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INTERVIEW WITH
GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL

PINEHURST, NC

December 7, 1956

Marshall after being named chief of staff is spring of 1939 heads mission to Brazil; Ridgway goes as aide; tells of overcoming pro-German and pro-Italian feeling; effect of giving candy to children at orphanage

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Problems with National Guard

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RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH
GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL
AT PINEHURST, NC - December 7, 1956

Answers to questions by Forrest C. Pogue. Sgt. Heffner ran the recoding machine and was present throughout the interview.

Q. 1. What were the basic weaknesses of the National Guard and how did you attempt to eliminate them?

A. As to the basic weaknesses: There were some of these that could not be eliminated as they were inherent in the basic laws governing the National Guard. The principal trouble was the very short training period for the men and as a few hours once a week would not suffice to replace basic training which required us in the regular service on a 12 hour day, very strenuous work, many months—six or more—in getting men ready for the war. It is only possible in a National Guard organization to get the men but once a week except for the two weeks in the summer. I did find it possible as an extra effort, beside the law, to get the Illinois National Guard for longer periods. But the lack of training which resulted in the two hours a week was the, or rather constituted the, basic weakness of the National Guard system which you could not cure unless you had a longer period of training. And that was one reason why I was so anxious to see compulsory military training installed because I wanted to see it reach the point where—you couldn't—the man would have to enlist in the National Guard after he's finished this six months

compulsory training in order to clear himself from further service. He would be on a reserve basis and as soon as the ranks of the National Guard were filled with these men that had had six months basic training the opportunities for the development of a highly disciplined organization were all present.

The next difficulty was the question of officers. The amount of training they had before they got their commissions, which in most instances was very little. It was not possible to send them to schools in the numbers that would meet the requirements of the National Guard and it was also quite evident that the very men we wanted most couldn't spare that time—they were too successful in business or the law or medicine or whatever their practice was. So it resulted in a very complete lack of thoroughness in the training of the officers. This again was one of the reasons that I thought that as a by-product of the compulsory military training, we would get a totally different result because we could commission officers only from those who had this compulsory training. So your control of the National Guard would be in the hands of the men who had been basically trained—which was entirely absent.

As I recall the divisions we first called in—in the National Guard—we required them to have seven weeks of this basic training, preliminary training, as it were. And they went on through that and passed to their other work with great complaint from commanders who felt that that was time wasted, that seven weeks was entirely too long. After we really took over these divisions, largely with a change of command, we had to do this training all over again, for the established forces that we controlled, we were then having almost a year's basic training of the individuals before we put them into the ranks. Later it was six months of very strenuous work—very strenuous days and nights—all of which was missing—is missing—in the normal National

Guard training. Only a high degree of discipline, as developed by this intensive training, makes it possible to meet the demands of the modern battlefield, which requires a very high state of discipline. And there is no time to get it after you are in there. And this individual training doesn't come as readily on a divisional basis as it does on the individual basis of training the man as an individual and then assigning him to a larger unit.

Now another thing, in connection with the officers was, it was very hard to get a correct judgment of their efficiency, their qualifications, because here you stepped into the realm of politics, just as you did in the commissioning of officers in a great many of the states, and in their handling of the men and all, it was very difficult, short of a war basis, to have men discipline their neighbors during the peacetime training in a manner that is required in order to get a strict compliance with the orders that are so necessary to build up a satisfying state of discipline. In the main—the weakness was—the complaint, lack of time, to basically train the individuals in the Guard, the political influences involved in the officer corps, and the lack of method of firmly establishing the qualifications of the candidates for promotion or commission.

Q. 2. Mr. Frye in his biography of you mentions efforts you made to improve the performance of the Illinois National Guard. He mentions, in particular, special maneuvers which you sponsored. Will you discuss your efforts while there?

A. In relation to Mr. Frye's mention and his biography of me, he speaks of a special training procedure I followed in New York—in Illinois—I can't very well go in to that because it's a very lengthy proposition and it would take quite some time. I will have to reserve this to talk to you later.

Q. 3. Did you meet considerable opposition from National Guard officers and their friends in Congress in your efforts to improve the National Guard?

A. I confined myself in my efforts in the training of the National Guard in dealing with the Illinois National Guard. I took things as they were—and the rules and regulations as they were—and they responded very, very well. I would say, they responded with goodwill to the procedure, whatever the lacks were.

Q. 4. Did we eliminate the former weaknesses in the reorganization of the National Guard which was made after 1945?

A. I am not sufficiently familiar now with the reorganization of the National Guard after 1945. But what little I do know of it, I think it didn't correct these basic weaknesses.

Q. 5. What changes, if any, are still needed?

A. No answer given here. He answers this after question 6. See page 5.

Q. 6. Do you feel that the National Guard is the answer to the need for a Citizen Army?

A. I feel the National Guard is part and parcel of our system and we will always have it with us. Whether it's the complete provision of trained forces or not, I do not know. But if we must depend on that, we have a long ways to go in fitting these men for the strain of modern fighting. We have to remember now that where heretofore we've had years to get ready for a war, the next time we will have no time at all. Because whoever makes an issue of war will be prepared to try to get the best of us from the very start because that would be our weakest moment for a large trained force. The only way I can see under present conditions to improve on this short of

Universal Military Training would be to have a very few troops take their turn—we'll say a five year period—of being very highly trained and giving a great deal of time—in order to be ready for immediate employment and then being relieved from that pressure by another group of divisions, which would be determined largely by the amount of transport that could be readily made available. We would know right off that we couldn't transport a large number of troops abroad and if our military police remains the same, that is to keep the fighting out of the western world, as we have in the past, it would be limited at the start to the divisions to which we could find transportation. And at the same time others that would remain at home and gradually establish themselves in efficiency during the period they were available as home guards, as it were.

Q. 5. What changes, if any, are still needed?

A. I'm not sufficiently familiar with the law now. But I would say as far as I know nothing has been done to cure the greatest weakness which is the time element and the quality of the man that is commissioned. The only remedy to this that I know of is compulsory military training where the graduate of the six months course, of whatever months may be the term, can be assigned to the National Guard, for the ranks, for a period of say three years and meanwhile would be a reserve for the ranks of the National Guard after that period. I know of no other way to get a solid basis of training in the ranks of the National Guard. When you look back and realize how long it took us to get these divisions ready for service—I think the average, I'm guessing, was about 20 months—I know some divisions were 22 months getting ready to go abroad. Well if we become involved in first-line fighting in the first week of the war, a system of that sort is not tolerable.

Q. 7. Mr. Frye mentions efforts by General John M. Palmer, you and others just after the war in an effort to get Congress to establish a citizen army instead of a small professional army, such as General March wanted. Can you give some background?

A. As to 7 my work with General Palmer and others in an effort to get Congress to establish a citizen army instead of small professional army that General March wanted, I think I will have to talk to you about this at some length.

Q. 8. What were the weaknesses in the Reserve program as you found it in 1939?

A. As to the Reserve program, its principal weakness was an effort had been made to get as large a reserve of officers as possible. And that was quite contrary to my conception. I felt that we ought to have a small reserve, very well sustained and trained. With the funds available for this large mass of officers, we couldn't possibly do that. I thought it was very much more to the point to start off with a modest number who had been given first class opportunities for their training instead of as it was so little money available that the government could do very little for the individual officer.

Q. 9. What steps did you take to strengthen this program?

A. What steps did I take to strengthen this program? Well almost immediately on my becoming Chief of Staff we were moving into a situation that demanded the assignment of a great many reserve officers to active duty and there we had to put them in before they had completed any additional training, which wasn't so good, but was the best that could be done under the circumstances. There was no period for a new preparation arrangement for the training of reservists because we were into the thing—into mobilization—almost immediately on my

appointment as Chief of Staff. Prior to that the funds available for the training of reserves, as I already indicated, were so limited that very little could be done for the individual so the standard of training of the officer was very small. The regular component of the ground army again was so small that there was almost no place to assign these men for professional experience. Somebody hazarded the statement, I recall, that all the noncommissioned officers of the regular Army in this country could find reserve seats in the Yankee stadium. That may be correct or incorrect, I don't know, but there were very few of them. And of coursed the numbers to be increased were tremendous. However, I feel very sharply that we tried to get numbers rather than training which I thought was a cardinal mistake.

Q. 10. "In the mid-Thirties the Navy was permitted, by a cautious increase in appropriations, to start on a new shipbuilding program which by that time was acutely needed. The Army was less favored, presumably because there was a continuing public confidence shared by the White House and Congress alike, that the Navy could safely bed thought of … as the only really necessary line of defense for the time being."

Was this due mainly to the President's pro-Navy feeling, do you think? Or was the Navy more successful in selling its viewpoint to the President and Congress? Or was it as the result of the same type of public reaction we have now in regard to the Air Force which prefers the program which takes the smallest number of men.

A. This attitude towards the Navy set up in time of peace may be partially due to the President's pro-Navy feelings, but the main point was that the Navy was dealing in something you had to have years of construction preliminary to making an effective result. The feeling was that you could make a ground army very quickly, but you couldn't build a battleship in a week—it was a

matter of years. As a matter of fact the same thing held with the Air—that you had to have a lot of extra training for the Air—well the hardest thing in the world to train is a ground army of infantry and artillery. In fact, I never saw it perfectly trained except during the latter part of the war. Because everything you do is under extraordinary difficult circumstances, which is not the case with the others. For example, in the Navy, I think it was the ship custom that everybody should take a bath, time prevailing, before going into action and put on clean underwear. The probability was he'd had a night's sleep in his regular bunk. With the Army it was quite the other way around. The probability before a battle was that he had been in a series of marches—some of them possible forced marches. He had been pushed to the verge of exhaustion. He was wet—because it always seems to rain in such times—and muddy and he had to sleep in those clothes. He had no chance to get a change of garments on the eve of action or a long time after that, and yet the moment when his high courage was necessary was as a rule at dawn when he woke up half-frozen to deal with an enemy he couldn't see and his machine guns and artillery, as a rule, couldn't see except through the eyes of a single observer. And another thing the artillery which had to furnish such close support was out of sight and he might never see the guns that were supporting him, all of which required a very high state of training, higher than that of any other force that I know of. Most of the training in the Navy you had a specific duty to perform, a specific place to perform that duty and you went as I have explained in a prepared state to do that. That was not at all the case with the Army. It was exactly the opposite and the chances were nine out of ten, certainly with the artillery, you never saw your enemy and you never saw the place in which you fired until dawn came the morning of the battle. All this required very high training in order that it might be carried out with precision and efficiency. Then there was another very, I think, a specific reason why it was much easier to obtain funds for the Navy than

for the Army and for the Air than for the ground army. The Navy was highly photogenic. A column of battleships, supporting cruisers, and scurrying destroyers was a very spectacular thing. There is nothing spectacular about a ground army set-up. As a matter of fact the better it's done, the less there is to see, which made it very, very hard to deal with men who were being educated constantly to admire the tremendous, the impressive sight of those great ships plunging through the waves and stirring up quite a wake behind them. This, I think, presented one of the great difficulties of the thing because a member of Congress didn't see the ground armies in action very well. He was taken out to see part of thing and all. But the time that really counted was the night—the marches up to the final night—the fatigues and discomforts and hardships of that night—and where you were when morning came, when you got ready for the first effort. The airship is very spectacular. The air force and the ships are very spectacular. But again this is the nearest approach to pushbutton warfare, just as it is with the Navy, but there is nothing pushbutton at all about practically anything in the ground army. I think part of our trouble in this goes back to our days of our ancestors being experts with the rifle, and the rifle being on the conventional deer prongs over the fireplace. Every man in those days—certainly every man on the frontier—was an expert handler of a gun. He knew how to track. He knew how to screen himself and he knew how to shoot with precision. Now practically all of that vanished and the major portion of the boys we got were city boys. I know when we went into the First World War, I went over with the first unit and there was such talk about that they were trained marksmen and trained woodsmen. Well most of them hadn't seen a weapon except in a shooting gallery and had never been in the woods in their life, other than the park, which made it a very difficult change. Now the farmer boy in a sense was better prepared. He probably moved more

slowly and deliberately, but he knew the open country. And his difficulty came in handling himself with the crowds to which he was utterly unaccustomed.

Q. 11. "The money finally obtained for educational orders (which were designed by the Ordnance Department of the Army not to supply weapons but to pave the way to eventual mass production) is seen to have been grotesquely small on almost any basis of comparison." Any comment on this.

A. As to the money involved in educational orders, the amounts were small but they should be screened for percentages against the total appropriation available and the needs of the ground army at this time. The army needed everything. At this time it was dealing with a 40 year old rifle—I think it is 40 years—and had to be rearmed. Its artillery had to be rearmed. I was much criticized for continuing the 57 and 75 -mm guns. I did that because we had no ammunition for the new 105 guns we had very few of these and it would take a long time to get them. Meanwhile we had to have some artillery. So the only way was to use the 75 and the large accumulation of ammunition which was left over from the first war. Those were facts and we had to have something. And that entered into most all of these things—there was such a limited amount of money available. We had the 105; we had the new automatic rifle and we had the new machine guns. The poorest product gotten out by the Ordnance at this time and I don't know whose fault it was—it was the first thing that reached the troops—was the 37 mm cannon as antitank gun—I say 37, maybe it was 47, I don't recall. This was archaic when it was issued to the troops. Yet it was the last ordnance product. We had had very great difficulty with the Ordnance department in the past, but I think that had been largely washed out by the operations of the General Staff coming in as to what models should be manufactured.

Another great difficulty I found with the Ordnance, and I got into this by an early visit to the Ordnance almost immediately after I was made deputy Chief of Staff. I went to them, the chief of Ordnance and his assistant chiefs of ordnance and asked them to tell me all the thing they needed, all the things they lacked and there I found for example that while the big industries retooled almost completely every three years or more, they had some machines in those arsenals that had been there fifty years and there was no money to get any replacements of any kind. And so there was so much required that only a very little bit could be apportioned to educational orders. It was a very fine thing to have the educational orders, but by Gosh, we had to have something actual that we could use immediately. [Sgt. Heffner – I think that 37 mm was referred to as a one pounder] Where I said 75 mm antitank gun it was 37 mm [Sgt. Heffner, One pounder, I think it was]

TURN IT OFF

Q. 12 and 13 have been merged with a later question.

Q. 14. Would you discuss the whole program of developing new weapons and techniques, noting your role in this effort?

Q. 15. Were there specific weapons or pieces of equipment in which you took an especially close interest?

A. The system for developing new weapons. This was guided in the main from the chief of the branch—Chief of Artillery, Chief of Infantry, and so forth. Also there were specific boards that existed, notable one for infantry at Benning, one for artillery at Bragg, and several others. There

were sections in the staff in the War Department that were busily engaged on any new prospect that came up. My reactions and actions were motivated largely by a general survey of the whole set-up or lack of pieces in that set-up and the proposals of officers. It's inherent in an Army, a large organization with a control like that of the War Department—General Staff and chiefs of branches—that it should be conservative and when a man comes up with a new idea, unless he handles himself very carefully, he merely stirs up opposition. In the first place, a great many new things are proposed, a great many out of Congress, a great many by outsiders, and a great many by individual Army officers. Only a few of these practical propositions and yet you have to clear the air of all the impractical ones, each one of which is somebody's favorite son. I tried to make it a point to see the proponents—a proponent—of any one of these matters. I remember one in which an officer was in rather bad odor, it seemed, by his feelings about the artillery and the fact that they were not forward looking and there was a great lack in the training, particularly of the artillery that was being mounted in the tanks. As I say the feeling against him was rather strong. When I heard this I sent for him and I had him lay out for me all of his thoughts on the subject, his arguments, and I told him at the time about half his trouble was that his presentation wasn't a coordinated affair but was a highly prejudiced and almost semi-insulting procedure. I thought he had good ideas. As a matter of fact I made use of them, particularly about the techniques of employing the artillery installed in tanks. But he had successfully antagonized practically the whole staff by getting out of temper with them all. It required a little more subtlety than that, because they were in a firm position and he was not. I saw any number of these men and I will come to one of the most notable cases later, in regard to the jeep. I made it quite a point to see the foreign representatives of any of the new tools that we were building, like tanks for example and other things of that nature, to find out what the other fellow was doing—

who was fighting and using them on the battlefield. This was notable the case in relation to the settlement of quantity production of tanks, as to what model it should be as between the British conception and our conception. Well I heard all of our arguments and then I got a couple of Britishers in, just as myself alone, and told them to talk very frankly to me and tell me how they saw this thing. And I got their point of view from them. But, in short, it was this, as it seemed to me afterwards, and it worked out well too. As to mobility, speed, handling and matters of that sort the American tank was incomparable and the British was very poor. We had used these procedures in connection with the harvest field, notably one man out west of the Mississippi River, who had great numbers of tractors and things of that sort. I know we brought him in and almost lost the value of his use because there got to be a Congressional movement behind him and of course that just clouds the whole issue. I was trying to get that part—trying to get it from the British. I remember, for example, that there came a time when the British wanted fifteen of the earliest form of heavy bombers. I am just trying to think of the name that we called them. Anyway, I'll remember the name in a minute—a very common one—the reason they wanted them was—their people down on the river in the slums were being heavily bombed and Mr. Churchill in particular said they needed encouragement and the only encouragement they could get was if we were bombing the enemy as heavily as they were being bombed in the slums of London. But the trouble was that the German bombers working on England were taking off just across the Channel. Our bombers, working on Berlin, had to fly a long distance and the only thing we had that would reach there—the British had nothing that would reach Berlin—were this particular kind of bomber, whose name I've forgotten at the moment. So they wanted this bomber to get something to Berlin so that they could tell these people they were bombing Berlin. At that time there was a law which made it imperative that anything that was turned over to the

British or the French had to be approved by me personally as Chief of Staff of army equipment. It was quite clearly to my mind an unconstitutional law, because the President of Commander-in-Chief and for a subordinate of the Commander-in-Chief to be able to tell him what he can do or can't do is kind of ridiculous. However, that's the way the law read and it hadn't been tested out. So it fell to me to operate under the terms of this law. Well, I was very careful about it. I tried not to crowd the issue at all and I thought it was imperative that Congress feel that they could trust me and then I could get them to do things that otherwise they would oppose. Well this was one of them and it was the only time I recall that I did something that there was a certain amount of duplicity in it. Actually what I was doing was very right, and I didn't realize how right, and I could have given that reason most effectively, but it wasn't until we turned over these bombers to England that from an Englishman I found out what the trouble was. Our fellows were reporting back that they turned these, reluctantly, very reluctantly turned these bombers over to the British and they were not being used. In fact, they were standing out in the field and the grass growing up around the tires. I sent for a Britisher and I asked him to explain this thing to me very frankly and I wouldn't quote him and he told me very quickly what the point was. He said they couldn't use these bombers. Their defensive arrangements were lacking. They had no tail guns for one thing, which was the most serious thing which would mean that they would all get shot down. There were two or three other things about it and I accepted their version because I was familiar with the manufacture of these things. I had been out to the plant and gone over them while they were turned out and I could see exactly what they were talking about. Our fellows were arguing about all these things, but here were the British who had a familiarity with battlefield conditions that we didn't possess. It was like the tank procedure. The mobility of machinery and all was superb because we'd had this comparable experience with tractors and all

that thing out in the great wheat fields out in the West, but when it came to the question of using these planes—tanks—when it came to the battlefield equipment of the tanks, they were not arranged so they could be fought with efficiency. And I got my line-up from the British, so in the general arguments I decided in favor of the Americans in everything that had to do with the mobility propulsion of the tanks and I decided for the British on what they felt were the necessities of the interior arrangements of the tanks for fighting purposes. The same happened with these planes. When I looked into it I discovered that the British found they couldn't use them because they were so vulnerable. Their defensive equipment was utterly lacking and we then began sending each tank [plane] through the modification section at the plant up at Seattle and I went there several times to see what they doing about it. So we had to modify every one of these planes before they were workable. Now I could have much better have said that we gave those fifteen planes to have an efficiency test. Whereas what I did say was something like that but not a positive statement such as it developed could readily be made in the case of these tanks. This sort of thing occurred time and again. When it got into the ammunition, machine guns, in particular, we were short in every way on ammunition, small arms, antitank and Congress was criticizing the Chief of Ordnance very heavily for insisting on a very conservative procedure. Because the British were planning similar orders in this country and doing the work very quickly. The Ordnance people told me that they would get in trouble and that was being too hurriedly done. Well it developed it was being too hurriedly done. The guns froze as it were at high altitudes in the planes and couldn't be fired at all. And where they were using British ammunition, though manufactured in this country, they had to turn back and we had to issue some of our cherished small allotments that we had available for the few planes that we then had. When you get into these arguments of that nature—and they get into a political complex—it is

extraordinarily difficult to handle the thing because when they are pushing for something like that, logic flies out of the window and you are up against a political procedure. In all of which it seems to be the general attitude that the War Department is always stupid and everybody else is brilliant. I must say that this used to make me tired.

We were making an intensive study in antitank defense, both as to weapons and as to the method of employment and following this up very carefully in the field of the large maneuvers that we were running. We found in our early Army-Navy joint operations for landings that there was a complete lack of comprehension on both sides as to how to go about it. I remember seeing a letter of the commander of the fleet saying they had gone through his one exercise in which I might say practically everything went wrong, but it was a great lesson to all of us, they couldn't do it again because it interfered with their training. Well, it's rather absurd when you look at the training to see the hundreds and hundreds of landing operations that they had to support—and how very few battle actions at sea there were.

I remember visiting the Air Corp's first efforts at having larger guns in the planes and they had installed a 75 mm in this plane and were trying to work out how they could use it. This sort of thing I was after all the time, but there were so many different facets to the procedure when it came to the work of the planes in support of ground operations that it was very easy to say that the great trouble was there were almost no planes available for use in these demonstrations for the operations in support of troops. We had so few that we had to take almost all of them away from the Air Corps training to do this other thing which put a very grave difficulty in our way and set up very positive postures on both sides of the fence.

You refer to Colonel Borden and weapons for jungle warfare. I took this up to see what I could do to increase the support of the ground troops and to lessen the casualty rates in the way of heavier gunfire. They were then fighting north of Guadalcanal above Russell Island and on beyond that. I have forgotten the names of the places at the present time. And I got Borden in and told him to figure out what could be done with existing things. We couldn't go at something that took a year to produce. It had to be something that he could get it in shape in a month or even less and I remember some of the things that he did do. One of the principal ones was to take the amount of antiaircraft ammunition for the 80 mm gun—I think it was 80 mm—and by shaving it down and get it so it would fit a trench mortar we had. That gave us heavy artillery fire close up to the front line in the jungle and, therefore, was very valuable. There were a number of things of like nature that he worked up. Then I would send him over, wherever it was, later it was to Italy I remember—then it was to the Pacific and he'd have these things all displayed. And I had them bring in the principal officers and I had them bring in the sergeants and they could indicate what they wanted right there. He'd take the order and that would be shipped the next day from San Francisco. And we followed that up with great length. First it was something that could be done quickly, like just shaving down the side of a shell and the next was having it available so that the man looked at it and said, "I will take that" and then the order would go to San Francisco to put that on the boat and send it out there. We carried this to a great extent in Italy. The high commanders there—the field marshals and all—came down to inspect and pick out what they thought might be usable.

The various items that are mentioned by you here in that main paragraph of yours, I recall, I don't know just what to say about them, but they were being pushed in every way possible.

When I sent a man like Borden over to the Ordnance Proving Grounds, I gave him a priority procedure that they would have to accept. Mr. Stimson got interested in this and he had a man doing the same thing later.

Q. 14. Would you discuss the whole program of developing new weapons and techniques, noting your role in this effort?

A. I pretty much answered this question, right then.

Q. 15. Were there specific weapons or pieces of equipment in which you took an especially close interest?

A. There were a number of weapons in which I had a direct interest. I don't know how to separate them apart at this moment.

Q. 16. There has been a great deal of debate over the credit for the jeep. Is there anything you want to say on that?

A. The best witness in this is General Bedell Smith. He was then Secretary of the General Staff. During a conference I was having a number of generals, he came into my office, which was his privilege, and interrupted to say that there was a man in his office who had just come in, who'd invented a small vehicle that he (Smith) thought was excellent but he had been unable to get any favorable observers from the Quartermaster Corps, from the field artillery, regarding which he had been very hopeful, and from the Air Corps. So they had sent him from Judge Patterson's office down to my office and he came in to Smith. He was pretty irate, I guess, he was an Irishman, and he wanted to give one of these small motors as a sample and have us test it. Smith took about three minutes to state this and I said, "Well, what do you think of it?" He said, "I

think it's good." "Well, I said, do it." The conversation was just about that long. "Well," he said, "it isn't that simple. We couldn't get along unless we had about fifteen of them." So I said, "How much will it cost," and he gave me the estimated cost. I said, "Do you think you can find the money?" And he said he thought he could. And then I said—"You do it." And he went back and then he came back in about four or five minutes later and interrupted us again. And I said, "What's the trouble now Smith?" Well he said, "I should have said it before and I say it now , that's the first damn time we have been able to get anything for this fellow in this whole War Department, and I think it is worthy of special comment."

That was the jeep. First thing I heard of it after that was at the tests at the Quartermaster field depot near Baltimore [Holabird]. It was called by some other name and there were a lot of photographs in the rotogravure section of the paper. And on inquiry I discovered that was this jeep and these were manufacturing it. Well Smith handled the distribution. I remember, he sent five, I think, to Fort Knox to the Tank Corps and the Chief of the Tank Corps replied that he could give the reply without the test. And Smith told him well he would have to have the test that I ordered it. As I recall the incident, two weeks later he asked for 38,000. From that time on the requests for the jeep just mounted and mounted. The Artillery wanted some, Quartermaster of course wanted some. All these people who had turned it down all wanted some. That was the jeep as I recall it, but Smith can confirm this.

Q. 17. The Ordnance Department has been sharply criticized for its conservative attitude in the pre-war period and the early years of the war. Was this due to lack of funds mainly or to a certain innate conservatism?

A. The Ordnance was conservative, too conservative, I would say, but at the same time it had to insist on a certain precision that the line officers objected to as too prolonged. But the reason for this showed up crystal clear when we were dealing with machine guns for the antiaircraft and we had to use machine guns that were being built in various arsenals around the country for the British, who accepted a very much lower standard than the Ordnance insisted upon, and they found everyone of those froze at high altitudes and couldn't be used. And then, as I said before, they came back and called on us for some of our small reserve.

Well, the Chief of Ordnance was being very heavily criticized by everybody interested in this matter in Congress. As a matter of fact, he was absolutely right and you had to do this thing with a great deal of care and a great deal of examination and tests, all of which were thrown to the wind when they wanted something badly and they were arguing to get it regardless of what the conditions were.

Another thing was the archaic machinery they had. I remember when I was—I think I've told this already—investigating as Deputy Chief of Staff the set-up of the Ordnance to try to find out personally what they wanted, I discovered they had some machines that had been in there for fifty years. In other words, they whole set-up needed revamping. One reason was the extreme lack of funds. There was just almost nothing in the Army appropriations that permitted you to go ahead on anything.

Q. 18. Do you have any comments on the development of the General Staff?

A. As to the development of the General Staff in connection with General March and General Pershing, I think the estimates—the statements in the preceding paragraph are reasonable correct.

I found in going into all the papers afterwards and in some of the actions which occurred at the time in which I saw General March personally that he was a master administrator, an executive, with a great weakness of antagonizing everybody and, in particular, having men about him, one in particular, who were very curt, and almost rude, in their procedure. They operated too much like General March. They needed someone of exactly opposite characteristics as Secretary of the General Staff and in other posts. I admired General March very much in his basic procedure, but I thought he almost ruined himself by his bitterness in his procedure which stuck with him to the last. The one point about the General Staff that has to be remembered is that while they had the power of selection there very high that the selections abroad were much more effective than the selections of individuals on this side. Whether that was due to the fact that they were close to the combat and all that sort of thing, but nevertheless that was the case.

Q. 19. What are your views on the work of Secretary Baker?

A. As to Mr. Baker, I'll say that he was the greatest American—or I will put it, the greatest mind—that I came into contact with in my lifetime. I never saw Mr. Wilson, so I can't comment on that. But I had a number of conversations—intimate conversations—with Mr. Baker and I admired him beyond any other man that I have ever known. He rode a very difficult horse there between General Pershing and General March and did it extraordinarily well. He was the most penetrating observer of Army facts and fancies, as it were, and we couldn't have had a better man as Secretary of War. And, of course, when he made a presentation his handling of the English language was superb.

Q. 20. What are your views on the disagreement between Generals March and Pershing?

A. I have nothing more to add about the disagreement between General March and General Pershing. I don't know how much was General Pershing's fault because I didn't join him until the feud had well built up. But I thought on General March's part he might have been much more moderate in his procedure. However, I think they were both at fault, because it was essential that they get together and they didn't. What saved the situation was Newton Baker.

Q. 21. Do you recall when you first became worried about Germany and Japan?

A. As nearly as I can recall my first intimate worry about Germany and Japan was when I was in the Philippines in 19… I want to correct the beginnings of my answer to 21. Frankly I don't recall just when I became worried.

Q. 22. Do you recall your reaction to President Roosevelt's Chicago speech in 1937 in which he spoke of a quarantine against aggressors?

A. I had a very distant reaction to Mr. Roosevelt's speech in 1937. In fact, I don't recall analyzing it at all.

Q. 23. Where do you think the western powers made their great error in the Thirties: (1) allowing the Germans to reoccupy the Rhineland, (2) allowing the Germans to rearm; (3) failing to rearm speedily enough after (1) and (2) happened; I4) some other factor?

A. I don't care to answer that.

Q. 24. Do you feel that Chamberlain could have afforded to try a showdown with Hitler at Munich?

A. I don't know enough about all the details to answer that.

Q. 25. Do you have any comments on General Wood's America First movement and on the activities of some his associates? Did they hurt our rearmament effort?

A. I don't care to answer 25.

Q. 26. How damaging to the armed forces was the munitions inquiry of the mid-thirties?

A. All I know about the munitions inquiry is that we weren't able to use any of the free money, as it were, which Hugh Johnson had proposed that we should use, for the immediate manufacture by heavy industries and of a lot of heavy armament.

Q. 27. Did Lindbergh's report that the Germans could not be beaten in the air seriously affect military thinking in this country in the late Thirties and early Forties?

A. As to Lindbergh's report, I don't think that was fatal in anyway. It was very informative. I knew Lindbergh—talked with him. I remember driving home from a dinner at General Arnold's one night and I heard so much of that sort of thing, it didn't make a profound impression on me. As a matter of fact, one very distinguished citizen still in the forefront as it were, came to me in about 1939 I think—no 1941—and advised me very strongly not to ask these large sums of money from Congress because we couldn't possibly go into the war; we didn't have a chance of defeating the Germans and getting into the Western Europe. And it was all a tremendous waste of money and a very serious involvement.

Q. 28. Was Roosevelt playing with fire when he talked tough to the Germans after 1937 without making adequate provision for the armed forces?

A. Well, I can't answer that. Everybody has to be the judge.

END OF SIDE 1

BEGINNING OF SIDE 2 – TAPE 12 (Side 2 of Tape 12 is a duplicate of Tape 8 which was on a small piece of tape.)

Q. 29. General Marshall agreed with Secretary Hull of the need of keeping the State Department acquainted with Army and Navy plans. Admiral Leahy considered this unnecessary. Was this liaison with the State Department every worked out satisfactorily?

A. Reference to the State Department. I do not recall any machinery set up for liaison with the State Department. I recall very intimate relations with them and frequent visits of Mr. Stimson on Mr. Hull.

Q. 30. Please discuss these early efforts to provide for hemisphere defense.

A. Hemisphere defense. I'm sorry but I can't recall much of this.

Q. 31. Before you took the position of Chief of Staff, you took a trip to Brazil. What was the main purpose of the trip and its significance?

A. He says question 33 [it should be 31]. Trip to Brazil. As I understood it, I received very brief instructions for the trip. General Monteiro was going to attend a review of the Italian army in Italy and in order to suppress these intimacies I was sent to Brazil on a goodwill tour and my actions were merely to be goodwill actions. But I was particularly involved in going down south at that very prominent town—something do Sol—[he means Rio Grande do Sol] I've forgotten the name right now, which had a very heavy German population. In fact, the mayor was a German and when I went there he excused himself on grounds of being sick. I had a rather

interesting trip as a matter of fact. Just short of this southern town was a small place whose name I've forgotten. I stopped off there and the Mayor or rather the Governor or rather the *interventor*, I think that they called him, asked me if I would review a parade on Sunday and I said, "Well, certainly I would." They had a parade of all the school children. All the boys wear uniforms and the girls all wore pleated skirts and middie blouses. It was a very impressive parade. But what I was particularly interested in was a group in the middle of the parade in sort of ornate work clothes, overalls, with pink piping. There were some little boys, ranging in years from four to twelve, I believe, an agricultural unit and each one had his tool, maybe a hoe, or a rake, or pulling something through the street. When I asked the host what it was, I found he was intensely interested in this and it actually was a home for homeless children. I've forgotten the word for that, when the father and mother are unidentified. So he asked me to go out there after the review. Well, I was giving a dinner that night or going to one and they lasted forever and the parade was very late but nevertheless he and I went out there. And we arrived just at the time the first truck showed up. But everything was immaculate—the most beautifully run place. I was profoundly impressed. I was much amused too because one boy they left there and didn't take him to town and he was in charge of the latrines. And they told me to speak to him and ask him some questions and they would bet me that they could name his reply, whatever the question was. I don't recall whether I put up any money or not, anyway I asked him some question—very ordinary one—and his reply was "Getulio Vargas" which was the name of the President. They said whatever you said to him—good morning or good night—he would say "Getulio Vargas." I always remember that. (He was the one that just recently died as he made a comeback as president.)

Well, anyway, I sent General Ridgway (who was then a major) to get up early the next morning and buy some candy for these children so each child would get a pound. He had a hard time finding any kind of candy, particularly that early hour in the morning, but he found it, and he went out there and gave it to the children and got back just in time to get on the plane with me and go down to something do Sol. That created such excitement (this candy) for this place that never had a gift before that it got into the papers about an hour and a half before we reached—whatever it is do Sol and they didn't have time to get up a parade in the ordinary way, so they gave it to me and then asked me if I would review a parade the next day. When I came in I got a regular Lindbergh reception. They had the roofs of the houses, all the balconies and streets full of children, all of them throwing confetti. They just bought up all the confetti in town in that hour and a half they had to get ready and put on quite a show. And then asked me to review the parade the next day. And it was a beautiful parade. It made quite an impression and made a tremendous hit in the papers. With the result that I got back up to Rio de Negre and was asked not come into town but to get on a plane and go right out to—I think it's called Minas Geraes—it's up in the mountains where they have some mines or iron ore of some kind. When we went up there they put me in a closed car with a squadron of cavalry on both sides and in front and behind so that nobody could possibly see me. It wasn't intentional. They were honoring me, but they were defeating entirely the—what I might be able to do and we ran into this assembly of citizens, and particularly young people and fortunately early in the game ran into a spread of troops. So I stopped the car and got out and reviewed these troops and then I didn't get back in and I walked about three miles through this congregation of people, particularly school children on the curbing, and they said there were some tremendous number of children there, I've forgotten what it was but I couldn't believe it was as many as they said. But they gave me a

tremendous reception nevertheless. They had me go out to the mines and the next day presented me with large nuggets of gold and some other things of that nature. Then I came back to Rio and they had a sort of send off for me. Then when I got up to the northern—the first big port on the bulge of Brazil, Recife—they had another tremendous affair there of children. I don't know how many there were but they said there were 45,000. Anyway the principal occurrence—which was unknown to me at the time—my orderly went ashore and went up and stood on the courthouse steps and met a girl and they tried to get married before I got back to the boat.

Q. 30. See page 20.

Hemisphere defenses I have nothing that I can think of to say in regard to this except it was a consideration and we had to keep them working at it particularly in the bulge of Brazil which was opposite that large city in West Africa.

Q. 31. See page 20.

A. I've already described my trip to Brazil.

Q. 32. "On May 21, 1940, the Chief of Staff was given an unsigned memorandum, presumably from the Secretary General Staff, reading: 'In view of the present world conditions it is believed that this country should take immediate steps to acquire British and French possessions in the Atlantic.' This early suggestion of a measure ultimately achieved by the destroyer for bases deals brought no recorded action, but the memorandum bears the notation 'Chief of Staff has seen'." Would you like to give some background on your part in this whole proposal and the final destroyer-bases transaction?

A. I do not recall just what happened in this affair.

Q. "May 22, Major Matthew Ridgway submitted a memorandum on National Strategic Decisions to the Chief of Staff. He said in view of the danger of dispersing U. S. troops to all danger points, it was well to decide on the area of first importance. His proposal boiled down to hemispheric defense, possible protective occupation of European possessions in the western Hemisphere, and defense of U. S. overseas possessions east of the 180th meridian. This accepted the possible loss of Wake, Guam and the Philippines. On the next day the Chief of Staff reported having shown this memorandum to the President, Admiral Stark, and Under Secretary Welles. They were in general agreement, specifically Mr. Welles. They felt we must not become involved with Japan, must not concern ourselves beyond the 180th meridian and must concentrate on the South American situation. Any comment on this phase of the war?

A. I have no comment. My recollection is too dim.

Q. 34. June 17, 1940, General Marshall told a staff conference that we might suddenly find Japan and Russia appear as a team operating to hold our ships in the Pacific. If the French Navy goes to Germany and Italy, we may have a serious situation in the South Atlantic in a few weeks. Are we not forced into a question of reframing our naval policy, that is (into) purely defensive action in the Pacific with a main effort on the Atlantic side? There is the possibility of raids. He said it would seem we should mobilize the National Guard. He added: "Should not Hawaii have some big bombers?...It is possible that our opponents in the Pacific would be four-fifths of the way to Hawaii before we knew that they had moved…" Is that about your first statement of the idea that we should concentrate on the Atlantic first?

A. I have no comment on most of this. I will say that in regard to Hawaii we were always worried because they did not have enough planes, bombers of the long range to set up an

adequate reconnaissance. All through this period I find as my mind begins to revive memories, it is almost impossible to realize now how little we possessed, particularly in the air. It think it's best explained by something I mentioned to you before—that we had fifteen Flying Fortresses (this was the name I was trying to catch a little while ago—planes) we had fifteen Flying Fortresses and we didn't have enough money to service them, to maintain them—fifteen. One of my last acts before I retired as Chief of Staff was to cooperate with some of the authorities in the approval of condemning twenty-five hundred Flying Fortresses and stacking them out in Arizona. That was quite a contrast between the fifteen we could not support and twenty-five we were going to get rid of.

Q. 35. Did you fear Russian action or merely a threat which would keep up immobile?

A. I don't recall enough of this to give a positive answer.

Q. 36. Any general comments on the developments of this period?

A. I have already said that I thought we were worried about Hawaii because they didn't have enough long range bombers to provide adequate reconnaissance.

Q. 37. "One of the important strategy papers of the 1940 period was that submitted by General Marshall and Admiral Stark to the President on June 27. (This was a revision of a paper submitted on June 22d and changed to meet the President's wishes)." Any comment on this paper?

A. I have no comment. I've forgotten the terms of the paper.

Q. 38. "Senator McCarthy and others have attacked you and President Roosevelt for engaging in a conspiracy with Great Britain because Admiral Ghormley, General Emmons, and General Strong were sent to London in July 1940 to discuss defense plans with the British. I gather that this idea was suggested by the British to the President and that at first it was largely a Navy show." Do you wish to add some background on this mission?

A. I have nothing to add to 38.

Q. 39. Would it be accurate to say that this orientation toward the west became so strong that it was difficult for us to shift toward the Pacific later on? In other words was our later policy based in part on this earlier psychological trend toward Europe? Or is it simpler and more accurate merely to say that our interest in 1940 was in keeping Great Britain in the war, just as 1942-44 it was to our interest to help Great Britain keep Russia in the war and to cooperate with Russia in inflicting the maximum damage on Germany?

A. Your summary of the simpler statement in regard to this is the more nearly accurate I believe.

Q. 40. In October 1940 Admiral Stark and General Marshall opposed Mr. Churchill's suggestion for sending U. S. forces to Singapore. General Marshall felt that this was as unfavorable a moment as could be chosen for provoking trouble. He also favored the withdrawal of the Marine garrison from Shanghai since he felt that it could not escape attack. He confessed that his views were probably at variance with those of Secretary Stimson? Did you have any discussion with Mr. Stimson on this later? Were you in disagreement?

A. I don't recall any discussion.

Q. 41. "On November 4, 1940, Admiral Stark drew up a paper for the Secretary of Navy on strategy. On November 12, he put it in a more definite form. Among the plans was Plan "DOG" which said that in case of war a strong offensive should be carried on in the Atlantic, and defensive action in the Pacific." It is suggested that the impetus for Plan Dog came from a Naval War College study, and that initially it was the Navy and not the Army which talked of hitting the European enemy first in case of war. Did your own 1942 strategy grow out of this earlier naval strategy or did you develop it from the realities of the situation you found after Pearl Harbor?

A. I don't recall the circumstances.

Q. 42. In the light of the emphasis on making the main effort in the Atlantic, why did the President insist on strengthening the fleet at Pearl Harbor? The Navy people now say that they opposed this action. Admiral Richardson is supposed to have been shifted from his command in the Pacific before the end of his normal tour there because of his strong opposition to basing the fleet at Pearl Harbor. (All of this shifting of the fleet has been used by opponents of the Presidents to charge him with a deliberate attempt to attract a Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor.)

A. I cannot answer 42.

Q. 43. "On January 1941 the ABC conversations with Great Britain began. The idea for them apparently came from suggestions by Admiral Stark in which General Marshall acquiesced." Do you have any comments on the origins of these conversations and on their value to later military preparations?

A. I don't recall on what basis we got together. They proved very important on one point and that was unity of command, and you will find the statement I made which is the basis for this decision given in full in the book on *Roosevelt and Hopkins*.

Q. 44. "A momentous White House conference was held by the President with chief members of his cabinet and the Army and Navy on November 14, 1938. The President's whole emphasis was on airplanes."

Was it at this meeting where you disagreed with the President and several people told you they were sorry that you weren't going to be around any longer?

A. As nearly as I can remember this was the meeting.

Q. 45. "There new arose in various quarters, as a result of Axis threats, a desire to correct all the lacks at the same time, despite the slender resources of new money which had to be divided among so many projects. It is not surprising that so sharp a turn of attitude as that of the White House in mid-November 1938 produced confusion; the significant thing is that there was at least a bold step forward on the road of rearming. It was not a sure one, partly because of the basic conflict between the Army's tenacious desires to attain a balanced force, which professional training recognized as essential, and the President's insistence upon air additions first of all. It must be recognized that even to get a balanced forced for modern war there had to be an immense addition to its existing air element. The President concentrated on that vital point; the Army emphasized its own and equally sound objective—even though the Air Corps on occasion felt that it was receiving from the Staff as a whole less support than had been ordered. A mid-January (1939) complaint was that 'appears that General Staff cooperation has just about died

out and the Air Corps is again going it alone.'… In fact on that very day, G-4 was trying to learn the responsibility for getting from the federal WPA funds the amount needed for Air Corps construction. Do you wish to comment on this?

A. There was a general confusion of views in this matter. The Air Corps was very determined—the air corps people were very determined—in their action in doing a great deal of talking with Congress. They had very poor representation in the War Department. The General Staff had very few air members which was largely the fault of the fact they hadn't for a long time taken the Leavenworth course. Some said it was because they didn't want to endanger their flying pay. Fortunately the leading people like Spaatz, Arnold and others of that caliber did go to Leavenworth. The law then wouldn't allow a man to go to the War College unless he had been to Leavenworth and wouldn't allow him to get on the General Staff unless he had been to the War College which resulted in a very meager representation of the Air on the General Staff, the fault of this variety of reasons. I had gone around and inspected the air and the manufacturers at great length with General [Andrews]—well the man was killed in Greenland (in Iceland) and he was at this time the commanding general of the GHQ Air Force. [Sgt. Heffner – Harmon?] No. So I became familiar while I was Deputy Chief of Staff of all these various points and was able to talk to most of these men and I became aware of where their troubles were and gradually aware of what I thought were the cause of those troubles. However I was never able to work them out fully until I became chief of staff myself. At that time I put General [Andrews] – blank above – as G-3 of the War Department General Staff.

END OF TAPE