

during the late '40's.

**KIRBY** It became GCHQ. Right. Let me see now.

**HATCH** It was kind of an interim name between LSIC to GCHQ.

**VANDERPOOL** You made the comment that you think that the British had been deliberately withholding...it's on the last page, I think.

**KIRBY** Yeah, this is the last paragraph.

**VANDERPOOL** Why?

**KIRBY** (reading from memo): "There's a definite attempt to find out (1G) if that material is being sent to ASA." That's right. You notice also where it says it was sent? To ASA.

**VANDERPOOL** Oh, okay.

**KIRBY** This is before the formal agreement that had us have a signals...(cut off by Vanderpool)

**VANDERPOOL** So the navy wasn't a part of this.

**KIRBY** The navy was not a part of it.

**BAKER** Let me flip the tape. (TR Note: period of silence here)

**KIRBY** Let me point out one thing, and I'll apologize, but I still think about some of these things a little longer than you might expect, because I'm still sorting out what are the things that are or are not going to get folks into trouble even at this late date. Remember, we operated on a very simple principle. The rule of operations was this: you never do anything which is illegal because of law, because of a policy which is a written and promulgated policy, or a verbal policy which has been sent directly to you. But if it is not illegal according to any of those things, you go ahead and do it but you don't get caught. That's it.

**BAKER** Didn't you all have a sense that you might be doing something illegal?

**KIRBY** Oh no, we had a sense which is very simple. That the law didn't cover these things, and that some weenie would decide to make a landmark case, and we'd be it. And therefore you did not get caught.

**BAKER** You were in that grey area that you could become illegal eventually.

**KIRBY** It was totally a grey area.

**VANDERPOOL** We all face that in our careers here.

**KIRBY** Right. That's exactly right. That you could cross the line at any time. And sometimes I still think about these things, and it says that there are some notations about things that I think might be very interesting, but as long as the principles involved are still around, and as long as I have a question as to what somebody could make of it, it ain't what it is unless somebody can make it to be, then I have reservations about what do I say about this particular thing. That's why it took me a while to figure out what we did. Okay, the sixty-four-thousand dollar question.

**VANDERPOOL** Well, it's going to take me a while to ask it. It seems to me that what this material represents...I shouldn't say "it seems to me." What this material does represent is a very

small subset of what Mr. Scott referred to as an enormous network. And the network itself - bear with me just as long as it...and if you hear anything that you disagree with, please say so. <sup>25X1</sup>

25X1

25X1

Asian power, right? Here comes the sixty-four-thousand dollar question finally: Did anybody separate that out and say, "Hey, we've got to worry about these Chinese Communists because it looks like they are a strong, developing power, and they have these strong ties with Moscow, and this proves it." Was anybody saying or talking about that sort of stuff, or did they still think of this as a sort of secrecy, Moscow (1G) of agents?

KIRBY

No, no. Let me tell why...it was not because of this that people had that conclusion. It was because of everything that was available. But it was known that Chiang Kai Shek was on the decline and had lost everything at that point, and that the other people were taking over. That was an accepted fact. The question was how and when, and all of the support which you saw everywhere from the Soviets, and the Soviets were the major power behind providing the wherewithal for the Chinese Communists to take over.

HATCH

How early?

KIRBY

This was beginning in about...the earliest plain language we got when we transcribed undulator tape showed that the Soviets were taking lend-lease factories and shipping them to the Chinese Communists to get them set up when they took over areas in Manchuria. When they took over; they haven't taken them over yet. When they took them over, according to...and some of the guys felt there must be a timetable here.

HATCH

Oh, because the Soviets were planning in advance of the takeover. This factory will go there when they take over.

KIRBY

But when you look at the map you say, "Hey, they're not there yet." And yet this is where the shipment was destined.

BAKER

So this could be as early as what, '46?

KIRBY

Yes, it was when we started...we did not have the 2-, 6-, and 9-channel baudot stuff yet, so we were training people to learn Cyrillic, because we converted them from Japanese by transcribing undulator tapes - "hellschreiber" tapes - of the 2-, 6- and 9-channel. And what Olan Adams found was some pure gold stuff. If we had had it, it contained wondrous things, but there were occasional messages having to do with the support to the

Chinese Communists, and it was actually the utilization of American lend-lease as part of the support then going to the Chinese. Now, we didn't make a big deal about that because we talked to British people about it, and they nodded their heads, and they thought that was great. And we gave them what we had, which was spotty messages. When you think of the billions of rolls of undulator tape we had, we didn't have enough trainees to transcribe it all. So we just transcribed willy-nilly.

**VANDERPOOL** These people would have been customers?

**KIRBY** No, these were our ASA folks.

**VANDERPOOL** No, excuse me. (I meant) the people you gave the material to.

**KIRBY** The people we gave them to...our discussions at that point was with special branch and with Carter Clarke's (B% section).

**VANDERPOOL** Okay. It wasn't until later that you gave them to State, I guess.

**KIRBY** Oh, we gave the stuff to State, but I don't recall any great hurrahs from them.

**HATCH** And ASA and MID worked in the same place? They were sitting in the same office as some guys...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** You couldn't tell the difference, yeah. We just knew there was a difference, but that's all. Oh, they were Carter Clarke's.

**VANDERPOOL** You know, there's a man named Kenneth T. Young who was a member of the State Department Special Projects Staff. You probably remember him.

**KIRBY** I don't.

**VANDERPOOL** But he worked in the Far East Section, so you maybe you didn't. But anyway, he worked for a guy named T. Achilles (B% Polysoides).

**KIRBY** Oh, I know him. Hell, I know Polysoides. Polysoides was a dud.

**VANDERPOOL** Well, this man, Young, wrote a memo in mid-48 in which he pointed to the lack of resources being applied to the Chinese problem - not the Russian problem (but) the Chinese problem - at ASA and the navy. And he was informed in this memo - by all this material that had been published on the Chinese Communists - and he said, "Somebody in the government better put ASA and NSG to work on the Chinese Communist problem because we're getting caught short. We don't have the intelligence on those people. So in other words, there was all this intelligence, like you say, on this rising power, and SIGINT had produced (B% nothing). Is that right? You know, that SIGINT had...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** The British had produced most of it up to that point. We weren't doing anything with it. We didn't have any resources to put on it. Heck, we were trying to get enough stuff to handle in some fashion the Russian program where we couldn't cover much of anything worth a darn. The only things we could cover were by accident because we knew how to do book breaking and all. We had materials from drop copy; I'm sorry, we had materials from various sources on the political and stuff like that. Believe me, there weren't enough resources to cover anything. And yes, I heard the complaints about the Chinese Communists. My interest in this was the fact that the network was extensive. We

already knew that. We knew it from the snippets we got here and there. We knew it was all part of a great big network. We didn't understand who was doing what, but it looked like it involved government-to-government commercial espionage deals, propaganda. It was a whole variety of things, and then this was the first stuff that made it clear that opps, there are varieties of things in here that we just didn't know about. We didn't have any collection on the whole network. We didn't know anything about it. We knew that there was something there, but that's all. And again, the intelligence people were aware of a background...don't forget; there's one thing you've got to remember. Not all Anglo-phobes disappeared at the time that Roosevelt decided to sign us up to join with the UK in the war against Germany and later Japan. There were a lot of people who did not trust the British or anything.

**BAKER** And some of them were very powerful people.

**KIRBY** And some of them were among our bosses.

**VANDERPOOL** Was Carter Clarke one of those?

**KIRBY** Well, let's just say that he was not really totally trustful of almost anybody, but there were some people he was less trustful of than others. (laughter) Let me put it this way: at one point after Lou Tordella became the Deputy Director of the agency, Carter Clarke gave him a firsthand lecture on how he should not extend himself too far towards various people who were then our cooperative parties in various endeavors that we were doing. I wouldn't say he was a "phobe." He just felt that you had to watch it, and the type of thing we had here could be typical of what you would expect. If it was not in their interest...and you see, I don't know why this stuff was not. I think if you look at it real hard you will see that what this was, was a lot of work. The part you've got here, there's a lot of others: commercial espionage, and commercial...it was just like with the Japanese. It was commercial warfare. And it was the agreements for and against which you don't tell another party about. You don't. And you'll find here that the discussions have to do with borders, and frontiers, and cooperation even with the Japanese at this late date, and on and on it goes. There's a lot of stuff here. It's more than bipartite; it's tripartite and quadrapartite a lot of things which seem very strange, and I always wished I had more time and had all the stuff that I thought the UK had because I think it would have been fascinating. I have the same feeling about something we're not working on at all: this would deal with spy handler stuff. I think we could learn an enormous amount about things that really went on. I would like to know who instructed people who went to certain negotiations and were traitors in their negotiations. Who instructed them to do that? I don't think they went there on their own as a traitor. This is the kind of stuff that showed up in here. The discussions...it never says who instigated it, but it's real revealing material. And if you really were following what you're trying to do now, it's a great revelation. Think of it in terms of conspiracy and who is conspiring with whom to do what? And you'll find you'll have a hell of a time ever figuring out who caused these things to happen. Do you find many that say this is based on discussions that somebody...but they don't start out in the middle; they start out with a policy obviously behind whatever is taking place here.

**VANDERPOOL** Well, the only thing I can relate to, I guess, in that respect, since I'm...you know, this is just one small subset of this other stuff. The only thing I can relate there is, you know,

we had all this intelligence lying around from <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] his stuff, from diplomatic communications, from MAGIC (B% at least) from German communications that showed the Chinese Communists weren't just some little band of bandits in the hills.

**KIRBY**

Look, they had been approved by somebody, and not just the Russians.

**VANDERPOOL**

Well, maybe so. I don't know about that. But anyway, that being the case then, why didn't the U.S. put a lot more intelligence resources on that Chinese Communist problem than they did, because they just...drips and drabs?

**KIRBY**

Well wait a minute. You've got to look at...it's like trying to read the Bible. You've got to look at the situation and the conditions at the time. Two things: number one, what we had was great for Japan and for naval stuff in the Pacific. The Chinese Communists...the only networks that were developed were these pseudo-clandestine type things. The rest of it, they didn't need so many communications. They used motorcycles and stuff like that. They were pretty smart. You had a growing potential problem, but you did not have a real live problem. I remember looking at the sort of collection, and what we could do and things like that. And it wasn't until they exploded and took over that they began to develop a nationwide network. You can't intercept what isn't there and, therefore, what do you put your resources on? Sure, let's go after this program, but they had all this stuff here, and man, this took operators like we didn't have many of. It took highly skilled operators, and believe me. We were still struggling to get the 8- to 10-word a minute Morse guys in shape to get us something we could use. So there were many factors. And the other was that that did not come up high on the unofficial list of priorities. We operated on the basis of hand-to-mouth. In the early days when I finally went to industry I found I was well-trained. I had spent the first several years of my life in this business going from no customers, no targets, no product that anybody was interested in or knew anything about, to developing something that would sell in the market and bring us in enough bucks to keep us going from year to year. And believe me, when I went to E-Systems this idea of living from year to year where you're in a competitive environment was nothing. That was child's play compared to the early days of ASA and NSG and that, because we didn't have anything. We had nothing. I hear people around here worrying. My god, I'd give anything to be coming back and starting out my career in the situation like you have today: the greatest intercept system that has ever been developed; you've got a following; people know what has been done; you have a product which is recognized. (We had) none of that! Now, this is a time when, believe me, it was bad enough to go for that which looks like it was top-priority: espionage and things that were happening in your own backyard and (that) you could sell. McCarthy was working at that point. We could begin to sell stuff, and we could get money to make this agency go (and) these agencies, ultimately.

**BAKER**

Let's talk about that evolution a little bit. That's a key point. You came back in late '45. Okay, what did you do when you first came back?

**KIRBY**

I came back, and I joined this new project which Frank Rowlett had started a year or two before. You see, they really started some people pulling the dip stuff together before '45.

**BAKER**

Cecil Phillips and the Soviet problem.

**KIRBY** Yeah, Cecil Phillips, and they had started pulling this stuff together.

**BAKER** You're still in uniform? A young captain.

**KIRBY** Oh, yes, I was still in uniform. You bet your life. So I came back and the idea was we were going to go to work and start making some order out of some of these things. You had these two nets. You needed somebody who had developed something from nothing, because on the German program we had learned to develop from nothing except the notion of a signal, to the T/A, the signal analysis, sort these things down, find people who could do a job, and so even if I was a temporary worker, which I announced I was when I came back.

**HATCH** You were going to get demobilized or get out as soon as you could.

**KIRBY** I was getting "demobed." I was going to leave as soon as I could and go back to school. I had already written to Cornell. They were going to accept me, and I was going to become an organic chemist again. But still I had a capability that...Frank had met me over in Germany. He found I was on all the research programs taking the unknown stuff and working on it at GCHQ during the war. Whenever we had new links we couldn't break into and the links between the scrambler and this others, I was involved in those. I was the only American involved in that because that's what I liked. So he put me on this thing, and then I decided this is going to be kind of interesting. We had a bunch of people with great knowledge of what to do, and how to break codes and ciphers, and how to ingeniously use whatever machine capabilities we had, and to intercept, which we had not much of. And it was just fascinating because here was people who...and the other thing was we all came back believing that we'd had a hell-of-a big part in winning the war. That was the important thing. And then some of us decided, you know what? This would be more useful. You've got to keep this going. We became disciples, I believe, of an idea that this had to be kept going. If it could happen here, it could happen again. And we ought to have this.

**BAKER** Were you heading up a team, or were you part of a team?

**KIRBY** Yeah. I became like a deputy to...first I came in as a part of a team, just loosey-goosey. Then I became the deputy to Duberstein.

**BAKER** Okay. Do you recall that organization designator?

**KIRBY** WGAS-93B. Woodgas-93.

**HATCH** Part of ASA.

**BAKER** Okay, you were working for Duberstein.

**KIRBY** Yeah, WGAS-93B. Originally it was just 93, but we had made it "B" when I came in, and so it already had a specific designator.

**BAKER** Do you remember how many people were in it?

**KIRBY** Yeah, there were about 35 to 40. And we had some very good...we had (B% Kodear), we had Brown; we had some excellent linguistic people and all. Very unusual.

**BAKER** A mix of civilians and military?

**KIRBY** A mix of civilian and military. And then we were bringing people in by the droves. I

mean that literally.

**VANDERPOOL** And this was just the Russian problem, sir?

**KIRBY** Just this part of the Russian problem. But I also had become aware in TICOM of the printer problem, and so I was the only one pushing at that time for, "Hey, we've got to tackle this printer," because I also had heard from the British, I think, that they had a scrambler in there. I had already done the German scrambler. I was just getting converted to that, and I thought, heck, that would be nice to work on the scrambler problem.

**HATCH** Because these 35 to 40 (people) were just working Morse decrypt and cablegrams.

**KIRBY** They were working mostly just getting the cable stuff in order and figuring out the "A" net and the "B" net and taking the intercept that was coming in and seeing if they could sort it and make it Russian versus something else. They had been doing work on the cable traffic, but this was to begin work on the overall (B% front). That's what it was for, and so I was asked to do it; start getting this problem pulled together. That's when I came in. And Cecil Phillips knew a lot about the cable stuff so I proceeded not to pay a heck of a lot of attention to that. That was being taken care of. That's all that was being taken care of. So then we went to work on the other stuff.

**BAKER** This was cable traffic to...?

**KIRBY** It was Soviet cable traffic to Washington.

**BAKER** To their embassy?

**KIRBY** Yeah.

**HATCH** It was just dip. There wasn't any military yet?

**KIRBY** There was some military coming in from our collection from the ASA stations and from the NSG stations.

**HATCH** But most of it was dip traffic, just telegrams that we had scarfed up.

**KIRBY** That's right, and we were starting to bring in the traffic...we had a few TA guys who had converted from Japanese or from German. Remember, ASA had always done a few of these diplomatic and other things all during the war, which the navy did not. They put everything on Japanese and other naval-related stuff. And ASA didn't do that. They always had a few people working on other things, and some of those people were working on the traffic analysis and all on this program. They had been pulled from whatever else they were doing. They were starting to work on the TA.

**BAKER** The ultimate target here being Soviet agents?

**KIRBY** No, the target was Soviet. No. We broadened that immediately. Soviet military. I want to know how the army, navy and air force communicate. Well, it was HF, and that was about it. How they communicate, and what do they use? What do those cipher systems look like? And we were just starting to find that out. We knew nothing about that. All we knew was we had a lot of 5-digit traffic. It looked just like the dip stuff, but it obviously wasn't. We had no literal traffic except a few very, very low-level things; didn't know what they were; didn't care really because we couldn't fit the big stuff together. Basi-

cally the anonymity of wartime had succeeded. All the commanders who knew much about SIGINT were gone. It was very anonymous because we only briefed commanders. We had no big distribution lists. When they disappeared, the audience - the users - disappeared. We had no market for...we had no targets. The Japanese and the Germans were gone. We didn't know what else might be of interest. We thought SIGINT ought to be kept alive. How? With what? And the fact that Carter Clarke and them had figured out that there ought to be this espionage problem, if you want to look for something, I would say that in the early days there were two things: 1) Carter Clarke's penchant for irreligious, questionable approaches to do things that he believed really would make a big difference; and the other was General Canine coming in when he did. Without those two things this agency would not exist today because we made it from year to year. Every year you had to have something big that would get you the bucks the next year and would make people interested. Plain language turned out to be the greatest, continuous thing that we ever invented. Few of us around here really ever want to admit to that. But it was.

**BAKER** Despite the bias against it?

**KIRBY** The only bias against it was all of us cryppies who wanted to feel that we...(cut off by Hatch)

**HATCH** The strong bias was true. TA's and linguists were just support personnel, weren't they?

**KIRBY** Right. Exactly right, but you see, again, growing up with the British I never felt that way. This was the other part of the British...learning...(cut off by Hatch)

**HATCH** Well, a TA-linguist in the Brit system was as equal as a cryppie? But not in the American's system.

**KIRBY** You bet. Now, the cryppie was like the railroad engineer versus the fireman. I'll agree to that over there, but he was only a little bit more. The other guy was just as essential as the other guys, but you see, everybody did everything. So how could you say that this guy knew more? If he was a cryppie, he knew more than the guy who was just a TA man. But the other guy was going to get there. That's what he was working for.

**HATCH** The cryppie was also a TA guy.

**KIRBY** He was a TA guy; he was everything.

**BAKER** And linguist probably too.

**VANDERPOOL** Of course, you know the most recent stepchild of that whole thing is the ILC, a much-maligned, you know, plaintext...guys who sold them stuff anybody can have access to. One of the most lucrative things today is...I wish you had been around to sponsor that.

**KIRBY** Well no, to me the most lucrative thing that should happen, and NSA has not gotten very much involved in, is this stuff called PROFORMA traffic.

**HATCH** Oh yes, that's very true.

**BAKER** Yeah, we wrestled with that for years.

**KIRBY** When I left here I was working on what was available at that time, and I was very interested because it happened to be the air defense. It happened to be the selection of

activity targets and so forth. I'm trying to remember what that was called.

BAKER

25X1

KIRBY

25X1

And I left here really interested in the fact that, "Hey, here's a new thing happening. It looks like it's an aggregate. There's all these things." And from what little I could find out, we had navigational systems; we had guidance systems. It had already appeared in the very high-level. We knew it was there because of the other work we were doing on auto-keyed stuff. But I felt that, "Hey, when this appears...as it seems to be at the lower level..." That's why we spent so much time, and that's why I used to come back here and why a lot of guys around here still don't like me, because

25X1

HATCH

KIRBY

25X1

To me the fun of leaving here was getting out of going over to congress and justifying budgets and getting into the lab again like I did in the very beginning of my career here and messing around with signals. I've had more fun than anybody. It's the only reason I feel as young as I do these days is I've had more fun. Now, these things here, I think that there was an enormous opportunity as you look back for fantastic information on a lot of things we'd really like to know. I looked at the VENONA stuff, and I see you know what? It's sort of dead now, but man, we got all the traffic. We could recover information about people, and maybe we can even get some idea of who instructed folks to do certain things. I'll tell you this, that Carter Clarke's interest was trying to find out who was behind some of the things going on. He didn't give a dang about...(cut off by Hatch)

HATCH

Well, there were a lot of spies apparently never uncovered, right? They're still floating

around somewhere.

**KIRBY**

Of course. You can still match...I don't care. There's some stuff I wouldn't want to publish. I'd also like to know things that were never published, or never brought to light, people accepted bribes to do things. There's a lot of it in there. Some of the folks like even Lou Tordella and Ann Caracristi, who were never in on the project, don't know that's there. We used to find it. I would personally brief Carter Clarke. He'd say, "Don't you say a damn word about that because if we ever become "Big Brother" we'll lose every nickel of funding that we might get." So you never talked about that stuff, but it's there. It's kind of amazing what we have. He's right! That's exactly what would happen.

**VANDERPOOL**

In one of these interviews that Manson had with...I've forgotten now; it might have been Josh Cooper. He said there are two things that we haven't given you Americans - this was in like September '46 - one of them is this stuff, which we now know about; the other one was something called **25X1** (spelled). So Manson put that in a letter and sent it to Washington and got something back to the effect "don't you ask any more about **25X1** That's none of your business. You stay away from that."

**BAKER**

Manson was our liaison...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY**

He was with USLIC. He would be what's now the SUSLO.

**BAKER**

And Cooper was the other way? He was the Brit here?

**KIRBY**

No, Cooper was one of the principals of the...(cut off by Vanderpool)

**VANDERPOOL**

He was in charge of all the cryptanalysts.

**KIRBY**

Josh Cooper was a brilliant guy, and he was in charge of a lot of the operational cryptanalysis for many, many years in England.

**VANDERPOOL**

So does that name ring a bell, Mr. Kirby, **25X1** )

**KIRBY**

Yes. **25X1** was not strictly SIGINT. It was handled by different folks on a different level. That's why they wouldn't want anybody here mucking up or getting involved in...something was already...we knew what to do with it; where it had gone, and at that point I think it was probably not important anymore. But it was important that you had done what you had done, but I don't think it's...it's like we've spent so much time being sure people would not know about VENONA. For a very simple reason: you don't want to publicize until somebody wrote the dang book about the thing which was not (what) NSA wanted to do, but the attorney general and the FBI wanted to write the dang book, which I think doesn't help anything. Nobody is going to believe that that's what really happened, so you don't accomplish anything. Now, CIA wanted to do it at one time, but Benson K. Buffham was the Deputy Director, and he called me. He said they wanted to publish a lot of this stuff because we're having so much trouble with the intelligence committees; we're getting such a bad name. The CIA wanted to publish this stuff to show what great things we had done. All I said was, "Oh man. I can think of nothing worse. It's just going to raise a big ruckus. You'll never convince people that we really did what we did because they won't understand it." I know this. The problem with going and telling somebody what we've done, you've got a sample of material. Picture this: you go in and you say, "I've got this stuff," and it's a report (from) a KGB agent spy handler back to Moscow on dealing with somebody. The name we've got isn't the guy's

name, it's a covername. And you don't get who the guy is who is saying this, and the activity is very carefully worded so that you don't get a specific notion about the guy lives on such-and-such a street and was operating...but you have a report. Remember, the report is very specific, and the guy says, "Okay, that's great. How did you do it?" "Well that's a little complicated, and I'm not sure I can even explain it to you if I tried because this was a 4-digit, one-part code. And this message was sent this year, and this message was sent in this year, and it was supposed to be a one-time tablet; it wasn't, but we found a match and we somehow or other worked these things out. And this is most of the groups that are in that thing; and we got a covername," and so on. Why, get out of here! You know. "What are you talking about? You guys are crazy." And that's basically the handling that if you were smart you got. There was one time when I was sent in to brief somebody at State to show him this material, and I was kicked out because these were our glorious allies and "you, young man, are going to lose your scalp and a few other bits of skin on other parts of your anatomy if you keep this up," and I believe to this day (that) I went in, and I was set up, and I got the reaction that I was expected to get, and somebody's conscience was then clear. They did not need to bring the Assistant Secretary of State in on anything at that point because I had been kicked out of that office. Not by him, but by his administrative...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER**

Okay, but State was such that when...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY**

No, they just didn't want to mess with them, and they didn't think they'd believe it, and so I went in carrying a message that was bound to be rejected and, "We've done it! We now have a record that we attempted to do this, and if anything ever comes up (and State says), "You didn't brief us." "Oh yes we did! And you kicked my emissary out and threatened him." Because I wrote it up. I don't have a record of it, but I gave it to Carter Clarke. And he wasn't at all surprised. It was just like he was chuckling all the time.

**VANDERPOOL**

Why did this material stop coming in in '47? Why wasn't there any more of it?

**KIRBY**

I don't know whether they said the...I think it disappeared. That's all I can remember. But the other thing was. I'll just have to tell you very truthfully. To me it dropped out of sight. And I had no reason to pursue it beyond that. We didn't have any burning questions about it, but I think I must have known more. Something tells me I knew what had happened to the system. The system disappeared.

**HATCH**

In the VENONA case they finally went back to one-time codes. They quit repeating so you couldn't break it.

**KIRBY**

Yeah, but VENONA only ran for a short time. When we brought our traitor over here they found out about it, and they stopped. But there's still enough stuff to be matched that there would be many, many more names to come out...(cut off by Hatch)

**HATCH**

Oh yeah, well they worked on it for a long time.

**KIRBY**

They did work on it for a long time.

**HATCH**

But it becomes lost.

**VANDERPOOL**

25X1

25X1

HATCH Maybe they went landline or something.

KIRBY Okay, but there could very well be a reason: landlines or printer! Remember, they were  
25X1 and we were not covering anything.

VANDERPOOL Okay, so it could have been a technical reason.

KIRBY We had nothing, no ability to cover any of that stuff at that point. So that could very well...as I say, I know in the back of my mind I knew why, because I did keep up on what was on the air and what was not. This had to have died out - or at least for our interest died out - at that point in time. Now remember, it was at about that time they also began to introduce true  
25X1

VANDERPOOL Yeah, and that didn't even cover that much.

KIRBY And the embassy transmissions kept on probably still to this day, but for stuff that they really wanted they began to go in various, remote areas where this stuff had appeared before, they began to go to the  
25X1

VANDERPOOL All right, sir. It sounds like it's all very coincidental with the U.S. involved in trying to get the Nationalists and Chinese together. So if we got this...we've got this other Russian stuff. We had some good Chinese Communist messages, almost all the military at (B% Chengkou) during that period of time, but then the Nationalists and the Chinese Communists kind of just told each other to kiss off, and that's when General Marshall said, "You guys (B% don't fit). I'll leave you to your own fate, and he bowed out of it. So that seemed to have a lot to do with our - AFSA's - attempt to get these communications.

KIRBY It did, because you see at that time I was strictly in the Russian program. It wasn't until much later I became the DDO over, or ADP over...where I worried about all those things. At that point I was stealing everybody else blind. Anything I could get for the Russian program I got for the Russian program, because that's what we were building and pushing at that time. (TR Note: Baker changes the tape here. The other interviewers apparently leave at this point.)

BAKER Okay, I'd like to take a step back a little bit to...you were in AS93, and then you were deputy to Mr. Duberstein. Okay. And how long were you there do you think?

KIRBY I was in AS93B from 1947 until 1949 when it became AS97, and right after that on May 20, 1949, we became AFSA. For a short time I was the head of what AS97 which was a branch which had included what had been AS93B.

BAKER And this was the entire Soviet effort at the time?

KIRBY Yeah, that's right. The whole thing.

BAKER What were the branches of ASA working on in that timeframe?

KIRBY We were working some Middle East. We were working on the Soviet. I'm trying to

remember. There was some other satellite stuff that we were working on which was not...we had like an ALO setup at that point, so but the Russians had gotten big enough. It was an organization all of its own, and the rest of them were spread amongst these other groups.

**BAKER** Did they have to double their wares in a similar fashion?

**KIRBY** Yes, and then finally we were pulling them all together and, of course, coming with the joint budgets and then under AFSA. Then naturally it was presented as an AFSA budget. But remember, the problem with AFSA was, AFSA was under the Joint Chiefs, and the Joint Chiefs really didn't do anything with the organization, so it was being run by the SCA's. I think as I said in that one little talk I gave a couple of years ago, the problem with that was it didn't work at all. And the responsiveness during the Korean War was so bad that finally the Brownell Committee was put together because of the failures of AFSA in the Korean War, and the lack of direction, and the lack of really concentration of technical capability; but mostly the lack of control of intercept and the collection resources. That's where the thing failed completely. So eventually in about 1950 the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State were told to do something about this, and they put together the Brownell Committee who then proceeded to look at the organization and came up with the recommendation that it be made a national agency and it be taken out from under the Joint Chiefs, and really came up the NSCID-9 which then we operated under for a number of years. But that's kind of the chronology at that particular point. Because really, ASA and the part of it that had the NSA ceased to exist on May 20th. That's when it became part of AFSA. May 20th, 1949.

**BAKER** Okay. ASA did not have its own separate existence?

**KIRBY** ASA continued to exist as ASA, as a Service Cryptologic Agency, but the part of it that was the national operation became AFSA. So AFSA took over the major part of the cryptanalysis, and machine, and all the rest of it.

**BAKER** Were you still assigned to ASA then?

**KIRBY** No, I was assigned to AFSA then.

**BAKER** Oh, you were assigned to AFSA. Okay, so ASA ended up being this what, collection...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** ASA ended up being a Service Cryptologic Agency with collection, and some cryptanalysis, and intercept control.

**BAKER** Primarily oriented on military targets.

**KIRBY** On military, yes. Well, and it was a military arm. It was the army group that was responsible for collection and for doing whatever the Service Cryptologic Agencies were supposed to do including field exploitation, reporting, and things like that.

**BAKER** And to whom would the commander of ASA report to?

**KIRBY** He was under the Chief of Staff Army.

**BAKER** Directly?

**KIRBY** I believe so. I don't recall the specific thing, but I think he remained under the Chief of

Staff Army, yes. I don't think that's true now. I think that's all changed around a bunch now. But he was at that time.

**BAKER** Oh, yeah it has. And generally under staff supervision through your time there, it would be under the G2.

**KIRBY** Yes, up until the time it became...it definitely was under the supervision of the G2.

**BAKER** Two questions about your early days back here. Number one, when did you become a civilian?

**KIRBY** In about...I'm thinking it was around November of...wait a minute. It was before the UKUSA Conference, so it had to be before that happened. In 1948 I became a civilian.

**BAKER** Oh okay. So you stayed in the military for several years after you came back.

**KIRBY** Oh yes. I was held over. I had points to be let out and everything else; overseas time and everything else, but I was kept in until...and I'm trying to remember the specific date. I really can't. I think it was in January or February of 1948. Then I converted to civilian. So when I went over to the UKUSA Conference I was an ASA civilian, army civilian.

**BAKER** So you were an involuntary servant, do you call that?

**KIRBY** Oh, yes. I was just kept in. Right. I just could not get out until then. Yes, indeed. I was not demobilized. I was not allowed out until that happened in 1948.

**BAKER** And by then you figured you had so much of your life invested in this business you stayed.

**KIRBY** No, I got so I liked it. I had still kept it open to go back to Cornell and work in chemistry. But at that point I really decided that this is what I would like to do, so I stayed.

**BAKER** Now, from the time that you came back to Arlington Hall until it was absorbed in AFSA, by then you were civilian. Was all that time in the Russian problem?

**KIRBY** Yes, every bit of it.

**BAKER** You're probably one of the old hands there now, or you are thee old hand there.

**KIRBY** Yes, I imagine I'm one of them. The only one I know that is before me is Cecil Phillips who was a young kid working on some of the...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** No, but I meant in 1949 you were already an old hand.

**KIRBY** Oh yes, by then definitely.

**BAKER** Running a division?

**KIRBY** Yes. Well, running one at that time was a branch. AS97 was a branch. But it would be like a division now.

**BAKER** You had what? Fifteen hundred people working for you at the time?

**KIRBY** It was a bunch. I don't remember the exact number, to tell you the truth. I've seen the organization charts, but yes, there must have been that many.

**BAKER** But it is the whole Soviet problem.

KIRBY

It was the whole Soviet problem.

BAKER

And then, of course, the big event there was in, I believe you said '48, when Black Friday came on.

KIRBY

That's right. That was the big kicker.

BAKER

25X1

KIRBY

BAKER

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25X1

**BAKER** Plus you've got burgeoning plaintext.

**KIRBY** Yes, and we began to really exploit and find that there was a gold mine in the plaintext in terms of intelligence, and I mean highly-desired intelligence.

**BAKER** Was Jack (B% Goering) already working with you then?

**KIRBY** Yes, Jack was one of the people we brought in very early on that. Jack was really in charge of the linguistic effort on that, and we then found Olin Adams in '47 working in the remains of an OSS group down in the old State Department building, and we hired away that whole group. And I received some bad slaps on the back of the wrist because of proselyting (sic) of...since we really decimated the entire unit. But then the people themselves, to the investigators, told them that there was no future in what they were doing. They didn't know how long they would be employed, and so basically that just disappeared. But we were desperate for linguists.

**BAKER** But you solved that problem very quickly.

**KIRBY** Well, not very quickly. We had a lot of new linguists from that one unit, and then as time went on we kept adding more linguists as time went on. And we began to develop machine methods of scanning and pulling out traffic so that one person could effectively look through a lot more traffic in a great hurry.

**BAKER** Was this (XG)?

**KIRBY** Ah, yes. Right, yes.

**BAKER** Okay, but the linguists you're still hiring from the outside. You're not building them yourself.

**KIRBY** Oh yes, but we're training too.

**BAKER** Oh, you are building some yourself? Okay, good. Now you're still leaving it up to the services to train them, or did the school develop them here?

**KIRBY** No, we were training them ourselves. The school...it might not have been the school, but we had our own training programs going which later became the school, so we were already developing our own linguists. There were internal classes and sending people to school at universities and a whole variety of things which now are formalized under various terms, but...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** That's what I'm reaching for is a little seed, the seed corn there.

**KIRBY** Well, that's what it is. We were already starting to send people to school on our own, and we had to fight to get those authorizations from the Department of Defense. Then we did begin to set up a school for formalized training, taking that load away from the operational divisions who shouldn't be fooling around with that. We still had to do a lot of on-job training, so we still had after a person went through courses at the university or school, bringing them in and teaching them the real life problems. And also we

began to get voice traffic, which I don't think you have ever, or will any of us, ever solve all the problems of linguist-transcribers and things like that. But we began to get those types of things coming in too.

**BAKER** Now, as AFSA becomes NSA, you stated pretty clearly earlier today, and implied very heavily at your presentation a couple years ago, that the Korean War helped bring NSA into being and the failures of AFSA.

**KIRBY** Oh definitely. AFSA really was...the failures were so bad and so obvious that the demand on the part of people outside the SIGINT community was, "Hey, let's straighten this out."

**BAKER** And did we solve it pretty quickly?

**KIRBY** Yes indeed. We sure did.

**BAKER** So by the end of the war we were doing a good job.

**KIRBY** No, no. By the end of the war...and I don't remember when the Korean police action stopped...(Baker cuts in)

**BAKER** Spring of 1953.

**KIRBY** But NSA was formed then. NSCID Number 9 and so forth; that was November 1952.

**BAKER** You only had about 6 months there before the cease-fire.

**KIRBY** That's right, so you see we did not really ever do much, because you couldn't make a silk purse out of that sow's ear in any 6 months. But then we began to get things pulled back into shape and to get a collection control system and to begin to get tasking at the stations straightened out and worked out. It wasn't straightened out; there just wasn't anything. Each SCA did what it wanted to, and basically AFSA was being run by the SCA's, and it was really a vast failure.

**BAKER** There was no operational center and no place to really...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** No, and really the Joint Chiefs could not run it. It was supposed to be under the Joint Chiefs, and they couldn't run it. They didn't run it, and so all they did was say to the SCA's, "You take care of the problem." So basically at that time AFSA was run by the SCA's for whatever running there was.

**BAKER** Okay. When AFSA was formed you were in a outfit called AFSA-24?

**KIRBY** Yes, I was in AFSA-24.

**BAKER** Is that also the Soviet problem, or is this something different?

**KIRBY** Yes, that was the Soviet problem.

**BAKER** Oh okay. So we're talking about just different names for the same organization all along. Okay fine. And this became under the new NSA...what did it become, and did you stay with the Soviet problem?

**KIRBY** Yeah, I stayed there, right. And after it became NSA...I'm trying to remember and I should remember what it was, but I must admit I don't. Because under NSA...oh, I know what happened...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** From the very beginnings did you have the ALO and all of that?

**KIRBY** Yes, we had that basic division. I know what happened. I was Chief of AFSA-24. We established NSA in November of '52, and I believe that about that time, just very shortly thereafter, General Canine...I stayed in whatever the organization was for just a few months, and then I moved to Plans and Policy Division, NSA.

**BAKER** Very quickly after NSA was formed?

**KIRBY** Yes, very quickly. Right. And then after that, after I was Plans and Policy for about 2 years that I was the Deputy Plans and Policy, and then I moved to...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** Who was Chief Plans and Policy?

**KIRBY** That was Air Force General...I can't even remember his name right now. But we did have an air force one-star that was in charge. We got along real well and I think worked very, very well together. And then General Canine moved me to the Office of Collection, which was not doing well at all. We were not doing a good job of providing upgrades for our collection equipment, and tasking control, and things like that. This is a part of the business I liked. He also gave me a considerable budget to work with. So NSA began to buy and provide to the SCA's things they couldn't get, or wouldn't get, from their own channels, from the services, and that I think began to establish a precedent which kept on for a long time.

**BAKER** And also drew them to you!

**KIRBY** That's right. Made them beholding. But it really was necessary. The things we got were quite necessary.

**BAKER** How big an organization was your collection and...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** Oh, gee, it was small. It was really quite small. We had some signal analysis and all. I forget what the exact number is, but it was probably three or four hundred or something like that.

**BAKER** Did you do a lot of travelling to field sites and things like that?

**KIRBY** Oh, my, all the time. Yes indeed. That was part of it.

**BAKER** How many field sites did we have in those days?

**KIRBY** We pretty much at the end of this time, except for places like the last couple of German sites which are now being closed, we had pretty well established these sites worldwide.

**BAKER** Okay, the structure that we're familiar with?

**KIRBY** Uh huh. Thirty-some sites. It was pretty well set in concrete. The CDAA's, which some of them went to the sites that then existed, were the only thing that was added really after that.

**BAKER** Earlier when you were in Plans and Policy, you said that was just for a short time?

**KIRBY** About 2 years.

**BAKER** 1952 to '54? Does that sound right?

**KIRBY** Yes.

**BAKER** How was that organized? Was it just primarily staff?

**KIRBY** Yes, it was just staff. It was staff function. Yes, very definitely, but I was working most of the time on second and third party exchange things and trying to make sure that the technical staffs like the Prod 04 and groups like that, that they were able to do their job and that Plans and Policy Division did not get involved in micromanagement. Because there was enough to do at that level, setting up exchanges, and sort of monitoring things that went on with SCA's, and we also began to have the unified budget. So that's when we really started, and it was when I was in Plans and Policy we started really unified budget activity for NSA and the SCA's. I actually was involved in that very heavily.

**BAKER** So you were actually budgeting for the SCA's.

**KIRBY** We were helping to put together the submissions which went in...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** Which they would put through the services.

**KIRBY** Well, to make sure they were coordinated with whatever came under the budget, the portion that NSA submitted, or approved.

**BAKER** And at that time NSA is under the Assistant Secretary of Defense?

**KIRBY** Yes it was at that point. Beginning in November it had started reporting actually to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. It was Graves B. Erskine and I guess it was called ASDI, but Assistant Secretary of Defense, Intelligence, but that's where you reported.

**BAKER** You said you were dealing with third party relations. What sort of third party relations did we have in those days?

**KIRBY** Oh, we were putting the [25X1] in business. We were putting the [25X1] in business, and we were starting to deal with other...already called them third parties as such...but we were dealing with countries and starting to work out exchange agreements with other countries in return for technical help, and equipment help, and things like that.

**BAKER** Does [25X1] go back that far?

**KIRBY** It doesn't go back quite that far. We were dealing with [25X1] strictly on a base-rights basis. No, but as a cooperative deal (we had) [25X1] and countries like that. And we also had a...whatever agreement that you want to call it, cooperative agreement. Remember, you had the Australian and Canadian agreements too along with the British agreement.

**BAKER** Okay, all separate, not one big (B% team) like we get later.

**KIRBY** Well, it was pretty much one thing, but they were all really separate functioning agreements because you wanted to keep things...not to get them mixed up. You didn't want the same thing that applied to the UK to apply to all the others in terms of exchange. So they were all separate agreements.

**BAKER** Did you sense that for the rest of your time here that it stayed that way?

**KIRBY** Yeah. Probably we called them something different, but basically they were always specific agreements...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** So you had gone about 5 years when I came here, and I've always had the impression that, while the British relationship is the closest, the others get pretty much what they wanted, and we exchange pretty much...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** Yeah, we exchange pretty widely, but if they were to ask for some of the things that we've talked about here and there, you would not do that. We have turned people down because this was something beyond their sphere of influence, activity, or really interest. And so it has worked that way. You wouldn't expect the Australians, for example, to be vastly interested in what was happening in northern Siberia.

**BAKER** Right. Okay, your time in collection, those 2 years. Did you notice any dramatic increase in traffic in those days?

**KIRBY** Oh yes, there was a dramatic increase in traffic. We were building up the printer collection. And at that time a former ASA official who was at that time in CIA, namely Frank Rowlett, opened up the tunnel operation in Berlin, and the equipment for the tunnel operation was all provided by the Office of Collection, NSA, because we had the sources to the people who built Cyrillic typewriter cages, and so forth. So we purchased large amounts of "training" equipment which we then transferred to CIA and wrote off on the requisitions. When CIA received the equipment then they dropped accountability. And General Canine at one time called me in and asked me, "What is all this stuff doing?" So I told him as best I could, but did arrange for somebody to come over and brief him. It had all started before he was even briefed, and I was told I could say nothing about anything except get the equipment, or to start ordering the equipment if I could possibly do it. So I did; (there was) nothing illegal about it, and I knew it was going to be perfectly legal, within the law the way we would be handling it, but he finally got the idea that, "Good gosh." I had a several million dollar budget, and all of a sudden he found an enormous chunk of that going into Cyrillic printing and recording equipment, and some more 2-channel stuff, and a whole bunch of things like that which he really didn't understand. We weren't building any new stations, so he did ask me, and I did sort of explain, and all he did was grin and dismiss me. And sure enough, he was then filled in completely right after that.

**BAKER** You did all this in anticipation that you were going to get some real returns from CIA.

**KIRBY** I knew we would. We had been briefed on what they had, and the only thing that could happen was it could be discovered and shut down, which eventually it was. But yes, we did anticipate we'd have fantastic returns, so this was no problem. But I would have done it even if it was minimal returns as long as it was another agency's operation, and we being basically reimbursed, which is kind of what happened too. We not only dropped accountability, we did receive the money back for the equipment. When we sent it to them we had worked it out so that basically we were reimbursed for whatever we had done, but then we dropped all accountability. We had nothing to ever tell us...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** No O&M to be concerned about. What sort of thing did you get from them, from the tunnel?

**KIRBY** Oh, well we got...it was the hottest military traffic and things of that sort, because this was really a very secure method of transmission - landline. And so they had none of the

inhibitions that they had on the open radio communications.

**BAKER**

Rather like the Brit's during World War II.

**KIRBY**

It was just much more open and free in what they talked about, and they talked about everything.

**BAKER**

Was this Group of Soviet Forces in Germany?

**KIRBY**

Yes, GSFG, yes. We got all sorts of information. We also got things about the Far Eastern Military District and the entire USSR; missilery, the whole nine yards, because they'd be reporting in and coordinating things among the various...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER**

Was this highly caveated, or did most of the military intelligence people get this?

**KIRBY**

Oh no. It was...the distributions, I forget exactly what happened, but it was pretty much just the normal distributions. But this had some caveats, yes, because of the source it had some caveats.

**BAKER**

This was pre-GAMMA time. What did they call it then?

**KIRBY**

Well, I think it was just "Eyes Only" or it specifically went to individuals. Before GAMMA we had what I thought was a pretty good system, and that was basically...you identified who was supposed to get things.

**BAKER**

So by name.

**KIRBY**

In some cases by name, or by specific office.

**BAKER**

Are we into an era here now where we're beginning to process things by machine...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY**

Oh, yes, a lot stuff by machine. Yes, plain language was being processed quite heavily by machine at this point, and the distribution...we had considerably different systems now for distribution, the teletype, various means of actually getting the material around in a big hurry. Yes, everything was being souped up because we had a lot more material coming in.

**BAKER**

Hardcopies falling away?

**KIRBY**

Yeah.

**BAKER**

Okay, so we were already moving that way by the mid-fifties?

**KIRBY**

Yes.

**BAKER**

Okay, when you left collection you went to OSD Office of Special Operations.

**KIRBY**

Yes. By the way, it was after the...I had one thing which...we were doing the budgetary process, and I was originally in the cryptologic staff. But then later in 1961 I went back as the Deputy Director of the Cryptologic Staff, because at that time I was called Plans and Policy Division. But when I went back to the cryptologic staff, that was the beginning of the CCP process which was where we began to bring in and look at the justifications for even service requirements at that point, and to meld them with the requirements, so when it all went up and was presented at the various budget approval levels, it had all been coordinated.

**BAKER** Who invented the CCP, or was it just sort of an evolution?

**KIRBY** It was sort of an evolution. We were involved in the invention of it, but it was not...but it later became...it was where we basically set the pace, and people reviewed what we were saying we wanted. And we had questions; we had to try to resolve those questions. Later on they were pretty much dictating what we would present and how we'd present it. That's about the time I left the agency was when we saw that we were being run by the program, rather than running the program. But originally we did run the program, and it was simply the mechanism that was used to justify and to get all the things in some sort of an order that was understandable to everybody.

**BAKER** Okay, let me step back here to this OSD Office of Special Operations. What was that all about?

**KIRBY** Well, this was the one that had the oversight of NSA. So when you were preparing the NSA budget it had to be reviewed and approved by Office of Special Operations, OSO, OSD.

**BAKER** Did you actually move down to the Pentagon?

**KIRBY** Yes, I moved down there. Lou Tordella had been there, and then I moved down to the Office of Special Operations, OSD, and Lou became the Deputy Director NSA at that point.

**BAKER** Okay, and you were sort of NSA's man to this office to make sure our budget was not mishandled, abused, spindled, and mutilated?

**KIRBY** No, I actually helped review the budget. People were appearing down there and making a presentation to me, and I was participating in the critical review of what NSA was presenting as needs for a budget.

**BAKER** As an official of the SecDef?

**KIRBY** Yes, I was on loan to him, but that was my job.

**BAKER** Because you were the resident expert, but you essentially were assigned to SecDef.

**KIRBY** Yes, indeed. Yeah, I was there to provide know-how and access to people who had know-how, but also I was there to participate in the review and to catch things that might be missed by the fellows who didn't know NSA that well.

**BAKER** Lose any friends there?

**KIRBY** Oh, bunches. Yeah, bunches, but I usually found ways to tell them don't go for this because that's never going to happen, but you'd do better if you do the following. So I did not work against them. I actually helped to cut out things that would never be approved in any further review and to find things more easily justified. That's basically when I...I began in Plans and Policy...I began in the budget thing, continued it in OSD, and then really between OSD and the financial people in the Pentagon and NSA we ultimately invented the CCP in about 1961.

**BAKER** Okay, and where did you go after that job? That was for a couple years, what? 1956-57?

**KIRBY** Yes, that was '56 and '57. Then I went to the Industrial College of the Armed Forces for

a year until '58. Then I came back in charge of the Office of Machine Processing.

**BAKER** Was it commonplace for our seniors to go there? You were a senior by then, weren't you?

**KIRBY** Well yes. No, Lou Tordella had gone to the War College, but I did not want to go to the War College, so I actually wanted to go to the Industrial College for several reasons: there were some different things I thought I wanted to do. And I did go there in '57 to '58. Then when I came back, I was the Chief of the Office of Machine Processing; had all the computers.

**BAKER** Was that your first real involvement with computers, or you'd been involved with them...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** Oh, no. I'd been involved with computers since the earliest days over in England. No, I had been working with computers and computer-like devices always. So this was not my first. This was...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** From their beginning, not from (B% your's).

**KIRBY** That's right. This was just picking up on something that I was already working on long and hard. No, this was not new at all, but it was exciting because we were bringing in a lot of new equipment and things like that.

**BAKER** That outfit that you had earlier was called (B% ADVA). Is that the correct term?

**KIRBY** It was just (B% ADVA).

**BAKER** How did you work with them in this new job, machine processing, MPRO?

**KIRBY** Oh, I was the one who supported...I received the request from them for things. I talked to them about what we could and could not do. I looked at the number of hours and tried to adjust the...what we could do is to get as close as I could to fulfilling the requirements. I was accused of being more sensitive to (B% ADVA's) requirements than other people's, and I suppose I was. I knew more about the programs that they were...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** Still got a soft spot in your heart for the Soviet problem too, don't you?

**KIRBY** Yeah, that's right. And it was still our major problem, and it was the one that was easiest to justify, (B% the Soviet problem). But we did a lot of work for them, and it was just...you met with everyone, and it was sort of a roundtable decision and discussion when you were allocating machine time. You really got into great detail on what was needed, how it was needed, when it was needed, and what would be the biggest pay-offs for the use of machine time and for the use of new machines. What new machines, what real changes did we need, and rental versus purchase, (or) lease versus purchase; all of that really a part of the...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** What kind of computer equipment were we using then, IBM's?

**KIRBY** IBM. Yeah, and a lot of special equipment. We were building...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** We were into -360 then?

**KIRBY** Into -360's; We're in the 1200 series. But we were building a lot of special equipment for

the Russian and for other problems: the Hagelin and various others.

**BAKER** We were building, or we contracted that out?

**KIRBY** We were contracting to have built. We weren't building ourselves. We were contracting to have built.

**BAKER** Okay, we're already too big to build for ourselves.

**KIRBY** Yeah, and Charles (B% Scharleman) was in charge of really the R&D that was doing a lot of construction and contracting. And Dale (B% Mariston) from PROD - Production - who was sort of the guy who converted a lot of the crypto requirements into how you do it by machine.

**BAKER** You're out here by now. I mean, we're out at Fort Meade by now.

**KIRBY** Yes. Right.

**BAKER** And all this was installed in the basement as we know it today?

**KIRBY** Oh yes, sure is.

**BAKER** Does the nickname Project LIGHTENING mean anything to you?

**KIRBY** It sure does. LIGHTENING was mid-'57. In fact, if you look at this you'll be amazed at how many things were instigated by Canine, or he sponsored and supported, and so forth, the things that really were key to the development of the agency, which is why I said there were several things I thought were amazing: one was the breaking into the 25X1 which brought bread and butter to ASA for awhile. And then General Canine entering in as early as he did and doing all the things he did in the early days of NSA, which no one person had ever supported so many things before. So you have to consider him as one of the keys and being the father, really, of what happened. Yes, LIGHTENING...the project had 25 million dollars that was allocated. NSA was the agency that was to supervise the program, divided into three areas: tung diode's (TR Note: probably short for tungsten); chips as we know them right now; and cryogenics, and all of them turned out to produce things...the tung diode's and all were the ones that really didn't get used for a heck of a lot, but the chips and the cryogenics are the two things that really are still the big payoffs from that project. And probably no 25 million has ever had the impact on the United States and on scientific endeavors as a whole...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** So this is where we're leading in computers at NSA.

**KIRBY** Yes, but we were getting some money to the people who needed some assistance, or a boost, namely the big companies, to give them some incentive to go ahead and do what needed to be done. But just like a couple of COMSEC developments later on, they could not keep these things as secrets of their own. It was shared with everybody. Whatever they did, just like some of the COMSEC stuff on the telephone, and the voice systems, and all. It became common...it was public...well, available to the cleared public. And that was the same thing with LIGHTENING. And it did accomplish the speed increases that we wanted and a lot more. It was a very successful project.

**BAKER** One thing that I skipped over back in '56. Do you recall our effort during the Suez Cri-

sis?

**KIRBY**

Yeah.

**BAKER**

You would have still been on the Soviet...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY**

No, at that time I was over in the...actually at that time I was probably...I started in collection, but then I moved to OSO, Special Operations. What I did was I helped get the money for the things that we needed to do that I had gotten briefed on before I went over.

**BAKER**

And what do we have in that area other than the Liberty which went on the Liberty later? But what all did we...what were our...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY**

We didn't have much of anything. We had things in the Mediterranean. We had some facilities in the Med.

**BAKER**

25X1

**KIRBY**

Yeah, 25X1 had facilities, and we were helping them add to their capabilities.

**BAKER**

25X1

**KIRBY**

Right. Because we just didn't have much.

**BAKER**

So we were primarily dependent upon the 25X1

**KIRBY**

You bet in those early days.

**BAKER**

Okay, now we're into the early sixties, cryptologic staff, 1961. That's the CCP (B% beginning).

**KIRBY**

That's when we really began the formalized CCP and I was the Deputy Assistant Director of the CCP Staff.

**BAKER**

What was the real driving force behind that? Just to pull everything together?

**KIRBY**

Yes, to pull things together. We found the services were having a terrible time on their own. They were not able to justify...in other words, the reviewers in the Pentagon were waiting for them to come in independently, and they were just pulling the tail feathers out right and left because there was no unified approach. You couldn't relate what they were doing to what somebody else was doing. So basically what the CCP process originally was designed to do - originally, not what it became later - was a common overview of the need for assets, and the utilization of assets, and what would be accomplished, and applying that all the way down the line to the lowest collection station; how they would participate in meeting whatever objectives were to be met.

**BAKER**

Orienting resources toward the target, right? (TR Note: Long period of silence on tape here; then cuts in) Okay, did you interact a lot with Admiral Frost in this period?

**KIRBY**

O, yes. Oh definitely, yes I sure did. And in fact, I went with Admiral Frost on at least one worldwide tour. And then, of course, I worked later...but yes, I worked with him a lot. And I found he was a very good guy to work with. I don't think he fared so well with Dr. (B% Cubini) later on in some of the things that happened. Gene Cubini then became the guy who reviewed the functions of NSA; he was the reviewer.

**BAKER** He went afoul of quite a few people, didn't he?

**KIRBY** Oh, but I became very good friends with Gene Cubini. Yes, I wouldn't say that we were copacetic on everything because that's not so. But I knew about the cryptanalytic process, and he didn't. And I never hesitated to let him know that in the reviews. And most of the real review activity took place in his office at 6 o'clock in the morning when I would go over there to meet with him, and we would go through and argue the things. And Jack (B% O'Gara), who was part of his office and was our reviewer, was not there at those meetings. It wasn't until afterwards we'd get together and discuss whatever general agreements we had come to. But Gene Cubini was...yes he was a very hard guy to deal with.

**BAKER** Did you know him when you were at the Pentagon?

**KIRBY** No, I had never met Gene until he basically became the Assistant Director over in the Pentagon looking over what we were doing. That's when I first met him.

**BAKER** Okay, so he's (B% sort of) Assistant Secretary?

**KIRBY** Yes.

**BAKER** Was he a political appointee?

**KIRBY** He was an appointee, yes. Sure.

**BAKER** Oh, okay. So there was no reason for you to...(blocked by Kirby). He may not have been there.

**KIRBY** No, I had no reason. No.

**BAKER** Okay. Have any occasion to have anything to do with the SecDef himself, McNamara in those days?

**KIRBY** Oh, yes, we used to brief McNamara on a variety of things. And as part of OSO we did not just brief him on SIGINT matters. There were some other clandestine functions, a lot of them that OSO was involved in which I was involved in as a member of the group, and many of the briefings had to do with base rights; it had to do with special arrangements with other countries for access to, or transportation, or special arrangements for U.S. work to be done in those countries, and security, and cover, and a whole bunch of things. So it was an eye-opening experience.

**BAKER** Okay. How did Admiral Frost approach the things different from General Canine?

**KIRBY** He was much more low-key. He did not have the presence in meetings with a lot of top DOD officials. He tended to speak in a voice that was so low that people couldn't understand him. These are minor things, but in terms of making an impression on people you're supposed to make an impression on, they made a difference. He was a professional SIGINT'er. He knew about SIGINT, but somehow or other, he did not project that he was a knowledgeable, dynamic, driving leader for the SIGINT effort. So he did not fare well with his SecDef superiors, namely Gene Cubini in particular. They had great difficulties.

**BAKER** During this period we're also talking about the Cuban Missile Crisis and some things going on in the Middle East. But you're in a macro position now. You're involved with

the...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** That's right. When I came, yes. And the Cuban Missile Crisis...was called in when that began because you had to be there so that you could talk to the SecDef Office when things happened. And I believe at that point I was the Deputy Director NSA for Production, the Deputy ADP at the time that particular thing took place. Well, we had several things, of course, about that period of time. We also had the navy and the ship...I talked about it a minute ago and now I can't remember.

**BAKER** The Liberty?

**KIRBY** No, no, the one that was captured by the Koreans.

**BAKER** Oh, the Pueblo. Well that's '68.

**KIRBY** Pueblo. Yeah, but that happened much later. But what I'm saying it was in that period of time that I sort of think a lot of these major events took place. The missile crisis, yeah, I was called in and basically, we had some things to offer, namely, we'd seen a buildup of Soviet activity there; we watched the shutdown when it happened; we participated and Dr. Tordella and I went over and talked to this group that was doing an investigation of Gary Powers, and it really was...we were providing information, but it was not the same sort of dynamic participation. I think you'll find that out when we have this October thing. It wasn't like some of the other events that had taken place earlier where SIGINT was absolutely key to everything that went on. Photography played a much larger part in that crisis in detecting what was going on. Now, we had to still uncover what was under the roofs of things. And we had uncovered the buildups, and the ships, and the activities, and things like that. But it was a little bit different.

**BAKER** Okay. You recall photography as being the prime...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** Being very, very important. I'd say the prime...because that's what they used to brief the public on.

**BAKER** So you took over as...at what point in here are you...you become the ADP in '64?

**KIRBY** I was Deputy ADP in '63. And then in '64 I took over as Assistant Director Production, yes. The exact month I've got someplace, but I forget what it is now.

**BAKER** Okay. And who was it who selected you to move on to that position?

**KIRBY** At that time the Director was Pat Carter; it was General Carter who selected me, but I think the person who pushed for it first was Dr. Cubini, and he and Pat Carter had sort of a running argument going about this at the time. But Gene Cubini was the one who was pushing very hard for me because he wanted somebody who was a career technologist to take over the operations because he felt that that really was the thing that we should have.

**BAKER** Of course, Dr. Tordella was the deputy director too, wasn't he?

**KIRBY** Yes, that's right.

**BAKER** He was a long-time acquaintance of your's too.

**KIRBY** Yes, but the deputy director didn't have the ability to nominate and to push for things that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence did and, oh yeah. There's no

doubt that Lou wanted it to go that way. But when you look at who were fighting the battles - Pat Carter on one hand and Gene Cubini on the other hand. And really the Assistant Secretary of Defense, he was the one who was going to make the decision and then the Secretary of Defense. And that's what happened.

**BAKER** Oh really. It wasn't that the director didn't have that much freedom of action.

**KIRBY** Not when it was elevated the way it was. Not when it was elevated to the degree it was elevated. It became a perogatives battle in which the referee had to be the one who had the oversight of the agency.

**BAKER** Interesting! And you didn't feel you had Carter's support really?

**KIRBY** Oh, yes, I had Carter's support in a way, but he was going to disrupt what had become a tradition, that it should be a military job. So that was basically what was happening. Oh yes, I was great friends with General Davis, who was at that time the ADP, and that I was going to succeed if I succeeded somebody, and I was a good friend with the...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** So you're the first civilian to hold that position?

**KIRBY** I was the first civilian to become the DDO or ADP. Yes. That broke the precedence right there.

**BAKER** And where was the resistance to that change?

**KIRBY** The military in general.

**BAKER** But not including Carter?

**KIRBY** Well, let's put it this way: Carter was a military director of the agency and was expected, among other things, to sort of respect some of the ingrained traditions, if they were ingrained, and this one was. And therefore...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** So the military expected Carter to put a military man in there.

**KIRBY** Basically he would have been hard put to suddenly say to everybody, "Look you guys. I'm going to appoint this guy just out of the blue." He would have had a big set of problems, but if there was intervention from outside and from the civilian sector...you know, this is like sometimes you want to lose a battle, but you've got to lose it because somebody else won it; not that you gave in. Somebody else beat you; higher authority and so forth. So I think that's what it was. No, Pat Carter and I talked very freely about things. There was no big problem though. He was torn; he figured that maybe it should go that way, but he was not really in a position to say, "I'm going to go against the military, whom I must now live with for NSA to get things done. I still have to live with them." So with him this precedence-shaping event would be better to be impressed on him from outside.

**BAKER** Okay. Your relations with Carter were pretty good all along?

**KIRBY** They were still good, yes. Absolutely.

**BAKER** And in this period, of course, the big event is the buildup in Viet Nam. How did you view that?

**KIRBY** Right. I was involved - and I felt that I was in pretty good shape to do it - in stealing from the Russian to increase the Vietnamese.

**BAKER** Win some more friends. (laughs)

**KIRBY** It was very difficult for some of the people in the Russian problem to come in and convince me on things when I had, with them, decided that this is probably the place we could skinny down here and put things over here, or we can reduce the intercept coverage here and put it here. Because I was still fairly conversant with the Soviet problem. But that's always hard. It's hard for anybody. I think of a President who has to cut spending and you look at where do you cut, and what do you do? This is basically the same thing. How do you reallocate resources? But it had to be done and so that's why...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** When did NSA start building up for Viet Nam?

**KIRBY** Oh my, I trying to remember. In 1961 when I was over there we still were not involved. It must have been about...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** You visited Viet Nam in '61?

**KIRBY** I sure did. It must have been about '63 when I was the Deputy ADP that we were starting to really have to build...I don't even remember what the dates were when we started our fighting in Viet Nam and things like that. I honestly don't.

**BAKER** Yeah, you can cite a precedence there since '56, but the real buildup starts in '65, the massive buildup.

**KIRBY** But even then in '63 - '64, then in...it was about in '65, yes it was that we were making the moves of people; the middle of '64 to '68, 1965 - '66.

**BAKER** Okay, we were building our sites up

**KIRBY** That's when I was ADP. And that's when we were really having to really...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** You made the...leading the services to take the lead there, or was NSA Headquarters pushing to put more field collection there?

**KIRBY** Oh no, we were the ones that were pushing, again, with the services. Of course, they were trying to use it to push for everything, and we wouldn't do that. We just pushed for the ones we felt really were essential to do the job. And some of the field facilities and all...it's just like Korea. There were certain things that we knew were going to be kind of a waste of time and effort, but there were others...I was for airborne DF. A lot of people here at NSA were not, but I felt it was one of the few good answers to the problem. I felt that the airborne coverage of the very low-level and low-powered HF was the only way to collect that stuff. You could not set up, you could not run vans in; you couldn't do any of that baloney, and so that was another very, very effective tool to do the job.

**BAKER** Did you make any trips to Nam in this job?

**KIRBY** Yes, I did. A number of them. I visited General Walt on the peninsula just after he had killed off the Viet Cong guerillas. Because there was only about 5,000 of them, and he got them all in one fell swoop from information we gave him. I was there with Pat Carter

right after he had actually cleaned up that area. From then on it was North Vietnamese troops. The VC guerillas...there were some of them, but the marines got them early on. Pat Carter had a son who was a Marine captain with Lou Walt, so we visited him out there.

**BAKER** What peninsula are you talking about?

**KIRBY** It was down...I'm trying to remember the name of the river, but it was where Walt...oh gee, I can't even remember the name of the place now. But Walt and the marines caught these guys out on the peninsula...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** Was that up near Danang, in that area?

**KIRBY** No, it was further down. I think it was further down than that. But they actually caught them on this peninsula out in a river, and they wiped out the bunch. It was only about 5,000 of them. And that really, as he said, "That's the guerilla problem," because from here on out it was North Vietnamese troops moving down there. Remember, the so-called guerilla activity; there was not a heck of a lot of guerilla activity. Most of it was North Vietnamese.

**BAKER** Well, that may expand quite a bit in '67 in the delta. (laughs)

**KIRBY** You may have had real guerillas by then, yeah.

**BAKER** Okay. You were talking earlier, there were a bunch of crises in this period, and that's certainly true. When did you actually leave the agency?

**KIRBY** I left the agency in February of '68.

**BAKER** Okay. Just about the time of (the) Tet (offensive). That was my time in Viet Nam. The Arab-Israeli War in '67, the so-called Six-Day War. What are your memories of that? Anything striking come to mind?

**KIRBY** No, we had reasonable coverage of what was going on. We were keeping track as best you could of the activities. But really, when you think about it, there wasn't a heck of a lot we had to contribute to that except keeping track from the outside of what was going on.

**BAKER** A lot of turbulence over the Liberty getting shot up?

**KIRBY** A bunch! Yes, a whole bunch, because...to this day I consider that to be a very strange (B% bird).

**BAKER** Do you view it as an accident, or do you view it as an attack?

**KIRBY** I view it as whatever the United States Government has found it to be.

**BAKER** In other words, you don't really have it settled in your own mind?

**KIRBY** I have it pretty well settled in my own mind, but my policy is it's whatever the U.S. Government found it to be. Otherwise it's just my opinion.

**BAKER** Yeah, well it's your opinion that I'm interested in.

**KIRBY** I feel it was very questionable that it was an accident. Let's put it that way.

**BAKER** Okay. What about the Czech spring? That's more back in your area, the Czechoslova-

kian...the Soviet...the Warsaw Pact putdown of the Czech spring.

**KIRBY**

Well again, that was one that we saw the buildup of troops beforehand and watched what happened there, but really there was no chance for any U.S. reaction of any kind. All you could do...that was one where you looked at and said, "Well, isn't this interesting!" We see these various things happening. It wasn't real clear until the blow fell, but you had a pretty good idea, because of the reserve that was built up. What was going to happen, there was absolutely nothing we could do about it. That was a case where SIGINT would give you an indication of something about to happen, but there's nothing you can do about it. It was not very useful, in other words; I don't feel. We did have pretty good indications of what was going to be launched.

**BAKER**

Okay. That's pretty much coming to the end of your tour here. I guess I've got to ask the sixty-four thousand dollar question: why did you leave?

**KIRBY**

I left because I found that I was spending more and more time going over and defending budgets on The Hill, of which apparently I had gotten real good, because I had helped with the CCP and, therefore, I kind of knew all the details of how the thing worked, and I kind of knew how to make good presentations. I found that there was increasing incursions from the outside on things NSA was trying to do, so it was getting harder and harder to get work done here in NSA. And you were starting to have to answer to too many people, and NSA was becoming bureaucratized. You were starting to have committees that were going to look at your personnel development of your own people, and I felt when you lose that control you lose control of organization. You no longer are able to run things, and I didn't want to do that.

**BAKER**

This was from the DOD bureaucracy?

**KIRBY**

No, no. This was from within NSA. We were starting to build up this training, and personnel development methodology which I find is why people go out and start new companies. They don't want to work in big companies that already have that methodology because they want to make the decisions on what they will do with your people: how they will train them, what they will train them in, how you should assign them, review them, and so forth.

**BAKER**

Okay, so it's from the other directorates that...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY**

From the other side, that's right. I did not want people getting together in a committee and voting on what I should do with my people. When that began to happen I began to lose interest in what I was doing. (TR Note: telephone rings here and tape recorder is shut off momentarily) (Kirby cuts in)...was the set of big problems that I found, but I still felt the work was fascinating, but I also was looking then to change my career and to get back to doing things that I had done in the very early days. So I was not interested in going with large companies. I was asked to go with IBM, which is like government. I was asked to go with several companies that were so big it was like staying in the government because they already had their invested bureaucracy. So I went to a smaller company that was doing some kind of interesting things, but where I could see they didn't know why they were doing what they were doing, and I could kind of help out on that. And I could start doing signal analysis, because I told you I was interested in proforma 25X1 and those things up here. I figured I'd never have time

to do that in the other places, but I might when I went there, and I did; ultimately I did. So that's why I decided to move.

**BAKER** You had a pretty solid offer before you even started...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** Oh, I had a very solid offer; several solid offers, but I chose that one, which many people could not understand.

**BAKER** The bottom line is you just reached your threshold with the bureaucracy.

**KIRBY** I reached the threshold and let's face it. I felt that ADP was the best job in the agency. I already had it. Where could I go from there? Unlike a lot of people I did not want to become the deputy director. I was asked before I left would I be interested, and I said, "No. Dr. Tordella is doing a wonderful job. He and I are great friends. I have no desire to do his job. I think he's doing a great job, much better than I would do in that job." He would do things that I would have very little interest in. So I decided it would be better just to leave, and that's what I did. I also had a great curiosity in what would happen outside this place because, after all, this is where I had been all the time.

**BAKER** And has outside lived up to your expectations?

**KIRBY** Oh, it's been great. But now it's unfair. I have kept a foot in both worlds. I probably spent more time and worked on as many or more things as a part of the NSA Advisory Board than...I mean, really, I did. I worked on some of the very fascinating things. I was able to participate when General Allen - before I joined the board - when General Allen wanted to set up a study of high-level...well, that was really the thing I believed in the most. Despite all the plain language and despite all these other things, I felt that the only reason this agency existed was high-level cryptanalysis, and if it stops doing that it could become anything. I could organize something anywhere to do all the other stuff, but to do the high-level and to attack things that become high-level - they may not be the same thing - but the new systems and all that were getting very complicated because of how you transmit, and what you transmit, and a whole bunch of these things, that this is the reason the agency was set up by President Truman. If you don't do that, there's no real good excuse for the agency as such to exist.

**BAKER** I think you share that belief with all your World War II comrades. It's certainly the strongest thing I've heard said. "Don't ever stop the high-level work. The high-grade stuff, that's what you're there for."

**KIRBY** No, this is what I firmly believe. That's right, because if you don't do the high-grade...in the high-grade the people we have had who've learned the most about modern-day communications switching, (and) computer control, all of them were the high-level cryptanalysts. The ultimate in these areas are the guys who've supported the things that they're doing.

**BAKER** So you came back on a contractor basis to work with the...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** I just came back on a...in other words, as a SAB member. No, I came back just as an outside person who is coming in here on a daily stipend, whatever that happened to be, plus the costs of transportation. That's all I ever came back to this agency on. I've never been...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** But you were still probably employed when you...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** I was employed by E Systems, so I became a special government employee, I believe is the term today; a special government employee without rights to retirement or any of those things, and sick benefits, or anything like that, but so much per day and travel allowances. Perfectly legal.

**BAKER** Well, you finally drew...are drawing some government retirement, aren't you?

**KIRBY** I'm drawing government retirement. That's because of the time I spent in the agency. So I'm a retiree, yes.

**BAKER** But you hadn't hit the 55 yet. Weren't even close!

**KIRBY** Oh no. No, no. I was 46 years old. No, I was nowhere close to that. It wasn't until I was 55 that I put in for the retirement. So this is why I stopped; and outside it's been very, very satisfying. I've worked with other foreign countries: Germany, Israel. I've worked with a couple of almost satellite-block countries in communication systems; things they've put in. I've helped build airplanes for heads of state with worldwide communications, and most of all I have worked with NSA, army, navy, air force on proforma stuff that we've installed in ships, airplanes; and during the Gulf War the (B% TOM) System to take the data and get it direct to the troops. You guys borrowed most of the equipment from us which was used because there hadn't been time to contract for it. And the stuff we had for demo and all was really basically what was available. So I felt that this was very, very satisfactory, to make a contribution.

**BAKER** So this is the type of thing you worked on with the advisory board or whatever, or was that...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** Yes, I worked with them on any problems that came up here, like what should you do about spread spectrum signals. Well, what should you do about things like the pro-forma? That was the very end. That was when I was getting ready to leave. Because finally I decided the board was getting stultified; too many people there for too long, so I think I was one of the first people to resign from the board, simply because it looked like it was a good idea to start getting some new people in. Which I really felt very strongly is the thing you should do.

**BAKER** So now you're trying once again to retire, are you? (laughs)

**KIRBY** No, no, I'm as retired as I want to be. I'm still doing what I want to do, when I want to do it. And I still work for NSA all the time. I give a lot of talks. There's nobody anywhere who is not aware that I am an ex-NSA employee, and in as unclassified terms as I can give them, have explained why this is an essential function within the government, what it does, how it does it in terms of what has already been published, and that this is why you have to have secrets and things like that. So I'm as retired as I want until health makes me retire further, that's it.

**BAKER** That covers mostly all the questions I wanted to cover. Do you have anything you want to leave for posterity other than what you have already told us?

**KIRBY** No, except that I worry about the fact that I see these days that the legalism which is kind of stifling us everywhere is creeping in on the agency. Because I believe that legal-

istic approaches...General Carter once said - and I believe this; I don't know if this was his idea entirely - that you can take anything, and if you go to the right legalist they will find something wrong with what you're about to do. I worry that many things in the agency we are not able to try to do because people are kind of afraid that, "Hey, this may turn out to be illegal," and I saw that more and more the more I worked with the agency: the stultifying effect of legalism versus the ability to go ahead and do things and believe that somebody is going to back you up and that you hadn't broken any law, but more and more of this idea of it isn't what it is, but what it can be made to be, I think had crept in throughout the country. Not just here, but every place else. School teachers who don't dare hug somebody for fear of being accused of treating the kids wrong; you know, sexual mistreatment. These are bad things that happened. And here what I've noticed happen is that people are less willing to go stick their neck out for fear that their head is going to be chopped off.

**BAKER**

Or for fear they won't be backed up.

**KIRBY**

And they won't be backed up. That's exactly right. And I still say the problem is always you can take anything you want to do...and I noted this particularly in contractual things and in relationships with people outside the agency. Now, there are two things that happen with relations outside the agency: there has always been a tendency of this agency and the people in it - and I was part of this, so I can say it - to want to grab certain things and keep them strictly within...to your breast because then you've got the only hold, unique capability. But the other thing is that when you deal with somebody...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER**

It's called turf battle.

**KIRBY**

That's turf battles and that's protecting the source, yeah. The other thing is the idea that you can not discuss and be open with somebody say in contractual relationships because you may be giving them too much information, favoritism; a whole bunch of these things. That is not just in contractual things. This is in discussions on, say with industry, on problems that you have. Things that maybe need to be looked at. The tendency is to take things you think are really critical and want to sort of hang on to them and not discuss them outside and solve them yourself. Private companies do the same thing. It's not unique.

**BAKER**

It's probably an organizational dynamic of some sort.

**KIRBY**

But no, I still feel that NSA has a unique capability. Now, the one thing I see that worries me a great deal. I said that, I think, in the talk I gave. And that is that more and more I worry about the fact that we are retrogressing toward the AFSA setup where the outsiders have too much...for instance there is no...the one thing I'd like say, "There is no such thing as tactical intelligence and strategic intelligence. There is only signals intelligence." If you happen to need it right now it's tactical. If you don't need it except to build up background, you could call it strategic if you want to, but it could change tomorrow. The fact that we have divided the CCP and the budget exercise into those two things is disastrous. Eventually we will have to look at the whole thing again and reinvent what was invented in 1962. I have the firm conviction this will ultimately happen, and I feel that we at NSA there have been too many of the, I'll call them perogatives, have been

given away. Too much turf had been undercut and that shouldn't have happened. The result is you don't have a clear leader where you talk about international support: what should you give <sup>25X1</sup> what should you give to <sup>25X1</sup> what should you give to some other country? You've got everybody on the outside joining in to try and decide. Now, you have to review what you've decided. But I don't get the feeling that NSA is a clear leader in making the decisions (and saying), "It ought to be this way," and then defending those positions to the community, who has a right to criticize, which is good. But I really believe that that's the biggest thing that is facing us, is not the contraction, not the money; not any of these things. It's the fact that we are not really the leader anymore like we were at one point. And I say this as a fairly educated, outside viewer.

**BAKER** We're not the leader in SIGINT?

**KIRBY** In the SIGINT decisions on political and policy matters.

**BAKER** Who is? The services?

**KIRBY** I'm not sure. The services have gotten to be more and more. They can stop NSA dead on too many things. And I feel that is bad. That's what happened under AFSA.

**BAKER** And of course, the service agencies are being gobbled up by this large INSCOM, and (B% AFIC) and so forth.

**KIRBY** So now you don't know who is...so you're losing a professional touch even there. So if you don't know who the boss is...(cut off by Baker)

**BAKER** You're getting an intelligence amalgam and some...(cut off by Kirby)

**KIRBY** Well, who's the boss? When you are no longer clearly going to be able to make decisions, now you tell me who is going to make (1G)? To me that's a great concern.

**BAKER** Good point. Well, thank you very much, sir. Did we get beyond Cat III, you think, at any point?

**KIRBY** No, I think that some of the things we mentioned...I think they're all in the Cat III. Even the things on VENONA and stuff like that. I don't think that's beyond it.

**BAKER** We certainly appreciate your time.

**KIRBY** I tried not to get into anything that I definitely shouldn't.

**BAKER** Okay, and thanks again.

**KIRBY** People problems are the ones that you usually stay the furthest away from. They're the most classified.

END OF INTERVIEW