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INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT A. LOVETT
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, SEPT. 1951 - JAN. 1953

by

ALFRED GOLDBERG AND HARRY B. YOSHPE
NEW YORK CITY
MAY 13, 1974

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GOLDBERG: We might begin, Mr. Lovett, by asking whether you were involved in any way in planning for the national security structure which was brought into being by the National Security Act of 1947.

LOVETT: Yes, I was, in a remote way. In the War Department of which the Air Force was a part at that time (it was then the Air Corps), we had a very careful survey made of what was called "autonomy", using the procurement machinery existing then under Judge Patterson. But the Air Corps retained the choice - selection of aircraft and specifications and the quantities and the setup of operational units, getting away from the awkward business of having a General Headquarters Air Force and then the Air Corps in addition to that. It became almost impossible to operate intelligently over a wide area of the earth with so cumbersome a setup. So we were involved in straightening that out first.

My involvement was first there. As the war progressed, toward the latter part of it, you recall, we went to Congress and had hearings

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as I recall it before a Congressman (I think it was Robertson of Virginia, I'm not sure) and Carl Vinson who was a strong advocate of the Navy. We were for a separate Air Force. Army was agreeable. We were already operating successfully under an autonomous arrangement with the Army, which was very well done as a matter of fact.

GOLDBERG: May I interject a question here? Before you became Assistant Secretary of War for Air did you have these ideas about the desirability and even necessity of a separate Air Force? Was this a conviction of yours?

LOVETT: It was a conviction of mine in one sense. I was a Navy airman in World War I. My wings were No 66. I was one of the early ones involved, in that I was one of the first to be sent abroad and was there attached to the British Royal Naval Air Service, having gotten my French Military Brevet (my French wings) at Tours, in France. And the French had little or no available equipment which wasn't already manned.

The British had had a substantial Naval Air Arm which was doing a beautiful job, operating of course with land planes. So the query was, in effect, why do you have the Naval Air Service operating with land planes and another Air Service, quite different, operating under Army command?

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The answers, of course, were composed largely of indications of the speciality that was required in the way of training in each of those branches. It was no good sending an Army airman, for example, out to try to spot a submarine, unless he knew what to do if he found it, and the British developed what was then called the "fan bombing pattern." If you see a submarine in a certain direction there are only certain things it can do. It can turn full left and full right or half forward or on a middle course, or it can stand still, or it could theoretically reverse and dive or something of that sort. Obviously you had to be specially trained for that kind of work.

I was then put in charge of U. S. Naval Squadron No 1, which was big night bombers, after I had flown with the British at the front out of a place called Couderkerque. We flew Handley Page land-based bombers with the British, with the famous No 7 Squadron Royal Naval Air Service, which was the 5th group under Captain Lamb of the Royal Navy. Before going to them I had flown the Felixstowe Furies out of Harwich Harbour, which was usually a convoy trip. In other words, it was a big flying boat with Rolls Royce engines.

All during that time we were planning to get the U. S. Naval Air Service properly equipped for use in both sea and land operations. Clearly the most efficient plane, given landing fields, was a land plane. But the advantage of the seaplane is you don't have to have a prepared

field. You can go into harbors and all sorts of things - so the selection of those two things in the operation of the two different type services became crystal clear in the night bombing activities in which I had operated in the land planes of the British Naval Command. We didn't have radar and the equipment which one has available today, but at night you had a better chance in that you couldn't be attacked in the slower planes by single seater fighters.

GOLDBERG: What targets were you going after?

LOVETT: We were going after Zeebrugge, Bruges, Ostend, Nieuwport, Valenciennes, (Submarinebases) that kind of thing. I was with them during the great Zeebrugge Raid, with Captain Carpenter of the British Navy, who was in command.

GOLDBERG: Do your views on the independent Air Force go back to these years?

LOVETT: Go back to the experience of World War I and the sweat, tears, and blood which were shed trying to find the most effective way of getting at the enemy in the 1940s. Mind you, Germany had never been invaded by anybody associated with the Allies. It was virgin territory, and the only way we could get into Germany, in my view, having tried it, was by air. It was clearly the most effective way of disturbing and interrupting their communications - and communications, of course, was everything during the war. I mean trains, canals, boats and all

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that sort of thing.

GOLDBERG: Were you also influenced by the British experience and the British establishment of the independent Air Force?

LOVETT: Yes, strongly. It was for the better. The Germans had the same thing. Every Air Force so to speak was independent. Except ours.

GOLDBERG: Well, then, during World War II your views on this subject were in accord with those of Arnold and Spaatz and the other people who wanted an independent Air Force.

LOVETT: Oh, yes. Not quite as far to the right, if you choose, as Arnold and some of the others were. I didn't believe that the Army was a subsidiary Service or the Navy was a subsidiary Service at all. But I thought the Air Force was entitled to equality in consideration of the sharing of the national treasure which was being poured into defense.

GOLDBERG: What were your views on the role of the Naval Air Service during the period of the unification hearings and discussions.

LOVETT: Again the Naval Air Service had a very definite role, it had the strike force, of course, with the Navy. It should be very powerful, together with the submarines. And the limitation of 100 miles at sea, the

artificial limitation on the naval plane, was an absurdity as the engine reliability increased, and there was no reason to say that they had to have a pontoon aircraft or boat to fly anything that flew. "Anymore than to say the Navy shouldn't have any field piece or cannon or anything over, say, a 3 inch gun. My views were really forged in the furnace of war itself, trying to get the operation done. Of course, in World War II, the effectiveness of the Navy arm was very apparent. If you take any of the big battles, you can see what those SBDs and TBs did there. You take torpedoes and launch them from all sides of the vessels by highly trained crews and you've got an awful job defending yourself.

GOLDBERG: Then you were more moderate in your views on the role of Navy Air than were Arnold and Spaatz and the other people.

LOVETT: Yes, absolutely. This business, that you can scrap the carriers, that sort of thing; that was nonsense. You couldn't scrap them, and you haven't been able to scrap them since.

GOLDBERG: You left Washington then at the end of 1945 or thereabouts and returned again in 1947 as the Under Secretary of State.

LOVETT: I was afraid you were going to ask me that, so I looked it up. It keeps slipping - when you get to be 79 things aren't as clear. I became Special Assistant to the Secretary of War on December 19, 1940. The bill establishing the post of the Assistant Secretary of War for Air,

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which was really Secretary of Air, was passed, but the Navy bill setting up the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air hadn't been passed. It was not enacted; it was only before the Congress for consideration. So it wasn't until 1941, really after Pearl Harbor, that they got off the chair and got walking. So at that point - April 19, 1941, I became Assistant Secretary of War for Air. The job was then open. I resigned after the end of the war, on December 8, 1945 and returned to New York and got my old job back.

Everything went fine until July 1, 1947 when the telephone rang at my home in Locust Valley, Long Island, while I was having breakfast about 6:00 A. M. I heard my wife answer the phone and she called down to me that the White House was on the line. I thought it was some waggish friend of mine trying to be funny; so I went to the phone, and rather indignantly said, "It's awful early in the morning to try to be funny." It was the President. He said, "Bob, I wish you'd come down here because George Marshall is going to take over the Department of State. He says he'll do that if you'll come down as his Under Secretary."

It was July 1, 1947 when I came down. That's when I was Under Secretary of State. I served there from July 1, 1947 until January 20, 1949. Then I resigned. I came back to New York and went to work in banking and railroads, the businesses in which I was born and brought up. Then in September 1950

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the same thing happened a second time, much to the disgust of my partners, because if you have a partnership in a New York private bank, you have to be approved by the banking board in the State of New York. Everytime I went down there I had to resign from every board and had to sell everything I had that related to anything in which there was a possible conflict of interest. When you work for the Army or the Air Force you have dealings with almost every corporation in the country. So it was a horrendous problem to take care of, legally and otherwise.

GOLDBERG: It explains why a lot of people don't take the jobs, doesn't it?

LOVETT: Oh, Yes. But I didn't have any choice. The President said General Marshall would be Secretary of Defense if I would be his Deputy. There isn't that much of a choice when the Old Man says, "Come on down." So, in September 1950 I went down for the third time. I was there as Deputy Secretary of Defense until September 14, 1951, at which point General Marshall was clearly quite ill. He resigned and the President asked me to be Secretary of Defense. General Marshall told me I had to, so I did. I became Secretary of Defense on September 14, 1951 and resigned on January 20, 1953, with the change of the Administration.

GOLDBERG: May I raise a question which is related at least partly to the period when you were Under Secretary of State and then later when you were at Defense. You are acquainted, I'm sure, with the so-called revisionist historians who have postulated hypotheses at least two / concerning U. S. foreign policy, and particularly U. S. -Soviet relations for the cold war period. They hold that first much of our policy, including our military and economic assistance program, was motivated by selfish interest, particularly economic self interest. And second, we are probably more responsible for the cold war and the arms competition since 1945 than the Soviets are. Can you think of any specific instances of U. S. policy and U. S. behavior which in any way would support these theses.

LOVETT: No, I can't. I think it's an absolutely false premise. It's been fostered, as you know, by the Professor at Wisconsin, William Appleman Williams. Anyway, I feel so strongly on this that I have repeatedly argued about this whole affair. I was delighted to see some time ago that others were taking an interest in it, including this September/October 1972 issue of "Freedom of Issue" #15, here in New York. It deals with the subject extremely well. It's written by Robert James Maddox.

GOLDBERG: Yes. Maddox has now published a book which does

a very thorough job of showing what poor scholars the revisionist
-historians have been.

LOVETT: When you start out with a preconceived idea and then
try to distort history so as to conform it to your idea you are headed
for disaster. I think these fellows have made absolute monkeys of
themselves, although they have persuaded a considerable number of
people of good faith and therefore acquired a following. But I think
it's absolutely nonsense. I know absolutely no situation which could
possibly be twisted into giving them support. If you want to get a
good deal more first-hand information on that you might call on
Governor Harriman, down in Washington, who feels as strongly about
it as the rest of us who then saw things at first hand.

GOLDBERG: We have had this same reaction from all the people
we've been talking to and who were involved. Clark Clifford gave
us a dissertation on this subject.

LOVETT: Well, it is an outrageous attempt to distort history.
It's ludicrous to even put the label of scholarship on it.

YOSHPE: My immediate interest, Mr. Lovett, is the Office of
Secretary of Defense during its initial three years of trial and tribulation.
This was the period following the enactment of the Unification Act.

LOVETT: That was the Forrestal - Johnson period.

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YOSHPE: In reviewing the literature of this period one thing stands out quite clearly. The Unification Act was a compromise. Forrestal tried to live with it and make it work, but found that it was necessary to recommend basic changes which unfortunately didn't come into being until after he had resigned.

LOVETT: It was amended in '49, wasn't it?

YOSHPE: That is correct, sir.

LOVETT: The only thing that made it work really was just a series of coincidences. Forrestal and I were very close friends and neighbors. So was Artemus Gates, who was my opposite Number in Naval Air. And so, of course, was Dean Acheson at State. There was here a group of people who lived together, worked together in other circumstances, who knew and trusted each other. So we could do away with the interminable conferences, committee meetings, and all that sort of thing. You could pick up the phone and say to Gates, "What about this new order for Pratt and Whitney Engines-- 4360s. Why are we getting such a bum delivery on it? He'd say, "Well I don't know, but I'll look it up and call you back," and that took care of that. Now that saved probably 3 or 4 days of paper shuffling. The same thing could be done throughout Government, so that although the incorrectly drawn National Security Act had these wide open hiatuses in it, it still operated. In my view, this was the result largely of the

carryover of the trust that existed between the old line departments and the knowledge of the special interest that each had in this, that, or the other field. I don't think that would be possible today.

YOSHPE: Of course, you remember your letter to President Truman of October '52 which is a classic and is quoted in every book that deals with Defense organization and management as pointing out some of the real problems that persisted even beyond the Forrestal-Johnson period. The problems with the JCS, for example, and also the problems of the board structure for the Munitions Board and the Research and Development Board. So that you've had these imperfections. It has often been said that the problems of trying to run the Defense establishment in the face of these difficulties undermined Forrestal's health. Is there truth in that?

LOVETT: I wouldn't say that those problems were the ones. Jim Forrestal was a very intense man anyway, but he had himself under strict control. He was never one to show emotion - containing that all the time was what I think put such extra tension on him. I remember that he was flown down to Hobe Sound after his breakdown. They phoned me and asked me if I would meet him, which I did - as I say, he was a very dear, close friend of mine. And when he got out of the plane over at the air base, we stood under the shadow of the tail plane because it was hot as the hinges at that time of day.

When he came down and he offloaded his golf clubs, bag, and that sort of thing, I said to Jim, "I'm glad you brought your golf clubs because I'm going to take every dollar you've got here." Not a crack of a smile, and he finally turned to me and said, "You know, they're really after me."

I'd been warned, of course, by Eberstadt over the phone that Forrestal was in bad shape. But to shorten the story, he was at that time a completely different person from the one I knew. We finally got him back to Washington. Ed Shea, his roommate at Princeton, came up from Texas and stayed there with him, and slept in the room with him the whole time. But he obviously was in very bad shape.

Now part of that tension was not the result of the problems of running the Department but the fact that he had been dabbling a little bit in politics. In other words, he had been dealing with the Republican side while a Democratic appointee. Not in any sly way but simply maintaining his position - I think he wanted to continue in the job in case of the change. I believe that had something to do with it.

But that, I would say, would not be for publication.

YOSHPE: Some of the material, including ^{the}Forrestal diaries, seemed to indicate that he had expected to stay on at least until May.

LOVETT: He had hoped, I think, to stay on. He was obsessed with the idea that his phone calls were being bugged and that "they" (it was hard to identify they) were some anti-Forrestal group in the Administration. They, the enemy, who was it? He was not of sound mind at that time, in my view.

YOSHPE: Is it correct to say that the mechanisms for the coordination of military, foreign, and economic policy that had been established under the National Security Act of 1947 were not working well enough in that period, and that in the absence of national policy Forrestal lacked an adequate basis on which to judge military requirements?

LOVETT: No, I don't think that would be a reasonable conclusion to draw. The problems were inherent in the competition by the three Services for a smaller and smaller amount of money and in the political atmosphere of the moment. The NSC, in my view, was very useful; Forrestal or other members could use it as a sounding board for a policy statement, but clearly the President - and this is what I always emphasized and was impressed with - the President must be given options, not just told that this is the thing to do. It's his responsibility, constitutionally his responsibility, and therefore, he's entitled to advice. Now that advice was available through the State - Army-Navy-Air Coordinating Committee at all times, and if you wanted to bring it up

to the top, at the NSC level.

The NSC was working well during Forrestal's time. The President rarely sat in on the unimportant meetings, but when you came up to a major policy decision the NSC could say, "We heard the views of the Navy, Army, Air Force and the State Department. We think that perhaps this would be a desirable national policy but the alternatives to this, if you don't want to do this, are this or that." Things were rarely made as clear as that. One of Forrestal's problems was that he believed strongly, I think, in sort of a Secretariat to operate this, whereas, the fundamental purpose of the NSC was to provide the President with a vehicle which would bring him the views in their disparity and not on an agreed position. That's about it.

GOLDBERG: Another issue from this same period was raised with us by a number of people. It falls right into your State Department period. That was the Palestine problem. The Defense Department had very strong views on this, and the State Department did also.

LOVETT: I was the agent in State who had to take the rap in this thing and do most of the ground work so I've a lively recollection. Pick some particular question --

GOLDBERG: I really wanted to ask how State looked at the National Security aspects of the issue at that time. I know how the

Defense Department was looking at it, and I've seen a lot of the State documents for the period too, but we're interested in hearing about it from your level and General Marshall's.

LOVETT: Well, you remember the American position set forth by Senator Austin at the United Nations meeting. It was, in effect, that this small country of a million and one half people, surrounded by 40 million Arabs, was nonviable unless it could be assured of an umbrella of some sort. It was on that basis that the theory of the trusteeship was developed which would give them an independent country, but place them in the hands of a group of trustees until such time as they either matured into a viable nation or until some method of living could be worked out with the Arabs.

We were ultimately defeated on that. I say we, this country's point of view did not prevail, and it didn't prevail because it was fought vigorously by the Israelis. Now the atmosphere was embittered, and that was the thing which caused most of the attacks on Forrestal. In my view, it was one of the principal causes for his mental condition. The constant unrelenting attacks on Forrestal. I was less visible as a Government official. They were bad enough, God knows, on me. I received telephone calls at 11 o'clock at night, with threats: "we'll get you, you so and so." And I got telegrams from every

conceivable agency - Haganah, Hadassah, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver - everybody pressuring me to do this, that, and the other thing. Give these people independence. You give them independence and they get overrun - what do you do then? So it was ^asense of conscience in this country, being willing to help them and not leading them down the garden path to utter destruction. It was a very serious problem.

Ultimately, I think, we took the right step. The President made the decision after both sides were clearly explained to him. He made the choice, but the pro-Arab and pro-Israeli groups around Washington in the various Government departments were still extremely active even after the President's decision. So the effect on Forrestal was devastating. There was no question about it. The effect on me was bad enough. The danger was that some darn fool, some fanatic would get into the act. There was no use in getting me a Secret Service guard, it, the President was very insistent about / I talked him out of it through General Marshall, because here I was living at 2425 Kalorama Road - all a fellow needed to do was get on a bicycle with a couple of hand grenades in his pocket, drive past my home, drop the grenades through the bedroom window, and drive off.

YOSHPE: Secretary Johnson took an awful beating from the Press when Korea broke. He was looked upon as a budget- chopper;

he had cut too much muscle even though he claimed he was cutting fat and not muscle. The feeling seems to be that he should have admitted that he went too far. Instead he was saying "we're strong, we're capable." He was not being honest with the public, and he got an awful lot of flak from newspaper columnists at that time. What were the circumstances surrounding Johnson's departure?

LOVETT: I know nothing about that at all. I was an innocent little Wall Street banker then, and the first thing I knew about - Oh I'd read occasional comments in the press, but I had no first hand information. The first I knew about the events was when I was telephoned and told that he was out and General Marshall in, and would I come down.

I doubt very much whether the events would have changed even had we had twice as much readiness. You can only get a certain number of troops into action in a country as horrible as Korea. We weren't without troops, and we weren't without supplies. And we had a left hand while the right hand was busy fighting: we had this superb Japanese manufacturing plant - 150 miles away. It was a fantastic set of circumstances -- they would rebuild trucks and artillery pieces and everything else in a fraction of the time it would take for us to get new ones from this country. So I doubt very much whether it's really a valid criticism of Johnson.

There were plenty of other things to criticize-disruption of the Department and, in general, a low state of morale. I don't know what would happen, for example, today if we got into an emergency situation. I hate to think of what the response to the call to arms would be. You have a quarter of a million deserters and defectors and evaders out of the country. You have the members of the military establishment held in low repute. You have performance of certain of the military, other than the highly trained ones, of a very low grade. I would have grave doubts as to our competence today - in fact I am myself persuaded that we are no longer the No.1 power, militarily, that we were relatively a few years ago. Russia has replaced us in their organization, in the quality of their equipment, and certainly in their determination.

To be quite blunt about it, I doubt whether this country could fight a war with the ruthlessness that it takes to win today. It's very significant that a little country like Israel, for which I have enormous admiration, here is a country with some 3 million - with no reserve supply of manpower at all. Everybody working like Trojans, standing off five countries - outnumbered I don't know how many to one - a ridiculous figure certainly - and doing it with an alacrity and a precision which is quite fascinating to anybody who has been trained in this type of thing. It's amazing. Now the utterly ruthless eye-for-eye,

tooth-for-tooth, kind of thing - this business is carried too far by them, in my opinion, and in some cases in their own opinion. When, for instance, they retaliate on the Arab village and wipe out 48 or 50 people - something of that sort. But nobody is going to lay a finger on the Israeli troops without having that finger burnt or perhaps cut off. It is that kind of prestige militarily speaking, not humanly but militarily - its that kind of prestige which is worth many, many divisions of troops.

A good example in our history is the Texas Rangers. One Company covered a border that was terrifyingly long. They could send one Ranger to a town like Beaumont and put a riot down, simply because the people there knew if anybody attacked him, killed him particularly, they would simply have the daylights beaten out of them. I'm trying to make the point that it isn't adequate to say, "You reduced the troops in numbers too much." We had plenty of troops looking at it from the outside. I wasn't there (Korea) at the start of this thing, but we had plenty of troops, plenty of ships, plenty of planes, plenty of everything; we just didn't know enough to hit hard at the start.

GOLDBERG: Would you ^sway the same thing about Vietnam?

LOVETT: Vietnam, I think, was the very height of stupidity from the start. I think it was incredibly bad judgment to get into this. We were sold a bill of goods, and I believe it was a horrible affair and a disaster because we went into it without any determination to win the thing.

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GOLDBERG: Was this your view in 1964 and 1965.

LOVETT: Oh yes, I knew it was an absurdity from the start.
It's the most God-awful country.

GOLDBERG: Could I go back a little bit to 1948 - 49 and ask whether you were involved in or related to the B-36/Carrier controversy of that period. You were surely very much aware of it.

LOVETT: I was involved in it in the sense that Jim Forrestal used to stop by the house on the way home for dinner. As long as the light was on in the library he'd stop by. He had the B-36 on his mind. Now the B-36 was not a very good plane, but that was a product of the desire to show that you didn't need carriers at all, I suppose. But, of course, I was involved in it in the sense that Jim would come and say, "What do you think about these planes, can we do it without the carriers?" Of course, the answer is, "No, you can't." You can do the job with carriers, but with one carrier costing God knows how many billion of dollars, the cost is enormous. I'd hate to think what it would cost today with all of the target-seeking devices, TV, beam riders, all that sort of thing. You're putting an awful lot of eggs in one basket. The basket has so many holes in the bottom of it that I'd think you'd be in mortal danger all the time. So you can't just rely on that.

Nor can you just rely on the B-36. With the surface-to-air missiles which we were then perfecting, sooner or later you would get something out of White Sands or some other place - where you touch a button and this thing would go up and smack the aircraft no matter what the altitude was. I remember seeing the tests that were run out there. I think it shook up the Air Force quite a lot because you had a surface-to-air missile which actually changed direction in the air, it was a target seeker of first class quality. And then when the Ramo outfit produced this air-to-air missile which sought out the hot exhaust from the aircraft, you had a very valuable weapon. So, no matter what it was equipped with, the B-36 was very vulnerable to anything of that sort.

GOLDBERG: Your position, then, was a rather moderate one
USAF and Navy
in which you saw a need for both/weapon systems and for appropriate missions for both Services, and no doubt you deplored the controversy and animus displayed over this issue.

LOVETT: That's a fair statement. As I said earlier in our conversation here, I did not believe that the right wing, the extremists on the right, were on solid ground. It has been proven over and over again. You can destroy something from the air, you can deny the enemy control there, but you can't seize and occupy unless you have a much

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wider type of military power to exploit. I think the B-36 - carrier dispute was in part a battle of personalities among the military participants at that time. Radford had everybody's back up - everybody's. And certainly Hap Arnold and his successors didn't do anything to cool it off. So it was normal to expect to have trouble while those characters were still in. The only thing to do was to get them all out.

YOSHPE: In his autobiography, Dean Acheson had some very unflattering remarks about Johnson - in fact at one point he was confident that he was out of his mind. Inasmuch as he had been associated with rather drastic budget cutting and all the fighting and feuding with the Service people, would you say that President Truman had lost confidence in Johnson's ability to lead when the Korean War broke out?

LOVETT: Oh, I think so, I think so.

YOSHPE: But did President Truman feel that Johnson had served a useful purpose during the time that he was there?

LOVETT: I don't really know, Mr. Yoshpe. I tried to avoid stirring the muddy waters any more than was necessary to see what was below. It was clear that the release of Johnson was an abrupt determination, and as you know, one of President Truman's gifts was the ability to reach a decision under pressure. I'm sure from

his attitude toward General Marshall and indeed toward me which was so trusting, so forthright, so heartwarming, that he would not withhold that kind of support except after he had been grievously let down. I can't imagine Mr. Johnson and President Truman getting along together anyway.

GOLDBERG: Of course, that raises questions about the reason for the appointment in the first place. Most people are pretty generally agreed that it was a reward for Johnson's services in the 1948 election.

YOSHPE: On this matter of the '48 election, Mr. Lovett, we gather that Forrestal didn't go to bat for Truman in the campaign. He felt that he was above politics. At the same time, he did sit at meetings with Dewey and they talked a bit. He seemed^{so}/sure that Truman would lose the election that he was setting the ground for transition to the new Administration.

GOLDBERG: May I point out that Mr. Truman had assured both General Marshall and Forrestal that they would not be expected to participate in the election in any way.

LOVETT: I was going to make that point. They were given a complete exemption, and they were so told. In my case, for example, the President said, "I don't care who telephones you and says that I want you to go out and help Mr. so and so. I will not have the

Department of Defense or the Department of State campaigning or taking part in this campaign, and if anybody calls you, refer them to me. Don't answer them yourself, just say, "I refer you to the President." That's a fact.

YOSHPE: But it's also a fact from what you said earlier in our discussion that there was a feeling that Forrestal was dealing with the Republicans.

LOVETT: Definitely.

YOSHPE: And which no doubt must have been offensive to the President.

LOVETT: Yes.

GOLDBERG: And yet his motives in doing it, presumably, were high-minded ones - bringing about an appropriate transition.

LOVETT: Forrestal would not have stooped to anything even approaching a disloyal act.

GOLDBERG: People who knew anything about it saw it solely as an effort to bring about the right kind of transition.

LOVETT: I think that's correct. Now if you've covered most of your subject, I suggest we get some lunch because I have a relatively early date - at 1:30 - and I want to make sure that we've done everything we can for you.

GOLDBERG: I think we've covered most of the ground. We'll have a chance for further discussion at lunch. Thank you, Mr. Lovett.