

3

11

INTERVIEWS WITH
Gen. C. Craig Cannon
on
October 1969 and April 5, 1975
by
Dr. John E. Wickman and Dr. Don W. Wilson
for
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY

Legal Agreement Pertaining to the Oral History Interview of

C. CRAIG CANNON

In accordance with the Provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, I, C. Craig Cannon, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, hereinafter referred to as the donor, do hereby give, donate and convey to the United States of America all my rights, title and interest in the tape recordings and transcripts of personal interviews conducted in October 1969 and on April 5, 1975 and prepared for deposit in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. This assignment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (1) The transcripts shall be available for use by researchers as soon as they have been deposited in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.
- (2) The tape recordings shall not be available for use by researchers during the donor's lifetime. After the donor's death, access to the tape recordings shall be for background use only, and researchers may not cite, paraphrase, or quote therefrom.
- (3) During the donor's lifetime the donor retains all copyright in the material given to the United States by the terms of this instrument. Thereafter the copyright in both the transcripts and tape recordings shall pass to the United States Government. During the donor's lifetime, researchers may publish brief "fair use" quotations from the transcripts (but not the tape recordings) without the donor's express consent in each case.
- (4) Copies of the open portions of the interview transcripts, but not the tape recordings, may be provided by the Library to researchers upon request.
- (5) Copies of the interview transcripts, but not the tape recordings, may be deposited in or loaned to institutions other than the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

C. Craig Cannon
Donor

23 March 1990
Date

[Signature]
Archivist of the United States

4/5/90
Date

Gen. Craig Cannon, Oct. 1969, Omaha

DR. WICKMAN: This interview is being conducted with C. Craig Cannon about his activities with General Eisenhower over the years. Let's start with biographical business first, Craig. You know, when were you born; where did you go to school; when did you join the Army?--that kind of thing.

GEN. CANNON: O.K. I was born the 24th of October, 1914, Wilmington, Delaware, son of parents native to Delaware. I attended public schools in Wilmington and the University of Delaware at Newark, Delaware, graduating from there in June, 1936, with a bachelor of electrical engineering degree. I worked a few years for a local firm, the National Vulcanized Fibre Company, and then transferred about 1939 to Westinghouse Electric Company in Philadelphia where I worked until coming on active duty in June of 1942. I joined the 332d Engineer Regiment in Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, and we deployed to England in early August of 1942. We worked throughout the British Isles, principally in heavy construction, preparing logistic facilities for the coming invasion. Other activities consisted of moving small detachments throughout England to where a downed B-17 or B-24 was capable of rehabilitation. We would

then build a temporary airstrip, and the 8th Air Force maintenance people would come in and put in new props, engines, under carriage, et cetera, and fly it out. About January of 1944 my regiment was directed to furnish two officers for an interview at Southern Base Section Headquarters relative to a temporary duty assignment. I was one of the nominees from my regiment, and it turns out that the Chief of Staff at headquarters ETOUSA and the chief of staff at this command (Southern) were engineers (Lord and Broshous). They restricted the applicants to two engineers from each of the sixteen regiments then in England, I think. In any event, I wound up as the choice, considerably to my dissatisfaction. I was a separate detachment commander and getting many satisfactions out of the command and didn't relish the idea of temporary duty, which they wanted me to start that afternoon. And it turned out that the temporary duty was to replace a chap, Hank Diena, in civilian life an assistant hotel manager, who was returning to the States on emergency leave. His job was running the train "Alive", the Theater Commander's train. (Subsequently, after the war, Diena returned to New York and was assistant manager of the Hotel Commodore in NYC) Well, my father had been a railroad engineer, but that's

why he wanted me to become some other kind of engineer. And so I had no great enthusiasm for running a train. However, then, as sometimes now, I did as I was ordered. I reported to London on the first available train (about 4 AM) from Salisbury after I could clear my decks of censoring the company mail and turning it over to someone. I recall shaving in Waterloo station in the early morning hours with a bunch of His Majesty's drunken sailors and got over to Grosvenor Square and reported to General [John C.H.] Lee, who was then the Deputy Theater Commander. About noon that same day I was told that I was leaving that night, with General Lee and General [George S.] Patton, as commander of this train to go up to Scotland to pick up the advance elements of General Patton's Third Army headquarters which were coming in on the Queen. I have said through the years that I jumped that day from mud up to my knees to pile carpet in Grosvenor Square almost equally as high. Subsequently, during the some sixty or seventy days that I filled in for Hank Diena--I was then a 1st lieutenant--the train was General Eisenhower's, the Theater Commander's; but whenever he wasn't using it, the deputy used it, and General Lee used it quite frequently. But occasionally General Eisen-

• • hower did, and that's where I first met him.

WICKMAN: Did you first meet General Eisenhower just incidentally, or--

CANNON: Well, incidentally during a trip in England that he was taking.

WICKMAN: Remember the month?

CANNON: It would have been February of 1944. Of course, I guess it was about the first of two trips I took as train commander with him. I don't have any trouble remembering the second one because this was in March of 1944 where we combined Mr. Churchill's train with General Eisenhower's. We made a series of visits to both the Commonwealth and U.S. troop units including a practice jump by the 101st Airborne, winding up in Winchester where the 39th Regiment of the 9th Infantry Division was stationed. Both Mr. Churchill and General Eisenhower wandered through the streets of Winchester talking to the assembled troops, much to the distress of the security types. And, of course, Field Marshal [Bernard L.] Montgomery had been with us on the earlier part of the trip to the Commonwealth

troop units; and, joining us here, in addition to the division commander, who was General [Manton S.] Eddy, there was the corps commander, General [Joseph Lawton] Collins, and the army commander, General [Omar Nelson] Bradley. Others on the trip, of course were then Colonel [James Frederick] Gault and Mr. Churchill's daughter, Sarah Oliver, and a number of the working types of local authorities.

WICKMAN: During this particular trip did you have much close personal contact with General Eisenhower? Or did your assignment just put the two of you on the same train?

CANNON: Prior to the trips we worked through the aides--during the trips there was personal contact. Of course, we were there to make the thing go in the best possible fashion, and we were attuned to respond to whatever General Ike wanted in the way of arrangements, travel schedule, or what have you. This was not high strategy--just local hospitality! As you know, John, I sent you a copy of the menu for that final dinner; and I must say that that was a very unusual menu in its composition when you consider the austerity of food then available in England but we went all out. That was one example of our best

effort but trying to get decent coffee out of a British railway coffee maker is an entirely different story.

WICKMAN: I have another question, too. After I was talking to you about the exhibit we set up in the train that was on display in Abilene, some of my people were wondering about whether or not we really were dealing with the "Bayonet" [railroad car] that was brought over. The menu you sent was from the "Alive."

CANNON: Yes.

WICKMAN: Now what's the difference?

CANNON: The "Alive" was the code name for the entire train. "Bayonet" was, as I recall it, that one parlor car that had the long table down the center and the seats on the sides--its function pre-war was as a buffet-lounge car of limited capacity.

WICKMAN: Yeah, I see. That would explain that particular problem. After that trip then, after D-Day, what did you do? Where did you go?

CANNON: After that trip, Captain Diena came back. General Lee had a policy in that he kept one permanent aide but he rotated the other aide; and I was asked if I would like to be the other aide replacing Pete Avenali (San Francisco resident), who went on to a troop unit as I recall it. And, of course, at that time I had no thought of making the military service a career. I was in for the duration and one day, period! So it was interesting for a lieutenant to observe the day-to-day activities of the leaders of a military effort being mounted for such a significant invasion. That was certainly something that I found intriguing--sort of the mouse can look at the king or what have you. And to be even on the periphery of monumental decisions and efforts gave me a certain sense of satisfaction, so I stayed on as Lee's aide until he gave me the opportunity to come home on a prisoner of war escort assignment in November of 1944. And then I saw Louise for the first time in two and a half years. I then went back and went to work for General Jim [James Hobson] Stratton in the logistic side of the Headquarters European Theater, where I stayed until the chief of staff of ETOUSA and the deputy chief of staff to General [Walter] Bedell Smith asked me to go with him. He was forming--

this was [Gen.] Royal [B.] Lord--he was forming the Assembly Area Command, which was the command designated to provide for the redeployment of troops out of Europe either back to the Continental United States or direct to the Pacific mounting areas in preparation for the operations against the Japanese homeland. And so I went with him for about three months. By then the war in Europe was over, and Diena was rotating home. The joint British-American crew which had run the train was being broken up. The British train returned to the--I guess it was the British Army on the Rhine then. The captured German train, made up of a composite of various notable (?) Nazi individuals' cars, was assembled for General Eisenhower's use; and Tex [Colonel Ernest R.] Lee wanted to know if I wanted to wait out the remainder of my time in Europe by returning to command that train, which was being used extensively for various trips in Europe during the rest of 1945. I accepted. Somewhere I have copies of the telephone books made up for each trip. Subsequently, General Eisenhower was not able to return to Europe in November because, as I recall, of Mrs. Eisenhower's illness with pneumonia; and he himself, I think, had some touch of pneumonia. And the old Sunflower I had sprung leaks in its wing tanks on returning General

Eisenhower to the United States. I think it was sometime in October. Those of us on his staff who had been waiting for the return to go back to the States with him were told to come home the week before Christmas. They sent a bucket-seat C-54 over, and we arrived back in the States one week before Christmas 1945. At that time Tex [Colonel Ernest R. Lee] was returning to civilian life, and the General [Eisenhower] asked if I would be interested in continuing with him as an aide. Jim [Col. James] Stack would be the senior one. By then I was captain, I think; I know. And again here, in the interest of seeing a great man at work and having determined from my old boss at Westinghouse that I could come back at a time of my own choosing, I stayed on. And then, subsequently, about July 1946 General Eisenhower said he thought I should give some thought to making the Army a career. At that time they were having the integrations of non-regular officers; and, quite frankly, from seeing the messages which crossed his desk and making my own low level analysis of the state of affairs, I felt that it didn't look like we were going to be settled for too long. We were already having our troubles with the Russians; and it appeared to me that--I don't think this is

hindsight--it appeared to me that sometime in the future it might be inevitable that I would be called back involuntarily. And I must confess the personality--the ability--of General Eisenhower to inspire my trust and confidence in his judgment and the fact that he and Mrs. Eisenhower took a personal interest in Louise and me--making us feel like part of the family--why it was a delightful environment to contemplate. And so I took the step and applied for integration.

WICKMAN: Let me ask you a question, and it's going to be a real mind stretcher--maybe a memory stretcher. I've tried the same thing on Stack, but we haven't done the oral history with him. I always have to guard against the future in case I don't get back to do it. But if you can remember, what--in this particular period when you and Jim Stack were both aides to General Eisenhower--what was the daily routine like? This is one of the things that isn't down anywhere. You know, what time did you start? Who did what?

CANNON: Of course, there were always a number of trips, both within the US and to Canada, South America, Europe and the Pacific areas, but the daily routine in the Pentagon had us

getting to the office (3E-924) between 7:30 and a quarter of eight. The General would usually be there shortly after a quarter of eight. There were three of us outside the General's office: Jim [Stack], myself, and Mona Nason, the secretary who had also been there--I think she'd been there since the days of Malin Craig as Chief of Staff--very fine girl. I would be Stack's alter ego if he were not there. However, when both of us were there, Jim generally handled the appointments, conducting people in and out of the office. I would handle the correspondence in conjunction with Pete [Paul T.] Carroll, who was then the head of the correspondence section on certain matters. The more mundane letters that an aide would answer usually fell to my lot whereas Jim would handle the correspondence going in for the General's signature, except for the material which the Secretary General Staff, who had the office adjacent to us, or the then deputy chief of staff, General Tom [Thomas Troy] Handy, would carry in to the General on their own. In addition there were always briefings ranging from Operations and R & D to the "critical" aspects of changing the Army uniform from olive-drab to "Army-Green." Frequently the General would have lunch at his desk. The Secretary of War's dining room was just down the

E-Ring corridor, and, of course, the Secretary of War's office had a communicating door between his and the Chief of Staff's office. The back entrance to the C/S's office was covered by two WAC secretaries--initially those who had been with us in Germany, Margaret Chick and Sue Sarafian. They occupied a windowless 1 door (on the E-ring) 3E-928? office which also housed the elevator opening from the garage below--I once escorted President Truman up and down that elevator, four times in one day--in connection with affairs attendant to Ike's pending retirement. Subsequently, Olive Marsh and Margaret Hays were Chickie's and Sue's replacements. Bill Murray also used this tiny office for his activities. Across the E-Ring was the formal reception room/waiting room for the Chief of Staff, Cora Thomas. To provide constant coverage of the entrance office, one of the aides would have a sandwich or a bowl of soup sent up from the Secretary's mess, and would then eat lunch at his desk. I learned the inadvisability of that when I left Washington. I had come back from Europe weighing about 149 pounds, which was 16 pounds under what I weighed when I played freshman football; and when I left General Ike's office in Columbia in August of 1948, I weighed about 185

pounds. My first six months at Harvard Business School thinned me back to about 158, and I haven't let it get much--too much--above that since.

WICKMAN: I see. You were actively working in General Eisenhower's office during his tenure as Chief of Staff from '45 to--

CANNON: December of '45 until--well, he left as Chief of Staff in February of '48 after having announced the previous June, as I recall it, that he was going to take the presidency of Columbia University. We stayed in Washington where he was very actively engaged at Quarters One at Fort Myer in preparing a manuscript for Crusade in Europe; and since I knew most of his files from Europe and also from Chief of Staff days, he would have me look up some point that he wanted to develop. His memory recall in these matters always amazed me. And, of course, Kevin [McCann] and Pete [Carroll] along with Ken [Kenneth D.] McCormick and Joe [Joseph] Barnes would work with him on most of the other manuscript matters. I don't know, John, you know Doubleday--or the New York Herald Tribune of Bill Robinson's--had a stenographer there--male--to take

Gen. Craig Cannon, October, 1969

Page 14

General Eisenhower's dictation whenever needed; normally during an eight-hour work day (for the steno-typist) at Ft. Myer.

But this is a chap that subsequently wrote Damn Yankees--or something like that--that was turned into a play on Broadway. It was a novel. I may think of his name later, but this was a--

WICKMAN: It was a secretary.

CANNON: The recording steno-typist--sort of court reporter type that we used to modify the existing manuscript or for General Ike to supplement previous thoughts.

WICKMAN: Well, we'll look it up. [Douglas Wallop, The Year The Yankees Lost the Pennant]

CANNON: And, then, as I recall it, in early May--well to go back the year before in June of '47. Engineers had told me I was selected for graduate school for that fall. However, since I had been in Europe with him [Eisenhower], the General asked the then Chief of Engineers, General [Raymond A.] Wheeler, if I could be deferred for a year without losing my opportunity for graduate school. (This brought later complications for me professionally). No one outside the immediate family and those concerned at that time knew that he was about to announce

Gen. Craig Cannon, October, 1969

Page 15

this Columbia job; and he wanted, I guess, people with whom he was familiar to help him make the transition. And so we moved to New York in early May of '48, and I remained at Columbia because the 1948 political campaign was really heating up in preparation for the conventions that June. And, of course, he--I guess he's the only man who's ever been considered a good candidate by three parties. So--

WICKMAN: Can you remember--you probably can with a fair degree of accuracy--but when did the overtures start to the General for the '48 campaign? Did people start this in '45, '46, or start it in '47 or--

CANNON: Of course, as a lieutenant/captain back in '44, '45, I wasn't privy to such matters, but certainly--well, let's say in the fall of '45 when I had somewhat more responsibility--there were overtones then. And certainly when we came back to Washington, the mail grew in volume from early '46, increased very heavily in '47, and I think that the reply to the [Leonard V.] Finder letter was February of 1948.

WICKMAN: This is another question that we haven't really touched

on with anybody who's been interviewed yet. What kind of transition did you--or how did you do this transition: the General from Chief of Staff to president of Columbia?

CANNON: Well, as I think Louise related to you last night, John, we were certainly two on the staff who did not believe that in 1948 General Eisenhower should in any way place himself as a candidate. I--for my own feeling--I think it was a case that I thought he was too good a man to get damaged by what I had seen in national political life. I felt that his image of himself could have been distorted by the political maneuverings of opponents, adherents, and so forth, and we thought the country could get along without sacrificing Dwight D. Eisenhower in the process. Now I didn't finish. You asked about the routine of the day. The routine at Columbia was something of a ratrace because of the astounding number of letters urging him to be a candidate for President. It involved an administrative and secretarial workload that Columbia had not expected. I can also recall Strom Thurmond and his attractive wife as one of the many political visitors. Also watching from the TV at 60 Morningside George Allen addressing the Demo Convention of 1948.

WICKMAN: Yes, go ahead with whatever you have on that.

CANNON: Well, it was a rare day that there weren't a number of appointments. The General was gregarious in his friends and some acquaintances and some came from years back and others from a meeting just last week where he had met someone. And so I would say on the average we would get away from the office by shortly after six o'clock. However, many times I've seen us work there until seven or eight o'clock at night. Louise probably knows more about that than I do.

WICKMAN: She remembers more about how late at night you worked. You were living at Fort Myer?

CANNON: Yes. We lived for the first six weeks at the Statler Hotel. Of course, housing, like cars, in those days was pretty hard to come by, and we were having to wait to line-up an apartment out on Shirley Highway, Arlington, or somewhere around there. And one day General Ike called me in. He said, "Would you and Louise like quarters at Fort Myer?" I said--knowing how much quarters were sought after at Fort Myer--I can recall telling him, "No sir, not if it'll be embarrassing to you to put me in these quarters." He said, "I didn't ask you that."

I said, "Yes, sir."

WICKMAN: Very good.

CANNON: So we wound up at Fort Myer.

WICKMAN: In this period of life--and, of course, we have other evidences, pictorial as well as other kinds to demonstrate the fact--but General and Mrs. Eisenhower sort of absorbed the staff into their social life, didn't they? Fort Myer was just a--

CANNON: Very much so, Quarters One a convivial gathering place for Eisenhower friends, the personal staff, old friends, and an occasional new individual.

WICKMAN: In a sense it was more than just an eight to five or eight to six job. It was a way of life.

CANNON: Because at that time we didn't have a car, I would ride home with the General and go up with the various mail that had come to the office that was of interest to Mrs. Eisenhower; and we would walk up and see her and chit-chat--sometimes stay for an old-fashioned and then go on back to my quarters. Of course, at that time Louise and I didn't have children whereas

Jim Stack did. So, therefore, I was more eligible and willing to extend the day than was possible for Jim, who naturally wanted to be with his family. And Louise was frequently called during the day by Mrs. Eisenhower to join her at Quarters #1.

WICKMAN: Now somewhere in here you picked Bob [Robert L.] Schulz up on the staff. Was that when Stack left?

CANNON: No. Initially, oh, I guess it was early in '46 after Mrs. Eisenhower had been at the Wardman Park and after the Marshalls moved out of Quarters One. Mrs. Eisenhower didn't demand too much in the way of refurbishing at Quarters One. It was, I guess, an ingrained sense of austerity from her then thirty years in the military service. But they moved early in '46 to Fort Myer. You should have Louise tell you sometime about her first meeting with General Eisenhower at the Wardman Park. She came away completely overwhelmed. I had no trouble selling her on General Eisenhower in any role whatsoever after that. But I digress. General Eisenhower had a classmate, Henry [B.] Saylor. The Sayers had a daughter whose name

escapes me now--Dale, I think. She was married to a career infantry officer, Johnny [John Bowler] Hull. And there came a need for someone to manage the quarters at Fort Myer. And so through a combination of circumstances, including the "procratious" relationship, Johnny was picked. He'd had a very distinguished infantry career in Europe. I can recall General Willard [S.] Paul saying that every time that he saw Hull, who had been in his division--the 26th Division--he was on the way back to the hospital with a Purple Heart. My recollection is that he wound up with four of them. So Johnny was picked to run the house. Now Bob [Schulz] had been in the Military District of Washington and had been the transportation expert for that command (supportive of the Pentagon logistically). I think he was integrated in the list after mine. Stack was integrated in July, and I was integrated in August of '46. Well, Jim had known Bob during the war years, and Bob had been used extensively--whenever General Ike was coming back to the States--to lay on the transportation arrangements, which, of course, he did in his usual thorough fashion. So I guess it was about 1947--before Jim retired--that on an annual physical Johnny was picked up with tuberculosis; and, of course,

this was kind of amazing because we had one secretary, Margaret Chick, "Chickie" (now wife of Gen. Clay's aide, Edloe Donnan), who had been picked up, and Larry Hansen (former pilot) for a brief period had had to undergo treatments. So it was almost like someone of us was a "Typhoid Mary" or--

WICKMAN: Yes.

CANNON: In fact they mixed Hull's and my X-rays up on the first go round and I got the call. But Johnny had to go out to Fitzsimons for a very lengthy medical treatment, and it was at this time that Bob Schulz came in as the third aide* to run affairs at Quarters One. And, of course, later that year Jim Stack retired to take his job with a Louis Marx activity because it was, of course, known to the personal staff that General Ike was retiring before too long. Of course, I was going to graduate school. So that was when Mike [John Hersey] Michaelis was brought in. He'd been in

*Stack's comment to me covered later. [Page , Interview #2]

DCSPER [Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel]. He was brought up as senior aide to replace Stack.

WICKMAN: So you went to graduate school. When did you go back with General Eisenhower?

CANNON: Well, I stayed at Columbia in May to August of '48 to handle this tremendous volume of mail that the General was getting pressing him on the political issues and the Candidacy, and I guess I left there about August. I was kind of holding the fort until Kevin could come aboard. And I was there in the summer between my two years at the Harvard Business School. Kevin hadn't had a bit of relief, and so I came down for most of the month of June '49 and part of July to give Kevin a chance to get away. In fact, I lived in Kevin's apartment, and Louise came down a couple of weekends. And then I went back and worked on my thesis--one of my theses--for graduation the balance of the summer by observing a privately owned business--how it operated and so forth. The only holograph letter we have from Ike to Louise covers his comments for this period at Columbia.

WICKMAN: Now, Bob Schulz was with the General all this time?

CANNON: Yes. We drove from Fort Myer to Sixty Morningside the first time on the move in May of '48, and I went as the only aide up with them. Bob had gone ahead to New York to clear up a few things and met us as we arrived at 60 Morningside Drive. And he stayed on. He and I--let me see and Mrs. [Helen] King and Mrs. Marilyn McKinnon were in the office outside General Ike's office at Columbia. The latter two secretaries were holdovers from Dr. Butler's presidency at Columbia.

WICKMAN: I was wondering if Bob was still in the Army.

CANNON: Yes. See the five-star act authorized--and even though he was President of Columbia, he was still entitled to him, to one aide plus Moaney as orderly.

WICKMAN: I see. O.K., so then you finished at Harvard.

CANNON: I graduated at Harvard in June of 1950.

WICKMAN: An MBA?

CANNON: An MBA. That first year was blood, sweat, and tears, after being twelve years away from academics. But the

Engineers had given me the option: I could go for my masters in engineering or masters in business administration. And once again here is where I consulted and relied on General Ike's views and experience in the Army. I said it appeared to me that I had been so long away from technical engineering that it would be really bruising to get back into it in time to really get plumped up for my masters in that and that my experience in the army had been more along the lines of administration than it had [engineering]. And he agreed. He gave me the added thought that in his opinion it [administration] gave me additional flexibility for future assignments rather than being channeled. Of course, Korea broke about the time I graduated. In fact, I think it was a day or two afterwards. And my orders to a year's duty in which I would serve with three different industries as a part of the utilization of my graduate work were cancelled, and I was ordered back to the Chief of Engineers office as a branch head initially and then as exec of one of the principal divisions. And it was there--I think it was about September of 1950--that I got word that General Ike wanted to know--if his NATO assignment came about--if I would be willing to go back temporarily with him to help

get things organized. And I'll tell you, I've been an aide to three generals. If any of the other two had asked, I wouldn't have gone back; but if General Ike wanted me, I would because, after all, they'd made us part of the family.

WICKMAN: Yes.

CANNON: By that time Mrs. Eisenhower was Ann's godmother, and we were still hoping for a boy to put General Ike in the slot of godfather too.

WICKMAN: So then, when did you go to SHAPE?

CANNON: In December of '45. All of us were--

WICKMAN: Not '45.

CANNON: Oh, pardon me. December of '50. Was thinking of the date of my return from SHAEF after WW II.

WICKMAN: '50, yes.

CANNON: December seems to be my--

WICKMAN: December seems to be your month for a change. All right. Did you join General Eisenhower in New York or

Washington to go over, or--

CANNON: We spent a weekend with the Eisenhowers at Sixty Morningside early in December, and then I think it was about the nineteenth of December that President Truman made the announcement. On the 20th I was transferred from the Chief of Engineers' office to initially the Army Chief of Staff's office. Pete Carroll--I think Pete was--no, Pete was somewhere else (Leavenworth faculty), but he got there pretty soon. It wasn't until later in December, I think, that they assigned us to this initial increment of the SHAPE Headquarters because we were telephoning people like Andy [Andrew J.] Goodpaster and [Alfred] Dodd Starbird. Bob [Robert E.] Wood was there, and Al [Alfred M.] Gruenther was on board. We started phoning, after clearing with General Ike and General Gruenther, various people whom we knew from previous service. Of course, the Air Force sent in a couple of very, very fine colonels to initially man this first increment of U.S. officers for SHAPE. Oh, we were calling people Christmas Eve. In fact, I got some pretty funny responses from a couple of them on Christmas Eve.

WICKMAN: I'm sure you did.

CANNON: And I left. This was Christmas Eve afternoon. I left, oh, fairly early in the evening to go up to Wilmington to spend Christmas with our parents, and on Christmas Day I got a phone call from this one character with whom I'd talked on Christmas Eve afternoon about whether he would be willing to come back and go with us to Paris to form SHAPE. And he said, "I know I talked to you yesterday afternoon, but what did you say to me?"

WICKMAN: Let's see. This now makes about your third organization of General Eisenhower's office somewhere that you got involved in. What were the problems besides just the logistics of getting over there and getting set up? Did this particular assignment differ from the beginnings of the chief of staff?

CANNON: Oh, I think very much so. Of course, I wasn't in on the initial organization of Allied Force Headquarters in North Africa nor in COSSAC or SHAEF. But here, contemplating a twelve nation headquarters and facing some political opposition at home in the personage I believe of Senator Taft as one of

the principal spokesmen, it was apparent that it wasn't going to be an easy organization and that it was going to take the best talent that we could muster. And I must say this: the Army gave us an open ticket on anyone we wanted. I can recall I was delegated, since I'd served with Tony in the old days at SHAEP and afterwards the U.S. Forces, European Theater, to go down and talk to Tony [Anthony J. Drexel] Biddle. He was then in a pretty responsible job in intelligence, DA intelligence. And I went down to sound him out as to whether he'd be willing to leave Washington and come back to the rat race of forming a new headquarters. And--typically Tony--he was always ready to go wherever General Ike wanted him. And so, of course, we had to get organized on the Round Robin tour which General Eisenhower wanted to make to the then twelve NATO capitals before coming back to report to Congress and before actually establishing [the headquarters], because my recollection is there was a lot of ambivalence in some of these nations about being participants in this international NATO military effort.

WICKMAN: Well, each one had its own political and its own economic problems too that seemed to be either threatened or

assisted by NATO organization. Let's ask the same question here we did about the chief of staff. What did you do specifically on this staff? Was it a rerun of chief of staff days? You were outside the General's office with two or three top aides and--

CANNON: Well, in this instance, I guess, although I wasn't senior by date of rank to Bob, I took over more of the duties of senior aide in some ways: the correspondence both for my own signature and for the General's; and I ran all the entertainment expense accounting; and the official expense accounting. And I know I went to the Secretary of the Army before we left and persuaded him--undoubtedly with some assistance from my boss and General Gruenther, but, fundamentally, I was the action officer--to get \$5,000 to finance our Round Robin trip. I had made the recommendation, based on my experience with the General in the Chief of Staff days and in Europe, that we not fuss around with this per diem and things like this. We were going to be living in hotels in the various NATO capitals. The normal per diem would have left us--each and every one of us--very much in the hole financially for the thing, and I sold the idea. And so no one drew any

per diem; Craig Cannon paid all the bills and accounted for them when we got back.

WICKMAN: On a kind of project basis.

CANNON: I suspect that some of those receipts that I gave you today are these from the Round Robin trip as well as from subsequent trips and entertainment.

WICKMAN: Yes. This, of course, raises one question too about the NATO assignment. It would seem again from my own research on this subject that the entertainment, the social side of General Eisenhower's command, would have been important as a way to meet various people that he had to meet. It seems that he became almost a kind of ceremonial officer for a good share of the time.

CANNON: Every day that he was at SHAPE Headquarters--not only when we were down town but after we moved outside there north of Versailles--there was always someone that General Ike had to do a selling job on to convince them of the worth of this NATO effort and the military side of it in SHAPE. And subsequently, John, although we initially used the U.S. funds--as

I say--I then obtained an allotment of international funds which I applied against those things which had an international aspect and had U.S. funds for those things which, in my judgment, were solely U.S. And then, of course, I had been in Europe and Bob hadn't. Well, let me go back. In preparation for the Round Robin we decided that we'd leapfrog teams out ahead of us to size up things and be available when we landed to brief us on anything of a curious or potentially difficult nature. We had one team of public information specialists--three men. We had one team of sort of diplomats, if you will. By this time Doug MacArthur II, had joined us as a State Department representative. And then we had one team of sort of pseudo-aides to check on the physical arrangements and that sort of thing. Tony Biddle was one of our advance men in the diplomatic area. The public information people, as I recall it, were Barney Oldfield and Johnny Virden. Both of those were Air Force by this time, but they had been Army when we'd known them in the old days. And a little guy, Walt Gristi (Airborne Infantry type). And Dick [Vernon] Walters was--no I guess Dick stayed with us. Jack Wood--

WICKMAN: Dick was your translator, wasn't he?

CANNON: Dick stayed with us the whole time because of the translation, and, of course, Jack Wood had a facility in French (and a French wife). This was why we nominated him as aide to Al Gruenther. None of us had ever known him although his father had commanded the 4th Armored Div. in WW II. The other advance aide was Don [Donald C.] Melius, who had been in the secretariat at SHAEF and was in Frankfurt in WW II. In fact, we left him in Frankfurt in December of '45 when we came back. And our procedure in each of these cases was to put one man of each team out on the capital that we were going to hit next. And we would have met--in the capital we were then in--the members of the other team; and having been briefed by them, they would then take off for the capital beyond the next one. Thus we leapfrogged them, except occasionally we changed the pattern to take advantage of Tony Biddle's expertise in certain nations. Now the routine at the Astoria Hotel--I think, there, just off the Champs Elysees and the Place d'Etoile--that was pretty uncomfortable from the standpoint that secretaries were running typewriters in former

bathrooms and things like that. So finally we moved out. The French built SHAPE Headquarters; and as an engineer, I can't say much for their construction standards. But the routine there was, I'd say, pretty much as it had been when the General was Chief of Staff--different complexion of the visitors and, of course, vastly different with Al Gruenther as Ike's chief of staff. There was a direct line between Schulz's and my desks which Al could pick up on his end and buzz on our end; and he could ask, Who is with the General? and What plans are being made? and so forth. And he was a master of every detail.

WICKMAN: Gruenther?

CANNON: This is Al Gruenther. Of course, I recall one amusing incident on the Round Robin trip. I think Copenhagen was about our fifth stop, and I'd been having trouble getting Al on the plane before the boss boarded so that we could take off. And I think the General observed the trouble I was having, because Al always had to confer with some dignitary just on one more thing. He was nailing things down I guess. But in Copenhagen I completely failed because he was talking to the Minister of

Defense--that is, General Gruenther was. So General Ike got aboard. We were sitting in the lounge of the Columbine, and finally General Gruenther, the last one aboard, came through the door. General Ike said to him, "Gruenther, there's one thing you'd better learn. When I get aboard this plane, the door shuts and we take off. If you want to be with us, get on board ahead of me." I didn't have any more trouble with him.

But, of course, we'd selected a French speaking aide, Guy Degreeef, who was the son of the former Minister of Defense in Belgium. One of my big problems initially had been, as I told you last night, [that] for the convenience of these rat race trips--particularly the Round Robin one and looking at the prospect of others--I wanted a male secretary that could accompany us. And we put the word out to all three services: Navy, Air Force and Army. We ran through quite a few. And the one that lived up to our expectations and lasted longest was Jack Good, who was a bachelor warrant officer in the Army and by far the most competent of the male secretaries that we had. Of course, we had some real fine gal secretaries--Helen Weaver from the Navy. Then we had Marguerite Nelson, who had

been with me when I was with General Lee and whom I had recommended for a job at Columbia which she had taken in the General's office. And, in fact, Marguerite is still in the office of the chief of staff in SHAPE; she is the longest in seniority in SHAPE to this day. And Lois Tate and a number of others. Then, of course, down the corridor to get away from the main stream of things, Jimmie Gault, Pete Carroll, and Kevin McCann and Bill [William H.] Burnham had a series of offices together with their secretarial help where they were the sort of junior policy committee. And, of course, we had a kitchen there and a dining room adjoining the General's office. And down the corridor on that side we had our file room and our correspondence section which was eventually headed by a young Air Force captain, Keith [L.] Christensen, who for a young officer did very, very well. Then beyond that, of course, we had General [Howard M.] Snyder's office with his secretary and General Jerry [Wilton B.] Persons' office. And he had with him not only Ferne Hudson as secretary but Steve [Watson] Mulkey [Jr.] as a sort of administrative assistant. Of course, Alice Boyce (later at the White House as was Ferne Hudson) was secretary to Pete and Jimmie and Kevin. And I don't recall

General Synder's secretary. She wasn't known to us before that. But that makes up the office of the SACEUR personnel.

WICKMAN: If you had to capsule a few memories of the period when General Eisenhower was being asked to run in '52--because he was still in SHAPE--what do you remember from that period besides a great deal of activity?

CANNON: Well, I thought we had an unusual number of congressional visitors of various political alignments. And, of course, I can recall Henry Cabot Lodge visiting there frequently. But certainly the political pressure built up much more than that which we had experienced in '47 and '48. And by this time, on the personal side--without being any particular party adherent-- I believed it would probably be a good idea if General Eisenhower did become President in the interest of the Nation. The reservations that Louise and I had some four years earlier sort of dropped out of consideration.

WICKMAN: What do you think changed his mind? He was rather adamant for a long time about not doing this. What--

CANNON: Well, I think one thing--and this not particularly

profound--but I think he felt that the fact that one political party had been in office since 1932 was a disservice to the country that--

WICKMAN: Well, let me phrase the question a little differently. What I meant was this: Was there anything in the sequence of events or series of events that preceded his open candidacy for the party nomination? Was it an individual who got him to make up his mind this way, or was it--

CANNON: I think a combination of individuals, people whose judgment he respected and trusted; and I characterize Cabot Lodge as one of those. Certainly there were many, many more--I suspect all of the old Augusta National group that he associated with for so many years and who visited Paris frequently.

(Cliff Roberts, Bill Robinson, et cetera.) Most certainly Lucius [D.] Clay would have been a very important person in whose judgment General Eisenhower would have had implicit trust. All of them. The list of them, John, is quite long. And don't count Mrs. Eisenhower out on final approval.

WICKMAN: Oh, sure. I was wondering, you know, if one person stood out in all that time as somebody who seemingly gave

more weight to this decision of the General's than anybody else.

CANNON: Well--

WICKMAN: It's conceivable that this is not the case.

CANNON: Of course, on the staff, Kevin and Pete had, I think, considerable perception of the national political scene and its implications. And in certain areas--

[Interruption]

CANNON: Of course, no one could omit Jerry Persons as an advisor during these times, a very important one. I could be wrong, but I think between Jerry Persons, Lucius Clay, and Cabot Lodge there was a lot of strong convincing argument applied. And, after all, I think General Eisenhower had his own views. No one talked him into it, I would say. It was a sense of his own conviction.

WICKMAN: Your family was with you all the time in Paris then?

CANNON: We went back. We wound up the Round Robin trip in Washington, of course; and we spent several days there, including

one meeting in which he talked to Congress--talked with Congress. Then General and Mrs. Eisenhower, plus General Snyder, and Bob Schulz sailed on one of the Queens--Queen Elizabeth--to Cherbourg. The rest of us (Carroll, Cannon and Wood) picked up the wives and children. We really had a flight, sleeping on the floors. There was Gracie Gruenther and Alice Snyder. We had a Navy captain unknown to us previously and his wife on the flight: George [Whelan] Anderson [Jr.], who later became CNO [Chief of Naval Operations]. George was evidence of the caliber of people that the services were trying to put into these NATO jobs, and they certainly--with myself as an exception--I think they did a tremendous job. You look at what happened to the officers who served in the secretariat under Bob Wood initially and then [Alfred] Dodd Starbird. There isn't a one of them who hasn't made a resounding success story of himself subsequently. In fact, two of them are currently serving as four-star generals: Andy Goodpaster and Bill [William] Rosson. Others--none of them missed making general officer; including the Air Force and the Navy: Phil Mock, three-star; and Chuck [Charles Carmin] Noble, a new two-star; Ham [Hamilton Austin] Twitchell, two-star;

Herschel Goldberg, a two-star admiral. They had a lot of talent.

WICKMAN: Well, when General Eisenhower came back from Paris in 1952, then you came with him?

CANNON: I came back with him in late May to turn over such things as my responsibilities encompassed, and then I went back about the end of June to General [Matthew Bunker] Ridgway's office and wound up things at that end. Then I went on to Germany to take the command I wanted. We'd initially thought I'd just be there (SHAPE) for a few months to help get things organized. Evidently I'm a lousy organizer--it took me a year and a half!

WICKMAN: Then you took a command in Germany, did you say?

CANNON: Yes, I took an engineer combat battalion command in Germany and, of course, as you know, got ordered back for the inauguration. When I met General Ike in his office on his first day in office, I had a feeling why he had asked to see me; and so I'd done a little preliminary ground work. When I did see him, he said, "Now you're coming back in about a year and a half, and I have something in mind for you." And I said,

"Well, I think you'll be as pleased as I am, sir, to know that the Engineers plan to send me to Command and General Staff College when I come back." And I said, "Additionally, I think I've been riding your coattails long enough. If I'm going to make my way in the Army, I think I'd better get out and do it on my own." I hope and think he respected me all the more for that.

WICKMAN: How did he take that initially?

CANNON: Well, on the Leavenworth, he agreed because he knew it was essential if I was to make a career of the Army that I go to Leavenworth.

WICKMAN: Then the SHAPE business was the last working relationship you had with him?

CANNON: True.

WICKMAN: In the White House you didn't have any?

CANNON: In the White House--except occasionally to answer Bob's questions of who was so and so, which he would phone to me in all parts of the globe. But now after that, it was entirely a personal relationship.

WICKMAN: Of course, I realize you were out of the country part of the time; but from '52 to, say, '67, '68, did you visit Gettysburg or--

CANNON: Never visited Gettysburg during that period. While I was a student at the War College both General Eisenhower and Mrs. Eisenhower on separate occasions came up and visited us.

WICKMAN: I see.

CANNON: In fact his visit led to a comedy of errors that had me in the Commandant's office the Monday following it. He came up Saturday afternoon, and we were used to this from Fort Myer days and days in Europe. Here he was in this big black sedan; and George [E.] Allen and Howard Snyder were with him, and, of course, there was a Secret Service car. Well, somehow they got through the main gate without the guard ever detecting them, and they drove around the golf course and some of the family housing area looking for me. And we were told later by some of our friends who saw this: One of them with a head out on one side of the car and another with a head out on the other side looking for names on the various residences; and

Gen. Craig Cannon, October, 1969

Page 43

the double take some of the students or their wives did when they saw this famous visage peering out. He spent, oh, a couple of hours talking. It was the first time we'd seen him in a year or so, I guess, because I'd been in Korea and Louise had been down in Florida.* But usually when we went through Washington, we stopped in to say "hello." Meanwhile (at Carlisle), a considerable crowd of students and children had formed around our quarters, and when he came out--loud cheering and all this. And he got off the post without the guard making any note of it. And then, of course, the Commandant heard about it. And Bill [William P.] Ennis had known the Eisenhowers in Panama days, but I think Bill Ennis' father had served with the Eisenhowers there. And he just couldn't believe for a while that I didn't know that the President of the United States was coming to see us. And I said, "General, he does it wherever we go." Of course, when Mrs. Eisenhower came up later, she sent her card over to Mrs. Ennis. And, of course, on Ike's visit, Ann was upstairs

*During my Korean tour Mrs. Eisenhower had staged a birthday party for Ann in the White House while Ann was being treated at Walter Reed Army Hospital.

General Craig Cannon is being interviewed in his home in Jacksonville, Florida on April 5, 1975. The interviewer is Dr. Don. W. Wilson of the Eisenhower Library.

DR. WILSON: In our previous interview, General Cannon, I think you did a pretty good job of outlining your career, at least as far as getting to know General Eisenhower, being on General Tex Lee's staff and working during the SHAEF period. What I want to concentrate on in this interview is picking up some of your additional views in the period when General Eisenhower was army chief of staff and your relationship with him then, and then at Columbia University and while at NATO. If you could comment and just explain a little bit further in detail, if possible, your recollection of what the General's work routine was as chief of staff, how he adapted your routine, or were there any great distinctions or changes between the time you worked with him at SHAEF or your knowledge of him at SHAEF, and the work routine as chief of staff.

GEN. CANNON: Of course I haven't read interview number one with John [Wickman] some six years ago, so some of this may be redundant. But until I came back in December of '45 I was only on the periphery of the office operation in SHAEF. My duties were limited to transportation and running the train and trips, etcetera.

[Interruption]

(We're located between the main Navy base over here on the St. John's River and a satellite field where all the carrier aircraft are land-based here in Florida; so anyone who isn't in the military would

find it hard to stand some of the noise levels. But, in any event, of course I came back and Tex Lee was returning to civilian life. And Jim Stack, who had been in the States all through the war and had come to Europe briefly after V-E day and then gone back to the States, moved up to be the senior aide with Ike and I became the junior aide. I have several taped telephone conversations which our office felt that we needed to protect ourselves because at the time there was quite a furor for discharge of men from the service and the chief of staff was being tugged on a daily basis, from all levels, in congress and out of congress, private citizens, acquaintances and so forth, each asking that their son or relative get chief-of-staff attention so that he could be discharged and returned to the arms of his family. Of course, there was also, as I recall it, considerable cable traffic at that time reporting the intransigence of the Russians and things. In fact, that's one of the things that when Ike suggested I make a career of the army, having seen the cable traffic, it appeared to me that would be kind of foolish to retire and be possibly called back four or five years later for another national emergency. Besides, as I've said, the sheer pleasure of working for a man who was so much respected and admired and after coming to know Mrs. Eisenhower, just added up to a be kind of a job you'd look a long time for without many times too much success in the work environment.

WILSON: Excuse me a minute. On that same question, on these messages coming across, did the General ever comment specifically to your recollection about Russian problems or is that strictly your impression in looking at things? Did he anticipate a serious problem?

CANNON: I would say he was very much aware of it. I couldn't faithfully record any direct comment, but he couldn't help but be aware of it. I think I can recall my knowing that he was--

WILSON: He made this impression--

CANNON: Yes. The impression was there although I can't be specific.

But the routine was pretty much, everyone got to the office before 8 o'clock. He had to spend quite a bit of time that first year on the Hill. My recollection is that there was much discussion then of universal military training, and General Ike saw it as, as I recall, something which would be very useful in providing the military support that the army needed at that time. Of course, life in Washington was frequently interrupted by trips both within the States and outside the continental limits. During that brief two-year period from Christmas of '45 to February of '48, he made one trip to Europe, one trip to the Far East, one trip to Canada, one trip to South America, and innumerable trips to military installations,

and also a great many speaking engagements around the United States-- New York and--

WILSON: Did you accompany him on any of these Far Eastern, foreign--

CANNON: It was like the days in SHAPE because I was familiar with the way he operated on trips, I frequently was the aide accompanying although Stack as senior aide would assert his interest in going to certain places that he knew about. If there were a trip to Ft. Lewis, Washington, Stack having served there many years before, he'd go, or Ft. Benning. And then, of course, he took the European trip because he wanted to see Europe. I took the Pacific trip because that was a rat-race.

WILSON: Did you go to Indo-China? Was this a stop?

CANNON: No, we went to mainland China and visited General [George C.] Marshall and Mrs. Marshall who was then in Nanking. We were there for one day; we flew in in the morning, as I recall it, from Shanghai and back out of Nanking that afternoon. While there, I recall Madame Chiang Kai-shek was visiting Mrs. Marshall. We met her at that time. I can't recall, but it seems to me that the reason (when we were talking about these photographs taken on the Williamsburg, the day before we started on the trip) President Truman had wanted to discuss with General Eisenhower some of the people he would be

seeing, presumably most importantly General Marshall and possibly others in the Phillipines or Japan. But that discussion was brief. In any event, Marshall Carter, Pat Carter, was General Marshall's aide at the time and I guess, although I sat in on the things of later on in SHAPE and so forth, I wasn't too much in policy per se. I was a fairly young captain or major and even General Ike didn't consult captains and majors on policy.

WILSON: On that same trip, was that while General Aurand was in the Pacific. Did you stop in Hawaii?

CANNON: No, no. Pete Aurand at this point in time was the director of research and development in the army staff, in fact he lived two doors away from me, so I can recall that. He went to Hawaii later. The senior army general in Hawaii at that time was General Moore, an artilleryman, who'd been captured on Corregidor and had been held a prisoner for the entire length of the war, three and a half years, of the Japanese. Subsequently, I seem to recall that upon retirement he committed suicide in California. He was a very fine, fine man, but evidently the prison took its toll.

WILSON: This was the trip that he met with [Douglas] MacArthur as well?

CANNON: Yes. MacArthur made the unusual gesture. We landed at Atsugi, we didn't land at Tokyo. In fact I'm not certain that Tokyo had an airport by then. But General MacArthur came down from Tokyo to Atsugi to meet us upon our arrival. I was told at the time it was the first such occasion that he had been that considerate.

WILSON: Do you remember any impressions of the reunion?

CANNON: Very friendly.

WILSON: Very friendly.

CANNON: And this despite the fact that as custodian of Ike's diaries I knew that their parting hadn't been the most amicable.

WILSON: That's what I was leading to there.

CANNON: Well, no. We had dinner; I think General [Howard McCrum] Snyder was with us; there was Pinky Craig, who later was a major general in the air force; and, oh, Bill Bergen who was the assistant, I guess he was the adjutant general, and a couple of others. We were guests of General MacArthur for dinner one of the nights we were there. First time I'd ever met him, and I was tremendously impressed with his savoir-faire and his knowledge and intelligence and so forth, and everything seemed to be most amicable between he and Ike. Of course, he turned us over to a senior general in Japan, I

seemed to recall was Moon [Charles L.] Mullins who commanded the 25th Infantry Division stationed there but--oh, there was a three-star that pinch-hit for MacArthur in escorting us around. I'll possibly think of his name.

WILSON: Did you accompany the General on the 1946 trip to Brazil?

CANNON: No, I made the plans for it and did everything else. My recollection is it involved Mexico and Brazil and then it appeared that was going to be the only chance that Louise and I'd have an opportunity to get leave, so I dropped out and Hough and [Robert] Schulz made the trip.

WILSON: I'd like to switch a little bit and ask you for your impressions as far as the partisan political atmosphere in Washington at the time. How did the General respond or adjust to this or was there any call for this when he came back?

CANNON: Well, first of all, increasingly we had correspondence which urged political office upon the General. And of course Pete Carroll and Kevin McCann were in the correspondence section which we inherited from General Marshall, and they were instrumental in generating the policy and broad reply in conformity with General Ike's directives to them. As needed, they would have an appointment with the General to pick his brains on either a difficult problem or to get guidance on how we were going to handle this, and I know the answers were always couched in the most careful tones which

you've probably already obtained from the files of that time. Are the files pretty comprehensive of correspondence during that period?

WILSON: Pretty much so, yes, his [19]16-[19]52 file as they're called.

CANNON: Frequently either Stack or I or both of us would be used to answer a query that was directed to the General, and that way we could be convoluted in our responses and it would not reflect adversely on General Ike. And as I say, some of these things were so sensitive that we would record the conversation just to make certain that there wouldn't be any different story and, if it came out, why we'd have the exact--. These were the days before you had to give them a warning or a "beep", subsequently we had to discontinue it.

WILSON: Did you use stenographers or did you actually tape record it?

CANNON: I have some of the transcripts. In fact I used one of them on a conversation with some lady in my human relations thesis at Harvard Business School. It was very instructive.

WILSON: Do you recall the General ever discussing any individuals there, such as [Harry S.] Truman or [Thomas E.] Dewey or [Henry A.] Wallace or any response to the 1946 congressional elections? Did he try to keep this pretty much out of the office of the chief of staff, or was it part of it?

CANNON: Yes. Of course it was during this period that he got to know Bill Robinson and Cliff Roberts and the Augusta Golf Club men, all of whom were businessmen, but usually most of them were pretty much interested in politics. He still kept his ties back in Kansas, Roy Roberts and people like that. So he was aware of what was going on, but it's my impression that he really wanted to keep the chief of staff out of partisan politics.

WILSON: I'd like to explore a little more the question of--

CANNON: Oh, and in that connection, this jumps to when I was at Columbia to assist in the transition, I can recall we were at 60 Morningside and we were watching the Democratic national convention and his good friend, George Allen, I can recall seeing him on the tube and seems to me George had been making some kind of a pitch for Ike as a Democrat. That was the time when [Walter] Winchell instigated, I think, a torchlight parade to 60 Morningside Drive to try to talk Ike into becoming a candidate for one party or the other. I know Louise and I felt very strongly that the General should not be a candidate, and I particularly felt he shouldn't be one because the type of criticism that he would get in a political role would be harmful to him. He had a temper, and criticism of his motivations and so forth wasn't something that he'd take lightly. I didn't want to see him having a

heart attack trying to blow his stack. He went out on the balcony and waved at the crowd. But there were some who, I recall, would have thought it'd been a good idea for Ike to be a candidate, but not the Cannons.

WILSON: When you say "some thought", you were talking about staff, close staff at the time?

CANNON: Yes. Some of the people that you've seen in those pictures of bridge games and so forth.

WILSON: On the same subject, do you remember the General ever discussing Truman's offer of the presidency for 1948?

CANNON: The one in Berlin? Don, I've heard it so often that it's hard for me to pin down what's fact and what's--

WILSON: Yes, I don't know either.

CANNON: But in fact it even seems to me, this day that Ike retired, and Truman came over from the White House to the Pentagon in the morning for a ceremony and he came back for a farewell dinner that night, I could swear that, unless my memory fails me, it was referred to or mentioned then. That's my impression.

WILSON: That's all we want right now, just your personal impression.

CANNON: Yes, I'd hate to swear to it on a Bible, but--

WILSON: I don't know as that, you know, we're trying to get enough impressions to get some sort--

CANNON: Yes, but it seems to me that I came away with the impression that Mr. Truman had reiterated the famous Berlin remark at that time.

WILSON: Let's stay on the political part of this in a sense that do you recall Eisenhower's attitude toward testifying before congress? What was his method of preparing for testimony before congress?

CANNON: Staff briefings. By the DCS/PER [Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel] and of course there's one picture--I didn't see it in there, I thought I had it in--oh, when he was in a congressional office testifying on universal military training, and I think it was Ham Andrews' office, who was chairman of the House Armed Services. And there was a pull-cord on a venetian blind right behind him in the picture and it looked almost like several women had backed him into this corner and were interrogating him and this looked like a noose that was ready there for him to hang by. So there's my impression of the atmosphere of some of those congressional hearings. The aides per se, the personal aides, did not accompany him to--

WILSON: Oh, they didn't?

CANNON: No. We kept the office running. As I say, as a young major, I wasn't exactly in a policy--

WILSON: I just wanted to see if you had any impressions of that. Do you recall him developing any close personal relationships in congress at the time, maybe as an outgrowth of testimony?

CANNON: I think the chairman of the armed services committee would be considered as a friendly toward him, not opposed to him. Of course the big guessing game there was whether he was a Democrat or a Republican. No one would say even though some of us might have suspected, but that was the best kept secret in the Eisenhower--.

WILSON: That was reflected in his relationship with congressmen, too, I imagine.

CANNON: Yes. And here again I think he did that because he didn't want to in any way reduce his usefulness to the military services.

WILSON: I want to explore a minute the relationships within the office, you know, Robert Schulz, McCann, Pete Carroll, Jerry [Wilton B.] Persons. Were there any difficulties in continuing close relationships with World War II colleagues such as [Omar] Bradley or others? Were there any problems that arose while chief of staff? He was very close to these men.

CANNON: I'll recall one thing. The company commander always has the opinion that the battalion commander really doesn't know what the hell the score is; the battalion commander thinks that about the group, and the group about brigade, and brigade about division, and division about corps, army, so forth. I know that Bradley had one aide, Chet Hanson, who did a lot of the writing on A Soldier's Story, and I was friendly with Chet. In fact it was through Chet that I met Bill [William H.] Burnham and through me that Bill Burnham met the Eisenhowers. I think Chet was always jealous of the Eisenhower acceptance and achievements and felt that his boss should have received equal fame and fortune, if you will. And this isn't surprising. I think there's an element of jealousy that can be exploited in many situations like that. On a person-to-person basis I never saw it. One time, however, I can recall this. Coming back from playing golf at Blind Brook with Cliff Roberts and Bill Robinson, the boss and I were riding back to Columbia, and General Bradley had sent me an autographed copy of A Soldier's Story and I asked the boss if he'd seen it yet. And, as I recall it, He hadn't yet seen it. I said, "Well, I was pretty well accustomed to Chet Hanson's purple prose but when I read this statement in the opening part of A Soldier's Story, something about 'where the cerulean waters of the Mediterranean quietly lapped the shore,' I said, "That doesn't sound like Bradley to me; it sounds like Chet Hanson." And he laughed and agreed.

During that time, speaking of World War II comrades, Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke had written saying he was going to take a trip to the United States and he hoped to see Ike. Despite all the difficulties and differences of opinion they had, Ike went out of his way to make that trip pleasant and, typically, for anyone visiting there he would insist that they visit Mt. Vernon. That was the number one stop on orienting a foreign visitor. Of course, we had Montgomery visit there coming down from Canada on a tour of the States and he stayed at Quarters One. Unfortunately that happened to coincide with the death of Ike's mother, and they'd had a big reception planned for Monty with all the local brass and so forth.

[Interruption]

CANNON: It happened to coincide with the death of the General's mother so he did not come down. The reception was the night before they were leaving and Monty was going to be there for, I think it was about a four or five day visit, and so I stood at the head of the line and introduced people to Mrs. Eisenhower and she passed them on to Monty because a number of them were people that came from World War II days and she may not have recognized them at first. People like, well, John C.H. Lee she would have, but--. Then Louise and I had no children at that time so that must have been '46. We stayed on in Quarters One and were host and hostess to Monty for this rest of his stay. And of course the senior British officer, by then in

Washington, was Jumbo [General Sir Henry Maitland] Wilson, and as you saw he was in the party that went with Mr. Churchill down to Williamsburg and Richmond. So Ike enjoyed seeing, not necessarily Montgomery or Alan Brooke, but some of the friends he had made-- [Major General K.W.D.] Strong and oh, who was, oh, Morgan [Lieutenant General Frederick Edgworth] Freddie Morgan. I know we saw him several times in London during the round-robin trip before SHAPE and, I think, also on visits back to London like the time of the dedication at St. Pauls. And Strong, and of course always Jimmie Gault, whenever we were near him or he was in the States. Now does that answer--I kind of rambled there.

WILSON: Yes. That's fine. I think we picked up some good pointers on the relationship there. Give us your impressions of the relationships within the office and maybe division of responsibilities.

CANNON: Well in a way it was perhaps unfortunate. Many of the then colonels on the army staff had served either at Ft. Lewis or somewhere else, and there was a considerable resentment, if you will, of Stack as a former enlisted man. Stack was an operator; there's no question about it. And the best example I can cite of my relationship with Jim Stack is one time when Johnny [John E.] Hull had been sent to Fitzsimmons [Army Hospital] for treatment and we were bringing in Schulz, who previously had been in the military district of

Washington as the transportation officer and Stack had known him through the war. He did all the arrangements for Ike's transportation upon, well, coming back in June of 1945 and also in, what was it, October of 1945 when he came back for good. But at the time Stack said, "I'm not certain whether I'll keep you as the office aide or have you run Quarters One."

I said, "I'll make it very simple for you, Jim. You tell me I run Quarters One and I walk through that door and I say, 'Boss, it's been nice working for you all these years, but it's time for me to leave.'"

This was the attitude that gave me a few problems in relationships with other staff and particularly John Bowen, see, who was the secretary of the general staff. John had taken Frank McCarthy's place; McCarthy of director fame in Hollywood and a wonderful guy. And John was a straight up and down doughboy, and he had a number of them working for him. Pete Carroll was an assistant, see, to John Bowen. Kevin McCann was one of Pete's subordinates. Bill [William A.] Knowlton who is now chief of staff over in CINCEUR [Commander in Chief, Europe]; he is chief of staff there and was commandant at West Point. Bill was one of the bright young majors who was generating answers to all these thousands of letters that either General Marshall or General Eisenhower received. So there was considerable antipathy between Stack and Bowen and Bowen's people.

There was a little antipathy, well, when Mike [John H.] Michaelis-- Stack was retired and he was given a terminal leave promotion to full Colonel and recalled to active duty, this through Howard Snyder and so forth. Well, these people in the class of '32 had been busted from full colonel back to lieutenant colonel and for Stack to pull this shenanigan and still remain on active duty, that just was the crowning blow. Eventually I think, they realized that just because I worked alongside of him it didn't mean I had the same attitude and aspirations. But when Mike came on, Stack told Shulz that he would have to watch out, that Michaelis and I would team up to cut his throat. He wanted to be, even by screwing things up, remembered as the guy who ran Eisenhower's office the most effectively, and the only person that had Jim Stack's number was his wife, Elsa, an ex-army nurse and she could take care of him. There were a number of Ike's classmates in the area and, of course, all the people that Mamie had sort of commiserated with during the war at the Wardman Park Hotel where many of them were still there and so that formed a basis of mah-jongg for the women and bridge and games for the men and women at night. I found the family relationship, Louise and I were treated almost like son and daughter, and it was a very satisfying thing for both of us. And it was a happy two years. There was a lot of work. Well there were jealousies and maybe I was--I can't recall being jealous of Stack, but he was evidently jealous of me for some reason because he told

me that Michaelis and Schulz'd team up to cut my throat and I presume he told Michaelis that Schulz and I, having been with Ike longer, would. What whizzed Mike off was that he wanted the job very much, but he didn't realize that Ike was going to be retiring to go to Columbia. That wasn't public knowledge. I think it was about June 10th--that picture of Ike and I seeing Mamie off on the train--was when it was announced and Mike thought he was going to be an aide for a lot longer than seven months. So he was kind of resentful of that. Whose fault that was, I don't know.

WILSON: Did you see much of Milton during this period? Was he a frequent visitor or--

CANNON: Yes, he was a frequent visitor and of course we visited Manhattan and Kansas State. In the, what the 27 months that Ike was chief of staff, I would say that we made four or five trips where we saw Milton. And of course the other brothers, too, would--Earl would always want to go to the Army-Navy game so we'd set him up for that. There was frequent correspondence. Oft times the aides corresponded with the brothers in lieu of General Ike, and it appeared to be a satisfactory thing. I showed a confidential memo to John [Wickman] that Milton had written to me one time and I think he reproduced it. But it had to do with a newspaperman and our being careful to protect the boss. He happened to be a Kansas boy, too; he's now dead though.

General [Thomas] Handy was General Ike's deputy, and there was a two-star there--later four-star--Hodes, Hank Hodes. They ran the staff under Ike and they were both fine, fine gentlemen. We had a reception office across the hall from the--let's see our room number was 3E924 as I recall it. Of course that first Secretary of Defense moved everybody out of there because he always wanted to have an office with a river entrance--Louie Johnson from West Virginia. And somewhere in my files I've got a number of things, addressed to me, that Mrs. Thomas, the receptionist--Cora Thomas I think her name was, she'd worked for General Marshall. She had a reception room across the hall from our office which was outside the boss's office, and of course his office adjoined the Secretary of War and either the secretary or he, if need be, could open a door communicating between the two offices and talk over something.

WILSON: Well, let's leave the chief of staff period and talk now about the Columbia University time which you were there rather briefly, explore some of that.

[Interruption]

WILSON: By way of starting this off, could you possibly give us your impressions of when the President became interested in the post or in education in general, and why particularly Columbia? Is there anything that stands out in your memory as being a connection there.

CANNON: Well, my recollection is that he was offered a number of remunerative jobs in industry or what have you, and he felt it would be inappropriate for him to be in such a position. And possibly maybe he felt that he'd only be a figurehead in a position other than for whatever administrative abilities he had. Education was something he perceived as being important and in which he could make a lasting contribution and an appropriate one as he thought. I don't think he viewed his education and experience as limiting or being exclusive of an educational role. Of course, we moved in behind the many years of Nicholas "Miraculous" Butler, and as Bill Burnham once told me--I for a while stayed at Burnham's apartment while I was working at Columbia--and he said when Ike went out of Low Library and spoke to a freshman, it was probably the first time a freshman had been spoken to by the President of Columbia University in more than twenty-five years. Of course, my recollection is that one of his many contacts in the Columbia job was with Thomas Watson, Sr. I can recall I did not have the best impression of Mr. Watson and his attitudes in that Mrs. Eisenhower and the General and I'd gone up to New York for some kind of a ceremony at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This was probably in '46 or so, before any conversation about Columbia. And Mr. Watson and Mrs. Watson were so aggressive in their attention to General Eisenhower that they ran off with him and left Mrs. Eisenhower stranded. Well, I didn't particularly appreciate this. And I have no knowledge, no recollection, but somehow that--Watson was on the--

WILSON: Trustees.

CANNON: --Trustees, along with a lot of other people in New York that Ike would meet, either at--oh, there were a couple of speaking clubs that he addressed from time to time and the name escapes me now, down in Wall Street, one I think is still functioning. But I can't recall when I first knew that he was going to Columbia. Of course, increasingly our mail was devoted to this political situation and my role was to handle the things until we could get Kevin McCann on board at Columbia. The same way the following summer, between my two years at Harvard Business School, I came down and relieved Kevin while he took a leave and I handled the correspondence. All of it, and I think in a file somewhere, I know there is, there's a note from General Ike while I was at Columbia. We were inundated with letters and just to get the mail out was an impossibility, and so I tried to devise three form letters--A, B, and C, depending on what sort of circumstances were the input. And I took them to him for approval and he makes some kind of comment in returning it to me. But that was my role at Columbia and Schulz came in afterwards and he did all the personal stuff about the operation of 60 Morningside and cars and any relationship with First Army, with the headquarters there to support Ike as a five-star general. I figured his income tax and stuff like that. In fact one of the income taxes--I don't know whether--it's not at this period--it was when he was chief of staff--I had to fly down to Richmond for some reason, but I actually

forged his and Mamie's signature on their return because I couldn't get ahold of them and it had to be in by a certain deadline, and it was a beautiful job of forgery. And of course that income tax that year involved Crusade in Europe payments and so it was a little more complicated than before. But that's about the extent of it.

Of course while I was at Harvard he invited me down for a—they were starting up the Business School at Columbia and Jim [James B.] Conant, the president of Harvard and Donald K. David who was the dean of the business school came down to kick off the start. You know I had to run back the next day for a final examination. And then the Eisenhowers in May, when Chip's [Cannon], day after his first birthday, they had us come down--this is May 1950--for a christening for Chip, because when Ann was christened Ike said to me at the party they held at Quarters One afterwards, "I always thought you'd have me as a godfather, Craig." We used Gen. Eberly as godfather and Mamie as godmother. And I said, "Well, General, I'm saving you for a son. You're going to be more important to a boy than to a girl." So that's how come Chip was christened, and the chaplain performing the service was Jim Pike, the famous Episcopal minister of some contention. And he laid the law down to Dwight D., who'd gotten out of a sick bed to come down to perform in this ceremony, he laid down what his responsibilities were--not pulling any punches, worst I'd ever heard in a christening. But, as I started to say, to our considerable surprise--

we came down from Boston--they had four of our very good friends from Boston on hand for it--the Carrolls, the McCanns, the Schulzs were there and my parents, Louise's parents, brother and sister and grandfather--all as a surprise for this ceremony on a Sunday at Columbia.

WILSON: Was Phil Young involved in the...

CANNON: Yes. He was the first dean of the business school there. It was his, sort of installment, as I recall it.

WILSON: What do you see as his biggest contribution there in terms of--did he really get it started off right or was his connection with Eisenhower the result of his appointment?

CANNON: I don't have a feel for it, Don. I haven't followed it up that much, or even talked with anyone about it.

WILSON: What were the General's initial activities at Columbia? Do you recall what the initial program was, initial goals maybe?

CANNON: There was a chap named Jacobs there who was the number two man.

WILSON: Albert Jacobs? Provost?

CANNON: Yes, Provost, but ahead of who was it? Kirk?

WILSON: Grayson Kirk.

CANNON: Grayson Kirk. Grayson Kirk came during one of my later periods there, I guess. The General had quite a few discussions with Jacobs. And then there was, oh, a wonderful old chap, head of the English department, Lyon I think was his name. He was a charming man. I know Ike would go somewhere for lunch and we'd have lunch with Professor Lyon at the faculty club. He was not one of the ones who seemed to resent the intrusion of a military man into the--and I think he was a friend of John's, too; I think John had studied under him. But I felt that there was a stand-offishness on the part of what faculty and staff I could see, including, as I say, the secretary-- I think her name was Mrs. [Helen] King--except for the other secretary, Marilyn McKinnon, who tried to assist us. And I think I told you this morning that's when we got Marguerite Nelson in as a secretary to handle the military aspects, and also I guess took care of Schulz's correspondence because this Mrs.--

WILSON: You spoke of the military aspects. Was this considerable?

CANNON: No, but under the Five Star Act of course he retained active duty and full pay and available for consultation.

WILSON: And was he used?

CANNON: Yes, he was, and increasingly so in the last year. I

believe, at Columbia. Of course I wasn't there as much then but I recall, and I think Mr. [James] Forrestal was having his problems then and used to consult Ike frequently. In fact, I think, once Ike went to Key West to visit Mr. Truman on matters associated with the military scene.

WILSON: The story's been told that DDE first really became interested in painting while he was at Columbia. This morning as we were going through the photographs, you pointed out that Tom Stephens was at Pratt General Hospital as a visitor--

CANNON: It isn't true--he was interested before that. I can recall at Fort Myer at Quarters One up on the sun porch. In fact one of the first paintings he painted was one of Mamie. There were others. Of course, Howard Snyder was, if nothing else, a self-appointed expert in painting, and he would talk to the boss about it. Tommy Stephens visited the Snyders in Washington and would come over with them to visit with the Eisenhowers at Fort Myer. I don't recall his doing any painting until about February, '48 when he retired. There may have been a little of it before that. During the Churchill visit, one of the non-political things talked about was Mr. Churchill's paintings; so there was this interest. He had a Leica camera which had been given him at the end of the war with about eight different lenses and all sorts of filters and so forth. And when

he was chief of staff he gave it to me and he said, "I'd like to get to run this." So I briefed him on how and he said, "Too damn much trouble, Craig. If I want a picture, I'll tell you to take it." So I used his Leica all through the time he was chief of staff and then when I went back to SHAPE, he gave it back to me again. And I'd take pictures which I thought were of interest to him, some of which he used for paintings later on in life. One of the church in Bavaria is one that I took for him. I always tried to talk him into a self portrait but--I wrote to him about that. But, no, I'd date it from say late '47 to and positively I can recall that portrait of Mamie on the sun porch at Fort Myer, and subsequently hung on the top floor of 60 Morningside, because, let's see, where were we? I guess we were in Europe. We have four original Eisenhowers here; one of which is a painting of the two children, which he painted in Europe. He did a very beautiful Texas bluebonnet scene which should be somewhere now, but it was one of Mrs. Eisenhower's favorites. I presume she still has it. So one time in SHAPE he asked Louise what she'd like as a birthday present or something. And she told him that she'd like a duplicate of the painting of the Rocky Mountain scene that hung at Number 60 Morningside and he said, "I don't remember it." What she really wanted, she'd liked to have had a duplicate of the Texas bluebonnet because it was the best thing he'd done, but she .

knew better than to duplicate something that Mrs. Eisenhower treasured. So we described it as a mountain in the background and a lake and a tree stump in the foreground. The only thing the painting has is a tree stump in the foreground--it doesn't look anything like the one--

WILSON: That's interesting because I think tradition has it now that, you know, it was at Columbia--

CANNON: Well he used to work--

WILSON: But Tom Stephens did go to Columbia, I guess, to give him some art instructions.

CANNON: Yes. In fact I have a photograph somewhere, I guess it's the day of Chip's christening, of Ike painting in that solarium on the top floor at 60 Morningside. I think Butler had an aquarium up there. Well that turned into the family room for the Eisenhowers then. And that's where we always had bridge games and where Ike kept his painting stuff. I can find it somewhere; It's a picture of Louise sitting there talking with him, and he's got a smock on and painting.

WILSON: Do you recall how the General's relationship with Tom Dewey developed? Was there any indication of that at Columbia?

CANNON: Well of course you've got people like Bill Robinson and Cliff Roberts and Lucius Clay who were in the New York scene quite a bit. And I'm pretty certain all of them are pretty hard-rock Republicans. And, as I say, the other men from that Augusta National Golf Club; Slaters Slater and oh, that guy that--washing machine--Maytag, and the people he played golf with at Blind Brook. As I say, I didn't get too much into the political scene except to express my opinion that I didn't want him in it in '48. Kevin would be more knowledgeable about that and how it developed while in New York. Only politician I can recall--oh, Strom Thurmond came to see him while I was there in '48. The only reason I recall it is because he had a good looking blond wife, I think.

WILSON: On this same question then, do you think anyone helped DDE draft the [Leonard] Finder letter--

CANNON: Oh, yes.

WILSON: For instance, did he discuss it with the staff--

CANNON: Pete and Kevin were--

WILSON: --worked on that.

CANNON: --worked on that, and that was worked over time after time after time. That was in existence a long while before it finally got dispatched.

WILSON: Of course that is a very important segment in this whole question, particularly at Columbia. Do you--

CANNON: Of course that was written though from the office of chief of staff.

WILSON: Right.

CANNON: Written in February, 1948, I think.

WILSON: Right. Before he went to Columbia and of course it still continues--

CANNON: Oh, yes, that was the first--

WILSON: --big question throughout the '48 period.

CANNON: No, he put all the Eisenhower polish on that that he could.

WILSON: How did Kevin come to become president of Defiance College? Remember any--

CANNON: Umm. What--

WILSON: Hadn't he gone to Harvard?

CANNON: Yes. I think both Robert Taft, Sr. and who was the subsequent Republican governor of Ohio [John Bricker?]--both of them-- I'd recognize the name, but I didn't know the man myself. But they were both on the trustees of Defiance College--fairly well known name but I've drawn too many blanks today.

I don't know how Kevin came to take that job. I presume someone might have asked Ike if he knew of anyone suitable for a small college at the confluence of the Auglaize and Maumee as Kevin used to say. So I can't help much there. I know, hell--the way Kevin used to run off to assist Ike, Ruth ran the college as much as Kevin did. [Laughter].

WILSON: Did Kevin or anyone else on the staff there express second thoughts about the wisdom of General Eisenhower going to Columbia? Was there any question as to whether this was a mistake?

CANNON: Well I don't know whether I'm giving my own impression or--

WILSON: That's all right, I want your's, too.

CANNON: --or a digest of some of the bull sessions Kevin and Pete and I might have had through the years. But it seemed to me that Columbia was a good transition point for a five-star general out of the military and possibly on the road to political life. General Eisenhower wasn't naive. I certainly think he learned one hell of

a lot from having worked so closely with MacArthur, and he couldn't help but improve on the mistakes that MacArthur made in his own blundering away about politics. I think that was a fine school for him and I think Columbia was a fine school to make the transition. Certainly people had been talking with him about it for a number of years, so he couldn't ignore it. It was there and he'd have to treat it in some fashion or the other. And I think he was firmly of the belief that after so many years of the Democratic party that we needed a housecleaning.

Jerry Persons cabled me in Germany at the time of the first inaugural and said, "You and Louise and the children are to come home for the inaugural." And I at my own expense sent a cable back to him saying, "My impression was the General was elected partly on the basis that there'd be no favoritism to old friends and I conceived this as being a rather dubious case of having an ex-aide, particularly when John's in Korea."

Well of course then about three weeks later I got a call from Jazzbo Murphy who had worked in DCS/PER when Ike was chief of staff and he was G-1 of the command in Europe and he said, "Craig, you're on orders as a courier back to Washington."

I said, "Look Jazzbo, I got that all squared off with Jerry Persons and Pete Carroll and they agreed that I shouldn't come back."

He says, "I know about that. This time it's from the old man himself." [Laughter].

So I went back and very much appreciated it.

But I recall Mr. Dewey's name being mentioned, but I can't tie anything to it. As I say, I suspected Kevin would know more and certainly Bill Robinson and Cliff Roberts and the rest of that gang that had New York relationships then and Lucius Clay, above all.

WILSON: I think he was a very important figure.

CANNON: Yes.

WILSON: Well let's get a summary on Columbia. Do you think the General was disappointed, surprised, or disturbed perhaps at what he found once he got into the position itself? And did you detect a reaction or have a personal impression of his reaction?

CANNON: There were a lot of petty things which didn't sit well with him, all the way from trustees, I guess, to the operation at the 60 Morningside. That's an impression from twenty-seven years ago.

WILSON: I was just interested in your reaction to what you thought the feelings were there.

CANNON: Of course being an engineer, I recall that while I was there he had several appointments with the engineering dean, and with the academic dean, whose name I can't--I can see this engineering dean's name, but I can't quite bring it up from that long ago. Okay let's skip it.

[Interruption]

WILSON: I think we'll move now to the SHAPE period and I was curious this morning--you mentioned something about the fact that you were approached in September about a possible appointment at SHAPE and yet it was not announced until December and a lot of the history books tend to show this as a sudden announcement; yet you indicate negotiations had been going on quite a while between Truman and Eisenhower possibly as to a SHAPE assignment.

CANNON: I think it was September that Schulz called me to say that the boss wanted to know if he took another military job, if I'd come back as an aide. Of course Korea had just happened and my orders had been changed and I was in the chief of engineers office and just getting settled in a new job and I said, "Well, if the boss wants me, whatever he says is all right with me." And then in early December that year, Louise and I spent a weekend at 60 Morningside with Dwight D. and Mamie. There wasn't any particular occasion; we were just there and it seems to me that the potential

was again referred to at that time. I don't have any other explanation for it. I can't document it.

WILSON: That's all right. How did the General, himself, feel? What was your impression about his feeling toward undertaking a new assignment? Was he enthused about it? Did he seem a little reluctant to go back into the service?

CANNON: I don't think so. Of course we had this office in the Pentagon through December. It was there, I recall, that somebody, General Ed Clark, Ed Clark brought Robert Taft one evening before we were going to leave for Europe. Of course he was quite a critic of the international scene and the American part in it. And I recall how, I think we were enroute to the "round-robin trip" of the NATO capitals when he, contrary to what I believe had been the understanding, let loose a blast about this international headquarters. So I can recall the General being distressed at that bit of business, but generally it was kind of a fun time. As you and I talked earlier, we had this complete freedom to name whoever we wanted. And Al Gruenther, we'd never worked under him before,

He'd always been sort of a parallel to us, but as chief of staff he got Bob Wood and then we started phoning people--Andy [Andrew J.] Goodpaster and [Alfred] Dodd Starbird, Tony Brown. I went to see Tony Beddell and I called Carl Shytall who'd been the engineer not only at AFHQ but also at SHAEF. I called Bucky Harris who had been in the mess at Frankfurt. Unfortunately that choice of words is appropriate because he got in a mess by trusting some of his subordinates in SHAPE and he got relieved of his mess duties by Al Gruenther. But all sorts of old timers. In fact this chap Hylbreath, who had been one of our co-pilots came down to see me. He had a fine job with McLane Brothers at the Bulletin, flying, their pilot. And he said, "I want to come back with the old man. If he's going back, I want a piece of the action."

I said, "Kirk, don't be a numbskull. The General is going to be there to get this international effort started and then he's going to leave and you'll have thrown up a job with--and you won't be able to get it back. And I'm not going to let you do it." So subsequently he was kind of glad I gave him my good recommendation.

WILSON: When recruiting the SHAPE staff, what qualities did the General look for? Did he pretty much leave the discretion up to say you and--

CANNON: Well, Gruenther--

WILSON: --Gruenther.

CANNON: Well, Gruenther. Of course there was a tremendous esprit because there wasn't going to be any time to experiment around and find out if a guy could do a job. We asked for proven people, and all three services nominated top-flight people for those that we didn't ask for by name. As I think I mentioned this morning, there in the secretariat, Phil Mock, later a lieutenant general; Andy Goodpaster; Dodd Starbird; Herschel Goldberg, a navy who became rear admiral; Hamm [Hamilton A.] Twitchell--all of these as young colonels or lieutenant colonels--Bob Wordman, air force. I forgot how high he went, but at least two or three stars.

WILSON: Was Norstad in this group?

CANNON: Well, no. Laurie of course, had been chief of OPD in the Pentagon when Ike was chief of staff and then when the air force split off under the '47 agreement, Al Wedemeyer took over Laurie's job in the army staff and Laurie went with Tooe [Carl] Spaatz and Hoyt Vandenburg and so forth to the air staff. Laurie was down at Fountainbleu in the international headquarters there and also headed the air force element of the combined headquarters at CINCEUR--USAFE, I think they called it. George Anderson, who later became chief of naval operations, was a four stripe navy captain. He was one of Forrest Sherman's bright young men, and Ike talked with Sherman who-- was he chief of naval operations at the time? I think so. The people came up

with wonderful talent, and, of course, for those of us who had known someone in the earlier headquarters and knew what kind of a job they could do, we went after them. As I say Quinnie Brown as headquarters commandant, and, of course, Jones was the adjutant general. And one of his young lieutenant colonels was Vern Bowers who's now the adjutant general of the army.

WILSON: You were looking for proven--

CANNON: Yes, and the British, too, of course. At that time I thought Monty had mellowed when I first saw him back at SHAPE, but just proves that all of my impressions aren't always accurate. Of course Gruenther was a meticulous, demanding chief of staff who wanted to know every--he almost wanted to know when the boss went to the toilet. And he had a direct line to a phone between Schulz's and my desk and that thing was forever ringing or we were getting various grunion-grams from him asking "Who's in with the General, what are they talking about?" Etcetera, etcetera. It was a little hard to work for him after being--hell Schulz and I knew our business with the old man. We didn't need anyone telling us how to run the aide business for Eisenhower. But we lived through it. Al was difficult sometimes, but understandable. I recall he went with us on what we called the "round-robin trip", and the boss always liked to be the last one on the plane, the doors closed, and we take off.

And let's see, we hit Paris, London, Brussels, The Hague and then Copenhagen. Through the first five I was having a hell of a job getting little Al to get on the damned plane before the boss. And I think the boss saw it somewhere along the line, because at Copenhagen Al didn't make it and the boss got on the plane before him. You know he's got a gimp leg and as he stumped up the steps and into the aft cabin the boss looked at him and said, "Gruenther, there's one thing you better learn. When I board this plane, the doors close and we're going to take off. If you want to go, you be on board ahead of me." I didn't have another problem with Al from that trip on.

That cites the sort of thing and as we discussed, Helen Weaver was a fine secretary who went for many years through the White House with Ann Whitman and the boss. She subsequently married and I think she's somewhere in Pennsylvania. We brought Margurite Reed Nelson over from Columbia. We learned from previous years, and I searched for a male secretary that could accompany us on trips so we wouldn't have the problems of housing a member of the opposite sex in some places where it might be difficult. And the army came up with several, but the best of these was Jack Good who stayed on. In fact for a while, I think, no--he didn't go to the White House. People like Pete Carroll and Jerry Persons and Howard Snyder and their secretaries. And of course getting Jimmie Gault back on board was just like a class reunion almost.

WILSON. What was, say, Jimmie Gault's specific role or duty at SHAPE?

CANNON: Well Jimmie and Pete and Kevin occupied a series of offices on one side of the hall which, there at the final SHAPE headquarters, led to the boss's office. On the other side was the correspondence section and Jerry Persons and Doc Snyder with their secretaries. Further back on Pete and Jimmie's side, I forget who was there, but probably files or something. In any event, they were sort of our senior consultants--Jimmie in areas effecting particularly the British, but could be other European national considerations; and Pete and Kevin in their accustomed role of being the--and Burnham eventually moved into that area too--in politics and the drafting of appropriate statements and so forth, things other than non-routine correspondence. They, of course, had worked with the General long enough that they could operate without day-to-day guidance and that was pretty important.

[Interruption]

WILSON: If you will, General Cannon, a little bit about the "round robin trip" of '51 and various national reactions you observed, your appraisal of it.

CANNON: I guess about the only thing I can take any credit for is I think I was the initiator of the "round robin trip" and, were we on tape when I was telling about little Al and Copenhagen? Okay. [Laughter]. Well we named it because we were going to hit the then twelve NATO capitals. Of course at that time Greece and Turkey and West Germany were not in the SHAPE organization. In France, well we stayed at one of Ike's favorite hotels [Raphael] in Paris, right across from the Majestic on Avenue Kleber; and I know the name of it so well. I was useful from the standpoint that having served there before with him and his subordinates; I knew some of the routines and a little fractured French. What we did, we devised an advance team concept for the capitals in that we leap-frogged a group. One group had a linguist; another one had an arrangements man for hotel accommodations and check out the transport and that sort of thing; another was a public relations man to handle the local press inquiries before we got there, while we were there, and after that. We had three teams, and the linguists were Tony Biddle, Vernon "Dick" Walters, and Jack Wood, who we had selected as aide for Gruenther, principally because of his linguistic abilities. And he had other qualifications, of course. The publicity people were John Verdon, Barney Oldfield, and a little short fellow who had been in public relations at Department of the Army--I can see him but I can't put a name on him. Then we had the three who were to make the physical arrangements for accommodations and so forth, and one of these was Don Mulias who'd been in the secretariat at Frankfurt

at U.S. Forces headquarters at the end of World War II, and at the moment I can't recall the names of the other two. But there were three teams and as soon as we left one city, they would leave the next day for something three or four days down the road from us. The only place we didn't put them into was Iceland because we weren't going to stay there that long. In fact I took notes of the meeting with the Icelandic government representatives, and that's the only time on that trip that I did that. The linguists like Dick Walters and Tony were the recorders of things, and, of course, occasionally, Pete would sit in on some of the sessions.

London, there were lots of old friends. I can't recall that we had any particular problems. Although let's see, there was a labor government in then--Attlee I believe was the prime minister and, I think, it was our first dealings with him. But the number of old associates there of General Ikes made things very easy. In fact we even, it seems to me, we had a visit from Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. while we were at the Dorchester. No, that would have been later. We stayed at Claridges on the "round robin trip"; Dorchester was a subsequent trip.

Paris. Of course, this was another of the rapidly changing French governments, and I think Mendes France was the, at some point in time-- maybe was the day we came or the day we left. So Al Gruenther I would say was in on a lot of those discussions and of course, among other

problems, coming to the attention of an aide was looking for where are we going to hang Dwight D.'s hat when we move in here on a permanent basis. Discussions started then, and, after we came back in February, they continued to be prolonged while we lived at the Trianon Palace [Hotel] in Versailles and the French hemmed and hawed about whether they were going to provide a place for the Eisenhowers to live. Which eventually they did, of course, at Marnes-la-Coquette. I might mention here, this was the first time we'd met the General's new pilot, Bill Draper, who had come highly recommended from, I guess, Hoyt Vandenberg, who was then chief of staff of the air force. Bill was an exceptional pilot. I can recall the plane with the press on it wasn't able to land at Copenhagen and Bill, with great expertise, got us in there including a subsequent landing at Orly when it was blacked out and all of us welcomed him as a worthy member of the old team.

Germany. John McCloy as I recall it was the, I've forgotten the title--it wasn't ambassador at the time but, I guess it was commissioner or something. There were a number of discussions in Frankfurt. In fact I can recall we had to have a teletype conference with the states from Frankfurt on matters of things developing at home or on route and somewhere that should be in the record. That was one of the few times I recall during "round robin" where we were in contact

with the States. Portugal was interesting. The naval attache there was Gene [Cdr. Eugene B.] Fluckey, former aide to Admiral [Chester] Nimitz. And we stayed at the Aviz Hotel which was the government-owned, very ultra private and so forth. Oh, I recall who else was on the trip with us, Douglas MacArthur II, the nephew, and he, of course, was important in the state department-type matters. And these were, I guess, the principal people that we contacted in most of the capitals. It was a state department thing rather than a military.

We flew to Italy, and of course in Portugal, Vernon Walters' language proficiency was praised as being just like the locals'. In Italy he was praised as speaking like a perfect Tuscan and so forth. I recall Vern said he was going to take up Russian. He felt he could get a smattering grip of it in four or five days, but, he was a fabulous linguist. Italy, we were at the hotel at the top of the Spanish Steps, the Hassler Hotel, and Italy was under some considerable political tension at the time, and I recall the police there on that hill blocked off all the streets for about a block around the Hassler Hotel and didn't permit anyone without--. I must admit I don't know what the point of contention was at the moment, but--. Oh, we had a saying before the trip about Tony Biddle that--wait a minute, I'll have to think about this one. But in any event, thinking of Copenhagen, the younger group of us went to a night club and accompanying

us was Tony. And of course he'd been ambassador to the nations in exile at the start of World War II. People would come across the room, I mean the average citizen, tears streaming out of their eyes, to shake Tony's hand and say how good it was. Because see, if I recall it, the Danes were a little uneasy sitting on that northern flank and Russian intervention, and occupation could readily occur with great rapidity. And it was here that someone of the Danes, not one of the political people but more of the common-man type, gave General Eisenhower a symbol of the hedgehog which represents their determination to defend themselves. This was rewarding. We went from there to Oslo and--I'm trying to remember whether this was this trip or another one--it must have been another one. We took several trips to Copenhagen and Norway after we were back in SHAPE. It was pretty cold and miserable. In fact I have a flock of slides somewhere that someday I'll give to you--no point in my keeping them--of some of these trips. I don't think I have much time to take pictures on "round robin"--on subsequent trips. From there I think we flew back to Paris and then from Paris to Iceland. And the Icelandic government, to my recollection and my notes there--they were a labor-type government as I recall it and they were a little goosey about the military aspects and the effect on their relationship with Russia and the communist bloc. In Canada, we were pretty worn out by this time. We were getting ready for Ike to

appear before congress in the next couple of days and we got back to Washington. And then after the various rounds of things in Washington, why, the General had me take the plane from Washington to New York where we met Pete Carroll and Ruth, picked them up and we lifted Gracie Gruenther and Alice Snyder and Jack Woods' wife and the all associate children, including the Cannon children, and we flew to Paris and went into residence at the Trianon Palace Hotel which had been Ike's headquarters, of course, in World War II at one phase of the progress through France. And then I remember an old airport that existed outside of Cherbourg. So when the Queen with Bob Schulz and, I guess, Howard Snyder and General and Mrs. Eisenhower docked at Cherbourg, I had Bill Draper--wasn't on any maps, it was an old B-26 base from World War II that we had used in World War II--we flew in there and picked them up, took them back to the Trianon Palace and I collapsed with pneumonia. I was out of action for about a week or ten days.

It was a fascinating trip in such a short time and each of the nations had their quarrels and problems I guess with the concept, but Ike certainly was the only man that I can believe would have been successful in pulling them together with his reputation and with his attitudes.

WILSON: On that matter, how much time of General Eisenhower at SHAPE was--or how was the time divided, maybe would be a better way

to put it, between military affairs, European political affairs, even United States political matters, pressures. I guess what I'm saying--is there any way to distinguish or can you distinguish between these?

CANNON: Certainly towards the end, Don, with the influx of various congressional committees, Cabot Lodge, and Lucius Clay, and so forth, the national political scene was--

WILSON: Dominant?

Cannon: --dominant. Of course during this time we had Greece and Turkey come into NATO, and, while we were there, my recollection is, Germany never became officially a NATO--it was after our departure. But we made a trip to Athens and to Ankara and went into Istanbul to see the Blue Mosque on route. We made several trips to Italy, most of them more of a political nature, going to Rome to try to settle some political matters there. Only one, that I recall, was of a military nature in that we went up to Udine and watched maneuvers by the Alpine Italian troops and also had a tank demonstration by a tank brigade elsewhere in Northern Italy and then an exercise in the--. In fact, to show the trust that General Ike had, or maybe we foolish aides put him to, we underwent overhead artillery fire from Italian artillery troops and fortunately didn't have any short rounds. I can recall from the tank brigade, they were all lined up full of spit and polish, old M-48 tanks, and Ike

being an ex-tanker, he didn't let them get away with just standing there static. The commander asked him what he'd like and he said, "Move your tanks forward a hundred meters," so he could find out how many of them wouldn't operate. So he--

WILSON: They were probably still using that old fringe tank he started out with.

CANNON: It could well have been that not a one of them could move forward. There were only a couple out of about fifty I'd say, that didn't move. So he was applying military considerations as well as political considerations. He wasn't unaware of them, he hadn't lost that touch. At headquarters, the SHAPE receipts will give you a clue, because I had received from the U.S. government certain funds--the whole "round robin trip" was paid for--no one took any per diem or anything. I paid all the bills and that way we didn't have to go through this cost of living thing where Paris was sky-high and nothing was required in Iceland. Except we flew in an Icelandic--yes from Reykjavik we flew in a Icelandic airliner to this meeting, and by God there wasn't a bit of heat in the thing. We damned near froze. I'd forgotten about that. But the luncheons, the General almost daily, when he was in residence at SHAPE headquarters, would have a luncheon and sometimes it'd be devoted to U.S. type business; sometimes it'd be personal business; sometimes

it'd be NATO business. Well, I made the decision which budget to charge it against, and then I paid for the luncheon out of the funds I received from either Ike, the U.S., or from SHAPE headquarters. And that's why I very carefully saved all these receipts because I never wanted to be sent to Leavenworth for misappropriation. So they would give a picture of who the General's guests were and over the entire period of time.

WILSON: On the subject of guests--then I want, I guess, to move into the decision to run in '52 and what role did Cabot Lodge play? You mentioned him a couple of times. And do you recall Jackie Cochran's visit?

CANNON: Do I what?

WILSON: Recall Jackie Cochran?

CANNON: Oh, yes. I recall her being there. In fact it seems to me I also saw her one time when she visited him at Columbia while I was there. Now here, Don, I would be way out of my depth to try to estimate when the decision came.

WILSON: Well, your own subjective opinion.

CANNON: Oh, I think it probably came early in the January or February of '52, but I think there were a lot of reinforcements yet to come before it was a--

WILSON: Anything permanent.

CANNON: Yes, a permanent decision. I recall when I took him back at the end of May 1952, he had a meeting at the Statler Hotel, before I went back, to clear things up with General [Mathew B.] Ridgway who was his successor. He had a luncheon in the Statler in which he had McCann and Carroll and Cannon and I don't know who else, but Milton [Eisenhower] was there and Hugh Scott, Cabot Lodge, couple more of the people who had been decisive--Mr. Dewey wasn't there. But he said, "This is to have the new team meet the old team." That was the transition at that point. I think he'd just resigned that day or was about to resign. I remember [L.] Mendel Rivers being one of the ones who visited there. I suspect that might have been the House Armed Services Committee, but everyone wanted to see Ike and have an appointment with him and bend his ear. It was a problem running the appointment schedule and keeping Al Gruenther happy.

WILSON: Advised. As to who--

CANNON: Yes.

WILSON: Well I think that pretty well covers what I have. If you have anything to add, why, feel free.

CANNON: Yes, I was on route home from testifying in Washington the day he died. And so, I guess Dick [Richard W.] Streiff called me or Bob called me and said that Louise and I were invited to attend the ceremonies in Washington and I said, "Gee, I've just come back from Washington," and would it be just as readily obtained, invite me to the ceremonies at Abilene. I said, "I'd like to have Louise there and the children, if possible, because of our relationship." And so they cooked that up. Since I was taking the plane down, my division plane, I loaded it with my military officers and their wives and children because I said, "This is an event, I think, your children should see and learn to appreciate."

So we were heading back for the plane and Louise said, "Aren't you going by to see Mrs. Eisenhower?"

And I said, "I don't want to disturb her at this time." I'd seen her when we were in the chapel and so forth.

She said, "I think you better." This is another case of a good wife and advice and of course she knows Mrs. Eisenhower pretty well.

So I went by the train and walked on and saw Schulz and Dottie and walked back to where Mamie and Barbara were and she said, "Where are the children?" And I brought Louise and the children on and she put her arms around Chip and said, "I'm so sorry you've lost your godfather." She said, "I'll try to take his place with you." And

so I just thought it was typical, typical of her.

WILSON: And she appreciated the fact that you did come.

CANNON: Yes.

WILSON: You've continued to keep pretty close touch with Mamie.

CANNON: Yes. Corresponded on birthdays and various other events. But, well like, as I think I told you during lunch, I treasured their friendship, but yet when he asked me about coming back with him there that first day when he was first in office--I felt that I'd be, well I don't know. I just felt that I wanted to find out whether it was the Eisenhower association that was doing things for me or whether I could do it on my own.

[Interruption]

WILSON: I think before we conclude this interview with General Cannon, I'd like your comments on Merle Miller's book, 'Plain Speaking' and any comments you might have regarding Kay Summersby and your knowledge of relationship.

CANNON: Well on the first subject I'm utterly disgusted with that collection of trash attributed to Mr. Truman. If, in fact, he did say, as he is reported to have said, some of the things about General Eisenhower that he did, my respect for him has reached point zero. In analyzing it, I think he must have been jealous of whatever political success that Eisenhower achieved.

[Interruption]

CANNON: Well, as a good point of departure for the other subject concerning Kay. I have not read it. I have just scanned it and I would refuse to pay whatever the author expects in the way of purchase price. I'd hate to see anyone feathering his pockets. They're typical of the Washington rumor factory which, when I was aide in the Pentagon, I had frequent witness to. There were people who, in my view, sought to cover their own tails by attributing to Ike relationships with Kay that they themselves were guilty of with someone else, both overseas and elsewhere. And as I told you, I can recall this one wife of a classmate, very assiduously notifying Mrs. Eisenhower on the afternoon of an event where Kay, then stationed at Hamilton Air Force Base, had been attacked by a janitor. And I'm certain this same thing went on during the war and was heightened. Quite frankly, anyone who recalls the first units of Womens Auxiliary Army Corps that came overseas in '42 will recall that none of them were, or none that I saw were notable for pulchritude. And I don't think it's usual that General Eisenhower or anyone else could get some change of pace out of having someone that had some pulchritude around as long as they were performing a job. And Kay certainly, well in the early days, was one who knew the routes in and out of London and things like that. I, myself, have taken Kay to lunch or dinner

in a number of capitals and New York in years past and so perhaps I'm not a good one to speak up. But I also, of course, was in a position to see them frequently after V-E day, at least, and I never had the least indication of anything other than a wholesome, friendly relationship. I think it's unfortunate the way Kay answered some questions put to her in a, I think it was a Sunday magazine supplement--

WILSON: Parade.

CANNON: Parade. I read that and thought, "My God, the woman must be getting senile." But that covers the thing. I could name names but I think it's better that I not. I'll repeat--Mr. Truman was reiterating all the Washington gossip of World War II and some of the hairy things that only he could dream up. As I say, if he in fact said those things, I've lost all respect for him.

WILSON: Thank you very much General Cannon.