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INTERVIEW WITH
Charles Yost
by
Dr. Thomas Soapes
Oral Historian
on
September 13, 1978
for
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



This interview is being conducted with Ambassador Charles Yost in his office in Washington, DC on September 13, 1978. The interviewer is Dr. Thomas Soapes. Present for the interview are Ambassador Yost and Dr. Soapes.

DR. SOAPES: When the Eisenhower administration took office you were in Greece?



AMBASSADOR YOST: I was the Deputy Chief, Minister, in Greece, yes.

DR. SOAPES: The Eisenhower campaign had, of course, talked a lot about change. Did you notice much change from Truman to Eisenhower in foreign policy?

AMBASSADOR YOST: Well there was certainly a considerable change in atmospherics at least, which is what one notices immediately. It happened that I came home on leave in the spring of 1953 so I was here, briefly, shortly after the new administration came in. I had known Secretary [John Foster] Dulles before at various conferences; and in fact, I knew the family quite well because his father was the pastor of our church in Watertown, New York and married my father and mother. So we had known the Dulles family well; and, of course, I went to see him when I got back here. Also it happened that I timed my leave partly for this reason: That the number two man in the Greek government, Spyros Markezinis, (the Administrator of Coordination) [Minister of Economic Coordination] was here on a visit seeking American aid. He had asked that I be here at this time so I did have an opportunity to get involved right away in negotiation between

the Secretary and the Greeks. I did find that the Secretary, probably reflecting the Republican point of view, was very cautious about making commitments on aid. I think the word had probably already gone down the line that there must be caution on expenditures which had obviously been rising astronomically during the Korean War and before that with the Marshall Plan. So there was that change. Also, frankly, I noticed a considerable disarray inside the State Department as a result of the [Joseph] McCarthy campaign and uncertainty as to how far the new administration was going to support the pressure on the Department--the Foreign Service in particular--which had been generated by McCarthy. I think those were the two areas in which I noticed a change during that brief visit home.

SOAPES: But you did not notice, as time went on, that there was any change in the fundamental assumptions behind foreign policy.

YOST: No, no, I don't think so. Actually my experience has been that there's always far less change than the political campaign promises. When the new administration comes in it really has relatively little room for maneuver in matters of this kind.

SOAPES: Did the McCarthy situation affect you on station?



YOST: Well it did somewhat. The famous Messrs. [Roy Marcus] Cohn and [Gerard David] Schine came through Athens while I was still there--I forget just when-- and created an extremely bad impression, not only inside the American community which suffered from their behavior and intrusions but also created a very bad impression on the Greeks which redounded, rebounded against our prestige and our relations with them. Subsequently, I can remember, in my next post, Vienna, while we didn't have Cohn and Schine there, there was of course enormous publicity about the McCarthy hearings and particularly some of his denunciations of some of our military, which created a very bad impression among some of the staunch anticommunist political leaders in Austria.

SOAPES: One person I interviewed who was in Europe at this time and had a visit from Cohn and Schine indicated that they were spending a fair amount of time trying to get people in the Embassy to speak against their superiors, generally trying to break up the chain of command. Were they doing the same thing in Athens?

YOST: Well, frankly I don't remember that in particular. The general atmosphere they created was that there were a lot of incompetents and softies and so on around and that specifically the USIA [United States Information Agency]



libraries were full of subversive material, things of that kind, which obviously didn't help our job a breeze.

SOAPES: You made the point that this created a very bad impression among the staunch anti-communists in Europe.

YOST: I remember one Austrian political leader, after McCarthy had put on a particularly disgraceful performance in his interrogation of General--somebody, I've forgotten his name now--said, that is the most unAmerican activity that I have witnessed in my whole life. So you can see how American prestige was undermined by that sort of thing. Fortunately McCarthy didn't survive much beyond that point, but still the impact of it remained.

SOAPES: Greece, of course, had been a center piece of Truman's foreign policy in his support for anti-communism. Was that situation significantly stabilized by the time Eisenhower came into office?

YOST: Well I think pretty much so. During the years that I was there we were concerned at the instability of Greek governments in their rapid change and so on, so we supported, not only covertly but overtly, [Field-] Marshall [Alexander] Papagos' formation of another political party. In the elections that followed he did win a sweeping majority. He was in



office when Eisenhower came in and this number two man I mentioned was number two to him. Papagos died shortly after and this man went out of office. [Constantine] Caramanlis was really the successor of that movement and remained in power, as you know, for many years.



SOAPES: Was it your assessment that the Truman Doctrine then had been a major force in stabilizing the situation?

YOST: Oh absolutely. I think it was an outstanding success. Without it, without the aid we gave I think it's very probable that the Communists might have won the civil war and taken over the country.

SOAPES: You moved to Vienna then. Is that in '53?

YOST: September '53. I was there just one year due to having been named as Ambassador to Laos in the summer of '54.

SOAPES: Austria, of course, at that time--there had not been yet the signing of the treaty.

YOST: No. It was still under four-power occupation. I had been there before in '47 to '49 so this was my second assignment there. The principle difference between the first and the second assignments was that the occupation had changed from a purely military one to more of a civilian one. The High

Commissioners, the second time, were civilians. The first time they were military officers.



SOAPES: What was the atmosphere among the four-powers there? Were the Russians beginning to be cooperative at this point?

YOST: Not really. While some progress had been made in the negotiation of the treaty which was finally completed the next year, in the actual conduct of affairs I think they were as difficult as they had been all the way through. Of course I think the Austrian government by that time was feeling a little more secure in that it had endured that long. But, there were still episodes in which the Russians tried to intimidate the Austrians. Of course the situation in the Russian Zone continued to be quite precarious for Austrians.

SOAPES: Precarious in what sense?

YOST: Well, it was difficult for Austrian political leaders to speak out in that zone. It was hazardous. You never knew what was going to happen to them, though there were less incidents of people being actually kidnapped--spirited away-- than there had been in my previous time. The economic situation continued to be far less attractive in the Soviet zone than in the west. Of course they were taking out rather than putting in.

SOAPES: Can you remember a specific episode that would illustrate the problems that we had in dealing with the Russians, where they were difficult to deal with?

YOST: Well I can remember a good many very hot sessions of the Allied Council--actually due to the fact that our High Commissioner-- "Tommy" [Llewellyn E.] Thompson at that time-- was during most of the time of that year, 1954, detached and in London negotiating the Trieste Agreement. I was the acting High Commissioner; so I had to occupy the American chair in the Allied Council. I can remember that at least two out of three meetings we'd have some very hot arguments; it might be some aspect or episode of Russian behavior in their zone or it might be their objection to some proposed Austrian law which we were supporting. I don't remember specific issues. There were a series of them. They were always, among other things, worried about what they called the recrudescent militaries in Austria and therefore very reluctant to approve any expansion or strengthening of the extremely modest Austrian defense forces. We in general were trying to strengthen their forces, to give the Austrians more of a feeling of security. So that was a perennial subject of debate.



SOAPES: There seems to be a parallel between that and the feelings about Germany.

YOST: Oh sure. Of course, they were, I'm sure, suitably stronger in Germany; but this was a reflection of the same thing.



SOAPES: What particular significance did we attach to Austria?

YOST: Well we attached a great deal of significance to it, I think, as a very critical area of competition right on the border line. Of course by this time Germany was already thoroughly split and therefore in that sense the competition there had been narrowed to the city of Berlin, whereas the whole of Austria was in a sense still open, though not particularly the Soviet zone. We never knew whether the Soviet intention was to permit Austria to remain united or whether, if they couldn't get the sort of treaty they wanted, they might end by detaching their zone of Austria as they had their zone of Germany.

SOAPES: Yes. So it was for us on the geographic cutting edge.

YOST: Yes, exactly. And it was, among other things, a very important and useful listening post for us--for the whole of eastern Europe--being the closest place where we could

operate with relative freedom. We still could operate in west Berlin but it was much more difficult.

SOAPES: What was the major sticking point on the treaty-- other than this military question--for the Russians, the reason they were not more forthcoming?



YOST: Well, we never knew, of course. We were always curious as to what their motivations were. One of the prolonged sticking points was, of course, their control of the oil fields in eastern Austria, which was useful to them for a number of reasons; whether they'd be prepared to let those go; and, if so, on what terms. So that was a prolonged sticking point. The armed forces were another. But, the main question was whether they'd be prepared to let go at all, and that we really didn't know until the last moment. I very much doubt that Stalin ever would have done so. I suspect that the new leadership wanted to lower tensions and they probably felt that giving up Austria, eastern Austria, was the cheapest way in which they could do that. At least, where they'd lose the least that was critical to them.

SOAPES: Very interesting point. I know you weren't there when the treaty actually was finalized, but was there any hint while you were still there that it was beginning to move in that direction?

YOST: Well there had been movement for a period of years, but there were still several critical points, and no one was quite sure if and when they'd be resolved.

SOAPES: When you then did move directly to Laos, which of course, then was at the heart of Indochina; it was the focus of our attentions for several decades after that. What was the situation when you arrived in Laos?



YOST: Well as you know the first Geneva Accords had just been concluded that summer. The whole of Indochina was still, despite the accords, in a situation of considerable instability because nobody knew how the Accords were going to work out, whether they'd be kept or not. In South Vietnam the government was very unstable, and even internally there was a lot of opposition--not to mention in the North. In Laos a very unsatisfactory provision had been included in the Accord about Laos. By the way, the crown prince, who was really acting for his father, who was decrepit--the crown prince who later became king--fired the Prime Minister who represented Laos at Geneva for having agreed to this--I think under French pressure. The provision was that the Pathet Lao forces--the Communist Laos, who were a very small number at that time, not more than a thousand, were not obliged simply to dissolve as they were in Cambodia--here comparable to the Khmer Rouge--

but were allowed to regroup in two northern provinces adjacent to North Vietnam and ultimately to be absorbed into the Royal Armed Forces. But, what this turned out to mean in practice was that those two provinces remained communist enclaves--lots of North Vietnamese there too--and the whole problem for the time I was there, and for some time thereafter, was an attempt to reintegrate those two provinces into the government. Shortly after I arrived--about six months, I guess, after I arrived, five or six months--Secretary Dulles paid a visit there on his swing through Indochina. At that time the leaders of the Lao government, Prime Minister, Defense Minister, Foreign Minister were all prepared, it seemed, to move in militarily into those two provinces, while the communists were still very weak, and end the division. Their chief interest in the Secretary's visit was to get his support for this, which he very willingly and vigorously gave. Unfortunately, in a speech at a dinner which the crown prince gave for him which was also attended by the British and French ambassadors, he revealed this and affirmed his support for this. Well, the British and French rushed off and reported home and their governments nearly had a fit because they were afraid this would restart the Indochina War. So in two or three days they came in and made strong representations to the effect that if Laos tried anything of this kind they would



withdraw all support from the Laos government, which wasn't really very much in material terms but was psychologically important. So this killed that particular initiative. This I think was one of Mr. Dulles' weaknesses. He was so eager to demonstrate to the American public that he was taking a strong firm stand on issues of this kind that he tended to surface this sort of thing for public relations and political purposes at home, even in situations like this one, where it would have been far wiser and more effective to have kept quiet about it.



SOAPES: Did you detect that he was perhaps out of step with Eisenhower in that way?

YOST: Well I don't have any reason to believe he was in this particular instance. This wouldn't have restarted the Indochina war or involved any American forces whatsoever. The very small, but relatively well armed, Laotian Royal forces could have easily suppressed the Pathet Lao unless the North Vietnamese had chosen to move in in force. In which case, the Laotians would have immediately pulled back; so it wasn't really a danger that the French and British were so nervous.

SOAPES: There was a trial balloon floated here in '54 about the possibility of American troops, of American military involvement. I think Nixon was--

YOST: In Laos? No this was--

SOAPES: In Vietnam.

YOST: Before the Geneva Accords you mean?

SOAPES: Yes.

YOST: Oh yes. Eisenhower and the congressional people who were consulted reacted strongly against that. I think Eisenhower insisted that the British be consulted in that case. They most vigorously vetoed it and that was the end of it.

SOAPES: Yes, with Eisenhower probably aware that they would veto it.

YOST: I think so.

SOAPES: Eisenhower--

YOST: Yes, it's a pity he wasn't President in 1965 from that point of view. [Laughter]

SOAPES: Eisenhower said several times that the United States would fulfill its pledges in Indochina on the assumption that the French would fulfill their responsibilities. Was it your assessment that the French did all that they had said they would do and should have done?

YOST: You mean after Geneva?



SOAPES: After Geneva.

YOST: They didn't really assume any very extensive responsibilities under the Geneva Accords as I remember. They were in, of course, a rather neurotic and ambivalent frame of mind. On the one hand, having gone through the agonies of that war, they were certainly determined there not be a repetition so they didn't want to get involved militarily in any way. In Laos they had just a small military training mission to train the Laotian armed forces I suppose. Not more than twenty officers. And their economic programs, aid programs, were very small too. On the other hand they resented our seeming, as they felt, to move in and take over what had been their domain; so they were a little "dog-in-the-mangerish" about it. I say they were ambivalent. On the one hand, they wanted the situation stabilized; and so they could hardly object to our providing sufficient aid, military and economic, to stabilize it. But on the other hand, as this involved more and more Americans coming in, they grew more and more unhappy with that very conspicuous take-over, as it seemed to them.

SOAPES: Were you satisfied that the United States policy was adequate to its objectives?

YOST: Well I think so, during my assignment there. I, frankly, became very unhappy about our policy in Laos in latter years



of the Eisenhower administration. I don't know just who was responsible, but I felt it very important that we support unity among all of the non-communists and made this the centerpiece of what I tried to do internally there. This was the case while I was there and continued for a while afterwards. Subsequently--I think partly as the result of rivalry between the State Department and CIA, but also there was some support in the department for this view--the Lao government was not considered tough enough and right-wing enough for some Americans. Therefore, our support was thrown to General Phoumi [Nosavan] and others on the extreme right which split the non-communists and produced a so-called neutralist faction. This led to the fighting in the North which gave the communists a golden opportunity to move in in force from Vietnam, as they did just at the end of the Eisenhower and beginning of the Kennedy administrations. In my opinion this was quite unnecessary. We provoked it.

[Interruption]

YOST: But this is all second-hand because I wasn't there at the time. Things were still going very smoothly at the time I left.



SOAPES: It appears from some of Eisenhower's comments that he placed more importance on Laos than he did on Vietnam and I've talked with someone who was in Vietnam and has agreed with that point. Did you feel that Laos was of more significance to the United States than Vietnam in this period?

YOST: No, not that at all; but I did feel that it was important. When I first went out--when I was getting my briefing in the State Department in September '54--I was frankly rather appalled because a number of the people that I talked to took the position: Well this is just a brief interlude; Laos is down the drain; there's no hope of saving it--some people quite high up, not the Secretary, but others. I frankly, during the first few months I was there, had great difficulty getting what seemed to me necessary support, not to mention just simple housekeeping support which was desperately needed because it was such a primitive place. But this turned around completely after the Secretary's visit. He saw on the ground what we needed, both from the point of view of aid for the Laos and our own housekeeping requirements, and gave instructions immediately that anything I asked for--that in case the Department was unwilling to grant me something I asked for, it must be brought to his attention personally before it was refused. In fact that rarely happened. I got most of what I needed there. So Laos was strongly supported. Vietnam



was, as I think, equally strongly supported but there was a good deal of backing and filling as to just who to support. I went down there quite often, and our people from Vietnam came up to see me; so we worked quite closely together. As you know General [Joseph Lawton] Collins was out there for a number of months as the President's representative. I saw a lot of him. He, after looking into the situation very closely recommended, as I understand it, that we withdraw our support from [Ngo Dinh] Diem and find somebody else. He wasn't the appropriate person to carry out what we were interested in carrying out there. But, in the end it was Collins, not Diem, who lost his job. I think partly because Diem had had some success against the sects and strengthened his position and partly because he had very strong support domestically here from Henry Luce and Cardinal [Francis Joseph] Spellman and others like that.

SOAPES: The SEATO Treaty comes up during this period, and it's been criticized ever since as having been either a useless or unnecessary document that was an attempt to apply European lessons to Asia. Was it your assessment that such an arrangement was necessary in this period?



YOST: Well I don't think it was really necessary. I think it was probably marginally useful, for a while anyway. We did feel, I think, pretty naked there because the French were pulling out, except economically; and the British were obviously disinterested. We were determined to hold on there and try to save the area. It seemed important to try to mobilize as much support, even though--slim as it was. I think it was useful for a while. Of course, once we became involved in a real war out there, then it became just a fiction because the others, except maybe Thailand, were not interested in supporting such a war.

SOAPES: Revisionist scholars have been promoting the theme that American foreign policy is centered around our domestic economic assumptions and our concern for our foreign markets has been the predominant--

YOST: That's silly of course.



SOAPES: Okay, I want your reaction to that view.

YOST: Total misunderstanding of American domestic politics, seems to me. Foreign policy is frequently centered around domestic politics. But this idea that derives from Marxism-- this terrific drive for foreign markets that government, is nonsense. Never in my experience has that been a predominant feature.

SOAPES: The predominant feature from your experience being?

Yost: Well I don't know that there's any one. It varies from place to place, but it's never that one.

SOAPES: The anti-communist, the ideological conflict being--? We could spend a lot more time I'm sure on Indochina, but since we're pressed on time I'd like to move on a little bit to a couple of your other assignments. You went to France after Laos.

YOST: Yes.



SOAPES: That was in '56 I believe. France, of course, was going through the period of its many unstable governments and its colonial problems with Algeria. When you arrived there in '56 what was your assessment of the situation at that point?

YOST: Well there was, as you say, a French obsession with Algeria. That was the number one domestic political issue there. It made it very difficult for us, first, because we didn't like France being distracted from what seemed to us the more serious menace of the East and, second, because we were sympathetic to the general decolonization movement. On the other hand we had to be careful not to be too offensive to a close ally and friend. Of course, this all came to a head, shortly after I arrived, with the Suez crisis which, for a period, exacerbated our relations considerably.

SOAPES: Yes.

YOST: I remember for weeks after that, we still were invited out--we went out to dinners and receptions all the time--but everywhere we went we were immediately attacked by Frenchmen about this treacherous and stupid policy of ours. So for weeks I became hoarse defending ourselves. But, it finally calmed down. It didn't really fundamentally shake our basic relationship. We, of course, were very much disturbed by the instability of the French governments--the constant changes, the time wasted in reconstituting a new government every few months, and the new government settling in. I personally, and some others in the embassy, thought that the probable solution was a [General Charles] De Gaulle government though that didn't come till a few months after I left. I maintained very close relations, for that reason--all the time I was there--with Michel Debré, who was then very much on the outs but later of course was De Gaulle's prime minister.

SOAPES: Were the French genuinely surprised that we did not give them support in the Suez operation?

YOST: Well, of course, they hoped to carry it out by themselves, very quickly; but they were certainly surprised, astonished, that we opposed them so vigorously. They were furious also at



[Anthony] Eden for capitulating so rapidly. Had they been in charge they would have gone right on in. They felt they couldn't do it alone.

SOAPES: Did this change in any way their posture towards NATO?

YOST: Well I don't think so. As I say, it didn't really undermine the basic relationship between us. Difficulties about NATO arose from De Gaulle's peculiar psychology.

SOAPES: De Gaulle, of course, is the big figure who comes along and does stabilize the situation; liquidates the Algerian problem.



YOST: We felt at the time he was probably the only one who could do that.

SOAPES: Of course, some questions still remain about what his attitude towards the United States really was: how much of this was cosmetic for domestic French consumption; and how much was genuine feeling on his part that France had to take something and move more on its own.

YOST: Well, you have to do a psychoanalysis of De Gaulle, which is difficult. I have my doubt it's a mixture of motives. One

could hardly blame him if he had a good deal of deep-seated resentment against the United States for its treatment of him during the war. I was in the Department in those days, and it's extraordinary--it seemed to me--the attitude of [Franklin D.] Roosevelt and [Cordell] Hull toward De Gaulle. De Gaulle was a difficult character. It seemed to me through the time, obvious that he was going to end up as the French hero, and we were going to have to deal with him after the war as we did. It was very foolish to be so grudging in everything they did to support him, to continue to support [Henri Philippe] Pétain to the extent we did. So that, I think, played a part in addition to his general feeling about the necessity for France being independent--playing a great role, not just as a satellite of the United States.

SOAPES: You moved from France to Syria.



YOST: Very briefly.

SOAPES: Syria of course is one of the more aggressive of the Arab states. It was frequently in alliance and out of alliance with [Gamal Abdel] Nasser during this period, creating the [United Arab Republic] UAR for a period of time.

YOST: Well that of course is why I lost my job there, why my assignment was so short. I arrived there in early

January and found them already seriously considering some sort of an association with Nasser. They continued for a month or so to debate it at home and then they went and asked--the initiative came from the Syrians--asked for formation of a joint republic. Nasser considered it for a while but then decided, despite certain disadvantages, he couldn't turn it down and accepted it. So only two months after I arrived the union went through. I stayed on one month as the whole diplomatic corp was invited to stay on more or less as tourists, travel around the country, which we did.

SOAPES: Why did they go to Nasser?



YOST: Well it's interesting. It seems to be largely forgotten; but the Syrian leaders at that time were primarily, though not exclusively, a wing of the Baath party, which still controls Syria; but it's a very different wing. All of the leaders then are now in exile or dead. But they did it to escape left-wing pressures, including communists. They were seriously concerned that the communists were infiltrating the military; that the Chief of Staff, General [Afif al-]Bizri, was pro-communist; the communist party was getting stronger; and that they might be overwhelmed and the country taken over by communists. Frankly, it seemed to us that their fears were somewhat exaggerated; but even so, they obviously knew the

situation better than we did; and if they felt that way--if this was a real danger--we were pleased to see them go to Nasser as a better alternative. We pointed out at the time that whether or not the United Arab Republic endured depended on Nasser's policies. If he adopted a policy of leaving a great deal of autonomy to the Syrians, letting them pretty much run their own affairs, the union would probably endure; but if he tried to impose Egyptian direction up and down the line it wouldn't. He chose the latter course, and it didn't last.

SOAPES: Recently, with the importance of the Middle East in current affairs, a lot of reference has been made to Eisenhower's policy in the Middle East, of being able to successfully put pressure on Israel and that Eisenhower's policy was really very balanced in that area. Was it your assessment that it was a balanced policy?



YOST: Well it was in that respect of course. The Arab's were impressed and delighted that he did put this pressure on Israel to cause it to withdraw from the Sinai after the Suez business. On the other hand, the so-called Eisenhower Doctrine was received with great suspicion and hostility, because it was feared that it meant U.S. interference all over the place. And it was a mistake in my opinion because

it aroused all these fears without really being able to achieve much of anything. It was, I think again, an American domestic political gimmick which did more harm than good. I can remember once--the whole diplomatic corp always had to go out and meet visiting chiefs of state or heads of government at the airport; helluva nuisance--and on one occasion we went out to meet [Achmed] Sukarno and there was a huge crowd of people who'd been brought out to greet him and cheer. On the way back there was a terrific traffic jam, everybody going back at once. We were just inching along this narrow road and on each side these crowds going back. They saw my car and American flag; so a great crowd of them gathered around and began beating on the car and shouting. I asked my driver what they were saying: "Down with the Eisenhower Doctrine." So this is just one small symptom. If you'd have asked them what the Eisenhower Doctrine was, they wouldn't really have known; but it was in general taken as being a pretention on the part of the United States to interfere in internal affairs of all kinds. In fact, in Syria, before I arrived, the CIA had tried to pull off a coup, support its military people who were planning a coup. The local CIA station chief strongly advised against this. They said they were quite sure that it was penetrated by Syrian intelligence. But nevertheless, orders came from Washington



to support it, which we did. Of course it was penetrated, and it was broken up. As a result, they told our ambassador, who happened to be home on leave at that time, he would not be welcome to return. So there was a just a chargé for a number of months until Dulles managed to patch things up at a meeting with the Syrian foreign minister at the UN General Assembly. Then I was sent out. But, we were trying rather clumsily to get into some of their domestic affairs.

SOAPES: Yes. We're getting up close to the time I know you have to go. One final question: you're a career foreign service officer, how would you evaluate Eisenhower's performance in foreign policy?



YOST: Well I think it was very good on the whole. The whole atmosphere of the times led to more of this extreme Cold War posture and hanky panky--such as the one I just referred to--than I think was justified, and than I expect he would ever have initiated. I was very unhappy that he didn't crack down on McCarthy, even in the campaign; but he apparently felt that that tide was too strong to confront head on. Aside from those excesses which began before he came in and continued, I think in general his foreign policy was a wise one. Of course I thought his resistance to moving into Indochina was excellent in a military way. My last experience, as you know, was in

Morroco; and there he did strongly support, over the objection of some of the joint chiefs, our giving up the air and naval bases there--phasing out of them over a period of several years which was wise and necessary. They were no longer vital to our defense, and to try to hold them any longer would have provoked wide spread agitation and hostility and perhaps real trouble for us there. As it was, we were able to keep them as long as we needed them and then to get out gracefully and maintain our friendship with Morroco. Eisenhower played a significant part in those decisions. In fact he, of course, on his quick visit there--in 1959 I guess it was, end of '59--ironed out the final details with the King and concluded the agreement.

