

reasonable sets of assumptions such as the ones that existed there: no, no allies with us, therefore no airfield that could support us, therefore the Navy facing the Soviet Navy, plus the Soviet land bases in Syria and Egypt, where we could get whipped the odds were. And after the President called me aside and he said now I think the point you're trying to make is you're very nervous about what's going on, and I said yes that's right, he said words to the effect that it was his view that we had to first nail down our strategic superiority through the negotiations, get ourselves out of the war, and then go to work on getting sufficient support for budgets to turn the maritime balance around. I said to him that it seemed to me to be a rational approach provided he was sure that he could get strategic superiority, if he felt that he was going to come out of SALT I with either parity or inferiority, in the strategic field, then we ought to start right now taking it to the people. And his view was that it couldn't be done. In actual fact, the truth of the matter is

and this is not just the military talking, but the informed defense civilians, we gave the Soviets the opportunity to have superiority in SALT I, and they're in the process of getting it right now.

R: Of course it was impossible for him to, being the kind of fellow he was to take anything to the country on a candid basis, I mean that was one of the problems.

Z: This to me is the bottom line, the greatest immorality of all hasn't yet been revealed, it was the fact that the President, Haig and Kissinger, came to the conclusion that they knew better than the people what was good for the people, and what they have been saying in private sessions; we all know you're right, the maritime thing is going against us, but there isn't the support to turn this thing around, therefore we'll have to get the best deal we can. And by the time the American people find out that they don't have superiority, and have inferiority, it will be too late.

R: Its a very complicated kind of thing to try to describe, but

I. . .know I'm terribly far afield. I think that, I think what you're going to have to have in here somewhere, uh, its hard to visualize this early in the game just how, but you're going to have to have a chapter, a section or something or other, of considerable length, which describes the relationships, the working day to day relationships between the Pentagon and the White House, your office and the White House, or the Joint Chiefs and the White House, or whatever it is or a little of each, who talked to whom about what, and how do people do things, who composed memose that other people didn't see, and you know, whatever all those different things are. So that as you go on telling the story subsequently, it won't come as a great shock that all of a sudden, you know, a very surprising thing happens; Haldeman calls somebody up, or a memo goes up that nobody ever knew was there or you know, this or this or this or this happens. It seems to me. . .

Z: That probably should come right after the summons part, the. . . you suggested the first thing to do is to describe how I got sent for, and what the basis of that was, and having sorted that out

maybe next describe the way the relationship. . .

R: Yeah. How. . . what, is the working day of a Joint Chiefs like, of a CNO like, you know, what do you do, what does a guy in that job do, who does he talk to, who does he take orders from, who does he give orders to, and what's your relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, who is a fellow admiral. Are you going to have anything to say about the relations between you and Moorer?

Z: Yeah. They're going to be stated fairly simply. We thought very much alike on both the strategic field, and in regard to the maritime balance, we had some differences with regard to the way in which modernization should be brought about, but not many. We had marked differences with regard to our approach to personnel administration. But we managed not to talk about those, and to work together on, because they weren't his business anymore, to work together in the other two.

R: Was he one of your sponsors, or do you think you would have rather had someone somebody else.

Z: No, uh the part that didn't come through I guess and so which I will have to re-dictate, will show that his view was that I should not have been given the job for four more years, that I was too young, and that. . .he favored Admiral Clary.

R: Admiral Clary. He thought you should be more seasoned. But you didn't have a hostile relationship on the job?

Z: No. No, I'd say it started out cool for the first two or three months, and became increasinly close as we worked together.

R: In the course of your duty how much did a man in your position see the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs?

Z: Oh, at least three times a week and sometimes every day.

R: That is a very close one.

Z: Yeah. You have formal meetings Monday-Wednesday-Friday, and very frequently saw him daily.

R: Yeah. Another ~~kin~~ thing that I was just kind of wondering about was, just to set the scene, was how much of the Chief of Naval Operations' time is spent on Joint Chiefs' concern, and how much

on Navy administrative matters?

Z: Well, this is why I was, I thought it might be interesting at least as a first step, to try to lay out what went on during those four years, because, there is an ebb and flow to these things, if you visualize a chart across the wall of the four years, during the first six months, it would show primary occupation in making a host of personnel changes. . .

R: That was the first thing you did?

Z: Right. 60, that I recall of the roughly 120 changes, went out in the first six months. 30 in the second six months, as I recall, and then 15 each the third and fourth six months, and then just twos and threes after that. So the first year got the job done, it was just tuning it after that. And after two years we made almost no changes and were just driving it into the system. Then there was the period of increasing, but that was interrupted that personnel focus was interrupted by an intense period of dealing with the Jordan crisis in September 1970, just three

months after I took over, and trying to make sure that the Navy was doing everything it could to bolster up its weaknesses in the short term, and to use the lessons from that to try to drive home to Congress and the President, how weak our power was.. We were also during that six months, about the time I had been on for 60 days I had gotten approval in concept for the modernization scheme in, the reduction of ships and the construction of new ships and so forth.. .

R: Approval from where?

Z: From Secretary of Defense, Laird, and Packard. And. . .

R: This doesn't mean the White House and Capitol Hill obviously. . .

Z: No.

R: So in the Defense establishment.

Z: And the entire four years will show trying to get that project 60, the 60 day concept, driven into the system for the next four years, you know, dealing with Congress, dealing with the Budgeters, dealing with the White House, and so forth. Then as you move

towards the . . .

R: Did you have a lot of . . . Did that run into much opposition from ~~fr~~ Army and Air Force yet?

Z: No. The changes in the structure of the Navy were of no real concern to them.

R: Just you're share of the budget was of concern to them.

Z: That's right. They began to get concerned that our share went up by 1% each year, during my four years. The change in concept itself didn't bother them, but then there was this build up, well, no, if you look at personnel across the board, the first six months were, as I ~~di~~ say, very intense, then kind of settled in, then we began to get into trouble as the draft pressure really did ease, and we began to get into real trouble with inadequate numbers of recruits, & we had to take a lot of mental group 4's. The integration began to take place as we brought in large numbers of blacks, the escalation in the war, forced us to deploy ships beyond all reason, all these factors built up to the race riots

on the two ships.

R: When were they?

Z: Roughly, November of 1971, no 72.

R: 1972.

Z: And the Hicks Committee created by the Congress to investigate it which was the result of an effort organized by some inside-Admirals and some retired Admirals, to get me fired. So that during that period, the fall of 1972, there was again, total preoccupation on survival, uh, but it was also a period, just before that, the period was almost on, totally dealing with SALT I, where we had to get involved in trying to defend the bad deal the President made. So you've got this ebb and flow of the period from strategic features to survival on the personnel crisis, to getting the daily nitty-gritty down and dried in the new modernization program.

R: You know what I think we ought to do, it would be very convenient for me, and probably very simple for you, is to just, and it might

even be something that ultimately will be of value to the book itself, to help to make a chronological chart of those four years, with the the high points of all kinds, you know, Jordan, SALT I, riots on the ships, whatever, the big things that happened, in or to the Navy during that period.

Z: I have a friend working on doing the personnel side of that, for me right now, it will be ready next Friday, and I've got another fellow working on the strategic side of it, so. . .you can put it all together.

R: What I'm thinking of is, a chart that would illustrate, not illustrate, but describe the high and low points of your four years, you know, the particular times when you had the biggest pressure on you, or the biggest, the crisis atmosphere was the highest.

Z: Do you want to sit down and do that now?

R: Yeah. Do you mind?

Z: No not at all.

R: Alright. On 7/1/70, you assumed office, is that right?

Z: That's right.

R: By September 1. . .

Z: Could you first put down in parentheses after that, I'll have to check these numbers, 976 ships, and 55% probability. What that means is that at that time, the time I took over, having had three years before been the Director of Systems Analysis, and having done all the studies for the Navy, and then having reviewed them for two months before I took over, it was my estimate that in a conventional war with the Soviet Union at that time, we had a 55% probability of prevailing. That was a measure of our capability, to come down to that low a level.

R: That's better than half. . .

Z: That's right. By the time we get through its down to 30%. I'll give that to you each year as we go along. The big thing that went on then, 60 days later, by 1 September, we had delivered Project 60, the scheme for modernizing the Navy. So those 60

days were intensely preoccupied in doing that. Also, by the end of the first six months, we had issued the first, roughly 60 personnel changes, so you can see there was an intense amount of personnel work going on.

R: Meanwhile, though in September there was the Jordan crisis.

Z: That's right in September 1970, there was the Jordan crisis.

And, two meetings with the President in regard to the Jordan crisis.

R: Was that the first time you had ever had a very substantive meeting with him?

Z: Yeah. I had maybe five minutes with him the day before the announcement that I would be CNO.

R: But that was just formal. . .

Z: There was a little bit of conversation there, ..

R: Was that the first time you met him?

Z: Yeah. Now then, let's see, the next date point to make is, I guess, put down 1 July 1971 at which time we were down to be 45% probability. Each year I had a different number, we gave up more

ships.

R: One of these times, when we get into this, you're going to have to describe tom me so that I can make it intelligible, how you figure something like this out. A future note. Systems Analysis seems to me a dirty phrase.

Z: Also by 1 July 1971, we had made another thirty of the Z-grams.

R: Who thought of the name Z-grams? You?

Z: Yeah. The genesis of it, its just a message that goes out to the whole fleet, we've always had what are called NAVOPS, that go out to the whole fleet. I was looking for a way to make sure everybody knew that out of this whole mass of NAVOPS, maybe one or two a day, that this one that I was personally interested in so I just kind of absently mindedly in the case of the first one from me. . . (end side A.)

Z: So the next one that was of great interest to me was Z-2, and this began to be picked up and called Z-grams, . .

R: They were all personnel.

Z: No, there were some that were not personnel. For example, the there were some, they were all designed to enhance personnel conditions, but some of them were material changes.

R: So there were 30 of those in the second six months.

R: When was SALT I?

Z: It was wound up in May, of 1972. So let's put down 1 January 1972, another 15 personnel changes. We've got to figure out. . . the massive invasion against the DMZ was 30 March 1972. That was another big crisis.

R: Why was that a crisis for the Navy?

Z: Because in order for the President to deal with it without re-investing troops into Southeast Asia, we had to double the number of ships out there from the smallest base in the entire world we had the largest number of ships. Whereas, we had been cutting down on the number of our ships, and yet we suddenly had to surge and put large numbers out there.

R: When did troop withdrawals start?

Z: I think Mr. Nixon had already made his first withdrawal before I came to this job, while I was still out in Vietnam. So he started them in 1969 or 70. I didn't leave Vietnam until May of 1970, and we had already been dealing with our first withdrawal.

R: By the time of this invasion across the DMZ, the troops were withdrawn then.

- Z: No we still had troops there. One of the things the New York Times people, Quadrangle people can do is get a chronology of all significant dates. Something you'd better give them a call on, Bob. Alright now, let's see. By fall of 1971, put down, September 1971, we began to get in trouble with personnel. Our recruiting fell off. We had to take large groups of mental groups 4's.
- R: In my day in the Navy, there was a lot of need for common labor is there still?
- Z: There is. We reckon we can take from up to 5% mental group 4, and f do alright.
- R: On ship board there are just a lot of plain "swabbies" needed, aren't there?
- Z: Increasingly less so. For example, on a guided missile destroyer, now, it takes more people to maintain it than it does to man the watches. This means that you've got to have more technicians than you do "swabbies", and so that's one of the problems. What these basically have to be now are bright, young people who are just out boot camp who are on their way up, who can also learn to do the maintenance jobs. You can get some, there is still room for stewards, cooks and bakers, for people who are not terribly bright, but we got to where we were having to take nearly 20% mental group 4's., during that bad period.
- R: That's more than you can handle, is that right?
- Z: That's right. And that continued down until, roughly, 1 July 1972. That's when we began to turn it around again. So that was