Interview with Philip W. Manhard

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR PHILIP W. MANHARD

Interviewed by: Marshall Green

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[Note: The transcript has not been edited by Ambassador Manhard. Charles Stuart Kennedy is also present during this interview.]

Q: My name is Marshall Green, retired Foreign Service officer, interviewing Ambassador Philip Manhard with regard to his rather unique experiences in China during the critical final days in which the United States still had representatives in China, but where Chiang Kai-shek's forces had already been retreated to the island of Taiwan, and where the Chinese Communists were in the saddle.

Ambassador Manhard went on to serve in an interesting career in Pusan, Seoul in Korea, and Tokyo, as deputy political advisor to CINCPAC and regional planning advisor to the Far East. He was also presidential advisor with regard to Micronesia, having attended the Senior Seminar, and was Ambassador to Mauritius in 1974 to 1976. Before, as I say, he worked on Micronesia for the President.

I'd like to start by asking you, Phil, with regard to how you got yourself into China, into the background of the Foreign Service. As I recall, you were in Standard Oil Company in China. How did you get to the Far East? What is your background?

MANHARD: Marshall, I had always been interested, since high school, in the Foreign Service. I went to college with the idea of preparing for the Foreign Service. World War II arrived while I was still in university. I ended up studying Japanese in the Navy and served in the Marine Corps during World War II. I came back after the war, took the Foreign Service exams, passed them with not the highest grade in the world, and was put on a waiting list.

Q: What year was this?

MANHARD: 1946 and '47. I took the written and the oral, and was waiting on the waiting list, the Foreign Service then having very little money to appoint all those that had passed.

Not being a person of independent means, I had to earn a living. Standard Vacuum Oil Company of New York came along and said, “We're recruiting for our marketing division in China.”

I said, “That's exactly where I've always wanted to go,” and I went.

Q: You went there knowing Japanese?

MANHARD: I studied Japanese during the war and also studied some Chinese in college before the war. I went to China with Standard Vacuum Oil Company in Peking, whereupon, after I'd been there for about six months, I received a letter saying that my appointments had been made and I was to report to the State Department actually one week before they condescended to send the letter to me, which was by surface mail to China from Washington.

So I went to the then Acting Consul General Fulton Freeman, Tony Freeman, in Peking, who later became ambassador to several countries. I said, “Tony, what do I do now? My lifelong ambition has been to join the Foreign Service and come to China, and now it is too late.”

He said, “We have an opening in the Chinese language school here. Would you like to take that position?”

I said, “Certainly. That would be perfect from my point of view.”

He said, “I'll fix it.”

I said, “How in the world can you fix it, since the term for my eligibility for appointment is already expired?”

He said, “Phil, I'll introduce you to the Foreign Service by explaining something very basic to you. I will send a telegram to the Department explaining to them they can save $422, i.e., the (then) cost of your trip from Washington to Peking. They will do anything for $422, regardless of regulations.” He did, they did, and I was sworn in, if not uniquely, at least a very rare occurrence in the field, in Peking, by Tony Freeman.

Then I attended the Chinese language course, an 18-month course. In the end of January 1949, the Chinese Communist Army occupied Peking by negotiation with the local Chinese Nationalist commander. Then life changed radically for all of us in China at that time.

Q: Does that mean that you had to stop your Chinese language studies in Peking? Did you stay on in Peking, or were you then send elsewhere?

MANHARD: I stayed on through my course in Chinese, from which I graduated in October of 1949. I was then immediately transferred as a vice consul to Tientsin as a language officer in our consulate in Tientsin.

Q: Did you operate there as a regular vice consul, or were you studying the language?

MANHARD: No, I was operating as a regular vice consul.

Q: What were your duties?

MANHARD: Consular duties and monitoring the Chinese press. Actually, my main duties, as it turned out, were to try to assist Americans, both official and private, to leave north China, all of whom exited through Tientsin. So my duties evolved into constant negotiation, assistance, support, coordination between departing Americans and local Chinese Communist government officers.

Q: Were you aware that you'd have to be departing pretty soon, too?

MANHARD: The major event that bore on that for all of us in China at that time was, first, a telegram from the Department signed by the then-Acting Secretary Levitt, telling everybody in China that we were the indispensable eyes and ears, we could not be replaced, that China policy was still under very serious debate in Washington, and they wanted us to stay at all costs, and only those with a dire emergency should ask permission to return to the United States.

Q: Were dependents, meanwhile, taken back to the United States?

MANHARD: Dependents remained in China at that time. Apparently, the Department was mindful of what they hoped, I guess, to be a precedent of what we did in Manchuria in 1932, when the Japanese occupied Manchuria, i.e., we kept our consulates there and they did consular work by tolerance of the Japanese, even though we did not recognize the Japanese conquering and occupation of Manchuria at that time. They were allowed to remain and to function consular duties. We thought, I guess, that we could do that again in China temporarily, at least.

Q: What was the atmosphere like then in Tientsin during those days that you were serving as vice consul? The Chinese authorities were obviously Communist authorities. Did they act towards you in a hostile, surly way, or were they cooperative, or what?

MANHARD: It varied from official to official. Mostly very bureaucratic and quite non-cooperative. For example, they tried to apply all their regulations affecting foreigners that they promulgated after they came to power officially as of October 1, 1949, when they established their national government. They insisted, for instance, that we fill in various bureaucratic forms, residence permits and various things, declaring all previous permits or any other documents that we had used previously under the Chinese National Government to be null and void under their government. Each form, for example, had a space for occupation. So in my case, I would write down “vice consul.” They would reject it. It boiled down to a long, rather sterile negotiation over whether . . .

Q: What type would they prefer?

MANHARD: They would only accept “unemployed” or “former vice consul.” Since we claimed that we were not unemployed and we claimed that we had our official title, finally we ended up putting down “vice consul” and letting them fill in the word “former.”

Q: Just refresh my memory, though. At that point we had diplomatic relations with the Chiang government?

MANHARD: And we still maintained full diplomatic relations with the Chinese Nationalist Government, which by that time, of course, had moved south and then finally to Taiwan. Everyone was aware that there was a debate raging in Washington about our policy toward China.

Q: The situation you faced in Tientsin at that time, was that a similar situation faced by our other consulates? How many consulates did we have operating in China at that point?

MANHARD: I can't be sure exactly now, Marshall, but we had our consulate general in Peking, we had a consul general in Mukden, we had our embassy in Nanking, we had a consulate general in Shanghai and in Canton. We had several others in central and

south China, but they were evacuated, I believe, just before the Chinese Communist fully occupied the mainland.

Q: Just as a matter of historical note, it is interesting that in the early 1930s, we had more consulates in China than any other country in the world by far. After that came Mexico. So we had very close communications that had a great deal to do with our missionary activities, too, as I recall.

MANHARD: Yes, that's true.

Q: Going back to the events in 1949, when you were in Tientsin, what were some of the particular problems that arose that are of historic note and importance?

MANHARD: Shortly after I got to Tientsin in October 1949, the news had come just before I got there that our consul general, Angus Ward, and his entire staff and dependents in Mukden had been placed under house arrest, i.e., in a compound in which they lived between the office and residencies in the city of Mukden, the capital of what the Chinese called Northeast, formerly called Manchuria. No one knew what was going to transpire there. The communications were closed down with that office.

Incidentally, I should mention that when I got to Tientsin, we had no radio, no communications directly with the outside world through our own means, and the only way we could send any either classified or unclassified messages was by laborious one-time pad code work sent through the Chinese Communist mail to our consulate in Peking, which still had a radio and was allowed to operate its radio.

Mukden was out of communication, no one knew their condition, what was happening. At that point we were totally dependent on what we could pick up, at least as far as I knew, in Tientsin from the local Chinese language press. I followed that closely, and I noticed that the male members of the staff had been put in jail. There was a trial before what they called then the People's Court, and they were finally convicted of sabotaging the

revolution. Angus Ward himself was convicted of supposedly attacking and assaulting a Chinese citizen and conducting various spy activities against the Chinese Communist regime. Finally, they were sentenced to execution. Shortly thereafter, it was announced in the press again that due to the lenient policy of the Chinese Communist regime, that their sentence was being commuted to deportation.

At that point, I simply decided that I would try to—war game is not an appropriate name, but I would try to simply analyze for myself what I would be expected to do if I were a Chinese Communist official handling that situation. The first thing that seemed obvious to me, my own personal speculation, was that they had no way of physically carrying out the sentence of deportation from China mainland unless they had the cooperation of the United States or some other foreign power. They had no aircraft, there was no commercial transportation coming in or out of north China, at least. We knew that. We doubted there was any transportation anywhere in or out of China, at least of a regular nature.

So I decided that I'd take the initiative to go down to see the head of the Public Safety Bureau in the Chinese Communist regime, which was the equivalent of the internal and external gestapo. The head of that office, I was informed by a Belgian businessman who had long residence in Tientsin before and after World War II, was the son of a Chinese commercial family in Shanghai that was doing a lot of business with foreign business, and he had joined the Communist Party at a very early age and was a very senior member of the Chinese Communist Party. Perhaps partly by his background, he had rebelled against his father and family and was extremely, bitterly anti-foreign and specifically anti-American, a very difficult, tough, elderly, and senior Communist official. But he was the one with whom I had to deal. So I went down, insisted on seeing him.

Q: You took the initiative on this?

MANHARD: I took the initiative.

Q: You were in charge of your own office?

MANHARD: No, I was just a vice consul in an officer which consisted of a consul and several other vice consuls.

Q: Did you get the consul's permission to do this, or did you do this entirely on your own?

MANHARD: At this point, I can be frank, Marshall. I did it on my own. I simply went down and said, “I've seen from the paper that Angus Ward and his party have been sentenced to deportation.” I asked him first if his government intended to deport them via the Soviet Union. I asked that question clearly because I was curious. I personally believed that the Chinese Communists were having great difficulties with their relationship with the Soviet Union. This was late October 1949. I did that, one, to stimulate an answer with regard to the Soviet Union; two, I was primarily concerned about what I could do to help the case of Angus Ward and his party.

Q: You had reason to think that the Soviet-Chinese relationships were not all they should be because of the way the Soviets had left Manchuria, taking with them some of the equipment.

MANHARD: Yes, there had been a lot of discussion in some quarters about the Soviet rape of Manchuria, cleaning out materials, taking people and so forth. Whether that was entirely the opinion of Chinese Nationalist officials and their government's attitude, or whether this was shared by the Chinese Communists, of course, no one knew for sure. But I'd seen many low-level indications in my dealings with lots of Chinese Communists officials and maybe officials who were not members of the Party, as well, in Tientsin, that I just detected an atmosphere and undercurrent of restiveness and unhappiness toward the Soviets.

So I asked him that question first and got the answer that I really expected. He glowered and bristled and said, “Certainly not. Absolutely not.”

I said, “Perhaps Dairen,” which was then the port in the Liaotung peninsula of Manchuria at that time, which was still occupied.

Q: Now called Dalian.

MANHARD: Port Arthur. So I asked him about that place, which was even by implication at issue in the Chinese Communist press, which their slogan at that time was, “Lean to one side, learn from our big brother,” ostensible good relations with the Soviet Union. But restiveness and some criticism about the continuing Soviet occupation of that port. Total extraterritoriality, by the way, is the way they ran it, apparently, as a military base.

He again gave the same answer, “Absolutely not.” He wouldn't think of it.

I said, “Then I assume the only way that you can send this group out of China is through Tientsin, and either directly from Tientsin to the United States, or perhaps go down to South China somewhere, a long and perhaps unnecessary trip.”

At that point he backed up and said, “I'm not authorized to discuss this in any way with you.”

Q: Was this conducted in Chinese?

MANHARD: In Chinese. “I'm not authorized to discuss this.” He indicated that he'd like me to leave immediately, didn't want to talk to me.

So my parting shot at that point was simply, “Well, I trust you and your superiors realize that there is no way you can carry out the order of your court unless you have the cooperation of the United States. We are prepared.” I operated as a free-wheeler, which is not in the best tradition, I guess, of the Foreign Service, but I'm sorry, that is my personal

makeup and I can't help it. I decided I might as well strike while the iron was hot, feeling that there was nothing to lose and perhaps something to gain, and my personal career didn't matter.

So I said, “The United States Government is prepared to send a ship to Tientsin.”

Q: You said that?

MANHARD: Yes. “We're prepared to cooperate and send a ship.”

Q: And you knew that we were?

MANHARD: I did not know any such thing. We had no instructions whatsoever. Whether Peking or Nanking had instructions that were not divulged to low-ranking officers like myself at the end of the line, I had no way of knowing. But it seemed to me that I was actually in an impeccable position, because it seemed to me it was quite clear that the United States Government, the American press, the American Congress, and everybody else was very agitated about this issue, and was bound to cooperate if they had a chance to rescue this group of our representatives.

So I assumed that this was going to happen. I said, “We can't do this by ourselves. You have to do your share. You have to bring them to Tientsin, presumably arrange somehow to get them to a ship, because we can't come in over Cacubar, which is a navigational obstacle to a large ship coming into the wharf and docks in Tientsin.” I said, “But we are prepared to cooperate, and I hope that you and your superiors will do something about this.” Whereupon I was rather unceremoniously removed from his office, and left.

Q: He made no indication of yes or no?

MANHARD: He wouldn't speak. He ushered me out. Perhaps a week or ten days went by, and a call came through my Chinese staff. I had several people working for me in the consular business there, of which there was none practically of a normal sort at that time.

These Chinese on our staff in Tientsin, incidentally, were remarkable people. They had served, in many cases, for 25 or 30 years as local employees of our consulate in Tientsin. They had served before World War II, some of them had been put in prison and perhaps tortured by the Japanese during the Japanese occupation of China, and they were extremely loyal to the United States. They served through thick and thin.

Q: Did you have any way of telling if they were pro-Communist or otherwise?

MANHARD: We didn't ask them. We didn't think it was fair to ask them.

Q: No, but they were suspect. They must have been suspect.

MANHARD: We assumed that probably the Chinese Communist would put pressure on them to become informants and so forth, and they had to live with their government somehow. In any event, they were very experienced, very loyal to the United States, I felt, and proved their worth to our service for a long time. Two of them, the most senior in our office, came to me very ceremoniously and very seriously, and said, “Mr. Manhard, we're sorry to say that we have just received a call from the Public Safety Bureau, asking us to tell you that they request that you come to their office right away.”

I said, “Fine, I'll do so.”

They said, “Oh, no, please don't.”

I said, “Why do you say that?”

They said, “As is typical in China, we have a cousin who has another relative, who has a relative who works in that office. They tell us that once you get there, you are going to be

put in prison as an example to the rest of this office, just like Angus Ward and his party were treated in Mukden. So we think you shouldn't go."

So my obvious reply to them was, "I thank you for your sympathy and support. However, there is no way that I can prevent them from coming and getting me if they want to. We have no way of defending ourselves here. So I might as well go, not sit here and wait to be taken away, right?"

So they nodded. They lined up in old Chinese ceremonial fashion at the door as I left, and bowed, implying that that was the last they were going to see of me.

So I got in the car, a station wagon that was assigned to me, in which I had been followed everywhere day and night in the city of Tientsin, for all the months I was in Tientsin, with two leather jacket-clad, without insignia, young men, reminiscent of motorcycle gangs in the United States at some later date, I found out. They followed me. I went down there, and I was very surprised to see the head of the Public Safety Bureau seated behind his desk, slightly to the rear of two much younger men with very high-quality cloth uniforms, neither of whom had insignia. They did not give their name or rank or title. But the two young men were obviously in charge. The old man, the senior, the one that I had talked with, was very respectful toward them, even though they were much younger. So they were obviously of considerable rank.

They paid very little attention to him, and they simply addressed themselves to me, and said, entirely in Chinese, that their comrade, meaning the head of the Public Safety Bureau, had reported to them the conversation I had with him earlier, and that they were responding to what I had told him. They wanted to inform me that they represented the central government in Peking, and wanted me to know that what had happened to Mr. Ward—they still didn't use the title—and his group in Mukden did not reflect the policy of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Government. They went so far as to

say that what had happened in Mukden was unfortunate—"k'e-hsi," in Chinese, probably a different romanization by modern Chinese, but I'll stick with what I was taught.

I was very surprised, because that was about as close to an official apology as I think any American official could ever get from the Chinese at that point under those circumstances. They said, "However, this case has gone too far. There is nothing we can do to change what has happened in Mukden now, but we wish to cooperate with the United States in every way possible to make some smooth arrangements for him to leave China with your help and assistance. What do you propose?" they said to me.

I almost fell off my chair at that point. I wasn't prepared. So I decided I'd better get prepared and ask for everything I can think of. So I said, "First of all, where will he be coming?"

"East station, Tientsin," which was the main railroad station where I had been meeting all kinds of Americans leaving China before.

I said, "Fine." I made a number of requests, in which I said, "When they arrive here, we will arrange all the housing for them in our homes here. I request that none of their luggage be opened, either official or personal. Any large quantities of material that are too big to carry in our cars could be put in the warehouse under lock and key, to which we will have the key. They will have the freedom of the city, and we will provide local transportation. Then you will provide the transportation from the dock in Tientsin down the river, over the sandbar," which blocked a lot of heavy ships, "to the ship, which we will send from the United States.

They said, "Fine. Do you have anything else you'd like to suggest?"

I couldn't think of anything else at that point. I said, "There will be no personal harassment of any kind. They will be free to move throughout the city at any time, in any way they

want, and conduct business as normal, whatever personal business they need to do while waiting to leave."

They said, "With only one condition. Who will be the guarantor?"

At that time in Communist China, I'd had this experience many times, the Chinese insisted that as American citizens were leaving China, that there had to be someone who remained behind in China to be their "guarantor." What that meant was that if subsequent to their departure anything were found that they considered criminal or anything a misdemeanor to something serious, anything illegal on their part, that the guarantor would be held responsible, and that guarantor would still be in the hands of the Chinese Communists. By force of circumstances, I had signed many guarantees for Americans already.

Q: So he allowed you to be the guarantor?

MANHARD: I suggested that Mr. Ward was consul general of the United States Foreign Service and he was perfectly capable of being his own guarantor. They said, "Not satisfactory."

I said, "My superior officer is consul here."

"That's not satisfactory.

I said, "Why?"

"He does not speak Chinese."

I said, "Oh, you mean me."

"Yes. If you'll be the guarantor, everything's all right."

I said, "Fine."

Then we sent a message. As it turned out later, in December the State Department not only sent one ship, they sent two.

Q: You said you sent a message. How did you send a message?

MANHARD: I forget if it was classified or unclassified, in code or not. We sent it from Tientsin via the Chinese Communist Postal Service to our consulate in Peking. They then probably sent it unclassified by radio to Washington.

Q: The Chinese Postal Service included telegraph.

MANHARD: Yes. So we had the alternate of sending something by surface or by telegram.

Q: How long did it take, then, to get the message to Washington?

MANHARD: I don't know, Marshall.

Q: How soon, then, did you get word that a ship was coming?

MANHARD: I think within a week. I can't remember precisely. They were prepared to cooperate in any way.

Q: Where did the ship come from?

MANHARD: It turned out, as I understand it, they leased a passenger freighter from American President Lines, which was apparently available in Yokohama at that time, and it came from Japan over to off Tientsin.

Things did not go totally smoothly. The first night the party was there, we had one of the Chinese guards that was always stationed outside my house 24 hours a day, came in and started demanding to see their passports and other documents. I was over at the consul's house at the time. My house boy managed to sneak outside the place and make a phone

call to me and tell me that they were giving trouble. I had put up about 12 of the consulate people in my house, including two wives and one child. So I raced back to my house and raised hell, got the guy out of my house. That's the only time I'd been able to go down and reprimand the Chinese Communist Public Safety Bureau, and they never bothered the group again after that.

Q: You were a vice consul. What was the consul doing, and who was he? Did he know that you were going to talk with the Chinese officials?

MANHARD: Al Wellborn was our consul at that time. He did not speak Chinese. He knew that my main function had to be helping Americans get out of Communist China. After I had the initial conversation with this guy, I told Al that I had discussed this. He was a little nervous about it, but he said, “We don't have authorization for such a pitch.”

I said, “I think we had to do what we could do.” I guess he accepted that.

Then when the two senior officials came from Peking, then we reported that fully. From then on, the thing moved ahead and Washington responded as we knew they would.

Q: That important initial meeting with these high officials that you had, Wellborn knew that you were going?

MANHARD: Yes.

Q: Did he also share the views of your Chinese subordinates, that this might be the farewell?

MANHARD: I didn't tell him about that. I didn't ask him about that. I figured I was going anyway.

Q: How long was the Angus Ward party in Tientsin?

MANHARD: Here the memory fades a little bit. I would say ten days, roughly.

If I may go into personal reminiscence, the heartbreak and the human tragedy and trauma at that time was illustrated by several things. One of the local employees of the consulate general in Mukden was named Tatsumi.

Q: That's a Japanese name.

MANHARD: He was a Japanese-American born on the West Coast of the United States, but he had gone to work for a Japanese commercial company in Manchuria before 1941, before Pearl Harbor. He stayed there during the war. He lost his citizenship by U.S. law, because he apparently had made no effort to try to get out or to report to an American consulate at the time. He later married a Japanese woman. They had this little baby, and they lived in Mukden. He was the motor pool officer. He was also put in prison in Mukden, along with the rest. They were all put in solitary confinement.

The Chinese Communist interrogators told him that Chigona, who was an Italian citizen, the radio operator in Mukden, also a local employee, a big strapping six-footer, Tatsumi about five-foot, very small, that while Tatsumi was in solitary confinement in their prison, Chigona, meantime, according to them, was living in the compound and had raped Tatsumi's wife. Whereupon Tatsumi completely, I think, mentally collapsed. He signed all kinds of documents, I gather, that said, “Yes, I've been a spy for the Americans and the Americans have done everything terrible, and all the accusations are correct.” In fact, he broke down so totally, apparently he became almost useless to them.

When the party arrived in Tientsin and Tatsumi's wife and little baby daughter, and Chigona and his wife and other junior staff members were in my house, the first night they were there, other staff members from Mukden told me, “Be careful, because you don't understand what's happened between Chigona and Tatsumi. Tatsumi still does not

recognize his wife." All the way on the train ride, all the way from Mukden to Tientsin, he still would not accept the wife that his wife was still alive.

I said, "But she's sitting right here in my living room."

Q: He'd gone off his rocker, had he?

MANHARD: Yes. Well, the net result was that by the time they left, we treated them well, of course, and he began to relax a little bit. Finally, he recognized his wife the day before they left Tientsin. This is the kind of experience some of the people had gone through, which was very, very traumatic.

In any event, one point I wanted to make, Marshall, about policy in those days. From the time the Chinese Communists entered Peking, where I was in January of 1949 until we left in April 1950, in my case, from Tientsin, I received two letters from home. One was a bill and one was an advertisement. They cut off all our personal mail. We had no diplomatic privileges of any kind. Of course, their official excuse was, "You don't recognize us and we don't recognize you, so why should you have any privileges?" That was part of the background of how we lived. So we had to depend on radio.

Q: Did you depend at all on colleagues, like your British colleagues?

MANHARD: Oh, yes.

Q: They had relations with Peking. Wouldn't they be helpful?

MANHARD: Oh, they were very helpful. In fact, in Tientsin, the British consulate and British consul was our main reliance on a lot of news and helping us.

Q: If you wanted to get a message out, couldn't you always go through the British?

MANHARD: We could, yes, but some messages we tried to go through our own channels.

Q: For example, when you had the initial meeting where you put your life and career very much at stake, did your British colleague know about that? Had you consulted him at all?

MANHARD: No, I did not. I felt this was really a U.S. concern.

Q: This whole Angus Ward thing is a very interesting episode. Were there any other episodes that occurred there?

MANHARD: Marshall, let me put one what I consider historical footnote on this business about Angus Ward. They did get home, and everything worked out all right in the end, as far as safe departure. But I also suggested to my consul, “I think that this indicates to me that there is a serious split. Aside from what we're doing about getting Angus Ward and his party out of China, it seems to me that we're getting a clear indication that there is a very serious split at the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee at the top level about policy toward the United States.”

Because they repeated this twice about, “We want you to understand clearly that what happened to Angus Ward and his party in Manchuria do not reflect the policy of the central government in Peking,” which seemed to me very clear. Of course, the biographic background of Gao Gang, who was the head of the Chinese Communist Party and administration in Northeast China, i.e., former Manchuria, was famous among Chinese Communist leaders as one of the leaders of the pro-Soviet clique in the Chinese Communist Party.

I said, “It seems to me that what we're hearing here is a repudiation of Gao Gang and perhaps his whole faction in the Chinese Communist Party, which I think is very important, and we ought to report it.” I was turned down from sending cables, because my boss, I guess, felt that it was only my personal speculation and I really had nothing more to go on than this comment, which technically was true. So that never got reported.

Q: By the way, you keep using the word "Mukden." The Chinese call it Shenyang. Did they call it Shenyang at that time?

MANHARD: Yes, they did, but Mukden was the old traditional name.

Q: Any other episodes that occurred there that you think have some historic interest?

MANHARD: Yes, if I may revert back to something I mentioned earlier. About Christmas of 1949, we got this round robin telegram to all the posts in China, signed by then Acting Secretary Levitt, about "You're the indispensable eyes and ears. Please don't leave China. Even though you may be overdue for home leave and so forth, we only want to agree to let people come home if there's a dire personal emergency. So please stay until we can find a way to send out replacements, because we need your eyes and ears."

Approximately a week later, just after the first of January, we get another telegram to all the China posts saying, "Get out and get out immediately." So evidently, at the very end of December or the first few days of January 1950, policy had been decided that we were not going to recognize Communist China and, "We'd better get people out. We don't want any more potential hostages in China." We can only assume that from these two very opposite messages.

Q: What was the date of that second message?

MANHARD: I would guess it was the first week of January 1950. I can't remember precisely, but it was early January 1950.

Q: Did you get that yourself?

MANHARD: Yes, everyone.

Q: You stayed on for several months after that.

MANHARD: Yes, Marshall. Your question is well taken. Immediately, the next day, I took the lead, since I was dealing with all the local officials on leaving. I walked in first to the customs office. There was a very gentlemanly, probably non-Party member, as head of that office, whose specialty was dealing with foreigners leaving. So I said, “I would like to request the customs forms for our belongings and so forth we want to take with us.”

He said, “Why?”

I said, “Because our entire office is leaving China as soon as possible.”

He looked like he'd been hit by a thunderbolt. He was very alarmed, unhappy, and I could only interpret his reaction to mean, “Oh, my God, are we going to go to war?” He was well into his sixties, I would estimate, and he'd been through a lot. He'd been through, I'm sure, the Japanese occupation and everything else, and he'd seen war conditions. He looked dismayed, unhappy, and very sympathetic in a sense. He said, “Are you sure you're not going to say?” He didn't say, “I hope you'll stay,” but he implied that.

I said, “No, we have orders. We have to leave right away.” So he gave me the forms, and I left. Then I went and made my rounds, the People's Bank of China, to the famous Public Safety Bureau, asking for all the permits. Marshall, you asked what happened when we got the second message about leaving China immediately. We immediately began to make all the preparations we could to request the necessary documents to leave China. At that time they required that anyone leaving China, foreigners, at least, I presume also Chinese, had to have an exit permit. We applied for it, we submitted it, we never heard another thing. I would say we did all that within a few days from the time we received the telegram.

Q: And all the other consulates were doing the same thing?

MANHARD: We assumed so. I don't know exactly.

Q: You had no way of cross-checking with them?

MANHARD: No, we did not. I would go down frequently to each of these offices and ask them, “Is there an answer?” and they would simply brush me off and give me no answer at all.

So after maybe two or three weeks, we got another telegram from the Department, “What are you doing to get out of China? Why aren't you obeying our directives?” We tried to patiently explain that we were trying to obey it, but there were certain serious problems that we could not leave without permission of the Chinese Communist authorities, which didn't seem to be very well understood in Washington, D.C. In fact, a lot of things were not very well understood in the Department of State in those days, but that's another story.

We got two or three more reminders that we were derelict in our duties to leave China.

Q: Wasn't it the responsibility, though, of our embassy, or at least the officials that we had in Peking? Wasn't that our principal post

MANHARD: Nanking. I've forgotten now when Nanking evacuated, but I think at that point Nanking had managed to shift all the remaining personnel to Shanghai. I'm a little vague about that, Marshall, because I wasn't in the direct loop.

Q: An issue like this, when you have to take personnel from all over China and get them out, would really have to be conducted at one point by the senior official representing the United States and the top officials of the Chinese Government.

MANHARD: That would seem logical. However, as far as I could tell, every single post —and there were not very many, there was only Nanking, Shanghai, I believe Canton, I've forgotten exactly how they stood at this point, Peking, and Tientsin. That's all we had. We closed down everything else already. In each case, we had to deal directly with the

Chinese officials in each city. As far as we could tell, we couldn't send our requests to Peking and they would present it on our behalf.

Q: You presumed that they were probably dealing with some central authority.

MANHARD: The Chinese probably were, but we had to deal with each individual locality.

Q: So how long was it? In your case, it wasn't until April that you got out.

MANHARD: My memory is that we finally left on April 20, 1950.

Q: When you say "we," did all the consulate leave together?

MANHARD: All during this time, other Americans were getting permits and leaving from Peking, for example, with which I was familiar. At the very end, the only people left in Peking were Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Club, consul general and his wife, and Mr. and Mrs. Howard Boorman, who was the vice consul, like myself, also a Chinese language graduate, and they both come down to Tientsin. When they finally closed everything in the office in Peking, they came to Tientsin. The Clubs stayed with the Wellborns, and the Boormans stayed with me. So at least we were close to the exit point, but we still didn't have permits to leave China. They allowed them to come to Tientsin, but they didn't give them or us permits at that point. We didn't know when we were ever going to get it or what was going to happen.

Finally, what was to me almost a 007 kind of affair, one night—I'm trying to remember the date, which has faded now, I guess—but early April 1950—I have to back up and give you the circumstances. I lived in a very large house with six bedrooms, designed obviously for an officer with a family. I was a bachelor, but I was occupying the house because it was owned by the consulate. Jerry Warner used to live there, by the way. Diagonally across the street was another house. This was all in the former German concession of the days of territoriality back in World War I to World War II, really. They were foreign houses, very

large, private compounds, walls all around, but it was a sparsely settled area, a lot of empty lots between the houses, on the outskirts of Tientsin.

My house was constantly under guard, all of us were, and had an armed guard outside our gate 24 hours a day. In my case, I was followed. I guess they used me as the example—bad example, perhaps. I was followed wherever I went by a car with the Chinese Communists, with non-uniformed people in it. So they knew where I was at all times, and I think they pretty much knew where everybody else was, too.

Howie Boorman and I were old friends because we'd studied Japanese together in the Navy in World War II. He and his wife and their little baby son were staying in my house waiting for the hoped-for exit permit.

One night about 9:00 o'clock that evening, a young man knocked on my front door. A Chinese knocking on my front door, dressed in civilian clothes, was almost unique. I had never had that happen, because the guard would always prevent people from coming in, unless an American or someone had business with me. He said, “Could you please come to dinner tonight at my father's house right across the street?” Well, all I knew about his father was that he was an official in the Chinese Communist export and import corporation. He dressed in the Mao jacket and cap uniform of the dark gray-blue, which was Chinese Communist civilian uniform, a government official. I didn't really know anything about him, but I had seen a lot of traffic, Chinese, going in and out of his house from time to time. I paid rather little attention and had no business dealings with him. He said, “My father would like you to come to the house for dinner.”

I said, “It's 9:00. We've had supper. Thank you.”

He said, “It's very important that you come anyway, whether you've had supper or not.”

So we looked at each other, and I said, “You realize there's a guard out front who watches everybody coming. Do you really want us, terrible people like us (I was kind of joking with him) to come to your father's house while this guard is watching?”

He said, “If you will just delay about ten minutes before you leave your house to come across the street, he will be gone.” Well, that had never happened up to that point.

We said, “All right, we'll come.”

Q: Obvious collusion.

MANHARD: Ten minutes later, we walked out. For the first time in all the time I was in Tientsin, there was no guard anywhere to be seen.

We looked in there and it was a very strange scene in the dining room, a Western-style house. As a concession to the Chinese tradition, there was a large dining table with a lazy Susan in the middle, and there were approximately eight or nine people sitting around the table, none of whom we'd ever seen in our lives, with all kinds of the debris of a large Chinese meal lying on the table, people picking at a few things, but obviously they'd long finished their supper.

We had a few pleasantries, small talk, and we allowed as how we'd had supper, so he pressed some tea and something on us. All kinds of other people came in and out while we were there. In the first ten or twenty minutes, I think perhaps three people came in, apparently very urgently. They would go to his side, hand him a little piece of paper, and he would look at it and write something on it, or shake his head, or nod his head, give it back to them, and off they'd go. So all kinds of little messages were running in and out of the house at the same time we were sitting there. So we didn't know what we were into at this point, but having had some difficult experiences up to that point in China, and

mindful always of the overhanging background of Angus Ward and his party and what could happen if things went wrong.

He turned to us both and said, “When are you leaving China?”

We said, “We don't know. We've been trying for months to leave, and we have no exit permit.”

He said, “Oh, well, don't worry about that. You'll have one very soon.”

Q: What date was this, roughly?

MANHARD: I can't remember exactly. I would say the first few days of April 1950, but I can't remember exactly.

So this came as quite a surprise, because here someone that we don't know that has any particular authority in this field telling us that we're going to get an exit permit, after we had done everything possible for months, with no result. He said, “Don't worry about that. You'll get one very soon. Where are you both going? What's your next assignment?”

Howie had received an assignment, a direct transfer to Hong Kong, and I had been transferred to Washington. So then he devoted his attention to me. The next crack out of the box was, “You know the war in Korea is about to start.”

Q: For heaven sake! This was two months before the war actually started. It was June 25th when it started. So you're talking about something that's more than two months in advance of the event.

MANHARD: That's correct.

Q: And what did he say?

MANHARD: He said, “I hope you are aware that the war in Korea is about to begin.”

Going through your own mind at this point, not talking to him. He said that, and this is the instant reaction I had: one, I had seen in the Communist press for months, for quite some time when I was in Tientsin, articles from time in the press, frequently describing the valiant efforts of the People's guerrillas in South Korea resisting and fighting against the “terrible tyranny of the Syngman Rhee regime in Korea,” your old stomping ground, Marshall. But I took this as largely propaganda that was probably very little to it. So I didn't pay much attention to it, plus the fact that we were too busy with the things we were trying to do in managing our own daily life and getting out of China. Korea was pretty much over the horizon as far as we were concerned. I paid very little attention to those articles, but I had seen them.

He said, “Don't you realize how important this is?”

We both had kind of frozen faces and didn't say anything. Finally, Howie Boorman and I, having been old friends, by instinct, I think, without a chance to cross-reference with each other, we both looked at him and almost simultaneously said, “We don't know anything about Korea.”

Later I compared notes with Howie, after we got back to the house, and our thought processes were exactly the same: this is a setup, all we have to do is say, “Yes, tell us all about this very important matter of intelligence,” whereupon the guard would come in, grab us as spies, and off we'd go. That's what I thought was going to happen next at that point. I thought it was a setup, and so did Howie. So we played as dumb as possible.

Q: Do you still think it was a setup?

MANHARD: Now I don't because of what happened afterwards.

Q: Do you think this was a government-authorized warning?

MANHARD: No, I don't. Before we walked over to the house, I said to Howie, “Who is this guy? Did you know anything about this guy in Peking, for example?”

He said, “Yes, he did talk to Tony Freeman up there,” our mutual friend. Tony Freeman, in the meantime, had returned to the United States before the Chinese Communists came into power in Peking. He said he did talk to Tony Freeman before in Peking, but nothing of any great significance.

I said, “I don't know anything about him.” Howie had no direct knowledge or sense of him either.

He said, “You should pay attention to this. It's very important.” He turned to me, having found out I was going to be transferred to Washington, and said, “When you get to Washington, will you please tell what I'm going to tell you to Tony Freeman?”

I said, “All right, I'll do so.”

He said, “You go off into East Station, the railway station?”

I said, “Yes.”

“You must have seen two weeks ago (or something very recently) the first movement of Chinese troops.” Balujun, the Army, is the term. “Going north for the first time through East Station.”

I said, “No, I didn't see any such thing.”

He kind of looked at me suspiciously, as if I must have seen it but I was not willing to admit it. I hadn't actually seen it. He gave a date, two or three weeks earlier, that one entire division of the Chinese Communist Army had moved north through Tientsin on the way to Manchuria, northeast China. He said, “There will be very soon, we don't know exactly when, an all-out offensive against South Korea. There will be more Chinese forces coming

through Tientsin en route to Manchuria." That was the main rail line in that direction. "We don't know whether they will participate in the initial offensive against South Korea with the North Korean troops, whether the North Korean troops alone will end conduct the initial offensive with the Chinese troops in backup positions within North Korea, or whether the Chinese troops in that case would be held on the Chinese side in a back position in the case of need. Please tell my friend Mr. Freeman."

Q: We want to come back to how you got out of Tientsin and so forth, but follow up on this particular story. When you got back and you saw Freeman, what happened?

MANHARD: A slow boat from Tientsin to Yokohama broke down, started going backwards to China, finally got to Yokohama, took a boat, along with everybody else, evacuated from China across from Yokohama to the West Coast, saw my family very briefly in Los Angeles, on to Washington, and got there on the third of June 1950, finally, at the air-conditionless National Hotel. If I've got my dates straight—I'm pretty sure I have—Monday morning, the fourth of June, boiling hot, opening of business on Monday morning, I went straight to see Tony Freeman. I had a little hard time getting him to listen, because he wanted to tell me about my next assignment. I said, "I think this is more urgent." We were good friends, but he finally got off the personnel business, and I told him the story. He said, "Phil, what do you think of this man?"

I said, "Tony, I don't know the man from Adam. I thought you did."

He said, "I know him slightly, but I don't really know what kind of credibility to give him or this account that he's given you."

I said, "Well, I don't know." At that time I was just starting out in the Foreign Service and had no influential friends of any kind in Washington, I didn't know anybody here. I considered him to be the most senior Foreign Service officer I had ever met in my life, and a very fine person. I said, "Tony, you must have ways that you can check this out."

He said, “Okay, I'll check it out. If I hear anything about it, I'll let you know.”

So off I went to the basic officers' training course to learn how to become a Foreign Service officer at this point in the FSI, which I found a little bit boring and artificial. In any event, I didn't hear anything from Tony. Finally, about a week later, I went back and said, “Tony, what have you heard about this?”

He said, “I checked it out with the Korean desk, and they said there was nothing to that because there's no indication of anything happening in North Korea, and our main problem now is to prevent Syngman Rhee from marching north. That's our main problem in Korea.”

What could I say? What could I do? I felt that maybe you get prejudiced about your source, even though you don't know them very well, but I felt that maybe something might happen, but I had nothing more to go on. All the people in Washington, the few that I met who seemed to know, INR, said, “Oh, no, there's nothing to this.”

Q: As you look back on this event, do you think that what your Chinese friend was telling you in Tientsin had anything to do with what you earlier said with regard to the relationship between the Chinese and the Russians in Manchuria, that the Chinese might have had some indications of a rapprochement or close ties between North Korea and the Soviet Union, which they obviously did? That the build-up that was going on in North Korea, which obviously was occurring, largely through the Soviet Union, that this might have been a Chinese effort to forewarn us because of an antipathy on the part of this particular official and his group towards the Soviet Union? Is that too far-fetched?

MANHARD: Marshall, I don't think it's too far-fetched at all, but it didn't occur to me at the time, and there's no way that I can judge it from my own experience. I think it's not a bad speculation. This is really another story that we could talk about on some other occasion if you want to. Two things happened when I was in Korea later, because my next assignment was in Pusan, Korea. The reason I dragged Korea into this, when I got

to Korea, I was assigned by the personnel division in the State Department to be junior political officer in the embassy. At the same time, INR gave orders to me to go interrogate Chinese prisoners of war in our camps in South Korea, which got me in a lot of trouble, which seemed to be often the case in my career. I mean in trouble with the embassy.

In my experience with the Chinese military prisoners captured by us in the Korean War, this experience was on and off over a period of early 1951 to early 1953, and many of the Chinese—this is low level, mostly illiterate, uneducated, peasant people, for the most part, who were captured during the war in Korea—many of them had been in Chinese Nationalist units captured by the Communists, converted and integrated into the Chinese Communist Army after they occupied the mainland. Many of them had been stationed with units in the lower Yangtze River area, Jangshee province and nearby. They had been told—this is just shortly after the Korean War started—that their training mission, including practicing landing craft going across the Yangtze River and so forth, was to go liberate Taiwan, and that was what they thought they were getting trained for.

But suddenly, without any preparation or warning, they were told, “Get on a train. Your unit is going to the Northeast.” When they got to the Northeast, they crossed the Yalu River, and they realized that they were going to fight in Korea. It came as a great surprise to these young men, they said. So this doesn't respond directly to the hypothesis, or whatever you're expressing here, but it seems to me that from reactions I got from some of the Chinese prisoners in the Korean War, that the Chinese Communist priority at the time was occupying Taiwan and eliminating, presumably forever, any competition from the Chinese Nationalist Government anywhere. They had no more territory to claim. That was their priority; Korea was not. When some decision at some level was made to go and pull the fat out of the fire in Korea, it was, in my opinion, more logically a Soviet priority than a Chinese priority.

There's slippages of time here. For instance, the initial thing indicated by our informant in Tientsin is one thing.

Q: Yes, I think that's a logical conclusion that the Chinese priority in Taiwan, once the Russians and the North Koreans were involved in a war against us. Meanwhile, we were changing our policy with regard to Taiwan, and this is where I can't remember exactly what the timing was. President Truman, as I recall, made some declaration with regard to what our position was going to be with regard to Taiwan and our priorities. So there's a correlation of our actions and the Chinese and the Russian actions that escape me at this time.

It would be interesting to go back and look at Alan Whiting's book on China Crosses the Yalu or for you to talk to him sometime. I don't suppose he knows what you just said now. This is the first time I've ever heard it.

MANHARD: I don't think so. I remember Alan Whiting's book. He mentions me in the book, I think, if you're referring to China Crosses the Yalu. But part of the material he used in that was based on some of the things I discussed with him, as well as others discussed with him, about the Chinese prisoner experience. Some of the distillation of Chinese prisoner reports in the Korean War was part of his book.

Q: I can imagine that it would be rather upsetting to the Chinese to see the Russians having a dominant influence.

MANHARD: Yes, absolutely.

Q: On the whole Korean peninsula.

MANHARD: Frankly, Marshall, one of the things that dismayed me—it's always easy to look back and say, “I was right,” and that's kind of sterile, I guess—but when I got back to Washington and had my conversation with Tony Freeman and went off to my little FSI basic officers' training course, I had talked to a number of people I knew, junior officers around Washington. I got the impression from INR and others who had made a specialty of studying, analyzing, and researching China, that at that time this was an absolute

fantasy, ridiculous, absolutely impossible to conceive of that there was any difference of view between China and the Soviet Union, because the conventional wisdom at that time all over Washington, as far as I could make of it, military, civilian, State Department, CIA, whatever, was, “It's a monolithic Communist bloc,” and anybody who had a different opinion was way out in left field. I had a different opinion and found nobody who agreed with me.

Q: Speaking of left field, of course, Tony Freeman at that time was pretty embattled.

MANHARD: Oh, yes, absolutely.

Q: He, Jack Service, John Davies, and all the others who had been our prime China scholars had come under fire. This was just the beginnings of the McCarthy period. We had prepared the White Paper on China. Our bureau back in Washington, by the way, I was regional planning advisor while these events were going on.

MANHARD: That's where I first met you, I think.

Q: We were embattled simply to preserve the Foreign Service, really, against all these attacks.

MANHARD: Absolutely. Tony Freeman, as I remember, shortly after I had that conversation with him, it wasn't long thereafter when he was entangled by the McCarthy attacks, having been associated with China, that he had to have two-thirds of his stomach removed for a bleeding ulcer, it was such emotional stress, what he was accused of.

I would like to make one footnote here, Marshall, that in my conversation with Tony, I certainly don't want to leave any implication in anybody's mind that he was not interested in this report from any prejudice or anything. He was interested. He just didn't know how to assess it, and he tried to find out from others in terms of what's going on in Korea, and

that's the answer he got. In my opinion, I think it's a very honest reaction on his part to try to check it out.

There's one additional footnote I would make. I mentioned that when I got to Korea, there were two things that happened while I was in Korea. One of them I described in terms of some of the reactions of Chinese prisoners in our hands in Korea, in terms of preparing for Taiwan and being sent to Korea to fight.

The other thing, I can't give a date, unfortunately. I was in Korea from April 1951 until late '53, and this would have occurred in 1952 at some point, I think. I just happened to note in an FBIS [Foreign Broadcast Information Service] article, it monitors Communist block radio transmissions around the world and on China, I was reading it in the embassy in Pusan one day, and I noticed the announcement by the Chinese in Peking on their radio that Gao Gang had been executed for treason or disloyalty to the Party in Mukden.

Q: For goodness sakes.

MANHARD: He had been liquidated. I thought to myself, “Well, I tried to analyze that, and I think I was right, but what's the use now?” Still, he was liquidated.

Q: That supports the case.

MANHARD: In less than two years after I had that conversation.

Q: That supports the argument that this had a lot to do with the Sino-Soviet differences.

KENNEDY: A professor of diplomatic history, Norman Graebner, who is a consultant to our organization, said to try to ask how perceptions developed. This is of great interest to diplomatic scholars. Where did you see the monolith of Sino-Soviet developing? Looking back on it, it's hard to believe these two very dissimilar, basically enemies, they might be Communist, but the thought that they were working in absolute lockstep.

Q: For my part, it began out of World War II and the fact that the Chinese Communists holed up in Yenan were trying to carry the war against the Japanese, and the Japanese occupation, particularly of northeast China, was a very vicious one, and a main objective of the Chinese Communist government, when it came to power, was to consolidate its position throughout the country. The Russians, who had succeeded in overrunning Manchuria and helping to bring the war to a rapid close, did get out. But in getting out, they took with them a lot of the equipment. It left a legacy of some bitterness. I think this is interesting that there should have been a governor up there in Manchuria who was pro-Soviet. Quite clearly, his views and probably his position was very much one that was bolstered and supported by the Russians, and that the Chinese were increasingly dismayed by his actions.

Ambassador Manhard's account, I think, brings out very clearly that this, in fact, was the case, because this man was countermanded, really, by the officials that he talked to in Tientsin and later on, as he learned from FBIS broadcasts in 1952, he was executed. I think all this shows that there were early origins to the Sino-Soviet controversy and dispute.

The conventional wisdom is that they were pretty much in lockstep, certainly in their foreign policies, and that the first evidences of the split between Moscow and Peking occurred in 1957 after the Sputnik was put up, and when the Chinese sent two delegations to Moscow to try to benefit and participate in this breakthrough, getting certain kinds of technical support from the Russians. But the Russians, in turn, gave them the cold shoulder.

At that point, I was regional planning advisor for the Far East. I was in very close touch with scholars, particularly Alice Dunning HSIA, working for RAND in Santa Monica. They had a team out there that was following these events very closely. I do recall very clearly that we timed the real break between Russia and China as occurring in 1957. What Ambassador Manhard is saying is that there are earlier origins to this thing. They may be

ones of rather major consequence to scholars, I don't know. But if what he says correlates with other evidences, I think it's a very interesting line of inquiry.

KENNEDY: Having us look at this as a government, it seemed to be not only conventional wisdom, but pretty much accepted wisdom that these two powers were going to be working together for the foreseeable future. We're talking about in 1950.

MANHARD: Oh, yes. One thing that occurred to me was that when you read the Chinese Communist press in those days, from before and after they established their government at Peking, in those years the Chinese poured out a tremendous quantity of propaganda characterized by such expressions as “lean to one side,” in Chinese, and “learn from the example of the Soviet Union.” They are our mentor, our leader of the Communist world,” and the Chinese just laid it on with a trowel, very thick. So just reading their propaganda line, one would naturally assume, “They're just the younger brothers of the Soviet Union and they're just going to be like this indefinitely in the future.”

But that's just a propaganda line that they were using for the time being, and underneath it, the human relations, the personal feelings and attitudes of their own officials was quite different. I saw that.

Q: I think another thing that's very important to note here is that we're talking about China in 1950, when things were in a chaotic state, where the central government obviously hadn't composed an established line, where the personalities dominated the old warlords, you might say who was lingering on in China. It wasn't until well after the time you left that they established the line and everybody got the line and this is what it was. So what we're talking about is a period when there perhaps more open expression of how individual leaders might have felt, than was to occur later on when the fine line was clearly established and everybody had to tow it.

MANHARD: Yes, tighter controls all the way down the line.

Q: Looking at it from the other side, we had mentioned McCarthyism. Was there a line in Washington that felt communism is bad, communism is not split, it's a monolith, and we have to fight the monolith, and if you started talking about different types of communism, this would tend to weaken it as an enemy and maybe make you look soft on communism? Do you think this was behind any of this?

Q: Certainly this is the line that was being parlayed by Chiang Kai-shek. Even when I saw Chiang Kai-shek for the next to the last time in 1969—1969!—long after we all knew that the Sino-Soviet rift was real and vicious and all the rest of it, he told me that he believed that this was a ruse that was being pulled off by both Peking and Moscow, that they were trying to delude the West into thinking there was a split, so that it would cause splits in our ranks and weaken our ranks, whereas they were solid, and we were being galled and lured.

I'm saying that, because obviously it's wrong, but it shows that that was the line of the Chinese Nationalists that this was all a monolith. The Chinese Nationalists had a tremendous power in Washington, the so-called China lobby. Of course, it weakened over time, but at the time we're talking about, back in 1950-52, they were very strong. So the line was coming through very hard from Taipei that this was the situation.

KENNEDY: Would you say there might have been an inhibition on our thinking differently within the State Department?

Q: There were differences at that time, as you know, between the hard line pro-Chiang group and the China scholars and Foreign Service officers who served out there, who knew the situation much more and who remembered the role of Chiang Kai-shek during World War II, and all of his shortcomings, the state of life in China, and the misery that the people were undergoing, that they obviously were not on the same wavelength as these hard-liners. I would imagine that a man like Acheson, working for Truman, had misgivings about the hard line we were taking.

What I can't remember historically is exactly what the line was that we were about to take in the time when the Korean War broke out. I think we were beginning to consider quite seriously at that time whether we shouldn't move our policy towards recognizing the realities of mainland China, that the Chinese had taken over, and that they did represent one-quarter of humanity, and that we had to have some kind of relationship with them. I think Acheson was thinking that way. I'm sure that this was a line of thought that was widely shared. I'm sure that men like Walter Butterworth, who was the Assistant Secretary for State for East Asian Affairs at that time, thought that way. I was very close to him. I was working on Japanese affairs; that's why I'm not completely clear as to what all the details were.

But had the war in Korea not intervened, it is possible that our China policy could have moved in a different direction.

MANHARD: Marshall, I think that's true. I mentioned these two telegrams at the end of '49 and beginning of '50, a total contrast, you know: “Stay, stay stay.” “Get out.” Obviously something happened in those two weeks between those two telegrams in Washington. But I've never done research afterwards as to just exactly what happened in Washington at that time.

However, going back to this incident about Angus Ward, a cat's paw in this whole business, I think, the conclusion I personally draw from that experience was that the last thing the Russians wanted to see was, one, they were afraid of a flexible policy by the United States toward the new regime in Peking as a potential attempt by us to wean the Chinese Communist regime away from or be courted away, whatever you want to call it, to Soviet influence. The Soviets at that time, under Stalin, I'm sure wanted to absolutely, totally dominate China, absolutely at that point. Anything that would potentially be a threat to that total untrammeled domination by the Soviet Union, they tried their best to

undermine. To me, that was one of their little tactics, if it wasn't a grand strategy. Mukden alone was a tactic, but it worked rather well in the sense that it irritated the hell.

I've seen press reports many years later saved by the widow of one of the survivors of this Mukden incident, in her hometown in Kansas. Some friends sent them a lot of clippings from the U.S. press at that time, all during the incarceration of Ward and his party, the after-effects and so forth, in which they played it up tremendously in American press about, “This is what you can expect from the Communists, these awful people,” and so forth and so on. I mean, it was natural indignation on the part of the media.

Q: A duplication of the Iranian hostage crisis.

MANHARD: There are similarities, yes. I think it's the only duplication in my experience that matches that closely. The media just leaped on this thing. This played into the hands of people with a very conservative view of foreign policy in the Congress and in Washington, that even if certain people in the State Department, for instance, Acheson or Butterworth, whoever the people were you were mentioning, even if they'd been inclined to adopt what I'd call a more pragmatic approach to the new Peking regime, this kind of incident provided a lot of fodder for the grist mills of agitation about, “This is how they're treating official Americans in this regime.” If the Russians had expected to have some irritating effect both in Peking and in the United States, it worked very beautifully.

Q: That's a very valid point.

MANHARD: Whether they were that smart, I don't know, but I do believe that that was part of the Soviet effort.

Q: I think you're right. I think the Soviets were doing all they could to harden the deep freeze in U.S.-Chinese relationships and to keep Peking and Washington apart.

MANHARD: Looking back historically—and I wish I could give you reference here; I don't have it in mind now—there have been accounts, I believe, in the literature in the United States and elsewhere, to the effect that Mao had serious misgivings after his first trip to Moscow just after he established the central government in Peking. That first visit to Moscow, he came back less than satisfied, to put it mildly. The Soviets, therefore, were probably already concerned about where Mao was going to go, policy-wise, in China.

Q: This is very interesting, of course, getting into a highly speculative field.In winding this up, I want to make a couple of observations about all the things that you've been saying. They bear very importantly on the real shaping of events as they occurred, as seen by somebody who was in the midst of them all, in terms of relationships between the Chinese officials and the Americans in China at a very critical moment, and also casts a good deal of light on what might have been the true relationship between the Soviet Union and China at that particular period of time.

I wanted to close this conversation by making two observations, more or less for the record. One, I think your story is not only interesting from the point of view of a historian who is trying to analyze events, but I think it's also interesting from the point of view of a Foreign Service officer who is placed in a very difficult position, where he had to make decisions on his own and to bear the consequences. You undertook not only to make decisions for your government that might have been denied by your superiors, but you also really put your life on the line when you went to talk with those officials, and when your Chinese subordinates thought that that was the last time they were ever going to see you.

I do think it shows the kinds of challenges that can occur in the life of a Foreign Service officer, and it reminds me a little bit of those lines of Oliver Wendell Holmes, “Once to every man and nation comes a moment to decide.” You had to face some very difficult decisions.

It's not totally unconnected that many years later on, when you were presidential advisor in Hue and were taken prisoner by the Vietnamese, taken to Hanoi, where you were in isolation for five years, one of the longest POW records on record, that you maintained your sanity through your own inner intellectual resources, as I remember, by making a chess set out of bread crumbs that you were given. I think the record of your career shows a man with lots of guts, and I'm awfully glad that we had this conversation, because it not only attests to what, in fact, went on as seen by a participant, but also attests to the character of a man who participated in those events.

MANHARD: Marshall, I thank you for your generous comments. I can only say that part of the rich rewards of a Foreign Service career, at least in the time I spent in the Foreign Service, was the opportunity to benefit by, and grow with, the inspiration and counsel of my colleagues, for instance, Ambassador Marshall Green.

Q: Thank you.

KENNEDY: I wonder if you could describe a bit how the Chinese language training was done. What was the routine, and how effective was it? How did you live in 1948?

MANHARD: From March of 1948 until early October 1949. The Foreign Service Chinese language school at that time was located in Peking, in a Chinese compound, a Chinese-style building, small. That office and the quarters in which the students were put, which were private apartments, if you will, in a rabbit worn of interconnected little houses right near the city wall in the southeast part of Peking, had existed back through the twenties. I think at one time even George Marshall had attended school there in that place with the Army, way back, so it has a long history and tradition.

All the teachers were Chinese, recruited in Peking. They spoke the northern dialect, which was the preferred brand of Chinese and always has been, even though it's slightly Bostonian, in American context. We would usually have mornings with a tutor, and we

were almost all one on one with Chinese tutors, one hour with one, one hour with another. Texts were prepared, but they were the basis of our learning, and it was both written and oral, some writing, less writing than reading and speaking. It was very intensive. We'd spend usually three to four hours each morning, five days a week, and then you would prepare for the next day's performance that afternoon. Your time was your own in the afternoon and evening, but it was strenuous.

KENNEDY: Had your study of Japanese and Japanese characters been much assistance to you?

MANHARD: Yes, very much, because the Chinese and Japanese characters have basically the same meaning in both languages. Chinese, of course, grammatically, and the sequence of thought in Chinese is comparable to English, as Japanese is to German. So they're very different, but the written language is very similar.

Q: That's one of the difficult things about the Japanese language, the sentence order.

MANHARD: One time when I was out in a language course, a friend of mine was a middle-aged woman Presbyterian missionary, who was in a little town outside Peking. This was during the investment, I guess you'd call it, in military terminology, of Peking, the surrounding of Peking during the period of negotiation for the peaceable surrender of Peking by the Nationalists to the Communists in August and September of 1949 and before the occupation—the end of '48, the beginning of '49. I took a consulate jeep out on a Sunday to see her, because a Chinese friend of mine had told me she was sick out in this little town, which was in between the lines, I thought. It turned out the Chinese Communist Party lines were closer. I got out there on a road and got sniper fire from the Chinese Communist side, turned around and came back on the road, whereupon I met machine gun fire coming at me from the Chinese Nationalists. It destroyed the front end of the jeep. I drove it into the consulate compound. It was a diesel engine by that time because all the water had drained out of the engine block. I had to wait for the gas to run

out for the engine to stop. Then I was told that I would have to pay for the damage, of course, because it my own personal affair on the weekend. (Laughs)

Q: Did you actually ever pay for it?

MANHARD: I had some friends in the Army language school, which was just closing down. They were leaving the city, and they had extra equipment. They said, “Phil, we'll give you a jeep so you can pay your difficult Foreign Service folks who count the pennies.” (Laughs)

Q: When you went to Tientsin, what was its importance to the United States?

MANHARD: It was the port for most of north China.

Q: We had Marines stationed there at one time.

MANHARD: At one time, yes. We had them in Peking, too, of course. It is the main north China port. It was then, and it was for a long time, through which most of the foreign trade affected both ways all north trade.

Q: Still true today.

MANHARD: Yes, as far as I know, it's still true.

Q: You've mentioned the American missionaries. What was the relationship of the consulate, while you were there, with the American missionaries in Tientsin?

MANHARD: Not much, because most of the missionaries had departed. They didn't dare remain. The few that were still there, most of them, I think, came out before. A couple of them I assisted.

Q: They were in a much more exposed position, because they didn't have diplomatic status. Not that you had, but in a way you had international law.

MANHARD: They were entirely dependent on their Chinese colleagues. The Communists tenets against religion and so forth, they felt that they would have very little opportunity to continue to exist, so most of them, as far as I can remember, had pulled out before we finally got out.

Q: You alluded to your role at the consulate as being free-wheeling. I wonder if you could talk a little about how the consulate was organized, what the other officers were doing. Would you comment on the leadership there, how you felt it was operating under very difficult conditions? Not just your role, but the rest of the organization.

MANHARD: We had a consul. It's very hard to remember now. We had two vice consuls, the consular vice consul and one was administrative vice consul. We had several junior staff members who were mostly clerical, a code clerk and two secretaries. I can't remember precisely now. It was a very small staff and had been reduced considerably before I got there, people getting out, knowing they could only maintain a skeleton staff at that time. The consular work, the normal issuing of visas and so forth, was practically non-existent because nobody was going anywhere, except outbound with a permit from the Chinese. So I only issued one consular visa to a White Russian lady, while her daughter and mother came, because of a request from a U.S. admiral, which I never quite figured out, which the State Department indicated it would be very tactful if I would cooperate.

Q: The consul was Wellborn.

MANHARD: He was responsible for the running of the overall office.

Q: Which was largely a question of self-preservation.

MANHARD: It was self-preservation. I feel great sympathy for Al, because his wife and their young child, maybe two years old, was there, and several times I know I and others on the staff, I'm sure, tried to ask Al didn't he think that his wife and child should go home

right away, even though we were asked to stay. He said, “We're going to stick it out until we have orders to go.” So they did, but I think it added burden on him psychologically.

Q: This all occurred during the occupation of Japan. This, of course, gave you kind of a backup. When they said you wanted a ship to take people out, there was one available, which raises the question about the Japanese and the legacy of Japan during this particular period. I gather some 7 million Japanese had been returned from overseas, mostly from north China and from Manchuria, so there were no Japanese in the area when you were there. They obviously left a legacy. Did you come across that? Was there a great deal of bitterness displayed about the Japanese, or distrust?

MANHARD: In general, I'd say if you mentioned Japan to the Chinese there, they had a very bitter memory because it had been a tough occupation in that area, particularly, I guess.

Q: And humiliation, too.

MANHARD: Yes. Sometimes some remarks of a very negative nature about Koreans, because the Japanese in north China for quite a while did use a lot of Koreans as their military police up there, which was pretty tough. So the Chinese had very bad memories of both the Japanese occupation and the Koreans who worked for them in the occupation.

Q: The Korean collaborators.

MANHARD: Yes.

Q: Thank you, Ambassador.

End of interview