

# TAPE 12

Recorded November 21, 1956

1. Churchill at TRIDENT [Washington, May 12-25, 1943] suggested that the U.S. take the lead in preparing long-range plans to bring about the fall of Japan. They were already ready. Churchill thought that the attack on Japan might begin in 1945. He personally favored the entry of the Russians in the Far East conflict. The president agreed, predicting that the Soviet Union would join them forty-eight hours after the German surrender. Do you recall whether or not you agreed with these views in May 1943?

I do not recall my reaction in regard to the attack on Japan. I personally favored the entry of the Russians into the Far Eastern conflict, because early in the game we were very fearful of the establishment of the Kwantung Army in power in Manchuria and the southern part of Korea.

*Pogue: And in that you were joined by Admiral King and Admiral Leahy in the beginning, and even General MacArthur at the beginning.*

Oh, yes, he [MacArthur] very much so. I was fearful of the concentration of the Japanese troops in the south moving north from the south and particularly central China, and becoming established there in southern Manchuria and possibly in Korea but a short distance across from Japan. The Kwantung Army had quite a reputation. As a matter of fact, towards the last so much of it had been moved to southern Japan that it had nothing like the strength that we had feared theretofore.

*Pogue: It had been sent up there originally to protect against Russia, is that right?*

Oh, yes, and had fought the Russians. They had quite a struggle up there on a divisional basis, but neither the Russian people and the Japanese people were ever informed. And that was one of the things we were always afraid of, that they would get involved in some small thing and think they could ignore it, and actually our people would take it as a complete war. That fear, however, came later when we were supposedly at peace, and I was afraid the Russians would do something like they had always done with Japan and all, where the people of neither one was informed of what was going on. Large forces of troops—and I believe over a division on the side—fought up there in northern Manchuria.

*Pogue: They actually had about as many troops up there as we had in being here in this country in 1941, didn't they?*

Yes.

2. *Were you motivated mostly by a desire to push operations in the Pacific, or to call a halt to the continued nibbling procedure of the British?*

I do not recall either of these reactions. But I was viewing the thing, as I recall now, in the light of what we needed and where, rather than in some secret reaction.

*Pogue: That mainly is the point I wanted. There are a lot of people that assumed that you just gave up the Pacific, you see, and that anything you said about the Pacific was merely to head off the British in the Mediterranean, but you tried all along to try to keep something going in the Pacific.*

That was very hard; particularly hard at Guadalcanal. We had almost no troops anywhere. We would just transfer the war to Guadalcanal and it [effort] would cease entirely in Europe. My struggle was to see that the main show went on and that the later show was not washed out. But the Pacific people were Pacific, and you might say they were not interested at all in the Atlantic.

I had a rather interesting thing happen in regard to that. We had gradually, although I admit too slowly, gotten to the point where the presentation of the world picture was of great importance to me and to the principal staff, because we had so many different theaters operating at once, and along with that the stormy times with things at home. We had available artists of some talent and plenty of them, so we gradually formed the morning show on the basis of presentation by young men who were chosen for their ability to speak in an attractive manner. They got up at four o'clock in the morning and worked on the cables of the night, which always poured in, particularly from the Pacific, at about that hour, and were ready for the presentation at nine o'clock. They were chosen, as I say, for their manner and their voice and they weren't expected to know all about the details of operation, except as the actual procedure was going on at the time.

The charts were so made that all the divisions were represented on the charts—Japanese, Russians, British, Soviet—not Soviet but German—as long as these parties were in the war, and one of the young men moved these when it was necessary to move them and the other conducted the presentation of the day, after which the G-2 people came forward with any special statements they wished to make. But the main one of the operations in the Far East and Europe and Africa came at nine o'clock.

Just prior to that hour, about five minutes, this special force came into my office, no matter what I was doing or with whom I was talking, and set up all the machinery, and then they started at nine o'clock, no matter what I was doing. Just went off like a theatrical thing. They became very

expert at it and it was really a thrilling presentation. You saw the whole war up to the last minute, done in such a way it was easy, in a sense, to comprehend.

Well, people would come back from MacArthur's command to see what could be done, and one of the Michigan—son of the famous Michigan senator who was the political fellow that got drunk and ruined himself. His son was a senator and McCarthy beat him. (Pogue: It was Wisconsin. La Follette.) Wisconsin. La Follette. One of the La Follettes was on MacArthur's staff... (Pogue: Phillip)... and he came back, I suppose for the trip and also to see what he could root up for General MacArthur, who was always in dire need of everything because he didn't get but very little, and for a time got almost nothing. The only one that got less was Stilwell. They showed him [La Follette] around and talked to him and familiarized himself with everything. He wanted to see me and I had the appointment made at half past eight, much earlier than I had appointments, because I kept that time free for my own private thinking. So he was in there when this scene-setting began, without anything being said on my part, while we were talking. And when the deputy chief of staff, Hull, and the other principals came in, I think it made about ten in all. La Follette's time was up and he got up to go, and I said, "Would you like to see this?" Oh, yes, he would, so he sat down. Then he saw this presentation of the world picture and after it was finished, he left.

After the peace I saw him coming back from the Philippines, I think, and he asked me, he said, "Did you keep me back there purposely to see that?"—because it changed his whole state of mind the minute he saw the enormity of what was going on and what its requirements were and what the demands were. He began to see the picture in the light of the real circumstances. But I was always amused at his question. As a matter of fact, I did keep him for the purpose, but I let it just fall into place without any particular move, because if those fellows could see what the thing is, they would understand more what the impossibility was of many things that they were talking about. And, of course, they always felt that they were forgotten.

It always seemed so amusing in a sense, if such a thing as this can be amusing, when they complained all the time of being forgotten. Then when they got their war going in the Philippines, the army in Italy was complaining of being forgotten, and Claire Luce was helping them through the press and almost destroying morale.

*Pogue: Now did you use that same process to brief the press?*

No.

*Pogue: This was just for you and your staff?*

Oh, this was the whole picture, you see, of everything. The secret stuff and everything. That's the reason we only had ten people there. I don't think we had as many as ten. I think we had G-2 and one assistant, our operations man, and I don't think we had the G-3 people. It was very small because it was everything.

These young fellows became brilliant at it. Finally, I got enough of them. While only one performed at a time, the other one checked and moved things. I got enough of them, so I could relieve the fellow and send him around the world so that he'd get more of the local color, though I didn't expect him to address himself to try to learn about the conditions there. He just took the things that happened and here it was, and he presented it. There was one who was very brilliant at it, and he later—he wanted to be an assistant instructor at the V.M.I., which he would have been admirably qualified for—and he fell in a trout stream and got caught in a rock and drowned just before the thing came up. It struck me as so unnecessary.

*Pogue: Did you do something like this for the president to keep him in touch with the army picture?*

No. There was one other thing came in. Mr. Stimson wasn't in this either, Jack McCloy, anybody, because we just ran this secret stuff. I had a book that was kept up to date, which was the messages in and the messages out—of course, a very small percentage of them; I suppose not more than five per cent—but they were the vital messages, the vital ones that I sent out and all, and it was very easy to read. It was a log book, we called it. And for a while I sent it to Mr. Stimson and then discovered that Jack McCloy was looking at it and Mr. Stimson's secretaries were all looking at it, and my most private document was being passed all around. So I suppressed it and wouldn't give it to him anymore. Mr. Stimson didn't like that at all, but I just wasn't going to do it. He didn't control it, and I stopped it. Every clerk he had was looking at these vital messages I was sending out all over the world.

*Pogue: I know General Eisenhower kept one like that, and only he and General Smith saw it.*

Well, there wasn't anybody supposed to see this but me and the operations section. I might say, as an interlude, while I was over at Eisenhower's headquarters outside of Paris there, I saw the presentation of the situation by the principals—the head of the air, the head of this, and the head of that. Well, they did it themselves and none of them were trained to present. They turned their backs to you and looked at this and that, and you couldn't hear a damn thing. I came in and Smith said, "What did you think of it?" I said, "That's the rottenest performance I ever saw."

We had a regular stage play going there. It was done by people whose voices and attitudes and all were adapted to that. They didn't have to know anything about it.

*Pogue: I mean, you could have analyzed it. You wanted them to tell you.*

The thing that was given was already analyzed. They just poured it out. Smith was perfectly furious with me. But the commanders, none of them knew how to talk, you see. They'd stand and face the chart, look at the map with their back to you. They hadn't rehearsed the thing at all. These fellows were rehearsed. They began at four every morning. They put on the show at nine o'clock.

*Pogue: Now you were able to draw on that those times you talked to Congress and that, weren't you? Because they always said—the reporters and all—that you could seem to hit the main points and bring it to their attention better than anybody.*

Well, that came all the way through. Of course, this thing didn't get well established until pretty late in the game, for which I always felt critical of myself. It was done, but done very poorly or almost not done at all. But the thing was, I was familiar with all these things, and if I didn't know them, then I ought to be relieved as chief of staff. So when I began talking about it, all I had to do was to go from east to west, or west to east.

*Pogue: But it's fabulous the stories they've told about your memory of those things. Even McCarthy, when he's trying to build you up so he could hit you harder, relates the story, I think in Italy, where supposedly you talked to forty or fifty reporters, addressed each man separately, and answered his questions. Do you remember that at all?*

That occurred—I think the one that was written up was written up in the *Reader's Digest*—was out in Africa, at Algiers. You must understand I was bound to know what these things were, and it was very easy to keep your continuity. Then the whole thing was, could you talk.

*Pogue: But a great many people can't.*

I addressed myself as tersely as I could through the whole thing as was possible. You see, I'd been doing this with Congress all the time without any notes, because I found that the minute you began to read you lost your audience. It was better to forget something. They would say, why didn't you talk about this or that. Well, I had forgotten it. But the point was I did get over the point I was talking about.

I know that when we were with the Russians—well, for instance, I remember particularly at Iran, I guess it was, maybe it was the next conference, Yalta, I don't remember which one—anyway, without any warning at all, Churchill suggested right at the opening of the confer-

ence—Stalin read a paper of all their presentations as an introduction. It was all written. He read it and then it was translated. Well, of course, that was a long laborious process. So when he finished, Churchill spoke up and said, “I suggest that we have General Marshall, outline the situation from our side. Now I hadn’t had any warning at all, but I just started in and covered the whole thing. Well, that was no effort because I was in it up to my neck.

*Pogue: Well, it impressed. I remember talking to Portal and to some of the other British chiefs; they thought that was one of the most unusual performances they ever saw.*

I don’t see how you could be in this thing, and, as I say, the continuity wasn’t difficult, because all you had to take was the progress of the war or the area of the war, and you were right on the button all the way. And, of course, I was just soaked in it at that time.

*Pogue: You lived with it all the time.*

Yeah. Churchill would always reach to me on these things. At the time I remember his proposing to Mr. Roosevelt that I do the thing. Stalin read his, and then I came on and did mine orally. What is correct, orally or verbally?

*Pogue: Orally.*

What’s the difference in meaning?

*Pogue: Well, orally is delivered in that sense. Verbally you think of when you are saying that this is literally the way it was said in words. Actually, neither is incorrect. Either one can be used, but orally is preferred.*

3. Was the major factor in the president’s shift the result of the victory of the Chennault group over Stikwell?

[No answer. Skipped.]

4. Was the prime minister’s suggestion of the Sumatra operation anything more than an attempt to throw out ANAKIM?

As to Question 2 [4] on Sumatra, I don’t know, or have no recollection of my reaction at the time.

5. What was your impression of Wavell as a commander?

Question 4 [5]. As little as I knew about it from a long distance, he [Wavell] was a great commander. His difficult position, that he found himself out in the Far East there when we made him the supreme commander [ABDA Command, January–February 1942]—I was the one that proposed that and urged it in order to get a supreme commander, and he

was there. The distances made it almost impossible. But it was impossible to have the thing so messed up that nobody was in command anywhere.

And it was on the question of the unit command out there that Mr. Churchill and I came to a talk down, when he was in his bed and I was walking around the bed. He sent for the British chiefs of staff and we reached an understanding. So it had a very important effect. And that meeting, when I was up in his bedroom there, flowed from the fact of my statement, which you will find in the Hopkins book—before the Combined Chiefs of Staff—when I speak up at the end of the meeting and speak of supreme command or unit command. [See Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, pp. 455-57.]

*Pogue: I think it's coalition command, isn't it?*

I didn't use the word *coalition*, but it's there, the complete statement. Harry Hopkins had filed it.

*Pogue: I quoted it in my book when I discussed the forming of the supreme command, because the Eisenhower thing flowed out of it.*

Yeah. That was a very interesting thing, and there is a whale of a lot to it if you want to go into deductions, because I had reached no understanding with the navy about the air. This question of air command was always snarled up because of the fact that you had all these air fellows on carriers. And the navy at the same time didn't want the army air to submerge their air. And so it was very difficult to get an understanding and we had none at the time. But when I made that statement, trying to get the British chiefs of staff to agree to this—what is the word we used all the time?

*Pogue: Combined command.*

We didn't use "combined." We didn't use "unit." Well, whatever it was, we had a very ordinary term for it ["unity of command"]. I did that at the spur of the moment at the end of the meeting, and included in it were not only this appeal to the British, but the inclusion of our naval agreement in regard to our air. But I said that I hadn't consulted my own staff or the navy in regard to this, but this was my feeling on the whole thing.

Wavell was out there with this terribly messed up situation, and MacArthur was a prisoner on Corregidor. So I made this statement. When I read it afterwards—and I was quite surprised at the English in it, because I did better than usual—it was the end of the meeting. So when I finished, I got up and started down the steps and Dill reached me at the top of the steps. No, the first man to reach me was the old admiral who was the head of the naval board—which were pretty cut and dried fellows and more or less opposed to all of this—and he embraced me to my complete

astonishment. Dill met me and he embraced me. There were three men that met me—I've forgotten who the third one was, but he was a very important person—as I was going down the steps, because I put the whole thing up in one nut shell, as it were.

So then Hopkins heard of this and he suggested to Churchill that he get me in next morning. I think I told you that, didn't I?

*Pogue: Yes, sir. You went over to the White House where he was staying, didn't you?*

Up in his bedroom. And he was opposed to it. He couldn't conceive a naval command under a possible army command, because he said, "What would the army officer know about handling a ship?" "Well," I said, "what the devil does a naval officer know about handling a tank?" Or the army officer at that particular time? We were not enlisting sailors or tank drivers or things. We were getting control. The president has it all and he doesn't know about any of it.

*Pogue: Would you list that among one of five or one of ten crucial decisions of the war from your standpoint?*

I would say one of three. I'm just guessing at three. It was basic to the whole control of the war. So far as our interior economy, you might call it, goes, some of the things—the trouble we were having between the air and the navy. They didn't want to recognize Arnold as anything special, but as just a piece of the army, because they had air, and of course, his was going to be on a very vast scale eventually.

And I think I told you about modifying that speech of the president's, and that was the end of the thing. We had the [Joint] Chiefs of Staff organization in that one sentence. Nobody ever seemed to recognize it. They'd take such god-awful guesses at things, come out with these marvelous conclusions, and then here is the thing right in front of you and then none of them see it at all, you see. You have brought in so many things that writers have wondered or felt this and that and the other. And here is the organization of the three chiefs of staff in one sentence and not one of them has ever seen it.

One of the—I'm jumping clear away from the subject; while it's on my mind I'd better get it out. One of the side issues I had to fool with, I became very much irritated, almost infuriated, over the fact that when we brought these National Guard divisions into the show, some of them, one of them in particular, began letting out concessions for various things at the big cantonment where they landed. Well, of course, they were going to be no more than a transient customer and I had to get permanent command for these things. Getting into that sort of thing, that wasn't going to work at all.

And yet they were very insistent on it, and I was very angry over it. I



sort of lost my temper on this. I realized right away we had to get this post exchange system straightened up. So I took an officer that I'd had out of Vancouver Barracks who was very, very unusual in handling a post exchange, which is a difficult thing to do in the old-fashioned exchange, because you had a whole roster of cantankerous company commanders even fighting on reducing the prices on rusty collar buttons. And the War Department had just gotten out a regulation. Every time they found a rat in the place, they'd get out a new regulation. So it was very hard to run the thing under the terms of the contract, if you can express it that way, and something had to be done right away, because it was going to go into a colossal scale.

Well, I understood that the head of this agency down there was—we fought for his name the other day, you know, a big civilian set-up.

*Pogue: Williams?*

No, no. It was the purchasing agent.

*Pogue: Oh, it was Donald Nelson.*

Donald Nelson. Did I tell you this story?

*Pogue: No.*

I wanted to get Donald Nelson. I called up on the phone down there because he had been the purchasing agent for Sears Roebuck, and the man that answered said that he wasn't there, but he himself would be very glad to help me. He was very anxious to accommodate—quite pronounced in his anxiety to do this. I told him I would have to wait until Donald Nelson came back. "Well," he said, "is it urgent?" I said, "Yes, it's pretty urgent." "Well," he said, "won't you let me help you?" He said, "What is it? Tell me that."

Well, I asked a question. I said, "What were you occupied with prior to coming into Washington?" And as I recall, I won't say it was collars, but it was something about as remote from what I was after as that. I said, "Well, that don't do." "Well," he said, "please tell me what it is you are interested in." Well, I said I wanted to get somebody to tell me how to go after the coordination of all of our army post exchanges. It was a matter of going into the millions, and I understood that Donald Nelson had been a purchasing agent for Sears Roebuck.

"Well," he said, "I was the purchasing agent for the competing—what is the competing? [Montgomery Ward]. It may not have been, but something like that. Well, I said, "For goodness sake, all right." "Well," he said, "what do you want?" I said, "I want to get a group of men up here who would be familiar with the purchasing procedures, with the personnel procedures, with the financial procedures, and all that sort of thing, to consider what

kind of an order we can get out about all these exchanges, and unify the procedures in a way to accommodate itself to the unusual conditions which had arisen."

Well, he sent me up there a very distinguished group of men. One was Harrison, I think, who afterwards became the head fellow in connection with the Signal Corps, and he was one of the head men in connection with the Wilson's chairmanship of the Mobilization Committee. He sent me up, as I recall—I've got these mixed up undoubtedly—but as I recall, the personnel man of A & P. He sent me up some big man of the other store group, Safeway. He sent a series of men to cover all the various activities. They came up to see me, and I brought in my captain from Vancouver who was going to be their guide, and explained to them what their problem was and how difficult it would be for them to put their expert knowledge into this thing, because the controlling conditions were so entirely different from their procedure; because, I said, you can't ignore the commanding officer. He must not be brushed aside. And yet the commanding officer is a transient customer. He is the commander of the division or the corps that's going through there. There's a local commander of the post, but you can't ignore that commanding officer.

Now the great trouble is how to set this thing up on a permanent basis and yet not ignore the command functions. And we had quite a long discussion all about that. Then I sent them to four of our largest cantonments, and they took about a month and they came back with their proposals for the post exchange, the big purchasing agent in New York, and all the thing. It ran into the hundreds of millions before they got through with this business.

After I got it started, I dropped it. I let it settle. I only came into it again—this fellow from over here in Hagerstown, whose father used to be head of the great harness and leather business and all and played a big part in the First World War, was under attack also. I just came back enough to insist that the second wave of attack in the landings should contain an echelon of the post exchange, because if the men see this set up on the beach, it would look like everything was in firm control. Of course, that was difficult for him to do because he didn't have command of it. It was under the leadership of the commander of that operation, and they'd always tell me, "Well, I can't command it." "Well," I said, "You see it's done or get out. I don't care how you do it."

Then I would check myself. I remember my great pleasure when I went into Italy and got up right behind the firing line and they brought a battalion out from a front-line position to go into a support position as a picket. And before the men had gotten their pup tents up, one sergeant opened up the post exchange from two barrels that had been delivered to him, and here was tobacco and here was Coca-Cola and here was the

various things you want right away, and they sold them right there over the barrel.

As I told you, I think, I never allowed them to have sales going on in rear until they'd begun up front, because I had participated in that myself in the First World War where they did the thing exactly backwards.

*Pogue: You told me how you made them send the stuff out.*

Yeah. I emptied the post exchange in about a minute and I didn't forget that. The trouble there was that General Pershing didn't know about any of these things. He didn't have a traveling emissary to look and observe and to report in to him. He sent it to investigate some crime, you might say, but he didn't have somebody going around looking at all these things. There was a very rigid compliance with orders, but the trouble was the orders were all wrong. Those things irritated me, because they went right after me there and tried to stop me.

*Pogue: I watched it both ways and I know that it worked. We had PX set up very soon on the beaches in Normandy and it was very fine because, as you say, people thought well, it's all right. And then I remember in Paris when the cigarettes from time to time got short, they couldn't have them in Paris unless they were up front.*

I gave very rigid orders on that.

*Pogue: Of course, you'll remember that railway company began stealing them and there weren't cigarettes anywhere.*

We had quite a time there after the First World War because the soldiers turned on the YMCA so strongly that after the war, the YMCA couldn't get any funds. They appealed to me—this head fellow they had—and I went into the thing. What I found was that the Quartermaster people in the shipping and all, had mixed up or allowed to be mixed up the gift cigarettes with the purchase cigarettes that the YMCA had to sell. Mr. Stimson was very specific in requiring the sale of these things because it made it very difficult to go along with the British. We were giving away everything and they were forced to sell it. Soldiers bought a carton of cigarettes and found in it that it was a gift cigarette. Well, of course, the YMCA got the full blast and it spread in every direction. They were required to do that. Then they went on to say what others were doing and the YMCA was not doing.

The YMCA, at one time as I recall, was running 164 shows. But the Salvation Army got up one show, and as I recall, spent \$16,000 on it and they made a very good show, almost a light opera. So everybody said, "Look how the Salvation Army does it and how the YMCA doesn't do it."

Well, as I say, the YMCA put on 164, as I recall, or supervised them, and they got the dirty end of the deal very, very badly in all this. But the

feeling against them was bitter. It was so bitter and there was such a confusion that General Pershing laid the foundation for the order that there would be only one activity. There wouldn't be Knights of Columbus; there wouldn't be Salvation Army. They all might be there, but they not control any activity. Incidentally, the YMCA was promised, we'll say ninety tons a day, and they were cut in half or a third right away for the lack of shipping. Well, there was no explanation of that at all.

So when I got into this thing, I told General Pershing that he ought to help these people out. They couldn't get any money, the feeling was so bitter. He didn't want to do it. He thought the YMCA was at fault. I said I had gone all through it and they're not at fault at all. I said, "Your own army's at fault. Your Quartermaster Department is at fault," and all things like that.

I wrote a speech for him to give at the big dinner in New York the YMCA gives once a year and have men from all over the world come in, and I accepted for him to make the speech. He was perfectly furious with me when he found out what I had done. But he had to go up and make it, and then they got some help, some leadership, and some money.

I know the fellow who was head—I keep thinking of the name Moffitt, but it wasn't Moffitt; it was something like that—the head man, and he promised me anytime he could do for me he would do it. So when I got my regiment out in China, I wanted something done for my men there. We didn't have anything. The navy was having a place set up at Chefoo and getting other things, and they were buying the ground for them and putting on a fine thing. We were getting nothing at all. And I wrote to him and he had about a thousand reasons why he couldn't do it, and I had only one reason why, by God, he had to do it. We finally got a little improvement but not a great deal. I was furious about that.

*Pogue: Was his name Mott?*

Mott was the fellow. And I saved their necks in this thing.

I would like to continue that by saying that when I went into the Red Cross, I found the exact situation, but this time the Red Cross got it, because they were put in the same position. They were put in charge and then they had to bear all these conflicts. And they were so unpopular that one of my principal jobs as head of the Red Cross was to compose the press and all favorably to the Red Cross or at least abate this enmity. And they would hardly believe me when I told them something of the First World War and they were doing the same thing now to the Red Cross because they'd gotten into this impossible position.

*Pogue: I know that old time soldiers, they said, "I'll give anything to the Salvation Army but nothing to the YMCA."*

It was wholly illogical, wholly illogical. The Salvation Army was fine but it was just doing one thing in one place. As I say, I don't know what their tonnage was, but here was the YMCA with their contract to do all these various activities and all these various efforts, and then getting their tonnage cut in half but no explanation from the army to help them face the troops.

I found exactly the same thing, just exactly, identical—if there is any other word to make it more specific, I would use it—against the Red Cross in this war. The reporters were just vicious about it, and I just pushed them aside and I said I have seen all this. You sicked it on the YMCA in the first war, and now you are sicking it on these people in this war. Well, I'm not going to have it.

*Pogue: Well, you tried to make that clear by saying everything will be sold, didn't you, in this war?*

We wanted to sell it, we'd know. Of course, in the first war the YMCA couldn't afford to give it all. They didn't have enough stuff. In this case Mr. Stimson was very insistent that we must sell it so as to be abreast to the British; do the same as the British do.

*Pogue: The great argument, too, in this war that came from many men was the fact that the Red Cross girls had status of officers and they would stay, of course, in officers billets, and the men always told awful tales about them, except where they went up with their doughnuts near the front and then they liked them.*

Well, I had two stepsons in the war. One stepson was very bitter against the Wacs on the same basis. When we put the Wacs in the field, we put in—first we put in one company—well, there were a couple million soldiers and one girl had about a thousand suitors, and they all got sore except one. He [the stepson] was bitter against our sending them over to Europe, you see. I had to send them there. Eisenhower was going to use the British Wacs because he could get their services. Of course that [attitude] wore out as the thing went on.

But it was illogical; it was unreasonable. And that was my own stepson. He just saw that side. You couldn't make a date with them. My god, I remember I heard Mrs. Hobby get off a gem. I was talking to an officer. He was one of those gradgrinds that not only gets at the things he is supposed to do, but includes everything else that he can criticize at the same time—one that I didn't have much use for. He was not on anything connected with the Wacs, but when Mrs. Hobby was waiting there to talk to me next, and he was talking to me and he came in and he said, "Do you know what I saw?" And I said, "How do you expect me to know what you saw?" He said, "I saw a Wac and a soldier going down the road hand in hand." And he turned to Mrs. Hobby and said, "What do you think of that?" Mrs. Hobby

said, "Well, they have been doing that for about a thousand years, haven't they?" Which I thought was a complete retort [chuckles] doing that for about a thousand years.

[Begin cassette side 2]

6. *Did you feel that Chiang Kai-shek's reactions were based on an antipathy to taking any action with Chinese troops or a desire to preserve his troops intact for later action against the Chinese Communists? Or was there a view that he had "bought" the Chennault view as opposed to Stilwell's?*

I couldn't say as to Chiang's reaction except that he was bitter against the British, except one commander, Slim, and when you read Slim's story, you will find out why, because Slim took a great fancy to Li Sun, I think is the General's name [Sun Li-jen]—a fellow who was graduated from the V.M.I.—because he found he worked with him, he was dependable, and he would carry out the orders. But on the other hand, Li Sun, if that is his name, and who did remarkably up in Manchuria [*Burma*], who conducted a march across the Himalayas that ranks with the great troop movements in history. He got involved with elephants and everything in the world to get through, but nobody paid any attention to it. They came out at that southern port in China . . . . I haven't finished that sentence, but I've forgotten what I was getting in to.

*Pogue: You were talking about that Slim got along with Chiang Kai-shek, only liked him because he liked this man.*

Because Slim was a very dependable and reliable counselor in the fighting.

*Pogue: But otherwise he was bitter against the British.*

Yes. Madame told me in 1942, "There is only one Britisher out there I'd trust and that is General Slim." But when you read Slim's write-up, you will see why that was, because Slim took a great fancy to this one Chinese general who would go through with his contracts and not spill everything.

During this period referred to here in question 6, the generalissimo was very bitter against the British and you might say he was bitter against the Combined Chiefs of Staff, because he insisted on a certain phase of attack and certain shipping and we were in a terrible turmoil over that. The meeting at Cairo was almost devoted entirely to the question of twenty—I think it was—LSTs which were highly involved here. If we had been able to make fifty more LSTs in this country, it would have almost changed the course of the war. I think I told you once that the first model I had to have built of wood at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

*Pogue: The navy wasn't interested.*

The navy wasn't interested.

1. *In retrospect, what is your reaction to the opposing claims of the navy and MacArthur about control of operations in the Pacific?*

On the matter of the respective attitudes of the navy and MacArthur, the feeling was so bitter, the prejudice so great, the main thing was to get in agreement. Whichever side you could get agreement, that is the one you would take, because you were in a war of personalities—a very vicious war.

2. *Do you feel that MacArthur was right about his approach to Japan?*

I thought MacArthur was right in what he was doing, and I thought Nimitz was right in what he was doing. The question was to get both of them to accept the coordination of the two efforts.

*Pogue: Well, was Nimitz as difficult to bring to agreement as MacArthur?*

No, but Nimitz was getting his orders from Washington.

*Pogue: I assume Nimitz would be easier to work with personally than King, for example.*

Oh, very much.

3. *Does MacArthur's mention of possible political repercussions to his failure to take Rabaul contain a veiled threat? One of his most admiring biographers intimates that the general often had to use threats to get what was due him.*

I don't know about this veiled threat in one of the two Marine divisions, for whatever reasons.

*Pogue: It seems odd that he should bring up political repercussions.*

This admirer who says that it seems odd he should be forced to use political threats to get things—I think it was odd that a general should run in opposition to main control and should talk to the press in the way he did.

4. *In July, Marshall told General MacArthur that to him the most feasible operations after CARTWHEEL would be to isolate Rabaul by seizing New Ireland, Manus Island, and Wewak. This drew fire from the Southwest Pacific commander who held that the hazards of attempting an operation against Wewak before the fall of Rabaul would make success doubtful. Is this another case where the commander on the ground was more cautious than Washington?*

I don't think that was the case. There was so much dissension there, so much opposition. I will say this, that Halsey seemed to be the easiest one to do business with, one way or the other.

*Pogue: He just liked to fight.*

Yes, and he was always in the business of trying to smooth out things instead of arouse things.

*Pogue: In that sense—although he's often compared to General Patton—he was greatly different from him in that way.*

Oh, yes, very different. He was the same style fighter, in a sense.

*5. Had the State Department taken any stand on the Chinese Communists versus Chiang Kai-shek at this time?*

I don't recall about the State Department.

*Pogue: You see, we're getting into that business that was raked over later, that as early as 1943 you had a clique in the State Department that were attempting to build up the Communists against Chiang Kai-shek.*

I don't think they were at all. I don't know about that. I didn't know those fellows.

*Pogue: You see, [John P.] Davies was over there with Stilwell. Davies, who was hammered so hard by McCarihy and the others, was already over there. So later on, they put two and two together and got fifteen. This is part of that conspiracy charge which they lay against the State Department and then against you, you see.*

I didn't know Davies at all and these various feelings in here I didn't know much about until I got over to China later on. I knew there was great difficulty there. Stilwell would come in with recommendations, and he was inclined towards the forces the Communists had because he thought they would fight. The generalissimo was thinking more into the future—quite evidently—while Stilwell was having great difficulty getting his Chinese troops to fight. And they were very much underfed and poorly equipped, because the airplane tonnage was going to gasoline and Chennault and he—Stilwell—was getting very little. So he was having a hard time getting a fight out of his people. He was always trying to get the generalissimo to use these Communist troops. You see, they were supposed to have an army of three million men at that time. It wasn't a question of one or two Communists.

*Pogue: And they were well organized and wanted to fight.*

Oh, yes.

*Pogue: And they were disciplined and they would fight Japanese.*

I think every ten men or every squad had a fellow who was supposed to indoctrinate them. Well, he might indoctrinate them, but he kept the thing organized and made them do which was the important thing. He had the job of a corporal, except that he worked on something that was given primary importance which was their indoctrination as Communists.

*Pogue: It certainly is a libelous statement to suggest that General Stilwell in any way was pro-Communist.*



Oh, no. He would take anybody that would fight. I remember sending over a—proposing to sending somebody over there—and he came back and said, “I’ll take anybody that will fight.”

*Pogue: But you see, when they got at their worst, they attacked Stilwell and they attacked Carson, you remember, the Marine who was also the “gung-ho” man, both of whom had that same viewpoint. These men would fight. They weren’t interested in the politics of it.*

Exactly that. Stilwell replied that, “I’ll take anybody that will fight.” I remember once we sent him word about one of these colored units—I think it was an air unit—and his reply was, “I’ll take anyone who’ll fight.” And that was the guiding thought with him entirely.

*6. There are many people who now feel that we should have backed Chiang completely against the Chinese Communists at this time. What is your feeling?*

This question 6 I’ve answered in effect. This intense Communistic thing I was not aware of really in detail until I got over there after the war. The fight then was developing on the basis of division of equipment that was left by the Japanese, and particularly of the units that the Japanese had raised of Chinese troops which the Communists wanted completely disbanded and the generalissimo continued.

*7. Another view is that Chiang Kai-shek, in concentrating on his postwar strength against the Chinese Communists at the expense of his gaining any prestige for his forces by letting them take part in campaigns, actually hastened his later defeat. Do you have any comments on that?*

It’s very hard to answer that. The generalissimo, who out of his own experience with the Communists—he had been taken captive by them once—had them continuously on his mind and they influenced every military decision that he made. Now whether you can say he was right or wrong, I wouldn’t attempt to say. For instance, he had that young general, the Communist young general, who had taken him prisoner—as a matter of fact, who was a son of the former Manchurian warlord.

*Pogue: Chang Hsueh-liang.*

I knew him very well. I never mentioned him or anything. They wanted me to intercede for him because they thought he could sway a great deal of influence up there in Manchuria. But I never would mention it any way to the generalissimo, because this fellow had taken him prisoner and I didn’t think I ought to stick my finger into that pot at all. Madame asked me a question once about it and I didn’t even answer her.

*Pogue: That matter of face made a whole lot of difference, didn't it? Saving face.*

Yes.

8. *Would you like to make any general comment about the whole question of Chinese communism versus Chiang Kai-shek during the war?*

I can't very well beyond what I said.

*Pogue: Yes, you answered that.*

I might say that the British were practically unfavorable to everything we were doing over there, particularly use of all that equipment there. They thought it was just a dead loss.

9. *Why did the Americans oppose Sholto Douglas?*

Who was Sholto Douglas?

*Pogue: He was an airman who had been in the Mediterranean.*

Oh, yes, he was the one. Mr. Churchill tried very hard to have him put in command and I opposed it. And I opposed it to the point that I said I would take every American troop out from under him if he was made in command. He didn't like Americans and was very frank in saying it. To me it was out of the question to have a man like that in supreme command where there were both forces involved. And Mr. Churchill said he wasn't sufficiently informed and they'd go back and go at this thing again, and then it would come to me and I would again decline to accept this fellow. If they had him, he would have no American things under him. Finally, Mr. Churchill, as I recall, said well, who did I suggest, and I said Mountbatten. That's the way Mountbatten got his command out there.

*Pogue: Well, I hadn't heard much of him [Douglas] before this. Of course, after the war he became the Air Commander in Europe and I think the head of the air staff; but suddenly to find this opposition to him, I didn't know what the background was.*

Well, he didn't like Americans and talked very plainly about it, and it was just not thinkable that we would have him as Supreme Command. I barely knew him.

[Pogue: We skipped others that have nothing to do with the Far East.]

[Begin reel side 2]

*Army planners in the fall of 1943 concluded that the best possibility for ending the war against Japan in 1945 lay in the invasion of Hokkaido in early 1945 by way of Hawaii and the Aleutians. To do this, they felt that the scale of operations in the Central and*

*Southwest Pacific must continue at the same pace as during the war with Germany while the offensive against Hokkaido was being launched. The Combined Planners, however, felt that there was no chance for defeating Japan by October 1943. They thought that an advance upon Formosa in the spring of 1945 held more promise. If this proved futile, an alternative operation against northern Sumatra in late 1944 or early 1945 was better. In the U.S. Joint Planning Staff, the air force member said that more emphasis should be placed on the role of strategic air power. The navy member complained that the destruction of the fleet as the primary objective necessary to victory had not been given its proper place. The army member felt that the degree of success thus far against Japan indicated the need of a short term plan for operations against Japan on Germany's defeat, with chief emphasis on an approach from the Pacific instead of from the Asiatic mainland. The Joint Staff Studies Committee did not accept the idea of Hokkaido as the chief target for 1945, but said that the key to Japanese defeat lay in operations through the Central Pacific with supporting operations on either flank.*

1. *In October 1943, which one of these views was nearest your own?*

As to this question 1—October 1943—which one of these views was nearest your own: as nearly as I can recall, I think the army view, although I'm not at all positive on that subject. I must say that during phases here, I thought it was not possible in such a broad theater to plan so far in advance, when so much depended on the success of certain of the local operations as to whether they should be continued, whether we should continue along that course.

*Pogue: However, as you said about the War Department, you were quite willing for them to consider various possibilities.*

Oh, yes, any possibility.

*Pogue: I mean the State Department.*

I didn't want to put any restriction in their thinking at all.

2. *In the fall of 1943, Marshall pointed out that it was desirable for the high command in Washington to use the Foch system of pressing all subordinate commanders constantly in order to keep the enemy continually in retreat and to forestall delays or lags in operations. This unwillingness of Marshall to accept postponements and his eagerness to advance target dates were typical of this period of search for short cuts and faster results. Do you care to comment on this?*

Question 2 as to the pressing procedure: I have no particular comment to make except that I thought if you let the thing drift, as it were, you would never get anywhere. The trouble inherent in all these things is everybody wanted things that we couldn't give them. And you had to press them to accomplish the thing without all of the means that might later become available.

Earlier in our discussions there was a question of what I thought about Montgomery. Montgomery, when he got into the fight, was, I think, excellent; but on the other hand, if we had about three commanders like

Montgomery, we'd never have made any fights because they never could have settled who was to get everything to do it. Montgomery required—he might say in favor of his troops—forces and supplies and everything in such number. But as a matter of fact, we couldn't have conducted these campaigns if everybody had followed his procedure, because there just wasn't enough to go round. And you'd have to make complete abandonment of things in theaters like the Pacific in order to comply.

The Pacific, for instance, at the start got very, very little. Up in the Philippines MacArthur got nothing. Out in Australia there was very little sent out there for quite a long time. The marines went into Guadalcanal—on my urging in a way—because if we lost that field there, we were pushed way to the south in trying to move our troops into Australia, and turned them north. And so we went ahead and made it with what we had, which was almost entirely marines.

Later on in that fight, we wanted to put in army divisions and we couldn't manage the thing with the admiral in command there on that island off Australia. He had such a backup of tonnage that I sent Arnold from Washington to see what he had and to count the ships. And I dimly recall now, it was something like eighty-two ships standing idle in that harbor there. Of course, we wouldn't afford at that time—any time, as a matter of fact—but certainly not at that time, any use of tonnage on any such line as that. But we couldn't get the army in. When they did go up there, the marines thought they'd been very long in coming. Collins and those fellows wanted to get up there. Patch, Collins, and that crowd were all fighters and they had very good divisions, very good divisions. Later on we put a division in there that was not so—not so—not at all so good and they made a mess of it up there on Russell Island or some place like that. It made it very difficult for me because it was a National Guard division.

*Pogue: Isn't that the one that "Howling Mad" Smith got so mad about?*

No, it was the 27th.

*Pogue: Now which was the one General Harding had and he was finally relieved?*

I've forgotten; I've forgotten.

*Pogue: He'd been an old friend of yours, hadn't he?*

Oh, yes. Well, he was a very young officer as far as I was concerned, but I was very fond of him and still am. But I had nothing to do whatever with his promotion. As a matter of fact, when McNair made him a major general and give him this division, he came in to call on me. He'd been sent for by McNair and he came in to call on me and I said, "Harding, this is going to be your downfall. McNair has explained to you the state of this division?" And he said, "Yes, he had." "Well," I said, "this is going to be your downfall.

You're going to have many friends and you're going to get relieved from command." And that's exactly what happened.

*Pogue: That happened in that Ninetieth Division, I think, that went to Europe. I was told the commander liked everybody, everybody liked him.*

It reminds me of Mrs. Marshall—was called upon to make a speech to a lot of women and she hadn't done anything like that and didn't want to do it, and I said, "I think you've got to do something like that and this is a pretty appropriate occasion." Well, she said, "What will I talk about?" "Well," I said, "you have a very happy way of landing on things that are of interest, but I'll say one thing, you might exploit this: that mothers should look with care in the training period to a popular commander. Chances are nine out of ten he's going to get licked." And she made a very good speech on the subject and got these mothers much concerned about it, which is pretty much true.

The most famous case is that field out in the Philippines that the Japanese first shot down the planes on—Stotsenburg—where the airfield is. He was so desperately unpopular with his Nebraska regiment that the legislature was considering a debate, an action, a resolution demanding of the War Department his relief. Just then war broke out on February 4, 1899, and by the evening of the third day he was the most popular commander in the thing and they just swore by him, and then he was killed just about the time they got up to Camp Stotsenburg and the place was named after him. But they were just trying to get the legislature, by resolution, to demand of the War Department that he be relieved—and when the war started—and then they felt the discipline and they felt the command and control and they were just crazy about Stotsenburg. It was really very dramatic.

*Matloff's draft Chapter XIII [as published, Chapter XVI in Maurice Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-1944 [Washington: GPO, 1959], pp. 371-72): "Marshall and the other U.S. Chiefs of Staff were not eternally wedded to BUCCANEER [invasion of the Andaman Islands], but were firmly convinced that without such an amphibious operation in the Indian Ocean, Chiang would not commit his forces in Burma." According to Admiral King, the president, after the plenary meeting on December 5, 1943, called the Joint Chiefs of Staff in for consultation on the effects of breaking the understanding with Chiang. Leahy and Arnold finally agreed that it could be changed, and Marshall, after thinking it over, gave in also. Only King remained obdurate and refused to concede since he felt that Chiang would consider that he had been double-crossed. The president did not then tell them his decision, but made it later in the day. He notified Churchill that he had decided to call off BUCCANEER. Apparently he had not told the Joint Chiefs of Staff as late as the morning of the next day, since they were discussing possible alternatives to BUCCANEER.*

*2. I have seen one statement which indicates that the Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't really care about BUCCANEER, but that they wanted to pin the British down to*

something in the Pacific. Another view is that the Joint Chiefs wanted BUCCANEER so much they were willing to take a later date for it. Which is accurate?

3. Admiral King's account on the cancellation of BUCCANEER differs somewhat from that of Sherwood's. Sherwood says, "In an earlier chapter I have expressed my belief that there was only one occasion in the entire war when Roosevelt arbitrarily overruled the unanimous decision of his own chiefs of staff; there is, admittedly, some question as to the accuracy of the belief but, if it is true, then the second conference at Cairo was certainly the one occasion." What is your recollection on this?

Now here we have BUCCANEER. There was a great deal of argument about BUCCANEER. I'm sorry to admit that I don't remember the various courses of it at this time. I know the British were not in favor of it. Sorry, I can't give you a clean cut reaction to that.

*Pogue: Well, first and last, there were about twelve different operations out there that were planned. I remember Lord Portal, when I talked to him in 1946, said, "It may be just a short time but too many things were taken up," and he'd say, "If you brief me, I'll tell you a little something about it, but I can't remember the details."*

I am so dim on my recollection of BUCCANEER, I can't remember.

4. Do you feel that it was a mistake to cancel the operation?

And I can't answer the fourth question. So much of these things were psychological rather than plain logical.

*Pogue: But you don't recall whether or not you felt that Mr. Roosevelt was just arbitrarily overriding the chiefs of staff at that time?*

No. But as a matter of fact, in a sense he was overriding us on the China policy. The only thing was that I didn't make it a battle. There was no point to it. He was intent on doing these things with China. He was favorable to the generalissimo because Chennault was working on him direct and Madame's brother [T. V. Soong], who was president of the Executive Yuan and ambassador over here, was dealing with the president direct. And the president's reactions were so influenced from the outside that when Willkie went out there, [Joseph] Alsop and those fellows got a hold of Willkie. Of course, I think Stilwell made nothing of the occasion at all, but just allowed them to turn their guns on him. All these things came to the president, you see, and he was determined about China against British opposition because they didn't rank China as anything—as having any strength or force at all—you might say any importance to the future settlement of things.

The president was so intent about it that as far as the chiefs of staff were concerned, or more particularly so far as I was concerned, I didn't perpetuate the battle. I accepted the best of it. I told Sherwood—that fellow that wrote the book—don't question me on the China thing because I just stepped back

and let nature, in a sense, take its course, except that I wanted Stilwell to resign his command and let me give him another command.

*Pogue: It would have been better for him if he had, wouldn't it?*

Oh, yes. The trouble was with all his ability, he dissipated that ability by his open criticism of the generalissimo and allowing his staff to do the same thing, which is the worst thing you can do. One of them got back to me and started to tell me. I said, "I don't want to hear a word you have to say. You've already done all the harm you possibly can do. Now don't try to set up any more back here." He was a fellow I'd known very well and he was so shocked at my reaction. "Well," he said, "you don't favor this or something," and I said, "It isn't a question of favor. I don't approve at all of what you personally have done, and I wouldn't have you on my staff."

Of course, staff cliques and staff talk and all play a great part in all these things. But if you permit them to an open development and feed them grist for their mill, why, you've got an awful mess on your hands. And that was the greatest mistake Stilwell did—aside from his open criticism of the generalissimo—allowing his staff to mill around with these things. It was particularly critical there because he was a splendid fighting man, a splendid fighting man. Give Stilwell a fine corps—and I think a fine army, but certainly a fine corps—and he would have put up a magnificent performance. He knew the game; he was courageous to the limit and he was adventurous; and yet, he was calculating. It's too bad that he had to be laboring with this kind of a semi-diplomatic situation and being played off by a superb performer at the game, Chennault.

Just imagine allowing a staff officer in the position that Alsop was in go to India and talk to the Indian Army adversely to Stilwell and everything and nothing done about it at all. Now there I entered into it and I made a recommendation to the president. And then I discovered, doggone it, that he followed his usual custom. He didn't file that. He sent it back over, so it isn't in the record at the White House. He did that time and again. He wouldn't take the unfavorable thing and file it. He'd send it back to you so it would be on your side of the fence.

*Pogue: Well, he had for some reason—the Alsops are Republican and their father was a strong Republican, but they got very close to the president before the war.*

Very close.

*Pogue: As youngsters, and he used to feed them stuff before Alsop was commissioned. He fed them information he wanted in the papers.*

I see.

*Matloff's draft Chapter XIII [as published, Chapter XVI, pp. 349-51]: The army and its chief spokesman, General Marshall, were sympathetic to the Chinese stand*

for several reasons. The relations between Chiang and Stilwell had reached a favorable point at this time, and the generalissimo had displayed keener interest in the training of Chinese combat troops. Marshall urged that this apparent change of heart be encouraged since it showed that Chiang was now amenable to making use of the immense manpower of China, and "this constituted a milestone in the prosecution of the war in the East."

"It was the Chinese themselves who made Marshall's position as an advocate difficult. Chiang told Marshall he did not like the CHAMPION plan because it did not go as far as Mandalay and did not provide for simultaneous land and sea operations. Later he demanded that 10,000 tons a month be flown into China regardless of Burma requirements. . . . Stilwell's account of Marshall's irritation is even more explicit: 'Now let me get this straight. You [Chinese] are talking about your rights in this matter. I thought there were American planes and American personnel, and American materiel. I don't understand what you mean by saying we can or can't do thus and so.'"

Although Marshall was willing to agree to arming a Chinese army so long as it was to be done in the unspecified future, he opposed any further commitment of U.S. combat troops to the CBI. He hoped that the United States was now on the verge of a 'transfer of power' in the Pacific, and this, too, would make the deployment of U.S. combat ground forces to SEAC impracticable. Conversely, Marshall felt that unless BUCCANEER, the amphibious phase of CHAMPION, was carried out without delay, the reallocation of U.S. landing craft to the Pacific should be considered.

What was the CHAMPION plan?

Pogue: It's something around Mandalay but not all the way up to it. It was one of those small operations. It was the land part of BUCCANEER really.

You give a quotation here. Whose quotation is it?

Pogue: Stilwell's. It was his book, his diary.

He's saying that.

Pogue: He's saying that you said it.

That I said it. SEAC?

Pogue: South East Asia Command. That's Mountbatten's command.

1. Is this an accurate summary?

I think it is, but I'm not entirely clear in my recollections.

2. Do you recall any factors responsible for Chiang Kai-shek's frequent shifts in his decision to favor or to oppose BUCCANEER?

I can't answer question 2.

Pogue: He obviously did not. That quotation is obviously not something he wrote down while you were talking. It's his recollection of what you said. And that's a very dangerous thing for a historian to do, to quote that kind of a quotation as if it's precise. But what I'm really wondering was whether that more or less represented your point of view there.



*Matloff Chapter XVI: Roosevelt had complicated the work of his planners by his offer to Chiang of the choice to go ahead with land operations in north Burma (TARZAN) in 1944 or of waiting until sufficient resources were available to mount an amphibious operation in the SEAC area. Chiang accepted the delay, asked for a billion dollar gold loan, the doubling of the air forces in China, and raising of the Hump lift to twenty thousand tons a month. The president now showed greater firmness. He asked for the use of the Yunnan forces in Burma. This Chiang was not willing to do.*

*In January 1944, the British dispensed with all SEAC amphibious operations during the dry season. Mountbatten and Stilwell both sent missions to Washington to present plans. Stilwell's decision caused some difficulty.*

*By the beginning of 1944, Washington intelligence estimates frankly recognized that China had little desire to do any actual fighting, although it might engage in limited offensives to get a seat at the peace table. General Roberts felt that the only effective contribution from the China Theater would be in limited air support of the main effort in the Pacific. By the beginning of February China's role was considered to be less and least important.*

TARZAN?

*Pogue: That's operations in North Burma.*

What did it go towards?

*Pogue: Towards the China frontier. No, I'm wrong. It's just the opposite. It was an attempt to take those troops from Yunnan and push into Burma from the south-western Chinese area. Stilwell had a force but he wanted to get some Chinese in there to help him. That billion dollar gold loan really raised trouble. Morgenthau got in on that.*

*1. What were your own views towards China's role at this time? When, if ever, did you become convinced that China was not necessary for winning the war?*

I don't know how to answer that.

*Pogue: You didn't get in on any of that business on the loan to China, did you? That was handled entirely by the president.*

I don't recall that I did.

*Pogue: Well, had you told Stilwell to send a mission along with Mountbatten's?*

I suppose I did. I don't recall that. He came over himself once there, but I don't think that was the time.

*Pogue: Mountbatten got very angry about him sending a mission. He said he shouldn't have. I believe that you said, "Well, he was an American commander as well as being under Mountbatten."*

Of course, that setup of Stilwell's was wholly illogical. He was serving about three masters and being undercut by his commander in chief, the president.

*Pogue: You couldn't have worked out a much worse command situation, could you?*

Oh, it was terrible. Chennault was just stirring it up, you know, all over the place.

2. *Did you approve of Stikwell's mission?*

[Not answered.]

3. *Marshall's view on the role of the CBI was given in a message to Stikwell on May 26, 1944. He said that Japan should be defeated without undertaking a major campaign against her on the mainland of Asia, if her defeat could be accomplished in that manner. Was this view generally accepted?*

I'm not certain, but I believe it was generally accepted.

4. *Did you favor accepting the British offer of naval forces for use in the Pacific in 1944?*

As to accepting the offer of the British forces for use in the Pacific, I had no particular reaction. King was very intent.

*Pogue: He didn't want them, did he?*

He didn't want them because he thought we would have to supply them. He made it quite embarrassing.

*Pogue: The president just went over his head there, didn't he?*

Yes, I think so.

[Begin cassette side 3]

5. *In retrospect, what is your view of the two opposing strategies in the Pacific? Do you feel that the MacArthur supporters can fairly charge you with failing to support him?*

I supported him through thick and thin on most of the questions. I don't recall this particular phase of the thing. But he had a great many prejudices and intense feelings. All of this was arrangeable if the two commanders wanted to get together. But their approaches, particularly on MacArthur's side, were so filled with deep prejudice that it was very hard to go about it, to get about it. I always felt that—who was that other admiral?

*Pogue: Nimitz.*

No, he wasn't the other admiral. Who was the fighting admiral out there?

*Pogue: Halsey.*

I always felt that if Halsey could have been given a more leading role,

that he could have gotten along with General MacArthur because he very much wanted to. And even the simple procedure of taking the tie off the shirt was a move to produce general unanimity. Nimitz himself was not a quarrelsome man, but I think his staff was very much embittered because they were being criticized continuously by MacArthur's outfit.

*Pogue: Was that due entirely to the general's personality, that he just wanted to run things?*

Who?

*Pogue: MacArthur.*

Yes, he wanted to run things. He just took a decided stand on anything like that that affected his command. There were no concessions on his part whatsoever. Well, the war, picked in a thing like that, is made up of concessions, and adjustable one way or the other. But Nimitz's staff had become feeling so bitter towards General MacArthur, and MacArthur's staff so bitterly towards Nimitz, that it was almost impossible to get them together on anything. They would come in to see me and I could find some of them notably desirous of reaching adjustments, but the suspicion was just profound.

*Pogue: He thought they were trying to take away some of his glory and vice versa?*

And looking towards the future all the time. The personal thing was getting irrito it deeply—the personal thing more on MacArthur's side and the naval thing on Nimitz's side.

*Pogue: Well, did they feel that you were handing over the victories to the navy all the time?*

Who?

*Pogue: You, personally.*

Did who feel?

*Pogue: Did MacArthur's people feel?*

Well, apparently they do now, but apparently they didn't then.

*Pogue: Because I see no evidence of it. It seems to me that you were continually—*

Well, I was fighting his battles from the start to the finish. As I say, I even wrote his Medal of Honor decoration and all those things, and saw that he was promoted and given these ranks when it was actually opposed by Mr. Stimson and the president. I—but particularly Jack McCloy—got him the command in the end in Japan over the tremendous objections of the navy, because we got no help from his side at all, because it was all so

acid, and it wasn't helpful at all to an adjustment or a decision. But we just had to battle at that and Jack McCloy really played the leading part, and he and I led this fight to see that the army obtained command with MacArthur in the lead.

*Pogue: Well, the British didn't want him particularly either, did they?*

No. No, I don't know about that. I don't know whether they had an expression in regard to that particular thing or not. I shouldn't have said that.

I felt the way forces were deployed out there, they could go right ahead. But there were adjustments to be made. I remember they sent a very good naval force to help MacArthur at Hollandia, and then there was no use for it there and there was much talk about that, but there was one time when they were coming across to help. The distances were very great and they probably couldn't go back and forth with facility, but they could have mastered most of those difficulties if there had been a desire to do so. I found that Halsey, when he was on that island—what was the last island he went to—up above Guadalcanal before you get to that place we never did take, we bypassed?

*Pogue: Rabaul.*

Before you get to Rabaul.

*Pogue: New Britain and New--*

Oh, New Britain is way to the west of that.

*Pogue: I can't remember.*

The big island there. They fought on the fringe of it for quite a while.

*Pogue: New Guinea.*

No, no, that's to the west. This is to the east, the southeast.

*Pogue: I can't think.*

A great big island.

*Pogue: It just escapes me.*

Halsey was worrying very much about MacArthur's reaction where he, Halsey, was to do something, and his current situation got in the way of it and he thought that MacArthur would feel very badly about it. But he was concerned about getting the thing harmonized, which appealed to me.

*Pogue: Kinkaid apparently didn't get in on that like Halsey did.*

Well, he was very quiet. Kinkaid took orders. As a result of that, though,

he played a brilliant part, a brilliant part in that battle in the Philippines. He's hardly mentioned—his destruction of that southern fleet coming up.

*Pogue: Yes.*

He had the antiquated force and it was a beautiful job, and almost nothing is said about it. In all these things he was very close-mouthed throughout, and for that reason got along.

*Pogue: Apparently Spruance had some trouble, too.*

I don't know about that.

You speak about MacArthur holding the service troops. A question of great importance. I wonder if it is not this. From the War Department end we ran into a very difficult situation. We, I think, quite naturally, assumed that the fighting forces, particularly of the air in that theater north of Australia—New Guinea and thereabouts—would tire out long before the fellows on the ground. I sent a general officer out there to look into certain things for me. I will mention the other matters later. But I wanted him to look around and see things that were not being reported and to tell me not just what they were yelling about. He came back with a very important observation which bears on this reaction of MacArthur's towards the ground troops, support troops, I guess you would call them.

Contrary to our expectations, the wearing out process was occurring more rapidly with the ground forces of the Air Corps than of the fighting forces—for the reason that they had to work on the planes at night and they couldn't have any mosquito bar protection, and they had become so full of atabrine that for a while the pilots objected to using the planes, because these fellows were so dopey they weren't certain they were putting the cotter pins in and things of that sort. And the men on the ground were just dopey with these terrible doses of atabrine they had to take, because under electric lights they were working all night with the mosquitoes just eating them up. And it became quite evident that they would have to be relieved first and sent back somewhere free of the insect pests to recuperate. They all had a form of malaria or overdose of atabrine, one of the two. Now we hadn't anticipated that at all and it just reversed things for us in our training of replacements back in the United States.

And incidentally, these young pilots who were outnumbered badly for a long time by the Japanese Zero planes, and these young pilots were complaining about the planes they had, which were heavier than the Zero planes and they were being shot down by the Jap planes, and they were running on an exhausted basis. That was the principal thing I sent this general out to find out. I said, "I want you to talk to the individual pilots and a number of them. First thing you can tell them is if there is anything they'd like done to their planes, such as trimming them of all the armor

and everything on the plane, I will have it done. Anything they require about that plane that can be done, it will be done. All they have to do is tell you. I want you to tell them that this is from me to them."

We had stripped a plane over here to get the difference in weight, but of course, that took off all the armor. Well, so we had the data of what could be done. He came back and he was much amused, because they were so intent on this until they went in to it all, and he said they could have it and then it meant the removal of all this armor and all, and then they turned it down. They didn't want to do it. Well, their clamor boiled down to one thing—they wanted girls. But we were completely reversed on the necessities of the ground in view of the working at night and the mosquito menace. In order to get at that affair out there—which in Guadalcanal and other places had become very critical—I sent out a great expert on malaria. And I had to arm him with very careful instructions in order to get him to do anything.

I had a preliminary concentration of equipment, which we guessed would be needed, made in California at the port because we couldn't maintain the thing. For instance, the First Marine Division was out of action for over a year—for I think thirteen months. Well, we couldn't maintain an army out there with the withdrawals on such a length as that, but they were so loaded up with mosquito-malaria thing, that they were down there, I think it was in New Zealand, I believe it was for thirteen months. We couldn't possibly supply troops at that rate. So this fellow found out that they didn't have this mosquito protection for the messes and this and that and the other.

Of course, the decision as to what was to be shipped was left to the department commander. He notified the shore—notified the United States—of what he wanted. Well, his people, who were back at his headquarters and undoubtedly sitting in mosquito-protected places, were demanding a great many things but not netting—not screening. Nothing of that sort. So we just had to put it on without their order, override a portion of that tonnage and send that out, and this fellow indicated where it must be used. And we gave instructions that it must be used in that way. But we had to control the shipping, because on that side they were after the combat necessities and we were trying to cut down the malaria spread.

*Pogue: That's an interesting thing that I hadn't thought about; the fact that, of course, this man has protection, this one man, and yet he can affect the welfare of great numbers of people.*

My Lord, yes.

*Pogue: That's why you had to have this constant group of people who weren't under those conditions checking on them.*

I had to send men around the world all the time.

*Pogue: They weren't always very popularly received all the time, were they?*

Well, yes, more than you'd think they'd be disliked, because they got things for these fellows. And I would tell them always, if you can find anything that they want that they haven't got that we've got, give them that and let them know you're giving them that. They had very specific instructions to that, because I did that all over the United States. I always had something I could give a division, and if they didn't ask for it, I'd say, "How about such and such?" "Well, we haven't got a damn thing." "Well, do you want it?" "Yes." I'd write the telegram right on the wing of the plane and send it right off. I remember telling those fellows specifically about that. But I sent word to the pilots that I couldn't supply the girls. I could be sympathetic, but I couldn't supply them.

*Pogue: But you would not have considered tearing up any combat unit at the last, would you, to supply?*

No. Well, I was confronted once with the necessity of turning up, I think it was two, when I took those fellows out of college.

*Pogue: Oh, yes.*

I was determined to get an army at full strength and kept at that strength for all the fighting. That was the important thing to me, not the number of divisions at all. Well, I was quite right about that. It made all the difference, like the fighters, pilots, and all flying out of England. We had to have replacements in such a way that the mess table was always full. If they failed to come in, the other man had to take their place because to sit down and find half the table empty was a very depressing morale factor. Those things—those psychological reactions have got to be foreseen.

I remember when we discovered that the Japanese had retreated from that island—I've even forgotten the name of the island in the Aleutians [Kiska]—which meant that nobody else was left, because we'd defeated them at the tip of the Aleutians and now, in having this final expedition to throw them out of this particular island, they'd retreated from that before our attack struck. I sent for Somervell right away, the minute we heard that, the same day, and I said, "You have to get a couple of transports right away, immediate sailing up to the Aleutians or Alaska, wherever these men would come into, and start the movement of troops from that command. You can't move so many, of course, as we can eventually withdraw, but the movement was to be started and you ought to have two transports in it and instantly."

Well, he said, "I haven't got any transports. Every one is scheduled for these other operations and I just can't do it." Well, I said, "Somervell,

you've got to do it, because if you don't do that instanter, there is going to be set up a tremendous demand from these men to get out of the Aleutians and out of Alaska, and it is going to come with an impact that will get political very, very quickly." He said, "I don't know where in the world I'm going to get them." "Well," I said, "I certainly don't, but get them, by god! Get them, and get them up there right away. If you can put them there tomorrow, I'd say get them there tomorrow."

Well, of course, it took some time to move a transport up. Within three days the impact on that whole command was the fighting was over. They'd put up with terrific conditions there in the Aleutians. Now they wanted to come home and they wanted to come home fast, and I had a congressional committee on my hands the fourth day. When I got the Somervell's transports up there, that began to cut it down because the movement had started. That started, that took off the heat. Of course, it couldn't get there for some days.

Somervell couldn't see that. I wanted to get it started instantly. I wanted the orders to be gotten out within twenty-four hours, but I couldn't beat the punch on it. The instant the fighting was over, the reaction was come home. Not going to have any of it! We're all going home. And the next thing is the committee of Congress.

*Pogue: Well, you'd run into that in the first war, too?*

Why, of course, it was just tremendous there. The trouble there was, you see, all the men that went home were sore about it because they'd just gotten over and they wanted to see France, and the men that were up doing the fighting couldn't get back to the ports to get home, so General Pershing was up against it in every way. They didn't look at it in that way, but that was just the way and they did it. And, of course, it had a tremendous attack on General Pershing and his command. He was very unpopular, you know, when he came home. People have forgotten that in the long years that have elapsed.

I knew this was going to happen right off. That is the reason I took fellows from the front lines at the end of the war, at the end of the German War, and had them moved out by plane and brought right into the United States. I was trying to offset that same reaction. The only trouble was there I had a beautifully worked out plan—it was a beauty—everything went wrong. As you said, maybe you thought I didn't want peace right away. We had to take it any way we could get it, but it was just the devil.

*7. I know that at the time of the Bulge, you made great efforts to get combat fit men into the front lines. Were you ever satisfied with the degree to which your orders were carried out in this respect?*

I was never satisfied as to the business with combat men. But that was



excusable then because before we could get anything working well, a desperate battle developed which everybody had to get into.

*Pogue: That finished them. That's all the questions I brought down here with me.*

Well, not that I want to get rid of you, but I'm sort of glad. I'm getting a little tired.

*Pogue: That's the one thing I don't want to do and I wish you'd always let me know, because some days you just tire more quickly than others.*

Well, I don't feel it really till afterwards. I don't know what happened to me yesterday. I went out for a long walk after you left. Right from the start I was having difficulties. I was completely all-in when I got back. You exactly couldn't call it exhaustion, but my . . .

