital, but you've got to let those people run their own job on that, training and all that you can put into, you know what's going on, but the main thing is working up to the Secretary of Defense and the Congress and getting the money.

Q: This was not a new problem to you. When you were at Wright Field you had a tremendous amount of experience with that.

Twining: That's right.

Q: And it was largely the same men with whom you dealt.

Twining: When I was at Wright Field, things were going this way. Stuff started going downhill, you know. They were trying to close up the books, very fast giveaway programs-- sell, just get rid of it, get it off the shelves. Then it swung around a little while

the payload. This is what we needed and it looked like it was impossible. Our boy -- I had this written by the real pros. See, the word got out, there was quite a lot of trouble around here, that the Air Force didn't believe in the missile, the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, because it would hurt our Air Force program. So I just started right out of there. I supported the program to the utmost. I said, "All senior Air Force commanders who have responsibility in the ICBM field" -- I did say, SAC was a little bit reluctant. They hated to see it buck into the aircraft program. But that was not true. The Air Force was for it 100 percent. Here was the problem. The US Ballistic Missile Program got under way shortly after World War II. However, the studies at that time militated against a development program because formidable guidance, ^{weight} rate and propulsion problems associated with first generation nuclear weapons indicated that a long range ballistic missile was then an impractical weapon. It was not until the thermonuclear breakthrough in 1952 that a practical ICBM could be considered in the realm of possibility. So, you see, 1952, and that was that great man -- "In February, 1953, following several meetings with Dr. Van Neumann" -- he's the one" -- and Teller." Dr. Van Neumann, he died of cancer, and Dr. Edward Teller -- "In discussions of the nuclear weapons technology, the air scientific advisory board finally established a committee." And this was a great committee -- Dr. Van Neumann, Bradbury, Teller, Irv York, Gene Root, Dave Graves.

Among others. Those were the leaders. The report, in a rather significant disclosure, predicted that employing thermo-nuclear technology it would be possible to devise a warhead which would be light enough and powerful enough to make the intercontinental ballistic missile a practical weapon. Now, Van Neumann was responsible for that whole program. That's what made the weapon possible. People don't realize that. That was a great thing. Then it went on and got even better. Here's what happened. The Van Neumann committee then went to work with another committee and made its recommendations to the Secretary of the Air Force, Harold Talbot, on the 3th of February, '54. Its key recommendations were as follows: (1) the ICBM was technically feasible, re-entry, guidance and overhead problems could be resolved. A lot of people said that could never be done, the re-entry problem, the heat problem, but Van Neumann never worried about that. He worried about the weight versus the power. The Air Force should proceed as fast as technology permitted to achieve and operationalize the ICBM. The program should be accorded the highest priority. And they did that. They put the heat on that program. The Air Force should establish a special approach. He did that, so that, and I assigned Penny Shriever. Penny Shriever was the boy I assigned to this program, my representative. He was the military man in charge, and he had carte blanche. He had a Manhattan Project. Couldn't give him Manhattan Project, wasn't



authorized to . He left, and everybody in my command knew. I just told them all. I said, "Listen, kids, Shriever, I'm putting him in charge of the missile program, and he's Mr. Czar, and whenever he calls you long distance or writes you a letter, don't you ever come back to my headquarters. If he says this is what must be done, that's what you do. Then you complain later to me. This is going to work this way, right straight across the board, and it's going to be a Manhattan Project as far as this Air Force is concerned."

And that's the way we worked it, and Benny Shriever did some great things. He got the strongest -- he's a great friend of mine, and he talks about this all the time. It was really good. Nobody knew it. The Secretary of Defense didn't know it.

I didn't have time to get anything. If I started butting into my staff, we'd have never got this program, never. This thing was fantastic.

Q: General, how did you arrive at this ability to delegate authority and not interfere? Was this the result of long years of experience?

Twining: Well, I had a lot of confidence, and I knew, if we didn't do it, we'd lose out. You get to people like Van Neuman and Feller, and those guys, they are the best in the business, in the world, and they believed in it. All right. And they could

prove it to you. They said, "We can do it." But you can't have everybody butting in on you, see. They didn't butt in on these people. Shriver says in here -- I'll read what he says, it's pretty oute -- he said this at hearings, too -- he said, "If this program of development of the ICBM had been handled like our programs today, we would never have had an ICBM, and I'll go on record on that. If we'd been interfered with like they interfere with us now, we would never have accomplished this job."

Q: How did Secretary Wilson react, once he learned about this?

Twining: Oh, he was all right. Once it started, they wanted it. Wilson was pretty good on that kind of stuff.

Q: Is he that kind of an administrator himself?

Twining: Yes. Yes.

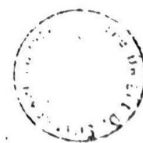
Q: Did he delegate things?

Twining: Oh, yes. If he had confidence in them, he'd let them go. In August, '54, the ^{management} ~~manages~~ approach taken was to exploit the best talent and competence in American industry. That became the



responsibility for all over systems of engineering and technical direction of the ICBM program under direct management of the military establishment, Shriever. He had the whole thing, so he could move across the board, in that area. And nobody could-- a civilian couldn't stop him, because he had the top guys on his board. It became the responsibility for the overall system of engineering and technical direction of the ICBM program under direct management of the military establishment, the creation of a technical organization to provide systems integration and technical direction on a fee basis. It was a hard carrier. But they excluded from actual manufacture of weapons, components and hardware. This unorthodox procedure assured the United States Air Force maintained direct control over the rocket, the guidance system, the warhead and the reentry vehicle. This was a significant reversal of normal procedure, but the expedient did permit the Air Force to go directly to all contractors on an associate basis. And when we wanted to get something done, a warhead or something, we'd go right to the contractor, orthodox contractor, good one, we never took any phonies, and he could go to work on it without going through all the laborious contracts that take months and months. Boom, just like that, and no mistake on it, because these people really wanted to get in on it, so they worked like hell to do a good job.

Q: This was almost a wartime power.



Q: How close was the President to this development?

Twining: Oh, he had his reports. He had his own scientific advisors over there, you know. He had a boy from -- Kistiakowski, Killian and that crowd. They were right on his private staff, and they kept him informed. That was a great period, I'll tell you. They really moved on that thing. And what marked me, I've heard a lot of this -- when the war ended, we knew nothing about ballistic missiles, zero. Of course, our scientists had been working on this a long time, leading scientists. They knew about all these terms and what they had to do and all that.

Q: And these men of German background had experience in Germany.

Twining: Surely. And when they would diagnose something and tell us, and then to go ahead and make it or do something, by God, they were right all the time. Pretty soon -- it didn't take you long to have faith in those people.

Q: That's what you acquired out in Wright Field, wasn't it?

Twining: Oh yes, I've got it in here somewhere, Benny said, if we had to do a thing like this today, under the present management of the Secretary of Defense, we could not accomplish this kind of a thing.



Q: When a program like this is under way, how closely is the Congress or the key men in the Congress, how closely are they keyed in on all this?

Twining: They're keyed in pretty well. See, Shriver would have to report to them. The Air Force would report. My own staff knew all about this. They followed it. They kept up to date, and they would testify on the Hill all the time about it, and then Shriver would be called in as special witness, and he would tell, and they were very happy with the whole program. That went along real well.

Q: And this was all done in secret. It wasn't in full committee ever, was it?

Twining: Oh, no. No, no. A lot of it was highly secret. They couldn't do much about it. But it was a great program.

Q: Well, it didn't require any special legislation to weigh the contract procedures and all of that? When you went to certain factories, certain manufacturers?

Twining: No, we just moved right in and violated all the rules. We didn't have the procedures. They knew the bill would be paid, and

if one
were asked to do something by Shriver's group, a company
say, they knew right away they were going to get paid and
everything was all right. They went ahead and did the job.

Q: The statutes weren't actually changed then --

Twining: -- no, no--

Q: -- just ignored?

Twining: That's right. That's right. Yes, we accomplished a
great deal, I'll tell you.

Q: There's another subject that came up early in the Eisenhower
Administration, and that was the whole Far Eastern situation
centering around Taiwan, Formosa, Formosa Doctrine, Dulles, 1954.

Twining: -- yes -- yes -- yes, that's right --

: Tell me about that.

Twining: Well, I think Ike handled that pretty well. We went over
there and participated, you know, actually helped them, but we
didn't get into combat, and this gave the Chinese a great lift,

