

INTERVIEW WITH
Vernon A. Walters
by
Dr. John Wickman
on
April 21, 1970
for
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



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Vernon A. Walters
Donor

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This is an oral history interview with General Vernon Walters, Military Attache in Paris, France. The interview was done on April 21, 1970, by Dr. John E. Wickman, Director of the Eisenhower Library.

GEN. WALTERS: Well, I think the first time I ever saw General Eisenhower was actually in Algiers. I was taking around, at that time, a group of Brazilians who were an advance party for a Brazilian division that subsequently came into that theater and fought there. And the first time I saw him was an extremely brief interview. We went into his office and I translated; and--you know--it was pretty much--they were discussing the coming of the Brazilian division and how it would be equipped and where it would fight and so forth; and it was the general agreement they would come in the Mediterranean theater and they would fight in Italy. We knew then we were going to Italy while we were still in Algiers. I guess it was December of 19--this was mid-December of 1944; sorry, '43.

DR. WICKMAN: '43.

GEN. WALTERS: '43, 1943, mid-December. Then I did not see him again until, I guess, right after the war. Curiously, this same Brazilian general who commanded the division in Italy was on tour of the United States, and he was by this time chief of staff. And I saw him briefly then, but I still didn't have any particularly close association with him at that time. Where I really became associated with him was in SHAPE. I had been working for



Governor [Averell] Harriman here in Paris, and he went back to be special assistant to Mr. Truman and I went back with him. I'd been out of the United States continuously since 1942, and this was 1948 which was six years, which I thought was a long time at that time. And I was working in the White House with him; and General [Alfred M.] Gruenther came in who was going to be his [Eisenhower's] chief of staff at SHAPE and who had been the chief of staff in Italy to General [Mark W.] Clark, whose aide I was; and he knew me from there. And he, I presume, wanted to have whatever languages I speak at his disposal in Europe, so first he borrowed me for General Eisenhower's initial exploratory trip. He went around in January of 1951. He went to fourteen NATO countries, a very good trip; I think there was something like fourteen countries in thirteen days or some other slightly mathematical formula of that type. And I was effectively borrowed only for that trip, but shortly after I got back Governor Harriman called me in. And he said, "General Eisenhower wants you to go to Europe with him and set up the allied headquarters, and what would you like to do?" And I said, "Well, frankly, I've been out of the United States so long I'd like to stay here." And he smiled and he said, "Well, frankly, Mr. Truman has told General Eisenhower he can have anybody who wears a uniform. And your choice is really not whether you're going or not; it's whether



you're going quietly or whether they drag you screaming. And. "he said, "frankly, for your career, it's better if you go quietly." On this advance trip I had played bridge a great deal on the airplane with Douglas MacArthur the Third, the general's nephew, who was subsequently his [Eisenhower's] political adviser at SHAPE; and we would play against General Eisenhower and General Gruenther with the catastrophic results that you can imagine. And I don't care, you know, MacArthur and I held every card and every finesse worked; we'd only lose by 900 points, because in my opinion--and I am not downgrading General Gruenther who is a marvelous bridge player--I think General Eisenhower is just as good a bridge player as General Gruenther. Now a lot of people won't agree, but my experience in playing with them is that he was. At the end of that trip, as I was leaving, evidently they'd said something about my bridge playing because as I left Mr. Harriman gave me a package as a farewell gift; and when I opened it, there were five books by Goren on bridge in it. Well, I never played bridge again if I could help it after that. This was a traumatic experience to play against a combination of General Eisenhower and General Gruenther. Well, on that trip, obviously, translating for him and being at his side all the time, I was in fairly close contact with him by the simple nature of things. Sometimes before a meeting he'd tell me what he was really trying to drive home, so that regardless of what his words were I could see what the real basic idea he was driving at [was] and make what he was saying.



WICKMAN: This is one area that I'd like to have you bring out. On an operating basis how did this work out? How did this association with General Eisenhower work out? You came in every morning at a certain time--started out with him that way.

WALTERS: Well, on a trip, of course, there was so much time on the airplane. No, I did not go in every morning. Sometimes he would do this and sometimes he would not. If it was a real meeting of substance, he would generally brief me on what he was trying to do before so that I could so shape his words in the other language as to direct them in the direction they were to go. Many people think translation is mechanical; if you really don't know what the person's intentions are, it's rather hard to do. No, usually on the trip around it would be in the airplane. Afterwards, when I was in SHAPE with him, it would be sometime before the meeting.

WICKMAN: During these meetings was there a give and take? Did he try to get from you some particular linguistic peculiarity that would add to what he wanted to do?



WALTERS: If there was something about which there had been discussion, he'd say, "What do you think he really thought? How do you think he reacted to that?" And often he would ask me for my evaluation of personality.

WICKMAN: Were you the only person, did he have staff, or, how was--

WALTERS: No, I was the only person who provided this particular service. This was not a full-time job when I was in SHAPE by any means. I worked for the Executive to the National Military Representative, who was General Turner Bittel; and the same was true when he was president. I was over at the NATO Standing Group. And when he had some particular visitor who spoke a language which I could handle, I was summoned over to the White House, or I would go on the trips with him which he took abroad. But, of course, this was not a full-time job; I had other things to do.



WICKMAN: While he was in the White House, were you in Washington all that time?

WALTERS: No, I did not come back to Washington till 1956. But, for instance, prior to that, I believe, there was the first Bermuda Conference, which was either '53 or '54--I'm not sure. I was called back for that, and then I'm not exactly sure whether [at] the Geneva Conference I was already back or I went from there. I have a feeling I was already back in the United States for the Geneva Conference, which was the big four: the Soviets, the French, the British and us. [Nikita S.] Khrushchev--and [Marshal Gogori K.] Zhukov was there.

WICKMAN: Let me ask you another question. You say you were at formal meetings. You just mentioned somewhere there were three, four, five, six, or seven people. Were you at many meetings where there was just the President or--

WALTERS: Yes, and then, of course, my job was to write the minutes. At every meeting I ever had with him alone, I wrote the minutes. I don't know where those records are now, but I think you could find--

WICKMAN: They're in Abilene, most probably.



WALTERS: --you could find a large number of pages written by me. Usually, what would happen, say, when he went to a country as Supreme Commander is he might call on the president briefly alone, and I would go in with him. Then there would be a meeting with the president, the prime minister, the defense minister, and the foreign minister and other specialists--or just plain military; and, of course, that somebody else would be the official recorder. I would translate what was said, but someone else would do the official recording when he was present. I used to do the translation and the notes. And, in fact, this was the most tedious part of the trip to me because sometimes he would see three or four personalities in a day, and sometimes he'd be in two countries in a day. And I had no opportunity to write. When everybody else

went to bed at 12:30, that's when I went down to the embassy and got three secretaries and dictated and corrected the final thing until about 5:00 o'clock in the morning; and baggage pickup was at 6:00 o'clock the next morning. And, for instance, on the South American trip, where I spoke all the languages involved, it was really bad. In Europe, occasionally, we'd go to some country that I didn't speak the language of, and I'd get a little rest where I could do this. But in South America, where I spoke both Spanish and Portugese, I was involved in every one of these things. And try to keep three or four conversations in your head and remember who said what is quite difficult. I never took notes during small conferences because it frightens people. In fact, that's the way it is with Nixon now.



WICKMAN: This is another one of those things the General told me about you the last time we met in 1968 and I proposed this trip was the fact that, in addition to your other abilities, you've got a phenomenal memory for this kind of thing. And this was one of the things that impressed him very much.

WALTERS: He mentioned it in his book--one of the two books. I don't know which one it was. But you know he had a tremendous memory. The first time I ever went to Greece with him, knowing his interest in things historical, I really boned up; and sure

enough, as the airplane circled in for a landing at Athens, he said, "Come over here; where is Salamis?" I said, "It's right there. That's where the battle was fought." He said, "Tell me what was the name of that island in the middle of the straits the Persians occupied the night before the battle?" I said, "Psyttaleia, General." [Laughter] You know, he was really shocked. He said, "How do you know that?" I said, "General, I know you; I boned up before we got here."

When he went to Brasilia as president, I went on the advance party; and in the presidential palace there's this inscription in large gold letters--the whole interior wall of the palace. It was a phrase that was spoken by the president of Brazil who founded Brasilia, [Juscelino] Kubitschek, when he turned the first shovelful of earth. And, really, it was written for him. His ghost writer was a poet, the greatest of modern Brazilian poets, Augusto Frederico Schmidt. But it really had the most Churchillian resonance in Portugese. Well, I just knew he was going to ask me what it said. So I copied it down, and I worked up an English translation that I thought had a little bit of the same sound to it. Sure enough, when he got there, he said, "What does it say?" So I said, "Well, this is what the President of Brazil said when he turned the first shovelful of earth for Brasilia in the midst of this nothing--it's 'outback'." He said, "What does it say?" "Well," I said, "it says



this: 'Here on this high central plateau, in the midst of this loneliness, the tomorrow will be the center of our national life. I have cast my eyes once again towards the tomorrow of my country, and I face that oncoming dawn with unbounded faith in its great destiny.'" He looked at me; and he said, "Can you do that, just like that?" And I said, "No, General, I rehearsed that one." He said, "Why did you rehearse it?" I said, "Because I knew you were going to ask me."



WICKMAN: That's an interesting point. How many other things like that did you have to know about--

WALTERS: Many, many. When you went anywhere, you--I--had to know. For some reason he turned to me, not for the everyday briefing, but for things like this. You know, he'd pass a statue, and he'd say, "Who was that? What did he do?" So I had to be fairly well up on Norwegian history and Portugese history and other things-- this was the sort of thing he sort of expected me to know. He knew I was interested in history; I knew he was interested in it. So before I went to any of those countries with him, I did my homework.

WICKMAN: Were you on the twenty-seven nations trip he made as President?

WALTERS: Yes. You see, in all of those places I was useful to him. For instance, in Afghanistan, the king spoke perfect French, so I translated. And I remember at the dinner the Soviet Ambassador, who was too far down the table to hear what was being said, looking up at me and shaking his head and wondering where the Americans had discovered a colonel who could speak that obviously fluent Afghan, not realizing that what we were speaking was French. [Laughter] I did French for him with [Habib] Bourguiba, and I did French for him with Mohammed the Fifth in Morocco.

WICKMAN: What were the most--in this particular kind of work, working with General Eisenhower--what was the most difficult part of it for you, do you think, aside from, you know, physically, the notes when no one--

WALTERS: That was the only difficult part. The famous Eisenhower temper I never saw. But I saw--not really in the form of which people talk about it--but I saw it once. And perhaps this is the one thing I should have expected, but with the passage of time and everything I think it doesn't make any difference. When NATO was set up, we set up a southern headquarters at Verona, which was a command given to the Italians. When Greece and Turkey came into the alliance, they were very anxious not to be placed under that Italian command, the Greeks--who had just finished having a



war with the Italians and so forth--particularly. So there was a great tug of war. The end result, as you know, was that they set up the Southeast Command at Smyrna--at Izmir--in the end. But the Greeks and Turks had a sort of feeling we were trying to put them under the Italians, and the Italians had the feeling we were trying to prevent the Greeks and Turks from being put under them. And the Italian defense minister, [Randolfo] Pacciardi--we were coming back from Greece and Turkey--and he wanted to talk to General Eisenhower; so we made a stop at Naples just long enough to go into town, talk with him, and go back out to the airplane. And Pacciardi said, "Well, you know when you move into a house and the whole structure is there, you don't start tearing out the rooms and refixing the house. Now this NATO structure existed before; and if the Greeks and Turks come in, they have to fit in with it." And Eisenhower said, "Well, but they say they don't want to." And Pacciardi said, "Well, you know, they indicate that the opposition is not really there." And General Eisenhower got very angry, and he said, "Well, if they say I'm the one that's doing it, they're not telling you the truth." And he got red in the face; and he got really angry, the angriest I think I've ever seen him. And the whole thing sounded as if I had mistranslated what he had said, so I was considerably crest fallen. But eventually Pacciardi gave in and agreed to the setting up of the separate headquarters in Izmir. And we got back on the airplane; and we all got on ahead of him;



and I was sitting in the compartment up front; and he came up front and tapped me on the shoulder; and he said, "Don't look so sad." He said, "if I pretend to think you mistranslated, that isn't what happened. It's just every now and then you've got to get a peg to hang your anger on, and as you saw, it worked." [Laughter]

WICKMAN: That's very interesting because there are some other people who have made statements like that, too, about--you know--how he would become angry with reason behind it all. It's a good point. Another area I want to ask you about is this: in talking to people who were with him at SHAPE we frequently stress the point that this was a new activity, NATO was new, that it was making a new concept--



WALTERS: Well, without derogating any of his successors, some of whom were extraordinary men, the day General Eisenhower left SHAPE it was never the same again. He had an ability to infuse into people a sense of mission which has not been equaled by anyone else I've ever known in my lifetime.

WICKMAN: Was it his personality, or was it the way he approached the problems--

WALTERS: It was the force of his personality, I think his obvious sincerity, and the fact that while he was in Valhalla he was still

there too. But there was something of a missionary zeal and spirit in SHAPE in his time that was never quite there again. Now General [Alfred M.] Gruenther was undoubtedly one of the most brilliant, if not the most brilliant, human being I've ever known: he was tremendous. And probably from the purely intellectual point of view, SHAPE had been at a higher level under him than at any other time. Maybe in the head, but not in the heart. You know there was an aura about "Eisenhower the Liberator of Europe" which never really left him. You know, when he died, sort of by a curious coincidence I was down with the French--I'm afraid I'm jumping around too much.

WICKMAN: No, go ahead, that's all right, that's fine.

WALTERS: I was down eating with the French mountain division, and I broke my leg at 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon. I had invited the entire staff and division to dinner that night. And it was a titanic effort, but I gave the dinner with a wet plaster that night. And in the middle of the dinner I heard that he'd died, and I left that night. And the next morning I came back to Paris, and I spoke on the French television. They knew that I had been close to him, and they had a news reel and everything. And at noon that day I left for the United States; and I went through that whole funeral on crutches with a darn dry cast--on which I could put no weight--it was an enormous effort. I had



seen him one month before. I think the last time I saw General Eisenhower was around the twenty-eighth or ninth of January.

WICKMAN: I think that's right. We have the appointment books, and I think that's right.

WALTERS: And, you know, I found him extraordinary. He told me he knew he did not have long to live, but he said, "How can I complain when all the daydreams of my youth have been fulfilled?" You know I've rarely seen anybody with that kind of serenity and know that when he was dying that he did not have very long to live. It was a most beautiful, impressive thing.



WICKMAN: Yes, this is perfectly true. In one sense I--there was a couple of times, myself, because I was, in '66--in '66 I worked very closely with him. His standard toward the end made it a great deal easier in many ways for everybody.

WALTERS: You can tell what day that was, and I don't think it was thirty days before he died. I saw him at Walter Reed, and I don't think it was thirty days before he died. And the doctors told me to stay only a short time. So in fifteen minutes I got up to leave. And he said, "I know they told you to leave, but," he said, "I don't see you that often; and it's such fun talking to an old friend. Sit down." And he won the argument with the doctor, I stayed.

WICKMAN: You were present when he talked with both Adenauer and DeGaulle on various occasions. How did he get on with these two personalities?

WALTERS: Yes. Well, of course, I could spend a day with you on just his relationship with General De Gaulle. I think it could be summed up in something De Gaulle said to him. He said, "You know, we are two old generals who have written our memoirs. And in spite of the fact that we had a lot of contact, neither of us ever said anything unkind about the other."

WICKMAN: Did he make this statement, well, what, what,--



WALTERS: He made the statement as they both sat in dressing gowns and slippers in front of the fireplace at Rambouillet Castle about sixty miles southwest of Paris in what was to me one of the most extraordinary evenings of my life. Here were these two men reminiscing about the war: "What did you think of so and so? And what did you--did you know that we were to land that day?" "Yes, I did; I figure you didn't tell me because Roosevelt wouldn't let you."

WICKMAN: Well, what year was this about?

WALTERS: This was his last official visit to France. It was either '60--'59, I think it was late '59 or '60. I'm not sure. You can check this. It was late '59 or '60.

WICKMAN: I was wondering: was there ever in this association with De Gaulle--were there any changes from the end of the war period on through the presidency?

WALTERS: I don't think so. There was always a special bond between them.

WICKMAN: Sort of rapport there.



WALTERS: There was a kind of rapport between them. It was a very strange thing. There was a rapport between them. I remember I came back here after I was here; and I saw General De Gaulle; and he said, "Did you see General Eisenhower?" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "What did he say?" And I felt the urge surge in me to tell him what he'd said, and I thought I've just got to do it. I said to him, "Mon Generale, he asked me if by chance I saw you" --I didn't want him to presume to think that I, the defense attache, would see the chief of state--" he said if by any chance I saw you, would I convey to you his friendship, affectionation and admiration as always, even though he doesn't always understand everything you're doing." De Gaulle laughed; and he said, "I know, but between sovereign nations these things happen."

WICKMAN: This is what I was really getting at I think: the question of the official position of each man in the conference-- as opposed to the personal--

WALTERS: Yeah. You asked me about the official and personal relationship. I would say in the case of those two men the personal relationship overrode at all times--including when they were both presidents--any official relationship. In 1952 General Eisenhower was here at SHAPE, and he was going home. He had announced that he would accept the Republican nomination; and many people had been trying to get him to see General De Gaulle. But this was a very difficult thing to do because General De Gaulle at that time was the head of the opposition. General Eisenhower was living in quarters provided to him by the French government, and it was very difficult to find out some way in which he could see De Gaulle without offending the French government. And this problem was finally solved by Admiral [Thierry de] Argenlieu, who was the Grand Chancellor of the Order of Liberation, of which General Eisenhower was the only foreign titular. And he gave a dinner--a luncheon--at the hotel, at the headquarters of the order on the Rue Francois Premier--in other words--here--Francis I. And he invited a number of the great dignitaries of the order. As I remember he had there himself, Marshall [Alphonse] Juin, General [Pierre] Koenig, a Mr. [Andre] Poniatowski, and General De Gaulle, General Eisenhower, and myself. I was the only non-titular of the order there, and I was there for obvious reasons. And as we walked up the steps he introduced me to General De Gaulle; and General De Gaulle looked at me; and he said, "But I know Colonel Walters. The last time



I saw him was in General [Mark] Clark's van in Italy at Roccastrada where we were discussing the withdrawal of the French forces from Italy for the landing in the south of France." I mean this was incredible performance of memory; it was just unbelievable. They talked a little bit at the meeting; and then they went back on the porch; and General De Gaulle said to him, "The time is coming when you will be called to the government of your country and I will be called to the government of mine"--which was highly improbable in his case at that time. General Eisenhower--you could see it. And he said, "We must always maintain the relationship we have together for the good of our two countries." And they always did. I remember in discussing the nuclear weapons--well, perhaps this is one of the areas you may want to hold for a little while or attend to in a little while. General De Gaulle said, "Look, I cannot entrust the survival of France as a nation to an unknown successor of yours. I have no doubts about your credibility, with your relationship with us, if you would do what had to be done. But when the day comes and the Russians achieve the ability to strike your cities, some unknown successor of yours may not be willing to destroy the great cities of America to save France." He said, "Just as you would not entrust the survival of the United States as a nation to my unknown successor, you cannot expect me to do it to yours." He said, "You tell me I need no atomic weapons; but if you don't have them, you don't really count, do you?"



WICKMAN: How did General Eisenhower take this kind of--

WALTERS: He said, "Well," he said, "you know, we have the McMahon Act that prevents us from disclosing these things to you."

General De Gaulle made a plea, saying, "Look, I can't accept the fact that you think it is dangerous for me to have something that is known to a thousand Soviet corporals." General Eisenhower said, "Well, of course, you know my hands are tied by the McMahon Act." De Gaulle said, "That's a law. I changed the constitution of France." But ultimately General Eisenhower was basically unsympathetic to these arguments. Frankly, he preferred to be blunt. I think he understood De Gaulle's reason; but, whether he agreed with it as an American or not, I think he understood it--the Frenchman's form of reasoning in this respect. Of course, what obsessed De Gaulle is that we thought it was all right for the British and Soviets to have it but not for him--which to him was totally intolerable.

WICKMAN: Yes, well then the other--

WALTERS: But this discussion between them never became acrimonious, nor did I ever hear a dart passed one way or the other--you know, a sort of needle or anything else. And De Gaulle is given to rather caustic speech at times. I'll never forget what he said when General Eisenhower arrived here at le Bourget on that visit. He greeted him at the foot of the ladder, and he said what he said



in French first. And before I translated I knew it would move General Eisenhower very much, both as to content and the fact that De Gaulle was not a man who normally threw away bouquets or said nice things to people just to hear himself talk. He held out his hands like this--outstretched towards Eisenhower; and he said, "How welcome you are. Whatever may happen in the future, you will for us forever be the Generalissimo of the Armies of Freedom." I just saw the tears start in General Eisenhower's eyes. Because in his darkest heart I think this is to him the great moment of his life--even greater than being President of the United States--: the fact that he had led the army that liberated the Continent. There have been thirty-seven Presidents of the United States; there has been only one liberator of Europe.



WICKMAN: Were you there when General Eisenhower went to Churchill's funeral?

WALTERS: No, I did not go. I was lost in the jungles of Brazil that day, and I was crossing--I was going to the back lands. I was in a truck driving the Peruvian border which is 3700 miles from Rio. I won't say it's on a road because it wasn't a road. An old man came up; and he said, "You've just lost a great man, a great man." And I said, "What happened?" He said, "Churchill has died." I said, "I'm an American." He said, "You have lost a great man." I understood what he meant; we had all lost a great man.

WICKMAN: What were you doing in Brazil at that time?

WALTERS: I was defense attache then. Oh, I forgot. No, no. The place I really got to know General Eisenhower--I completely lost my thread. In 1946 General Eisenhower came to Brazil as chief of staff, and I lived with him for two weeks in the most close proximity. I went up to Belem to meet him in northern Brazil; and I flew down to Rio; and I briefed him; and I lived with him, you know, in the house and everything for about two weeks; and this is where I really got to know him.



WICKMAN: So this was the first time, for any length of time after the Algerian--

WALTERS: After the Algerian--purely perfunctory thing. I don't even think he knew my name. This was the first time that I really --you know--I mean I was with him and with her day and night and everything else. They were in the guest house; and I lived in the guest house with them; and this is where I really got to know them. You see almost nobody spoke Portugese in those days. I had practically a monopoly on the market. [Laughter]

WICKMAN: How many languages do you speak?

WALTERS: I speak eight.

WICKMAN: Well, I'm glad we got that point out.

WALTERS: No, no, this is right about the first part of our relationship. It was in Brazil.

WICKMAN: So there was no--on the SHAPE period then--there is nothing--

WALTERS: No, I knew him well enough that I'd go home to dinner and sit around while he and Mamie would talk and everything else--you know. I mean I'd already developed--

WICKMAN: No, I mean in SHAPE.

WALTERS: No, I did not know him in SHAPE then.

WICKMAN: You were in London--

WALTERS: No, in fact I remember I was--we took Rome the day before the landing. I was aide to General Clark, and during the night I heard the German radio announce landings. And I wondered whether I should go in and wake up General Clark or not, and I decided that I wouldn't. When I told him in the morning, his comment was, "The sons-a-bitches. They wouldn't let us have a headline for even one day." It was the fall of Rome, page five, column six. But I can remember I woke up about 3:00 o'clock in the morning, and I turned on this radio. We'd moved into the Excelsior Hotel that



night. It was the first time I slept in a building in a long time. I turned on the radio, and I heard the German radio blowing this bugle call that announce a special bulletin. And I listened to it; and I heard the German announcer say, "In the last half hour very heavy allied airborne landings have begun on Cotentin penninsula. The invasion fleet was approaching the coast, and the batteries of the Atlantic Wall will open fire." That was the end of the bulletin.

WICKMAN: So now we have--we've established the Brazil period; and then after that period--then the next would be--

WALTERS: Because at Brasilia the Brazilian welcome was almost hysterical--it really was. The welcome we got was just beyond belief.

WICKMAN: Why, do you think?

WALTERS: There was an aura about the man. There was an aura about the man that never really settled. You know, as familiar as I got with him, I never forgot this. You know, he was the Liberator of Europe; and he was the President of the United States --I mean. You know I've one marvelous incident that shows the human side of the man. In 1954 I had a very bad skiing accident. I was over here--I was in SHAPE still--; he was back and he was president. This dragged on for about a year. I had to have other



operations and bone grafts and everything else, and finally it healed. And about 1956 they put a metal rod in the canal of the bone to hold all the pieces together, and it healed and everything was great. But they told me I should take it out because it wasn't good to leave a foreign object like that in there that long. So I went into Walter Reed. And I saw him intermittently; I didn't see him continuously. I was working over at the Pentagon. And I don't know whether I told him or [Col. Robert] Schulz told him, or somebody told him I was in Walter Reed. I was in a very nice room with two other lieutenant colonels; I was a lieutenant colonel at the time. And I'd had the operation; and everything was going fine; and one day in came this enormous bunch of flowers with a card saying, you know, "Best wishes--get well soon--Ike and Mamie." So when I got out of the hospital, I thanked him for this; and he said, "Tell me, after they brought you the flowers did anything happen?" And I said, "Oh, yes, within ten minutes I was moved into a private room." [Laughter] He grinned and he said, "You know, I didn't want to ask for special treatment for you, but I kind of figured something like that would happen"--you know, which was the enormously human side of the man.

WICKMAN: That's his way, too.



WALTERS: Which is an enormously human side of the man. When I was up for promotion to full colonel, the board was meeting; and this was all I knew, you see. And De Gaulle was there at that time--no, this was after, no, in fact, well, that's another story. The board was meeting. So one day I went in to see him. I don't know who was there--the prime minister of Lebanon and somebody who spoke French from Morocco or some non-French francophile. And they moved on; and he looked up to me, a twinkle in his eye; and he said, "What about that promotion board? Have you heard anything?" And I said, "Well, I heard they finished their work, but I don't know who they recommended." And he grinned; and he said, "Don't tell anybody I told you, but you made it." [Laughter]

No, then the day I became a full colonel, General De Gaulle was in Washington. And he had been in General Eisenhower's office that morning, and they'd had a long talk. And at the end of the talk General Eisenhower opened the door, and he said, "Today Colonel Walters became a full colonel. I'm going to pin one of the eagles on him. General, he's worked a lot for you this morning; you pin the other one on." So I had the rather unique experience of having my eagles pinned on by General Eisenhower and General De Gaulle. That afternoon General De Gaulle--who three years before had given me a cigarette case--when I saw him that afternoon, he gave me a gold cigarette lighter; and he said, "Now, Walters, you who do not smoke, you have everything you need."



WICKMAN: This is another--could be another--point, too, which I've found very interesting, and there's no way to corroborate except by your testimony in a way unless we get somebody in the French government. But when General Eisenhower met with De Gaulle, did the French have any translators in the room?

WALTERS: Yes, they did. They did, but several times General De Gaulle said, "I prefer to be alone." He dismissed the French translator--in fact which happened to Mr. Pompidou on his last trip. At one point he wanted to talk about something very, very confidential, and he asked the French interpreter to leave--which was rather awkward for me. [Laughter]

WICKMAN: Very interesting. It's interesting. I can see in De Gaulle's case now--you were talking to him--



WALTERS: In fact I thought this was the greatest, marvelous compliment I ever got from De Gaulle.

WICKMAN: Yes, I would say so.

WALTERS: But, of course, De Gaulle understands enough English to know whether I was twisting what he'd say.

WICKMAN: That's a good point also.

WALTERS: I've heard him many times correct his interpreters--even in a lot of the shaded meanings. I have a feeling that he had very great comprehension.

WICKMAN: I would have suspected that just outside--

WALTERS: Nobody lives unmarred four years in London---.

WICKMAN: Yes, that is what I would suspect, too. Let's skip over for a minute to Adenauer. What kind of situation do you have-- Adenauer opposed to Eisenhower?

WALTERS: I think he felt very close to Adenauer in many ways. I think Adenauer's standards and his standards were very close to one another. He felt a certain moral, almost religious, kinship with Adenauer although he was Presbyterian and Adenauer was a Catholic. First of all, I think he was a little bit intrigued in dealing with somebody who was that much older than he was; and secondly, in dealing with somebody who had been an enemy. But I think he held Adenauer in very great esteem. Adenauer was his kind of people--as to the general moral values and things like that.

WICKMAN: And this was reciprocated by Adenauer?

WALTERS: Yes, I believe it was.



WICKMAN: It's interesting that in some ways they both have a similar position--different but nevertheless both with an aura of leadership.

WALTERS: When you talk about the "iron chancellor" of the Germans today, they're not talking about Bismarck any more. The chancellor --he had a special rapport with Adenauer.

WICKMAN: Were there other people that you noticed General Eisenhower had this with--other heads of state over the years?

WALTERS: Well, you know, you knew him, and you know the extraordinary sincerity--even in vain. You never--you could see General Eisenhower doing something wrong but doing something really crafty or underhanded--I don't, I don't think so.



WICKMAN: I was just wondering how other personalities responded to him.

WALTERS: Well, of course, I mean--to be blunt--anybody who could talk to him in English had an advantage. You know the British had Churchill, MacMillan, and people like that. They had an advantage by virtue of the fact that he could--he had real direct human contact with them. I'm trying to think, as we went around, you know, whether there was anybody who really had that kind of thing with him. He had an excellent relationships with, you know,

the French government and everything; but I don't think he had quite the same human relationship he had with De Gaulle.

WICKMAN: Well, what was from the--from the--

WALTERS: You know the wartime people he knew in wartime had a special advantage--MacMillan, De Gaulle.

WICKMAN: Were there any of their successors who were able to get close to that--come close to that?

WALTERS: I'm trying to, you know, think back in my mind's eye of the people that I saw him--that he saw. I can't--I wouldn't--say so. You know, the leaders of the Scandinavian countries, and the Low Countries, and Italy and Greece and Turkey--I don't think--

WICKMAN: There was one particular Frenchman--I can't remember--who seemed to have a particular relationship--became finance minister of France.

WALTERS: [Rene] Pleven or [Jules] Moch?

WICKMAN: Monnet, Jean Monnet?

WALTERS: Jean Monnet?

WICKMAN: Yes.



WALTERS: Well, I don't think he became finance minister. He was in a sense one of the fathers of the European Community. Yes, I think he got along with Monnet; but to be blunt, I think he respected Monnet more than Monnet respected him. Monnet is very much of an intellectual, an intellectual snob; and I just don't think he thought any military man could possibly be really intelligent at his level. I once had a Frenchwoman say to me--she was looking for a quotation, and she couldn't remember who it was--: and I said, "It was Jean Jacques Rousseau." And she looked at me; and she said, "You know, a cultured general is an upsetting experience." And there is a great deal of that over here. You know, "He's a general; therefore he's stupid." In fact not only over here but in the United States there was a sort of "he can't possibly be intelligent; he's a general; he's got to be stupid."



WICKMAN: I see. That's an interesting thing again in connection with De Gaulle moving into the premiership.

WALTERS: I would say they were two intelligent generals who recognized the other's intelligence.

WICKMAN: And sometimes very carefully estimated the opposition too.

WALTERS: But there was a warm relationship right to the end. General De Gaulle told me before General Eisenhower died that he would go--which was premeditated. He knew he would go.

WICKMAN: Let's see, I knew there was reason to do these things in sets because there--

WALTERS: The whole thing--the series of things that occurred to me that I remember today and I won't remember tomorrow. Just like this Brazillian phenomenon--I mean I would have passed that over completely, you know, and not remembered it.

WICKMAN: Yes, and it's extremely important because--



WALTERS: Where you got to where I established a personal, non-official relationship, you know. Oh, but I must tell you another --these are--I'm telling you some of these things not because they have really historical value per se, but because they show a facet of the man. When General De Gaulle was in Washington, there were a series of receptions and a couple of white-tie dinners.

WICKMAN: This would be during the Presidency?

WALTERS: 1960. And there was one more reception that De Gaulle was going to give him at the French embassy, and someone said to me, "You won't be going to that; he's taking one of the military aides." So I said, "Great." At about 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon

I got a phone call saying, "No, you're going to that with him." So I went home, and I was looking for my white tie thing, which you don't wear that often, you know. My mother said, "There isn't any. You told me you didn't have any more this week, and I sent them all out to the laundry." By this time it was about 6:00 o'clock at night. The stores were closed. I said, "Well, my God, what am I going to do? I've got to be there at 7:20." So I called up stores and nothing doing. So I was in despair. I called up John Eisenhower and said, "John, well have you got anything?" He said, "I'm not going to it. I'm going somewhere else." He said, "Come down here. Maybe we'll get you one; maybe one of mine will fit you." So I go down to the White House; and I go in the West Executive Entrance and go up. [John] Moaney is the one who greets me and John Eisenhower. And we look and John Eisenhower wears a fifteen, and I wear a sixteen and a half. So he wore a fifteen and a half, and I wore a sixteen and a half. But really it was too constricting; I couldn't have done it. So we looked all over and all over and nothing doing on the third floor. And then Moaney said, "Well, come down and let me see if, you know, the president doesn't have something that's closer to your size in something down here." So we went down to the second floor, which is the living part of the White House; and as the elevator door opened there stood General Eisenhower fully dressed with the grand sash of the Legion of Honor and everything else on him.



And he looked at me; and he grinned; and he said, "I understand you have a problem." And I said, "Mr. President, you will understand--" He said, "This is the funniest thing I've ever heard." And I said, "Mr. President you will understand that being the victim of it, I don't share your amusement." He said, "Come with me. Let's see what we can do." So he said, "Here, let me show you something. I wear a fifteen and a half; John wore a fifteen; and I wear a fifteen and a half." And he said, "When I was a young officer, I found out how you solved this problem." He said, "You see this hole. Now you take a nail file; and," he said, "you file it out of one side about a quarter of an inch." He said, "you file it on the other side a quarter of an inch. You mustn't tear it; cause if you tear it, it'll tear all the way through." And he reamed it out from each side; and he handed it to me; and he said, "Try that." It was a little tight, but it fit. He said, "Well, that solves your problem." So I said, "Yes, Mr. President, but frankly, I've never had my problems solved at this level before." [Laughter] Yes there was an extraordinary human quality in that respect. You know, he came in there, and he was reaming away--President of the United States, master of the bombs--with a little nail file, reaming out this--the eye hole in the cuff.



WICKMAN: This is something that also I think we're going to have. You know it's going to take a long time to gather all that information.

WALTERS: As I say, that story--it's a tremendous story to me. It has no real historical effect except that it indicates that this man was never that far away from real practical problems.

WICKMAN: And also the view he had of the office. You know, that he didn't--didn't wear this all the time. This wasn't--he hadn't been forced into some kind of mold and so-forth.

WALTERS: No, well, you see, he was one of the very few men who got into that office, you know, already being a tremendous figure in his own right, already being a world figure before he got there. You know, because even, say, somebody who's been vice-president like Mr. Nixon or Mr. Johnson--they're not really a world figure by virtue of that, whereas he was the number-one-level world figure before he got there. And then he had certain innate dignity: I mean nobody tapped him on the stomach or poked him in the ribs.

WICKMAN: No, no! And I've said frequently, too: you always knew who was in charge. Now this is a very subtle thing, really. It's not something that--

WALTERS: Another little anecdote. I think one of the few times I ever--one little thing that bothered him was this business of getting in airplanes last. And on that first trip around in '51 we stopped in Rome. Now he loved General Gruenther; General Gruenther was one of his dearest and closest friends. And I would



stay with him [Eisenhower] until the last minute at the foot of the gangplank to say goodbye to everybody and translate; and then when I saw he was ready to go, I just went up the ladder ahead of him. But he was very punctilious about everybody being on the airplane ahead of him. And General Gruenther, of course, had found all of his old Italian buddies from World War II, and they were hugging and embracing and everything else. And General Eisenhower was standing there, and I could see, you know, that this was not the most successful operation General Gruenther had conducted. So finally he [Eisenhower] looked at me; and said, "Get up on the aircraft." I went on board the aircraft, and he was right behind me. He said, "Sit down on the sofa in back of the aircraft." So I sat there. And I could see he was, you know, irked. So finally General Gruenther came in, you know; and Eisenhower looked at him. And he said, "Gruenther,"--it's the only time in my life I ever heard him call him anything other than Al--he said, "Gruenther, if you're going to work for me, there's one thing you're going to have to learn right now. Everybody else gets on the aircraft ahead of me. When I get on, the door closes; and the aircraft leaves; and anybody who isn't aboard is left behind." I don't think General Gruenther was ever in doubt again. And yet I heard General Eisenhower once say that if he had no other claim to fame, the fact that he had consecutively selected as chiefs of staff Bedell Smith and Al Gruenther would entitle him to good marks in that area.



WICKMAN: That's a fantastic--

WALTERS: I suppose you've talked at great length to General Gruenther.

WICKMAN: Oh, yes, yes.

WALTERS: He was enormously close to him.

WICKMAN: Well, General Gruenther is really--he and I have become very close too in this--

WALTERS: I think you appreciate what I mean when I say he was one of the most brilliant minds that I have ever known, if not perhaps the most brilliant. I don't know how, you know, the passage of years has affected him. I mean the years I knew him he was just extraordinary.



WICKMAN: No, the passage of years hasn't done any damage there. It now comes in flashes, though. I think he was probably more consistent when he was younger. But every now and then, you know, you get these flashes of where you can see the enormous intellect that he has--really great, very competent. I was watching several discussions in connection with the National Trust that kind of prove a point that it is interesting to watch with the National Trust. He'll let these people run just so far and then--

WALTERS: In a loud pinging note he will retake control if necessary!

WICKMAN: --and move it where it should have been, you know, fifteen minutes ago. He does this, and nobody ever gets upset really because it's just the right moment.

WALTERS: I would think that probably the time which I was in SHAPE --and even as President--he was more at ease and more at home with Gruenther than almost anyone else. He was sensitive, you know, to things--military cronies and all that; and that probably prevented him from appointing Gruenther to a position of great responsibility.

WICKMAN: It's rather an interesting period when General Gruenther came back and was over at the head of the Red Cross--



WALTERS: Everybody thought he was going to be secretary of state. He got a lot of negative reactions in Congress, you know. I think he may have put out feelers. I don't know--one or two things, you know.

WICKMAN: Well, we'll get there. If I remember wrong--or maybe not --go back a little; but wasn't there some of this when Bedell Smith was over in the State Department? You know he was--

WALTERS: Well, but it still in the, you know, pro-military euphoria or the post-war period; the gold and brass hadn't rubbed off as much.

WICKMAN: I mean I thought maybe there was a rumbling--

WALTERS: Well, there was--obviously there was--obviously there was some. I mean I didn't know Bedell Smith as well as I knew Eisenhower. I thought Bedell Smith was a tremendous driver and tremendous officer, but I had relatively little contact with him. I would not put him on the same intellectual level with General Gruenther.

WICKMAN: Did you have much contact outside of just social with General Eisenhower in the post-presidency?

WALTERS: Well, I'd go up and see him from time to time; you know, I'd go up and see him. You know, we'd reminisce and talk about things and stay to lunch there--things like that.

WICKMAN: But there's no, no--

WALTERS: No, you see, I was out of the United States during that whole period. The only time I was here was when I came back on trips because, you see, I went abroad in August of '60, which was before he left the presidency; and I have not yet returned to be stationed in the United States. I went from, then, the United States to Italy to Brazil to Vietnam to here [Paris]. So I would see him only when I went back on trips, and I would try when I got back to go up and see him at least once. You know, we'd talk about various things and so forth. And when I was here, as I say, he'd occasionally give me messages of this type to General De Gaulle and asked



me how things were going in France--you know. You know, you have this popularized, New York Times type version of General Eisenhower: an amiable boob. Well, when I remember the penetrating questions he would ask me about French political figures--you know as recently as a year or two before his death--it just doesn't match the New York Times view.



WICKMAN: No, this is the thing--

WALTERS: This is true of Italy also. After I went to Italy I came back once when he went to Mexico to see the President of Mexico. And boy, he just flipped me over saying--how this man retained in his head; you know, he was dealing with about 118 countries or whatever there was in the United Nations--how about A, how about B, how about C, how about D, what's the influence of this, what's the coupling of these two people. This business that he never read a newspaper and didn't know what was going on--it's just balderdash. This man was enormously well informed, and he had a phenomenally retentive memory.

WICKMAN: How did--let's try it on the Russian side--how did this go?

WALTERS: Well, I think that he always felt that he had a certain relationship with Zhukov, but I think again that--

WICKMAN: Similar to that of the old comrade in arms?

WALTERS: Yes, similar to that, but, of course, he always--you know --he told me once how he asked Zhukov how they dealt with a mine field. And Zhukov said they just ordered the first wave through, and a large number were killed. They ordered the second wave through: a smaller number were killed. And by the time they got to the fourth wave they had a passage. Well, you know, this kind of lack of regard for human life was simply horrifying. But I remember he once told me that the most difficult decision he had to make in the whole war was not the decision of the landing but the decision of dropping the airborne troops the night before. All his experts told him he would have casualties upwards of fifty percent, and he said this was really --he just wrestled with this with his conscience. But he felt that he could--the operation--could not be a success unless these airborne landings were made behind the Germans. And the hardest decision he had to make was the decision to send those three airborne divisions that night. And, of course, casualties were nothing remotely approaching the horrifying figures that all the experts had told him he would have. I remember him telling me that. He said, "That was the hardest decision I had to make: to send those young men to where it appeared to be half of them would be killed or [inaudible]. And yet all of the planners said the operation cannot succeed unless this airborne operation takes place behind the beach." I saw him once after "The Longest Day" came out. And in "The Longest Day," you know, he's supposed to have said: "We've got to go because the troops

have been in the boats for forty-eight hours, and they can't stand any more." He said, "That's the silliest thing I ever heard." He said, "I'd have left them on the boats for forty-eight days if need be." He said, "We went that day because that was the day to go; and we'd have to wait a month; and we didn't know what was coming; and we didn't know what was in the warheads of the V-1; and we knew they were close to coming."

I once asked him who he thought was the greatest German general --this is a personalized note; and he said he never fought against [Erich von] Manstein. He said [Erwin] Rommel was a great tactician, but [Gerd von] Rundstedt was the greatest strategist.

WICKMAN: Well, the Russians--let's get back for a moment.

WALTERS: Yes, the Russians. I didn't have too much because I didn't speak Russian at the time, so I didn't have too much rapport. I was at the villa in Geneva when Zhukov came to see him, and it was a friendly enough meeting. The only thing I can remember--the Russians --that I had any part in was at the Geneva conference when he made his "Open Skies" proposal. He wound up this thing very eloquently by saying, "This is a question of belief and trust, and I would do anything--anything--to prove to you our sincerity." And at that moment there was a tremendous clap of thunder, a flash of lightning, a clap of thunder. Every light in the building went out, and he looked up and he grinned and he said, "Gee, I didn't think it would have that effect." [Laughter]



WICKMAN: The "Open Skies" proposal is a very good point. As a matter of fact, I want to ask you because you were there--because you were able to converse with other people from other nations--: how did--at the time--how was this proposal received?

WALTERS: Well, I think the British and French and most of the Americans thought it was a great idea, but I think no one had any illusions that the Russians with their passion for secrecy would ever accept it. It was perfectly obvious there that Khrushchev was the boss. Bulganin was technically the head of the delegation, but I've seen him just push Bulganin aside and talk to him.

WICKMAN: How did, well you weren't, did you say you--

WALTERS: I was not privy to the American--

WICKMAN: You were not privy, yeah. I've often wondered how Eisenhower did get on with--you know, as far as personalities go --with, say, Khrushchev because this is--

WALTERS: Oh, I think he got along quite well with Khrushchev. I think Khrushchev understood him. I think he had a fairly happy personal relationship with Khrushchev although he had no doubt in his mind that Khrushchev would like to bury him if he could. I heard one story. I don't know whether this is true or not; I can't vouch for its authenticity because I can't clearly remember whether he told me or somebody else told me; maybe I shouldn't tell you that;



but that is the truth. And that is that when they were coming back in a helicopter from Andrews--either going or coming--it was close to one of the rush hours--either morning or afternoon--Khrushchev looked out of the airplane--and, of course, there were millions cars on the road--and Washington is a city of small homes; and he said, "What a waste! What a waste!" And Eisenhower said, "What waste?" And he said, "All of those people riding to and from work in private cars--they should be riding buses and saving gasoline. And, he said, "all those people living in private houses when they should be living in apartment houses and saving land for agricultural production." And as I remember this General Eisenhower said, "Agricultural production! Don't talk to me about agricultural production." He said, "We've both got an agricultural problem. Yours is shortages, and ours is the surpluses for which we pay a billion dollars storage a year. But, he said, "you know our people want to drive their own cars; and our people want to live in individual homes; and in our system we try and give our people what they want rather than tell them what's good for them." And Khrushchev said, "Well, my people don't want private automobiles." General Eisenhower said, "If you really believe that, I don't know how long you'll occupy your job." I can't remember whether that's a "heard" story. It's lost in the haze of my mind. I couldn't truthfully tell you that he told me; I'm not sure who told me. It was interesting. It's a great, great example of basic philosophy combined with that dry humor, you know, that--"don't talk to me about agricultural production," you know, "it's coming out of my ears!" [Laughter]



WICKMAN: Yes especially in the second Eisenhower administration.

WALTERS: I'm afraid I'm digressing a lot because I jump around--

WICKMAN: No, no, that's all right, everybody does.

WALTERS: Everybody does?

WICKMAN: Yes.

WALTERS: I thought you would have some marvelously organized minds. We just start out and flow smoothly in chronological sequence.

WICKMAN: One of the most interesting things is that the many people who are not close to General Eisenhower--many people who were not--people who were down the line a ways--when you interview some of these, sometimes they are the ones who can do this. They do it because their work or their routine was such that it ran in a straight line; and if you start them off, then they'll just go right on through it. When they come to the end, that's all there is. But anybody who had a close contact or anybody whose work was as yours was is bound to do this because things keep coming up--they surface--you know.

WALTERS: What I'm trying to do frankly a little bit is--I know you know all the historical data and all the factual data--is to illustrate the man a little bit with perhaps things I alone saw or knew.



WICKMAN: Which is exactly what we want.

WALTERS: There is no use telling you what he looked like or how tall he was or how he walked or anything like that. I mean this you know about a thousand times better than I do.

WICKMAN: That's right, that's the--

WALTERS: What I'm searching my memory for is things that someone else might know about.



[Interruption]

WALTERS: Two people for whom I think he had considerable admiration and even affection were De Gaulle and Adenauer. These were two people who--I think he realized General De Gaulle was a proud, unreasonable man, but I think he could not help but admire him for his [inaudible] as a man [inaudible] the steadfastness in his faith. And he was very much admired right up to the end. I mean the last time I saw him he said to me, "Have you seen General De Gaulle? Give him my warmest regards" and so forth. Although he disagreed with De Gaulle on many things, I think the arguments I mentioned that De Gaulle had used in connection with atomic bomb made a deep impression on him. I think he thought General De Gaulle was a really great man.

I think he thought Adenauer was a great man. Although, as I say, he had this great war against the Germans, I think he saw in Adenauer the capability of the German people to develop a democratic government; and he saw a great steadfastness and resolution in this man and a personal integrity which appealed to him. I think the integrity of the man's life was an important thing in his relationship with General Eisenhower; and there was that integrity in De Gaulle's life and there was that integrity in Adenauer's life that appealed to him very much.

With the British he had an almost family relationship--with someone like MacMillan I mean who was not really like a foreigner to him--but particularly MacMillan with whom he had been closely associated during the war. In regard to other statesmen, I think --and again I'm expressing my view of what his thought was, but he didn't put it in quite these blunt words--I think he thought Nehru was a colorful but unrealistic figure. And I believe I recall one story that he told me; I'm pretty sure that he told me this. But Nehru was telling him once how he and his sister had laid down in the road in Amritsar in 1919 to stop the British tanks and that the British tanks had stopped. And Eisenhower said to him, "You realize that if the tanks had belonged to some other country, they might not have stopped."



WICKMAN: That's a very interesting story.

WALTERS: And as a matter of fact in the original trip, the exploratory trip for SHAPE in '51, we came out of the Claridge's Hotel; and there was Nehru in a bowler hat with an umbrella over his arm and looking more like a British gentleman, than any British gentleman. And he was really embarrassed. You know this was the height of the Communist wave of propaganda: General Eisenhower was coming to Europe to set up aggression against the Soviet Union and all of this business. And Nehru was really embarrassed at being seen in the street. General Eisenhower was in uniform; he was coming out; he was going to some British--some British thing--some meeting with the British. But Nehru was then at the height of his neutrality flip. This was before the Chinese Communist had given him the back of the hand. He was really quite embarrassed. It was in the car after that as I recall that General Eisenhower told me this story of when he had been at Columbia, Nehru had come to see him; and he told him this at that time.



Let me see if I can--he was very impressed with the personality --I'm not saying the politics--of General Franco. When we went to see General Franco, General Eisenhower asked him for his estimate of what was happening in the communist world. And he had the same impression that I did: I mean Franco did this completely dispassionately without any heat or anger or anything else. And as we came out he said something or other: "it was hard to believe that

he fought a war against those people on the soil of his own country for three years." He talked about it--Franco talked about it--in a completely detached, non-agitated fashion. You would have expected more passion from a Spaniard to begin with and even more so from one who had been involved in a war against people he regarded as Communists which the Soviet Union undoubtedly was assisting. Let me see who else.

WICKMAN: That's funny, I was going to ask you about Franco the other day. I was wondering what the--if you could dredge up any impressions of that particular part of the trip in Spain.



WALTERS: Of course, one of the impressions of the trip was that, you know, at the time he went to Madrid a lot of people--or the opposition in Spain--and, you know, to be blunt, people like the New York Times and the Washington Post had trumpeted the fact that the opposition had put out the word that nobody should go as a sign of the opposition to Franco. Well, of course there were more people in the streets than the population of Madrid. One of the things that amused me was this big edificio española, which is about a thirty-two story building. They had lighted the windows to form the letters, I-K-E. And, of course, there was an absolutely a phenomenal welcome. And when they'd got to the Castellana, both he and Franco got out of the car and went to see the mayor. And I mean the crowd was all around them there. And again, I always

give a personal impression. And the next day I read Marquis Childs account; and it said, "Last night General Eisenhower entered Madrid under sullen skies with small crowds held back by huge forces of police." And I couldn't help taking him to task. And he said, "Well, that's the way it looked to me." But I said, "You were in the town behind it." [Laughter]

I think he had considerable respect for Franco as individual. Again, in Franco's life there was this same kind of integrity. Whether you like him or not politically, I mean there's no scandal of any sort in his life. And I think that was--well, I remember in connection with that, I remember in the early days of SHAPE he gave a luncheon. And he had some French politicians in there; and I'm pretty sure it was Guy Mollet, who was one of the leaders and subsequently Prime Minister of France, who was holding out on the fact that Spain should not be brought into NATO and that Spain was a Fascist dictatorship and that Spain was this, that and the other. And Eisenhower said to him, "But if the Germans are fifty miles from Paris and there were ten Spanish divisions available, you wouldn't want to use them?" And the guy--I don't remember the reply, but it wasn't much. He either nodded or shrugged or something else.

WICKMAN: I was wondering in this reception in Spain if again-- was just the Spanish reaction or people's reaction to Eisenhower?



Or was it the fact that the, in a sense, the ice in a very cold situation had been broken by his coming?

WALTERS: I think it was somewhat of both. In fact, I'll tell you a story that involved me personally in this connection, and I don't know whether this really had any influence in it or not. But I went over to see Jim Hagerty before the trip; and he was describing the itinerary to me; and then he said, "Then we'll go to Paris, and then from Paris we'll fly to Morocco." And I said, "Do I understand correctly that the President is going to visit Morocco which is throwing us out of the bases and overfly Spain which is letting us stay?" And Jim Hagerty said that "Spain is a military dictatorship." I said, "What do you think Pakistan is? What do you think Afghanistan is? What do you think Turkey is?" And I said, "we're going to all of them!" Well he didn't say anything, but the next schedule I saw contained a stop in Madrid. Now whether that had any influence on it or not I don't know. This was before the December 1959, the big trip out to India, Pakistan, and all that.

WICKMAN: Twenty-seven nations.

WALTERS: Yes, right. But you see there is in Spain a very hard core of opposition to Franco. I'll be honest with you. I was in Spain. I lived in Spain just before the Civil War, and had I been a Spaniard--I am not a Fascist; I am not a rightist; I do not believe in un-democratic forms of government. But if I had the



alternative on which side I would have fought, I wouldn't have hesitated for one minute: I would have fought on Franco's side. I am not totally objective or unprejudiced about this. I have friends--I have connections in Spain and everything else. In my opinion the Spanish Civil War was the first prelude to the great assault of the West--which doesn't mean I endorse everything General Franco has done; which doesn't mean I am a Falangist or anything else. But you know it reminded me very much of a friend of mine when it was going on here [in Paris] in May, 1968. Finally the day came. You know they had this big demonstration which involved a million people out here, and I went that night to a restaurant which is owned by a friend of mine who is very anti-Gaullist. And while I was sitting there, he sneaked in with a flag in his hand, sort of wrapped it up rather sheepishly, and put it in the corner. I said, "Where have you been?" "Oh," he said, "I have been down to the Champs Elysees." I said, "I thought you were against the general." He said, "I am, but in the light of the alternative that was offered to me I went out and demonstrated for him." And there is a little bit of that; I mean people talked as though there was really a democratic alternative possible in Spain. There wasn't. There was the possibility of General Franco or communist dictatorship: those were the two alternatives that were present. And I may be wrong, but--I may be putting words in his mouth--but I talked to him [Eisenhower] about Spain on a number



of occasions because I'm interested in it. I don't think his view was very far from this. It wasn't a perfect government; it wasn't the kind of government we'd want or anything else for ourselves; but I think he thought that in the possible alternatives it was--

WICKMAN: This was something, of course, that comes through over and over again with General Eisenhower.

WALTERS: For a long period of time you get this thing. You don't get a flat statement of these things but you get some little remarks and things as you go along.

WICKMAN: Dealing with this idea, dealing with the world as it is, with what--as opposed to--

WALTERS: Exactly. With the world of reality as opposed to the world that would be, or we would like the world to be. I think I heard him once say that we have to deal with the world the way it is rather than the way we would like it to be and the important thing is to recognize the difference. You know, not to take our desires for reality, which is an important factor.

In Italy, of course, there wasn't any--in the early days I think he had great admiration for [Alcide] De Gasperi, you know, who had brought Italy up from the ashes of defeat and so forth. But in the time when he was president, Gasperi was already gone;



and there was a series of different political figures, not really large ones. I mean there were people like [Amintore] Fanfani and [Mario] Scelba. Both came to the United States, and both of whom I translated for with him in the United States. One man I remember he had some admiration for was [Giuseppe] Pella, who was minister of the treasury in Italy for a long time. I think the thing he admired about Pella was Pella about 1948 as finance minister, or minister of economy--national economy--had set the lira at 625 to the dollar. And he had been in every government for about fifteen years, but the one thing that he just held fast as a rock to was the lira at 625 to the dollar. And I might add that twenty-two years later the lira is at 625 to the dollar. [Laughter] Let me see who else.

WICKMAN: Well, another think I was going to ask you: Did--was there any occasion during the Suez--



WALTERS: Oh, I got to--I just thought of one. No, I wasn't around during the Suez crisis. In fact, I was not in sympathy with what our government did at the time of the Suez crisis. I thought it was a bad mistake, and I thought it was opening the door in Africa. I told this to Hagerty--I didn't get to tell it to the President--I told it to Hagerty. I said it was in a sense opening the door of Africa to the other side. They were up against a NATO alliance;

and not being able to go through it without provoking general war, they did what every commander has done since the dawn of history when he comes up against a line he can't cross: he tries to out-flank it.

But I must tell one I remember very distinctly. He went to Germany the day of the New Hampshire primary--again I'm jumping around in time, and you can eventually resplice this. And I was the only person who went with him. I don't know how this happened --I can't remember how this happened--that I was the only person who went with him from Paris to Germany. You know, it's curious. I mean usually there were several people. You know, there was the chief of staff or the chief of operations--somebody. I don't know how I was the only person who went with him that day. And everyday everywhere kept handing me the latest bulletins from the New Hampshire primary, which, of course, he was winning handily. As far as I knew, he was supposed not to be interested in it, and finally on the way back in the airplane I gave him the latest bulletin. I said, "General, I probably shouldn't do this; and I know you're not interested in it; but anyway," I said, "here it is." He looked at it; and he looked up; and he grinned; and he said, "Well," he said, "any American who didn't feel proud if that many of his fellow countrymen felt that way about him would be a difficult guy to understand." He grinned then, and he realized the situation I'd been in, you know, with this thing too.



I remember one day [inaudible] and he finally announced that he would accept the Republican nomination; and an announcement was to be made at SHAPE by General [Charles Trueman] Lanham, who was the chief of public information. And I was to make it in French because there was an enormous press corps out there, and everything was done in both languages and so on. So the appointed time came and no General Lanham, no General Lanham, no General Lanham, no General Lanham. And General Lanham was usually very prompt about these things, and then I was very puzzled. Finally about twenty minutes later General Lanham came out holding his hands like this across his stomach. Finally he made the announcement. Afterwards I discovered that what had happened is that his zipper had gotten stuck, and they finally had to sew it closed so he could appear at the ceremony. [Laughter] Needless to say, the newspapermen they just listened through to, you know, "I will accept." And boom! They were out of the room, leaving Lanham practically with an empty press office there. But I watched him you know. That summer one of my jobs was to take care of many of these politicians who came over--

WICKMAN: Now this, let's get this down.

WALTERS: --to bring pressure on him, and I don't think he really made up his mind till quite late.



WICKMAN: You mean the summer before?

WALTERS: Yes, the election was--yes, oh, well, it started really right after he got to SHAPE. You know, this idea was taking hold, but it became more acute in the autumn of '51 and the spring and summer--the spring--of '52 because he left on May second. You know, they were all coming up, and they obviously knew he didn't want to talk about it. And you could see the roundabout ways, you know, of launching the subject. You could see the roundabout ways. They'd say, "Well, anybody who enjoys broad consent--does he really have the obligation regardless of his personal inclination," you know, to do this, that, and the other? I personally don't think he made up his mind until quite late on it; I think he toyed with the idea --at the end of the war. I mean there was the precedent of Grant, a commander-in-chief. I'm not saying that there was a comparison or anything, but I just--you know he liked his privacy. And I think he realized how much of it he would lose--although he'd lost so much of it already by virtue of this--; but he realized he'd lose even more in virtue of that. And then, he always, you know--one thought that always came back is that "Mamie and I have never had a home. You know, we've moved, and moved, and moved, and moved, and moved, and moved, and moved, and moved." And he realized this would prolong even further the period in which he wouldn't actually have a home of his own even though he might be living in one of the larger ones in the country. [Laughter]



WICKMAN: One of the better staffed ones.

WALTERS: One of the better staffed ones, yes.

WICKMAN: Well, when he went--

WALTERS: You know he was a very friendly man, but in his intimacy he was a--I don't know how to quite put this in words. He liked people very much; He was a gregarious man; he liked people. But he had a sort of inner perimeter, and the number of people who came into that perimeter was relatively limited--if I can put it that way. With his intimacy he was relatively limited. He had really two phases of perimeter around him. I mean he allowed many more people in the outer perimeter than most public figures do, but a relatively small number in the inner perimeter of the thing--you know, in close intimacy with a close part of his life, you know, and so forth. Even I recall once when he was president, I went up; and he was in his underwear. Well, you know, the number of people that--he said, "Come in." I didn't walk in. He said to me, "Well you're doing something or other." And he was in his underwear. Well, I mean the number of people that he would do that to was relatively limited. And I think one of the reasons why he used me, for instance, in his translations and so forth was that he was used to me: it wasn't a further stranger being intruded on to his privacy. In other words, he could easily have gotten other people to do this for him. I mean there were a lot of people that



speak all these languages and so forth; but it would have meant letting one further person inside that perimeter, which was a form of his own privacy. Again, as I get back to.

He was a great doodler you know. I have a couple of his doodles. Even in conferences he would doodle endlessly. And then sometimes--I have a couple of changes he'd make in a speech. You know, he'd make the speech in English. And then while I was translating, he'd want to change some part of it; so he would scribble it on a piece of paper and hand it to me. And then when I got to that part of the speech, I had to give out the second version. And sometimes someone would say to me: "You didn't translate at all what he said." I said, "But I did what he told me he said!" [Laughter]



WICKMAN: This is a question I've been--I have to jump around too while I think of it--but the question that does frequently come up is this: did the general have any facility in French or any other language besides English?

WALTERS: No, he frequently complained bitterly of it. You know, he used to complain to this to such a point [that] I said, "But, General,"--one day I said to him when he was complaining about this--"But," I said, "General, the facility with languages will get you a job as head waiter or a courtier in some big hotel. You have been amply compensated in other areas." He grinned, and he laughed.

WICKMAN: I was just wondering because--

WALTERS: He used to often mention that. I think it sort of puzzled him. He was a modest man, but he was not unaware of his gifts in many fields. And this genuinely puzzled him: how he could have lived in France for two years and not learned French was something that genuinely puzzled him.

WICKMAN: Yes, so it would appear to [inaudible].

WALTERS: Yes, I mean, it's common. There's no real large American community and no PX, and the Embassy had twelve people in it and things like that. He was much more immersed in the French community than somebody living here now would be or even in the time when SHAPE was here or something like that. And I think he was genuinely a little puzzled about this. He used to say, "I have a block where languages are concerned." And, in fact, in one of his books in discussing me he made some mention of this or something or other; he made some reference to this. But as I once told him, I said, "General, the languages will get you a job as a head waiter or a courtier but," I said, "you've been amply compensated in other areas."



WICKMAN: Oh, dear. Let's see, I have some other point. He went back to--May 2nd--went back to the United States to run for the presidency. What did you do then?

WALTERS: I stayed at SHAPE. I stayed at SHAPE through Ridgway and Gruenther, and I came back to the--I told you I was sent for for the Bermuda Conference. And then I came back here, and had a bad accident. I broke my leg. In fact, I was in a cast for two years, and I went to Geneva either in a cast or I had a steel brace on my leg--one or the other. I remember in Geneva we went into a store; and he went to buy some dolls for his grandchildren; and he didn't have any money; and I had to pay for the dolls. We were coming back to the Rhone Hotel, and all of sudden he just said, "I'm going into that store," you know. And so the panic of the Secret Service and everything else, and he just walked into the store. And he fooled around, and he bought some dolls for his granddaughters, you know. Suddenly he put his hand in his pocket, and he said, "Has anybody got any money--Swiss money?" And I said, "Yes, I do." And I paid for them; I was, of course, reimbursed.

You know, another thing, I mean this may not be the most favorable thing in the world, but I noticed that I worked for General [George C.] Marshall too--and I'm trying to phrase this right so I don't say it wrong--there was a sort of awe in both men for anybody who made, himself, a great, great deal of money. I think this arose from the fact that they spent their whole lives in the Army and even when they went through the ceiling that existed when they came into the Army, that is, became five-star generals and advanced to the new grade, that they still earned relatively so



little money compared to somebody, you know, who is earning 250, 350, 400 thousand dollars a year. There was a sort of awe--a little bit of an awe--not for the man but for the fact that this type of thing was possible.

He was always concerned--you know, they had lifted this thing about the military-industrial complex out of its "context"; if they would read the whole speech, they would see. But I know one thing he was bothered about in France was the relatively low position of the military in national life. You know, he'd go to some town, and there would be about eighteen people outranking the local general. And he used to talk to Jules Moch about this, the French defense minister who was a socialist. And, of course, he used to have arguments with him about God, too, which were very interesting. I've read Moch's book called, Encounters with Eisenhower [Rencontres avec Darlan, Eisenhower], and, of course, the purpose is to make Moch look good. But they used to have arguments with him. And Moch once said to him, "Oh," he said, "in my constituency almost nobody believes in God." And Eisenhower looked at him and said, "Do you think that's a good thing?" And you know, there was a little thing on that. And, of course, Eisenhower used to talk about, you know, the non-material values; and this was really--used to sort of puzzle Moch, who sort of wondered, "Am I facing Billy Graham or the Allied Commander?" You know this was Moch's view of us, Moch taking a very cynical view about all such things. And he said to him--and Moch



said, "Well, our precedence is set from so and so." And he was very concerned about the pay of many of the nations, you know, who were at SHAPE because they earned so little compared to Americans. And he brought great pressure to bear on many of the countries to do something about this, and many of them did because of this. In fact, this is how he conceived the whole idea of the SHAPE village. One of the things that disturbed him at SHAPE was the difference in the standard of living of the American personnel and other personnel. You know, a Greek colonel I mean would earn about the equivalent of an American corporal, and the result is that they lived totally--



WICKMAN: How did he become aware of this disparity? Do you know what--

WALTERS: I'm not sure how he actually became aware of it, but he did. Whether he became aware of it through the all-seeing eye of General Gruenther, you know, who would sort of tell him this or whether--. I don't think he went out that much for him to be aware of, you know, from his own personal observation, but he was a very perceptive man, you know. Many times I would think I was giving him some news about something, and he would say, "Oh, yes, I know." I don't know how he knew, but he was very perceptive. He always appeared to be on this high level, but he was very aware of a lot of material things that were happening around him. And

he had a great ability when someone was talking to retain what they were saying even if he didn't stop them and ask for re-emphasis. I was surprised at this many times. Someone would say something in a conversation; and he'd refer to something they just touched on; and I'd say, "Oh, did you notice that, General?" "Oh, yes," he said, "I noticed it." And I had thought it was something that would not interest him at all, but he'd bring it in. And he conceived this idea of SHAPE village where people would be housed, broadly speaking, on the basis of rank and the number of children they had.

WICKMAN: Much like the Army in the United States.

WALTERS: Yes, so that, you know, a Greek colonel lived just as well as an American colonel. He felt that this disparity in living standards produced frictions that he did not want. And he conceived this idea of SHAPE village, and he conceived the idea of a SHAPE school where all these kids would go to school. Different nationalities would go together. He thought this would be a lesson in tolerance, and he pushed these very hard. And these were financed largely by the French government in a difficult budgetary time for the French; and if they came to be, it was in a large part because he squeezed the local authorities to do it. He felt that you couldn't really have a harmonious headquarters when people of the same rank were living in totally different conditions. Most of the trips that I'd go around with him he'd bring up this question



with the other people and say, "You've simply got to do this. If you don't do this, you will get second class people; and you can't afford second class people."

WICKMAN: That's a very good point because it's carrying on with the same philosophy from SHAEF.

WALTERS: But it also carries on, you see, the terrific thing that always struck me about General Eisenhower: his understanding of people. No matter how high he got, he was always aware of this fact: that if you had five people stacked in two rooms, this wasn't a good situation. I mean he had twenty rooms, yes, but a lot of people when they get twenty rooms forget what it's like to live in two rooms. He did not. He was enormously aware of people.

I don't think General Eisenhower would have been totally happy in the computer age simply because he thought people were the fundamental governing factor in everything. I still do, computer age or no computer age. This is one of the reasons why I think I felt such an affection for him. He was so considerate of people. I'm trying to think of some example of this, but it was so much a part of his nature, you know, that it didn't strike me when he did it after awhile because he just was considerate of people. In all the association I had with him I never saw him in any way ever humiliate anybody, no matter how humble or how low, you know, or really call anybody down in front of anybody else, with the one exception of



this Gruenther episode I told you about. Why he sat me down I don't know because he could have done it perfectly well alone.

There's one other thing that he laughed at himself that I'm trying to remember, one episode. It'll come back to me in a minute; maybe not right this minute; but it'll come back to me in a minute. No, I think he was a man who had an intense feeling for people. He liked people. He was a very gregarious man although he liked his privacy when he went home and so forth. When he could lunch at SHAPE, you know, he liked to have people in. He'd rotate people so he could get everybody from every nationality in and talk to them. And, as I say, you know, he always had this aura around him. I mean it's more difficult for Americans to understand. To Americans he was their leader abroad, but to Europeans he was the Liberator. And this was always around him no matter what he did.

I can remember when he came to Paris--I guess it was '57--, and we had decided to give some weapons to the Tunisians who were in bad thing with the French or something at that time. And there was some concern about, you know, what his reception would be like. It was just fantastic even through those "red" suburbs of Paris. I mean it was tremendous, tremendous.

WICKMAN: That's another subject we can touch on: the Algerian crisis that France had--the reaction to this--because this again would be a problem for him.



WALTERS: Yes, well, I don't think he felt as strongly about anti-colonialism, let me say, as the State Department did. On that interview that I told you about that thing with General De Gaulle --when De Gaulle said to him, "You and I are both going to be called to run our countries"--they went into the back; and they sat there; and they talked. I have never discussed this with anybody about various things--about, what were the things--that Americans did in France that irritated the French. And one little episode was, you know, in France the law says that all headlights must be yellow. And Americans would bring their cars in, and they wouldn't change the headlights. And De Gaulle said to him, "One of the things that--you know, you have all these cars here that don't comply with our legislation." De Gaulle was not in the government yet, but in France you're supposed to have yellow headlights. And all these cars were running around with white headlights. General Eisenhower said, "I can see that." And he turned to me, and he said, "What color headlights do you have on your car?" And I said, "White, General." He said, "They'll be yellow this afternoon, won't they?" I said, "Yes, sir." [Laughter]

Another thing De Gaulle said to him--one of the things he did --and this is ironic in view of the fact that De Gaulle was the one who ultimately abandoned Algeria--but De Gaulle made a great plea at that time for the French colonies: you know, that the presence of France was necessary until they could educate these people and



bring them to a level where they could govern themselves and so forth and so on. And one of the things that De Gaulle--you see Eisenhower by this time had announced that he was going home to accept the nomination, that at least in his case it was fairly clear that there was a high percentage of probability that he would be the next president. And De Gaulle said, "One of the things that bothers us is that your consulates are absolute havens for all the independence, anti-French leaders." And De Gaulle implied that we were stirring up some of this independence feeling, which was a widespread feeling in France at that time and it still is in many cases. And De Gaulle said in the course of that, "You know a great many Americans live under the illusion that George Washington was an Indian chief who drove out the British colonialists. As you well know this is historic fiction. He was the leader of the colons, the settlers, who drove out the metropolitan government and locked up the Arabs on reservations." [Laughter]

Eisenhower said to him, "I give you my word if I become president, we will do nothing to aggravate your burden; but you must understand that we cannot prevent our consuls from talking to people. That is a function of a consulate. Your consulates talk to people; our consulates talk to people." That seemed to satisfy De Gaulle in that respect. I think he was basically conservative in this respect. I think he thought that eventually people would accede to self-government, but I don't think he was one of those who felt it had



to be that afternoon. I think that he felt they were forming an elite and eventually would, you know, create people that could govern themselves. I don't think General Eisenhower--and again now this is my opinion of his views rather than quoting him--I don't think Eisenhower was an advocate of the return to the Greek city-state, that is, of independence for everybody in ever increasing small states like Barbados and Jamaica and Antigua and all of this business. He was a very strong supporter, as you know, of unity in Europe. I mean he was one of the driving forces, and he was very disappointed when the European Defense Community didn't work. In fact I personally had a peculiar session on that with Douglas MacArthur II who was, I believe, at that time the counsel of the State Department. After General Eisenhower became president, he [MacArthur] came over here, and he asked me, "Is this going to pass?" And I said, "No." And I said, "It can't pass." I said, "All you've got to do is a mathematical problem. You look at the French Chamber of Deputies. The Socialists are against it; the Communists are against it; and the Gaullists are against it. That's more than half the French Chamber of Deputies." MacArthur said, "The president said he'd relieve any American officer who said that." And I said, "Doug, any American officer who said that publicly should be relieved; but when you as the counselor of the State Department ask me my private view as someone who has lived in France for a long time and I can't tell you the facts, we're in trouble." So that I don't think this is exactly what he said. I think he wanted to know the real answer.



But he [Eisenhower] was very disappointed. He constantly kept talking to the Europeans about this question of unity and, you know, "why should 250 million Europeans be defended by 200 million Americans." I mean he said, "You've got the skills, you've got the industrial capacity"--much more today, in fact, than they did then. And he always held out the long-term possibility that the United States would not stay forever and defend them. I mean he pressed them very much to organize themselves so that they could bear the major part of this burden. He did believe very much in "United Europe." And he was sometimes impatient, you know, when they would give him this --I've seen him express a little impatience when they would give him: "Oh, well, there's two thousand years of history." He said, "Yes, but look what's staring you in the face!"



WICKMAN: There's that reality again.

WALTERS: Yes, again, exactly. The reality, the pragmatism, rather than the dream; rather than the dream world. Yes, it'd be nice to have been--I remember once some Frenchman was giving him this thing of "We must never furl the battle flags of Bouvines and Austerlitz." He said, "Yeah, but you may not have any flags at all to fly or furl if you don't do something about this."

[Interruption]

WALTERS: Speaking of Governor Harriman, of course he was a great bridge player too. And when he was here for the "Wise Men" exercise on NATO, which is a review of what should be done in the military and economic field--in which General [Andrew J.] Goodpaster was his military assistant as a full colonel they used to go out and play bridge at Marnes-la-Coquette with Marshal Juin, who used to be a member of that expedition too--General Gruenther, General Eisenhower, Marshal Juin, Mr. Harriman. And I remember he said one night--I don't know how I was there--he said, "Well, Ike," he said, "if you accept the Republican nomination and you run and the Democrats nominate somebody I can support like Adlai Stevenson, I'm going to campaign against you." And General Eisenhower said, "Well, of course, Averell." He said, "That's the democratic way." You know, there was just one little exchange on that.

And on that, let me see whether there were other episodes of that type. There were--no, no, many of these political figures that came over were sort of varied, almost frenzied on getting him to run. They would tell me, you know, "Do everything you can to convince him that he should run" and so forth. And I said, "I can't talk to him about something like this. I don't have that kind of a relationship with him." In fact, the nearest I ever came to discussing that sort of thing with him was the New Hampshire primary.



WICKMAN: When he was at SHAPE, was Bedell Smith the one whom he relied on for this kind of very close confidence--someone he could talk to--Gruenther or--

WALTERS: Well, Gruenther, of course. I mean Gruenther was as close to him as anybody. And, of course, when he was president, I think Andy Goodpaster was probably as close to him as anybody. I presume you've seen him or will see him.

WICKMAN: Yes. We haven't done tape on General Goodpaster.

WALTERS: In my opinion the two last years of General Eisenhower's presidency--with the exception of Mrs. Eisenhower--no one in the world was closer to him than Andy Goodpaster. I don't think historically people realize--

WICKMAN: No, this is quite true; they don't. This is something I've realized only belatedly and only because the General and I got to talking about it once--back in '67 I think.

WALTERS: His admiration for Goodpaster was enormous. The last time I saw him, a month before he died, he said he would recommend to Mr. Nixon that he make him supreme allied commander for two years and then chairman of the joint chiefs of staff. I remember even to me, you know, he used to talk about Goodpaster with enormous admiration.



WICKMAN: I wonder if that was--I met General Goodpaster--

WALTERS: He was very withdrawn and hard to get to talk. I don't know how much you'll get out of Goodpaster. I wish you great luck with this.

WICKMAN: This is what I was wondering. I was wondering where he and General Eisenhower got this rapport.

WALTERS: As far as I know, they got it at SHAPE. Gruenther had picked out Goodpaster early, and Goodpaster came over here in December of '50. And really he [Goodpaster] had about five people. He had the very first, "advance" detachment, and, of course, he has an enormous mind.

WICKMAN: Oh, yes, yes. There's no question about that. I was just wondering if--

WALTERS: I think what Eisenhower was attracted to in Goodpaster was the tremendous mental capacity, the tremendous balance, and the tremendous self-effacement. He never attempted to use his relationship with General Eisenhower. In fact that for two years he could be the closest man in the country to the president without anybody realizing it--. And, of course, Eisenhower I think was conscious of this "military" business at the beginning of it, you know. This was the reaction from World War II when the military occupied an enormous pedestal. He was very cautious about this



emphasizing, you know, Goodpaster's presence there. This was always underplayed and not much talked about. It was always Andy Goodpaster and never General Goodpaster; and he was always in civilian clothes even on official occasions. I never saw him in uniform the whole time he was in the White House.

WICKMAN: Very interesting. That's a point too.

WALTERS: And Eisenhower was not particularly frightened of uniforms, like many people are, you know. At SHAPE he always wore a uniform. And in fact he was the one that established the practice that at SHAPE everybody would wear a uniform, unlike in the Pentagon where most people wear civilian clothes. I think he did not feel that a uniform--as some of our friends in the State Department think--is necessarily a red rag to a bull to most people. And I think he understood profoundly the psychological need for the visible American presence in Europe in those years. But I don't know what the exact--but Goodpaster had an unparalleled access to him.

WICKMAN: Well, I stumbled on to this only because in his post-presidency they maintained this. And General Goodpaster was very, very close in advising him. Again, this is something that, you know, history doesn't know. It's almost impossible to record. We got to a point where we had a particular problem to work out, and it involved some people. I was coming to Washington, and General Eisenhower told me to go see General Goodpaster down at



the War College. I began to get that naturally through his interview, you know, that the General knew a great deal about what was going up at Gettysburg that he couldn't have known unless he was the General's confidant. That's an interesting point.

WALTERS: I would say after that that John Foster Dulles--nobody in the U.S. Government was closer to General Eisenhower. I don't say he didn't have personal friends like General Gruenther, but in the government I don't think anybody--with the possible exception of his son--had this kind of closeness with him.

WICKMAN: General Eisenhower always seemed to prefer to work that way too. There was always one person. There were a few, a very limited number.

WALTERS: Oh, yes, several. I said two, for instance. There were more than two. There was one periphery of general closeness where he didn't mind people seeing him in his shirt sleeves and his underwear, and then there was an even closer periphery--which maybe was occupied over a period of time by Bedell Smith, Alfred Gruenther, and Andy Goodpaster--with whom he really let himself go because he figured they had no political ambitions and so forth and would never use anything he told them or said to them to advance themselves politically. And I think this inner periphery consisted of these three people. I'm not talking about his family life or anything, but I'm talking about in his contact with the world. There was



this inner periphery of these three. Maybe there was somebody else that doesn't immediately come to my mind. Probably Mr. Dulles was in there pretty close--although I once had awkward situation with Dulles. The president had told me that when I wrote a memorandum of a conversation for him, it was not to be given to anybody until he had initialed it. And one day at White Sulphur Springs, where he had been meeting with the president of Mexico and prime minister of Canada, I was in my underwear in my room when John Foster Dulles opened the door and came in and said, "Give me that memorandum on the President's talk with the president of Mexico." And I said, "Mr. Secretary, this puts me in a very awkward position. I'm a lieutenant colonel, and you're the Secretary of State. But I must tell you the President directed me specifically that I was to give this to no one until he had initialed it, and I am bound by this." "All right." And he walked out. And I was quite, you know, concerned as to how he had taken this. And I must say the next day when I saw him, he called me over; and--Dulles, this is--and he said, "I want to thank you. You did a fine job for us." And I knew then that he had understood and forgiven me. But General Eisenhower was very strict about that. And actually the real release was given to me by Goodpaster. You know, he'd say, "The President has noted that. You can give it out to somebody."

WICKMAN: Did you have many occasions to work for Dulles?



WALTERS: Not too many. At these various conferences, of course, he'd be there--at Bermuda, at White Sulphur Springs. I think [Christian A.] Herter was at Geneva. That sort of thing. I recall one extraordinary incident with Dulles--and both Dulles and the President. I think it was President [Arturo] Frondizi of Argentina who was on a state visit to the United States, and there was a dinner at the White House. General [Nathan Farragut] Twining, who was then the chairman of the joint chiefs, caught my eye and called me. And I went over to him, and he gave me a note. He said, "Give this to the President." And I walked over to the President with it, and I handed it to him. He looked at it, and he said, "Show it to Foster." So I walked over to him. And he showed to me--the President showed it to me and what it said. It was from the commander of the Naval Air Station at Argentia, Newfoundland; and best as I remember, it said something like this: "At 2018 tonight the airliner"--I don't know whether it was KLM or SAS, a Scandinavian airline--"carrying Anistas Mikoyan and his party made a forced landing at this air field with one engine on fire, another engine stopped. We are taking care of them and nobody's injured." And the President showed it to me to read. You know, he held it up in position for me to read it, and he said, "Show it to Foster." And I took it over to Mr. Dulles, who had had his first operation already--you know, he knew he had that--, and he looked at it. He looked up at me, and he gave one of his wintry smiles. He said,



"Now maybe Mikoyan won't be disturbed by all those U.S. bases spread around the world." [Laughter] Now that's something nobody else will tell you because he said it to me, you know; I mean there was no one else there. Yes, but he would have that ironic--.

This same visit I remember Frondizi told the President that he was the son of a railroad worker and his father was an Italian immigrant who had come to Argentina. He said, "I have eleven brothers and sisters, and", he said, "you can tell the progress of the railroad by where they were born"--you know, further and further up the railroad. And he said, "You know, it is an extraordinary thing that I am the son of a poor Italian immigrant sitting here at the White House with the President of the United States and who is General Eisenhower." And how proud--he said this to General Eisenhower. And afterwards he [Eisenhower] commented to me. He said, "How remarkable that this man would say a thing like this even if he really felt it." You know, he liked that, that the guy said this very frankly to him.

He liked Frondizi also. When he went to Argentina, I remember he was quite moved. His last place in Argentina was Bariloche in the south where he went fishing, and he didn't catch anything. And when he came back, the newspapermen all clambered around and said, "He's not well, is he? He doesn't look well, does he?" And I said, "No, he's perfectly all right. He just didn't catch anything" [Laughter] And in one of the great fish streams of the world, you



know! And I remember as we left Bariloche there was a ceremony, and the president of Argentina made a speech, you know, farewell. And he [Eisenhower] made a speech. And then the Argentines played the national anthem, and everybody--including the soldiers that present arms, the audience, the Argentine newspapermen, and President Frondizi--sang it. And he was quite taken with that. Even the president, who was standing alongside of him, sang it.

I'm trying to remember some episodes of the Panama Conference. You know, I was there with him when he came down. He had just been operated on. The wound was still draining on that abdominal operation that he had when he came. Oh well, yes, I can remember one from that. As a matter of fact, that just reminds me of two. There was a meeting of the American presidents in Panama--I'm sure you can find this historically--, and there was to be a session, an afternoon session, where each of the presidents was going to make a very brief statement. And they had told them, "Look, General Eisenhower has just recovered from an operation. Don't make this long." And the president of Argentina got up and spoke for five or for four minutes; and the president of Brazil got up and spoke for three minutes; and the president of Chile spoke for two minutes. Somebody else got up and spoke for a tremendous period of time. Some of the presidents of the small countries launched into the most tremendous diatribes. This whole thing was scheduled to last an hour. It lasted four hours. And he sat there in this



courtyard of the President's Palace in Panama, and, of course, everybody was looking in terror, you know. And General [Howard] Snyder was looking at him, and he said, "He's all right; he's all right; he's all right." And I could see he wasn't interested, so I stopped translating the diatribes. I translated the three minutes. I was sitting right behind him you see. I translated the two or three minute speeches. But I remember this fellow [Jose Maria] Valasco Ibarra--who is right now president for the fifth time of Ecuador. He was the president-elect, and he was one of the last people to speak. And he said, "I know that this was dragged out much longer than it should have, and therefore I will be very brief." Forty minutes later he was still talking, and General Eisenhower said to me, "If he's being brief, I wonder what he would be like if he weren't!" [Laughter] But he lasted to everyone's surprise and he lasted through it. It was outrageous. It lasted four hours.

Another time I remember when Marshal [Jean] de Lattre de Tassigny died, who had commanded the First French Army under him during the war. He died. He had been high commissioner in Indo-China, and he had lost his son there and so forth. And he came back, and he died. He came back from Indo-China, and he died here. In fact, I'm having lunch with his widow on Friday. The French government chose this occasion to have the first really big military ceremonies since the end of World War II--I suppose, you know, to raise the national spirit and everything. They had a tremendous



ceremony at Notre Dame, and then they were going to walk in a procession from Notre Dame to the Invalides behind the body. And they asked General Eisenhower to be one of the--I don't know what it's called in English; they have a little cordon, you know, from the caisson; and you hold it. Sort of a pall bearer, but not like a funeral procession in the United States in that you actually hold on to something. And they did.

So there was an argument within SHAPE as to whether he should do it or not, and everybody was saying, "Oh, no, General, it's going to be very cold; and it may rain; and it may this, that, and the other." And he heard them through, and everybody told him he shouldn't do it. I felt strongly that he should, but I hadn't gotten to speak my piece yet, you know, for the whole relationship of the French. And finally he looked at them, and he said, "Well, don't you think this is the least thing I can do for an old comrade in arms?" And that was the end of the discussion.

So he walked from Notre Dame, which was a heck of a long--it was about a four mile walk. And when we got to the Invalides, I got to sit in the grandstand; but he was standing out there by the coffin while Mr. [Rene] Pleven, who was the minister of defense, spoke for forty-five minutes. Then he went into the chapel of the Invalides where the body was to lie in state, and that's where I finally caught up with him. And he was sitting there, and I said, "General, are you still alive?" He said, "Yes, but only just!"



Again, there was that human feeling. Again, I had a feeling that he felt that he hadn't given de Lattre [de Tassigny] quite as much place in Crusade in Europe as he should have. I mean I heard him once talk about that--you know, the [inaudible] thing. He did not give him quite as much place as he should have in the Crusade in Europe, and this in a way--a little way of making up for it.

WICKMAN: Yes, yes. You brought something to my mind which we really ought to get on here. When you translated for him--you know, technically, mechanically--how did you do this? You said at one point that you sat behind him at this meeting--

WALTERS: Yes.

WICKMAN: Did you type up, were you writing simultaneously, or--

WALTERS: Ah, there were two kinds: in small meetings it was simultaneous; in the big meetings it was consecutive. And sometimes there was equipment provided. You know, I was in the cabin and translating in the cabin. So there were three ways of doing it. He did not really like simultaneous. It saved an awful lot of time, but it distracted his thinking.

WICKMAN: I see. That's interesting.



WALTERS: In meeting alone with the chiefs of state it would be consecutive. At the Geneva Conference I was sitting at the table; it was consecutive. And that's how he could pass me these notes and say, "Change what I said to so-and-so." But he did not like the consecutive. He'd accept it sometimes simply in the interest of saving time.

WICKMAN: Did not like consecutive?

WALTERS: Did not like the simultaneous.

WICKMAN: Simultaneous.

WALTERS: He did not like the simultaneous. Correction. It sort of disturbed his sort of analysis process as he went along and listened to what the man said.

WICKMAN: Then when you would get in the situation where he was alone with someone you had three of you.

WALTERS: That would be consecutive, no. Where it would be simultaneous is if there were a lot of people, you know, and there was considerable talking going on and it really would have taken so long. But I would then sometimes condense it for him.

WICKMAN: I just thought that one little thing that's gotten away from everybody.



WALTERS: No, that was generally consecutive. That was generally consecutive. He liked that because, you know, it gave him time to reflect on what was said. And again, as I say, if he felt he could improve what he'd said, you know--particularly toward the end while I was doing it--he'd say, "Well, change that to so-and-so," which was very disturbing to me, incidentally, because you got a tape threaded, you know, and suddenly break it off and insert this and then go on--quite a difficult mental process, see, to do. I habitually tried not to take notes because I found that frightened people. In a big formal conference--sitting at a table--I would take notes. You know each party, answer and rebuttal, counter rebuttal, and everything else. But with the chief of state I would never take notes.



WICKMAN: Did you, did you ever do a--

WALTERS: I do for Mr. Nixon. He likes it, you know, to have it word for word, but General Eisenhower didn't.

WICKMAN: Did you, in a long speech for example--what did you do? He gave it, and then you--

WALTERS: Well, this was sometimes very difficult to do. At the Hotel de Ville here he spoke for eleven minutes one day without stopping, and then I had to get up and repeat it. And I heard the White House recording. The sequence isn't total, but there

isn't any missing [Laughter]. Rather [inaudible]. So much so, that when I walked back away from the microphone, General De Gaulle, who spoke quite good English, looked at me. He was and he said, "Very good, Walters." [Laughter] But, of course, it was easy for me because what General Eisenhower told was the story of his relationship with General De Gaulle which I'd heard before. So really--I mean he could have just started telling it and stopped, and I could have gone on because I had heard the whole story of this meeting with General De Gaulle.

WICKMAN: Yes, I was wondering that--

WALTERS: He did not--incidentally getting back to General De Gaulle --General Eisenhower several times said to me that he felt that Mr. Roosevelt had made a mistake and had antagonized General De Gaulle unnecessarily. But it was fairly obvious fairly soon that he did represent the feelings of most French people, and Mr. Roosevelt stubbornly insisted on trying to invent General [Henri Honore] Giraud or something else. And he felt that General De Gaulle did have some complaint about the way he had been treated by us during the war. In fact this came up at that meeting sitting around the chimney one night in the Rambouillet Castle here. And I forget what it was, but General De Gaulle had not been told. And he said, "But I understood perfectly well that Mr. Roosevelt had instructed you not to tell me." And General Eisenhower nodded.



WICKMAN: The burden of my question I guess was really whether if he had a long speech whether or not he gave an advance text.

WALTERS: Never. Never. Well, that depends. At the formal speeches for instance, in South America before the parliaments and that sort of thing, yes, I would have one. And in the [inaudible] Chile I had a terrible experience because it was finally touched up so late that they gave it to me and I only got about half of it translated. You know, in a speech before the Parliament I wanted to have it, if possible, translated and read it, you know, so it would have the same timing. And we had to go to the Chilean Congress when I only had half of it translated, so I left the other half of the speech in Spanish with somebody else to translate it and he didn't get it to me later. Well he [Eisenhower] delivered the whole thing all the way through in English first, and I had started through in Spanish. And I saw myself getting closer and closer to the end of what I had, and I didn't have the other half, you know. Finally--it was like the cavalry to the rescue at the last minute--I was in the last paragraph when somebody thrust the rest into my hand, but it was handwritten and I had great difficulty reading the writing.

I remember one occasion earlier. He was reading a speech. He read it, and he'd pause paragraph by paragraph. He did it either one or the other, but in this one he paused paragraph by paragraph. And he held it so I could see over his shoulder in English, which



meant there was no method of memory. I'd just read it in the other language. And I remember I was, you know, quite distracted and wasn't paying much attention because I knew I would be able to read it when he stopped at the end of the paragraph. And I was looking around and wandering and everything else, and all of a sudden he read the last paragraph and folded the piece of paper and put it back in his pocket. [Laughter] But I was fortunately able to finish it. You know it was sort of a disconcerting---

WICKMAN: On the twenty-seven nation tour were you with him in the Philippines?

WALTERS: No. No, I did not go to the Far East with him.

WICKMAN: Not at all?

WALTERS: No, that was the only foreign trip I didn't go on. See, I didn't speak any of those languages there, so I didn't go. Let me see if there is anything else I can remember for you. He was very happy here at Marnes-la-Coquette, you know. He mentioned several times this was the first time they had had a house where they could settle down and everything. He liked it very much.

WICKMAN: Which has now been sold.

WALTERS: Yes. He liked it very much; and, of course, it was convenient to SHAPE and everything, you know.



WICKMAN: He seems to have liked the whole SHAPE experience, really.

WALTERS: Well, as I told you---

WICKMAN: It was almost like a second--not a second chance--that's not the right--but--

WALTERS: Yes, well, somebody said, "He stayed here twice." Many people have, you know, done this sort of thing once but rarely have been in it twice.

WICKMAN: Yes. I don't know how they would have got it off the ground.

WALTERS: Yes, I mean the Atlantic Alliance didn't exist until he came. It was a paper document without any reality until he came. And if it had been anybody else, it would never have infused that depth to it. I mean here it is--what--twenty-two years later! I mean no alliance in the history of the world has lasted in an effective, activated form like that.

WICKMAN: I wonder if there were other instances like the one with the SHAPE village. I mean, you know, little things that he did that helped to smooth out this business or things that he had done to even frictions between the nationalities involved.

WALTERS: Well, you know, you've heard the famous story--the SHAEF story--about the guy who called somebody a British son-of-a-bitch.



WICKMAN: Yes.

WALTERS: Well, he was very much that. Anybody who had trouble-- not in personality clashes but on national clashes--they went. You know, anybody who didn't like Greeks or didn't like [inaudible] --when that came to his attention, and they didn't stay. He was very intolerant of that kind of bigotry or intolerant national feeling.

WICKMAN: Which sensitivity in itself is--

WALTERS: Which from a man from middle America was quite remarkable, yes. [Laughter] You know in many ways he had more foreign experience and had lived abroad perhaps more than any other American president. In my opinion he was a more profoundly American president than any of his predecessors or successors whom I knew with the possible exception of Mr. Truman, who was profoundly American also. Much more so, for instance, than Mr. Kennedy, who was really an international cosmopolite, you know, who came abroad three or four times a year every year of his life, you know, and moved in the cafe-set of Paris and so forth. General Eisenhower really was from middle America. And in the best and broadest sense of it, without the narrowness and yet with the homely virtues that are middle America.



I don't know. I would say, without boasting, I have been associated with a number of these people in my life. They are fairly common people. I mean I've done this for Mr. Truman; I did it for General Eisenhower; I've done it for Mr. Nixon, both as a vice-president and as president; and I've accompanied a large number of foreign dignitaries to the United States of America. I've translated for Sir Winston Churchill, General De Gaulle. In fact, I once translated between General De Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer, which for an American is rather an unusual experience.

WICKMAN: How did you get in that position?

WALTERS: Well, it was one of these quadripartite meetings, you know. De Gaulle just said to me as though it was the most natural thing in the world, "Well, tell the Chancellor so and so."

WICKMAN: Yes, I see.

WALTERS: So I told the Chancellor so and so.



WICKMAN: And how with Churchill--that's the same thing?

WALTERS: Churchill was very funny. I remember at the Bermuda Conference I was talking to [Joseph] Laniel, the prime minister of France, and Churchill came up. And I knew he spoke some French, so I moved away. Churchill beckoned me back. I came back. And

he said something. I translated it. And he turned and he looked at me; and he said, "You have translated for me before. Where?" And I said, "On the 25 of August 1944, Prime Minister, you came to the Brazilian Expeditionary Force, and I translated your speech to them." "That's right. Have a cigar." [Laughter] And he went on with it.

Let me remember something about General Eisenhower that I hadn't --now which meeting am I thinking of--oh, the meeting was with Khrushchev, the U-2 meeting. I was present at that. And I think one of the things that made an impression of General De Gaulle from that was De Gaulle was absolutely magnificent at that meeting, and frankly, he dominated it. Khrushchev was storming, "I've been overflown." De Gaulle said, "So have I." And Khrushchev said, "Yes, by your American allies." And De Gaulle said, "No, by you." Khrushchev said, "Me?" De Gaulle said, "Yes. Eighteen times yesterday that satellite you launched before this conference began overflew the sky of France without my permission. How do I know you do not have a camera aboard that?" And Khrushchev raised his hands, looked up piously at heaven, and said in Russian, "God sees me, my hands are clean. You don't think I would put a camera on that?" And De Gaulle said, "And [with] what did you take those pictures of the farside of the moon you showed us with such pride?" And Khrushchev said, "Oh, on that we had a camera." "Uh-huh," said De Gaulle. "On that you had a camera."



When Khrushchev had finished with all this, De Gaulle turned to him, and he said, "The day after the U-2 was shot down I sent my ambassador to see you to ask you whether there would be any point in having this conference. You knew everything then that you knew now. And yet you have imposed conditions that the President of the United States cannot possibly accept, and you know it. And in so doing you have brought General Eisenhower here from the United States for nothing; you have brought the British prime minister here for nothing; and you have put me to grave personal inconvenience."

As we went out of the meeting--Khrushchev, as you know, stormed out of the meeting and slammed the door--and as we went out, I walked down the stairs with General Eisenhower and General De Gaulle and myself--alone, the three of us. And on the landing De Gaulle stopped, and he said, "I don't know what's going to happen or what Mr. Khrushchev is going to do; but I want you to know that whatever happens, we are with you to the end." Nobody else heard that. And I think that also colored his feelings towards General De Gaulle.

I remember a meeting on Berlin. I don't know whether it was the same occasion. It was a tripartite meeting: the British, French and U.S. And the question arose as to what they would do about Berlin. And both General Eisenhower and Mr. MacMillan spoke, but it wasn't; frankly; totally clear to me whether we would fight for Berlin or not. We would obviously view it as very grave, and we would take the appropriate measures. General De Gaulle said,



"I don't know whether you're going to fight for Berlin or not, but I am. The only way they can get me out of there is by force." And then he smiled, and he said, "And, frankly, if I fight, do you really have any choice?" Which again was one of the coloring things of this relationship with General Eisenhower.

General Eisenhower felt that, you know--he did not really respect many of the French politicians that he dealt with. They were obviously conniving and trying to use him for advantage in this jockeying of parties and everything else. And I think the fact that De Gaulle never attempted to do any of this increased General Eisenhower's respect for him. I would say that in a sense he was almost closer to De Gaulle than anybody else who didn't speak English among these foreign people with whom he dealt. As I say, all the times that I saw him after I came here he always asked me to give General De Gaulle his warmest regards and so forth, which I invariably did.



When General Eisenhower went to see the Pope it was a very cordial meeting with Pope John. And at the end there was a joke told. Well, they were letting the photographers in; and there was a picture, which I have somewhere here. The president roaring with laughter; the Pope roaring with laughter; and I was standing between them, and I was roaring with laughter. And one of the newspapermen came to me and said, "That must have been a good joke."

I said, "It was, a very good one." And he said, "What was it?" And I said, "I'm sorry, you've got to ask one of the participants in the conversation." And he shook his finger in my face, and he said, "The American people have the right to know." I said, "I think so too; but I think they should exercise the right with the participants in the conversation, not with me." And in the passage of time the joke was simply this: The Pope said, "Well," he said, "you know I have language problems." He said, "I speak French; and I speak Bulgarian; and I speak Turkish; but I don't speak any English." And General Eisenhower said, "Well, are you doing anything about it?" The Pope said, "Yes." He said, "I am." He said, "Monsignor [James Patrick] Ryan is giving me an English lesson every day, but," he said, "I'm an old man, and I'm not learning very fast." And the president said, "Well, how are you doing?" The Pope said, "Well, the more I study English, the more I realize that Papal infallibility does not cover pronunciation." [Laughter]

WICKMAN: Very good.

WALTERS: At that same meeting incidentally I went in to the Pope. And the President shook hands with him; John shook hands with him; and Barbara shook hands with him; and--I can't remember whether it was Herter or Dulles--the Secretary of State shook hands with him; and I, being a card-carrying "fish eater," kissed the ring. And



the Pope looked up, and he said, "Ah, one of ours." [Laughter]
General Eisenhower--on that meeting with the Pope--he made sure
that everybody in his entourage, no matter how far down, who was
a Catholic got in to see the Pope--even people who normally would
not have been with him, you know, on such a thing. If he knew
they were Catholics, they got into see the Pope.

[End of Interview]

