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UN INTERVIEW
Harold Stassen
April 29, 1983
Interviewer: Joan Bush

Table of Contents

UN Charter: San Francisco Conference

Unanimous Approval of Charter	2,33
Appointment to Delegation	3,4
Franklyn D. Roosevelt	4-7,9,10,14,50
Admiral Halsey	4,5,8,9
Senator Arthur Vandenberg	4,7,10,14,24,28,36,49,50
V.E. Day	5,33
V.J. Day	5
Harry Truman	5,14,50
Meetings of Delegation	6,10,21,22,24,26
Edward Stettinius	6,7,12,51
Virginia Gildersleeve	6,7,24-26
Congressman Eaton	4,7,26
Senator Tom Connally	7,11,12,14,36,49,51,52
Congressman Sol Bloom	7,12
Cordell Hull	7
Chairman of National Governors	7
Stassen's Staff	8,35,36
Trusteeship	8,11-13,17-24,35,36
Ralph Bunche	8,22,35,36
Leo Pasvalsky	8
Dumbarton Oaks	9,26
Yalta	9,48,50
Soviet Union Having 3 Votes	9
Joseph Stalin	9,10,50
Winston Churchill	9,10,14,50
Establishing the Veto	10,18,48,50
Four & Five-Power Meetings	10,16,18,19,26,27,36
Harry Hopkins Visits Stalin	10,17,50
The Press	11,29,30
Security Council	11,12
Judicial Committee	12
National Interests	13,14
Ratification of Charter	14,48,49
League of Nations	14
Atlantic Charter	14
Senate B2H2 Resolution	14
Mood of the Conference	15,33,51-53
Translation	16,20,21,53
V.M. Molotov	16,23
Wellington Koo	18
Arkady Sobolev	18
Importance of Language	20,30,53
Self-determination	23
General Smuts	24,25

618

The Preamble	25,56
Collective and Self-defense	26,37
Revising the Charter	26,40-43,55,57,59
Andrei Gromyko	27,28,50
Interdependence	32
Regional Organizations	37
Voting	37,38
Peace-making	38
A UN Force	38,39
Today's Focus at the UN	46,47
Childhood Influence	47
Atomic Bomb	54

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Joan Bush: Governor Stassen, I would like to take you back 38 years to what must have been an almost electric moment at the San Francisco Conference when you were involved in drawing up the Charter of the United Nations. I should like to quote some of your own words, as you enthusiastically recounted this happening in a speech some nine days later.

Harold Stassen: Thirty-eight years ago. You are really reaching back.

QUESTION: This is what you said at the beginning of this speech, and I think it is rather nice.

"It was a thrilling moment on the afternoon of June 23, 1945 when the question was put to the Steering Committee of the Conference as to the approval of the Charter as it then lay before them; the result of hours and days and weeks of discussion and dissention, of conference and of compromise, of translation and revision. It was late in the afternoon in Room 223 of the Veterans Building, where so many earnest discussions had taken place. The arguments over clauses had been carried up right up to the hour immediately preceding the discussion. Chairman Stettinius asked if there was any further discussion. There was no response. Then he said 'Those who approve of the Charter will raise their hands'. The interpreter immediately restated the question in French, and down the long tables the hands of the Chairmen of delegations began to rise. The secretaries quickly counted, turned to the Chairman and said 'With your vote, Sir, it is 50 votes, or unanimous.' "

Do you recall how you continued? What you said, was I think, very moving:

"Somehow in the atmosphere of that room as you looked from face to face, as you thought of the billion and a half of the world's peoples that were represented, of all colours and of many races, tongues and creeds, as you realized that most of them had stood together through extremely difficult years of bitter fighting and suffering in the war, there was a definite inner feeling that the Conference had been a real success, that this United Nations Charter might well become one of the truly great documents of all time."

You were obviously elated. You went on to deliver quite a long speech, which I think would have broken your campaign rule of never speaking for more than 20 minutes, in which you explained -

STASSEN: Was that the one in Washington D.C.?

QUESTION: That is right.

STASSEN: There was a report in Washington.

QUESTION: And it was broadcast, I think, nationwide. You called it a truly human document and you explained its weaknesses and its strengths, and set out broad policies for the future.

STASSEN: I think I said we had obtained a beach head -

QUESTION: You did.

STASSEN: - in mankind's long struggle for peace; that it did not guarantee peace, but it was a beach head that then would be there for the future.

QUESTION: What we would like to do today is to try to capture the long days of consultations and meetings, the high points and low points and the atmosphere, something of the behind-the-scenes negotiations of the Conference through your mind and senses as you participated in it and as you contributed to it.

Before we launch into recollections of the Conference, I wonder if you could cast your mind back yet another few weeks, just before you went off for briefings in Washington. Was your appointment to the delegation a surprise to you?

STASSEN: Yes, in one respect, in that I was out in the war. I was out on Admiral Halsey's Staff. The background was that I had advocated publicly, I think as far back as 8 January 1943, that there should be a United Nations organized to follow through after the war, and I had spoken quite extensively about that before I had gone on active duty in the Navy. I had also, of course, spoken in some of the dinners in Washington where President Roosevelt had been present. I was also Chairman of the National Governors, and in that context had some conferences with President Roosevelt on Lend-Lease and so forth. Then I had gone off into active duty in the war. The moment of surprise was when Admiral Halsey called me into his cabin one day and put a dispatch across the table to me. It was a dispatch from President Roosevelt coming back from Yalta asking him whether he would send Commander Stassen back to the United States for the United Nations Conference. That was my notice. I had had no up-to-date information. We were very actively in the war. Then Admiral Halsey said "Harold, do you want to do this?" Of course, the dispatch itself was a surprise. In my own mind I had been working and advocating steps towards world peace for a number of years and I had felt really that as a young naval reserve officer even though I was also a Governor when Pearl Harbour had happened that my right thing to do was what I did do, which was to resign as Governor and go on active duty in the war. In a way I thought I was leaving behind my real life goal of working towards world peace.

Then that message from President Roosevelt showed that he had remembered my advocacy and he named me as the third of our party, the Republican Party. Senator Arthur Vandenberg was the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the leading Republican in the United States Senate. Congressman Eaton was the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the leading Republican in the House. I was then the third Republican that he appointed. It is quite clear that if I had not been out in the war he could not very well have reached over every one else in the Republican Party and recognized the fact that I had been advocating that there ought to be a United Nations. As far as I know, I was the first one in active public life in the United States to advocate that there should be a United Nations. I think that that was said back years ago, and I do not remember anybody claiming that they

had advocated it earlier than I did. Those speeches, of course, are on record.

When that dispatch came I told Admiral Halsey "Of course, I would very much like to do it" and he said "What about your section of the staff?" I was then Assistant Chief of Staff for Administration. I said "Admiral, you have always told us that we have to have two officers ready to take over if anything happens in battle, and I have two such officers and I would recommend that one of them, Lieutenant-Commander Herbert Carroll, should take my place."

He said "Well, when that's over back there would you like to come back?" and I said "Yes, very much."

So the orders were drawn that I was to leave Admiral Halsey and go and report to President Roosevelt for the purposes of the drawing up of the United Nations Charter, and when that was completed I should rejoin the Staff, which is what I did. That is why it was a kind of unusual circumstance, in that I was there for the signing and drafting through those weeks, and I was also present for the surrender in Tokyo Bay at the end of the war.

You realize, of course, too, that when we convened the war was still going on both in Europe and in Japan - in the Pacific Ocean. While we were there VE Day came - 6 May or 8 May or something like that - so we were in session in San Francisco when VE Day came. We had completed the Charter and I went back out into the Pacific before VJ Day, before the ending of the war in the Pacific. That was that background.

Then I flew back with those orders and reported to President Roosevelt in the White House, and we had a discussion of the objectives of the United Nations. Then I went back out to the Fleet for a brief time to get the organization set up and then came back to join the delegation in the preparatory work of the United States delegation for the beginning of the Conference. Then in the midst of that President Roosevelt died. So the time I had flown back and saw him in his White House office, in the Oval Office, was the last time I saw him alive. I was in San Francisco when the flash came that President Roosevelt had died. Very shortly President Truman reappointed the same delegation. That is why it is sometimes said that the delegation was appointed by both President Roosevelt and President Truman, because he did reappoint - it was necessary for him to, and he did it - the same delegation to take part. That delegation then met and prepared for the San Francisco Conference.

QUESTION: When you say you met President Roosevelt, do you mean you met him privately before you met him with the delegation? I think the delegation went on the first day that they met together officially in Washington.

STASSEN: I met him privately when I flew back. You see, in effect his dispatch to Admiral Halsey and my orders were to return to the United States from the Pacific Fleet and report to the President, so I first reported to him. You say that the whole delegation then also saw him. But that was a personal conference when I first reported back.

QUESTION: Could you relate something of your discussions that you recall?

STASSEN: Yes, for one thing, it was very evident to me - I had worked with him before I went out on active duty, as Chairman of the Governors - my first impression was, that he had failed considerably, that he did not look well, but that he still had that vigour of action as far as his emphasis in his speech of the necessity of getting a Charter drafted and that it would not be easy. He spoke a bit of his conferences at Yalta. I noticed that when he poured himself a glass of water on his desk his hand was very shaky. So he wasn't really very well, but he was very determined about the necessity for a United Nations and he was confident that we would do everything we could to get a successful Charter.

QUESTION: Perhaps we could talk about one or two of the delegation meetings. When you first met all together - I think all the delegates were present at the first meeting - had you met many of them before? Did you know them personally? Secretary of State Stettinius, for instance: did you know him?

STASSEN: I knew them all. I had been very active in public matters before the war, so I knew everyone in different degrees. I had met Virginia Gildersleeve, I think at the New York Harold Tribune Forum, which was held in those years. Virginia Gildersleeve, the one woman on our delegation, was the Dean of Barnard College, which was at Columbia.

QUESTION: She was also in the Navy, I think, wasn't she?

STASSEN: Not that I recall, but it could have been; she could have been a consultant or something. But she was very active in education, a leading educator and a very strong member. Then of course there were those who were in public life. I have already mentioned Senator Vandenberg and Congressman Eaton of our Republican Party, and then of President Roosevelt's party, there were Senator Tom Connally, the Democrat from Texas, and Congressman Sol Bloom, who was the senior Democrat in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Then of course there was Secretary of State Stettinius. Dean Gildersleeve and I made up the seven. Cordell Hull was also named, but he was not able to actually participate. He was the former Secretary of State. I think every one of the seven of us knew every other one of the seven, and we had our own varied backgrounds.

QUESTION: It was really quite a clever selection of a delegation, with both parties -

STASSEN: President Roosevelt - and you think of him reaching to both parties and both Houses, the Senate and the House - of course had very much in mind the great problems in the United States structure after World War I, the League of Nations and all of that, and the problems with the Senate. So I think he very wisely reached out to the two ranking people in foreign matters in both parties in both Houses of Congress, with the Secretary of State. He told me when I reported back to him that he remembered very clearly various speeches and statements I had made from the preceding years. I had been very active in public matters. I had been Governor - it was in my third term that I resigned and went on active duty in the Navy. I had also been serving for two years as Chairman of the National Governors. So we had a lot of contact. So he knew my views and he knew that whole situation.

It was a very interesting group of men and women and we developed quite a group of advisers and staff. As I have said, to begin with the war was going on, so in flying back from the Navy, of course leaving my own navy staff out there to carry on with Admiral Halsey, and then, having turned over the Governorship to my Lieutenant-Governor, Edward Thye, who later became a United States Senator, too; when I resigned as Governor he became Governor and that whole staff was

there, so literally I was flying back from the Pacific with no staff at all. As I thought of that I sent a telegram to some of the Presidents of universities that I knew - President Conan of Harvard and President Dodds of Princeton - and asked whether they could check whether they had some exceptionally brilliant students in international matters who had been out in the war and been wounded and got back. They cabled me various recommendations, and that is really the way I filled my staff. I had a remarkable staff out there - men like John Thompson and Cord Meyer, men who had been brilliant in international studies and been out in the war and wounded and back home. That is the way they were made available.

QUESTION: They were your personal aides?

STASSEN: They became more than aides - my staff. Then from the Foreign Service another interesting thing happened, which was that shortly after I arrived back the State Department in developing their personnel for the Conference asked if I would mind taking on my staff for those aspects of the trusteeship that would deal with Africa, a young Foreign Service officer by the name of Ralph Bunche. I listened and I said "not for African affairs. I'll take him for a comprehensive staff position like anyone else." Of course, they were rather taken aback, but they then did assign Ralph Bunche to me and we developed a tremendous relationship at that time. That then carried on through, because he was a very superior individual, as the United Nations records themselves will show. He worked with me all through the Conference, along with Ben Gerig, who was another Foreign Service officer. They were the two Foreign Service people. Then the young veterans that I spoke of made up the staff.

QUESTION: What about Leo Pasvalsky? I think he was involved.

STASSEN: He of course came in from the delegation as a whole. He was a co-ordinator and he did not have any relationship to me personally - only through the delegation. There was a considerable delegation staff and so forth, but that was another matter.

QUESTION: I think after the first session of the delegation preparation meetings in Washington you were not there through the rest of the meetings when they reviewed the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, were you?

STASSEN: No, I had got all the documents, but then I flew back out to the Navy in order to make certain of the transition, because, as I said, I was Assistant Chief of Staff for Administration in what was then the greatest fleet that had ever been at sea. I of course wanted to see that Admiral Halsey's responsibilities there and my responsibilities to him were carried out right. So we worked out the transition and Lieutenant-Commander Carroll taking charge and all the various things. Then I came back and re-joined the delegation. But I took the Dumbarton Oaks papers and all the other memoranda with me and went flying over the Pacific reading all those papers.

QUESTION: You weren't present, I think, at the second meeting of the delegation with President Roosevelt when he briefed the delegation on the three votes question reached at Yalta, and the later meeting when the delegations' recommendations were made to the President about the United States requesting only one vote. Did you get briefed on this by anybody afterwards or did you just learn about it?

STASSEN: I of course followed all the minutes of meetings and things of that kind and knew that in effect there was a compromise where the Soviet Union would have the extra votes under the circumstance where they had been saying that the United States had so many associates, had so many votes that way, as they looked at it, and this compromise had really been reached between President Roosevelt, as I understood it, and Marshal Stalin and Mr. Churchill. That is probably a good place to reach out broader. When we got into the very difficult and long negotiations on every part of the Charter at San Francisco, we analysed what in effect was the parameter within which we were meeting. In other words, we were a delegation representing Governments. There had been these sessions of

President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin and Winston Churchill, and of course there was the whole matter of the war still going on, to begin with, and what agreements had been made, where there might be flexibility. We very early - particularly Senator Arthur Vandenberg and I - realized that we had to think through at what point, if we were not able to get what we would have considered to be the best Charter, it would be better to fail to have a Charter; in other words, you had to think of the ultimate situation, what was essential to make it a desirable beginning as contrasted to saying "We can't get a Charter for a world organization now and we had better just go home and then after the war is over try to do it again", which we knew was a very grave thing. But that is the background from one of the most significant areas.

The question of the veto and the interpretation of the veto in the Security Council took a lot of consideration. You undoubtedly know that there were various phases. We had the United States delegation meetings. Then we had the so-called Five-Power meetings and then we had various bilateral meetings going on. Then of course there were meetings in the formal commissions and committees and plenaries and a lot of negotiating. One of the crucial questions on the veto power was whether the veto could stop even a discussion and whether the veto could prevent any kind of action in the Assembly. There was a lot of earnest examination of just how that should work out. Really Senator Vandenberg and I, and I think the United States delegation, after a lot of discussion, concluded that if the veto could completely stop any kind of expression in the United Nations, and any kind of inquiry, any kind of Assembly action, it would be better not to make a start under those circumstances. That led to President Truman sending Harry Hopkins over to see Marshal Stalin. The background of President Truman's decision to send him and to his going was that the at least surface directions at that point we felt would have made it impossible for the organization to be effective, so there had to be some yielding on that point of the veto. Then out of those further negotiations and the further conference of Hopkins with Marshal Stalin came the revisions down to the point where the actual practice has followed since that time.

QUESTION: How did you become so involved in trusteeship?

STASSEN: First of all by being assigned to do it. We divided up. Each member of the delegation had certain things that they took on especially. It happened that there had not been any advance agreement on trusteeship. The issues were so intense between the colony position and the mandate position and all of that, that it had not been possible for them to get any kind of advance agreement, so that they early felt that unless this could be worked out there probably could not be a Charter - that is, that if it wasn't clear what was going to happen and how the procedures would be handled over the mandates that had come out of World War I and the many colonies that were then around the world, you could not really get started in a United Nations Organization with its objectives. So fairly early in the assignments I was assigned to the trusteeship phase. That is how I got into that. I was also assigned fairly early to be the one that would go out and brief the media, because in the early stages there were a lot of misunderstandings with the media over what was happening and a lot of dire predictions of the impossibility of agreement and things of that kind. One of the problems in the early stages would be that, a perfectly natural thing with so many different viewpoints and different countries represented, if some individual country's delegate felt aggrieved or frustrated he would search out the press and give a very gloomy or rather distorted view and that would become the world headlines. So very early our delegation decided that the media had to be briefed to be really in perspective as to what was happening. Then they asked me to take that on, so that was one of my other responsibilities. We divided different assignments.

QUESTION: You also had the responsibility for the Security Council, I think, didn't you, with -

STASSEN: With Senator Tom Connally. Senator Tom Connally really was the No. 1. We usually had two members of the delegation on each aspect, with one of them in effect being the prime and the other being the deputy - we were

all really seven equal people - but in the way in which we organized to get things done. On the Security Council Senator Tom Connally was No. 1 and I was his second, so to speak. On trusteeship I was No. 1 and Congressman Bloom was my second. That is the way we kind of divided up organization-wise to follow these things up.

QUESTION: It is very funny, because in the official records and all the notes at the time you were not assigned to trusteeship in the official records.

STASSEN: I didn't know that.

QUESTION: Yes. It's very strange. You were assigned to judicial. Did you every have anything to do with it?

STASSEN: Yes, I did some work on judicial. I don't recall all the background, but I think that a lot of those advance papers were more or less what the staff thought should be and then the delegation would actually make the decisions when things came together,

QUESTION: Were the decisions made in Washington or in San Francisco?

STASSEN: The decisions were made in San Francisco between the delegation on things like that. Of course, Secretary of State Stettinius always there, so there was always that consultation and his communication with President Truman. But as far as the working methods, the delegation very much was a group that moved with the authority of a delegation. But, as I said a little earlier, we tried to be perceptive as to the framework in which we were working. That is, this wasn't anything that was unrealistic because there were Governments involved. There was a war still going on and there were Presidents and Heads of State that had made commitments, so we had to think "How do we shape a Charter under those circumstances?"

QUESTION: I would like to take you back to Washington, the briefings, just for a moment, if I may. How did you get your briefings on trusteeship? Did you have any ideas of your own or was it completely new to you?

STASSEN: No, Of course, I had been aware of the world. I knew what was going on in the world and had been a very active student from early years. There were briefing papers. Really when the work began on trusteeship there were divided opinions as to just how to do it in almost every Government as well as between Governments. There were very strongly held views between different parts even of a Foreign Ministry or a State Department as to just what to do. Consequently, it had been impossible to get any kind of advance document before the session convened and then in our early meetings we could not get any document. Many proposals had been put forward. That was where we finally decided between Ralph Bunche and Ben Gerig and Cord Meyer and John Thompson and me, and talking it through, that we came upon this sort of technique. They all said there was no diplomatic precedent for it, but we had to break through in some way, so we laid down one day what we called the working paper as a position of no government but as a document that we could start to work from. We spent a few days then talking about what was the status of the working paper and what it really meant and so forth, and then finally they turned to beginning to look at the paragraphs of it and start to amend. Really, the trusteeship part grew out of that working paper over a long period of time.

QUESTION: That was jumping ahead a little for me, because I'm still very interested in the last three meetings of the delegation in Washington, where I think you had a galaxy of Admirals and Secretaries of State all putting their various views, and I wonder if you could recall for us those meetings, at which I believe you were present.

STASSEN: One might say that there was the natural apprehension that there is in every Government of whether or not some kind of agreement should be made that would be a handicap to the security of the country or would be

an obligation that could not be fulfilled. Many different viewpoints were presented. There were very active viewpoints in the whole country. There was a certain amount of viewpoint in the world, in fact, that the whole thing was a waste of time because there would certainly be another world war in 15 or 20 years. There was lot of that kind of expression, that no way could 40 or 50 countries reach an agreement, and if they did it wouldn't mean much anyhow because there would be another world war in 15 or 20 years under the way the world had been moving. But the more affirmative view increasingly came to the fore, and of course with Senator Vandenberg and Senator Connally both having such respect in the Senate, there was the feeling that if we reached a Charter that they both were ready to recommend it would get ratified. Under our form of government the ratification by a two-thirds vote is a crucial thing as to any treaty form actually getting into effect. So there was a lot of discussion with Senator Connally and Senator Vandenberg and a lot of respect for their views, because they in turn were thinking in terms of how they would carry it through the Senate. That was part of that whole process.

QUESTION: That was very ingenious, a big comparison with the League of Nations days when there was no support in the Senate at all. Did you feel that the death of President Roosevelt would jeopardize the outcome of the Conference in any way?

STASSEN: It was a very deeply moving and very major event, and of course the promptness of President Truman in saying that the Conference should proceed and that the same delegation should carry on meant a great deal, but, as you know, President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill had first brought out that Atlantic Charter very early, and then there had been in the Senate what was called the B2E2 resolution. That was Senators Ball, Burton, Hatch and Hill, a bi-partisan resolution about developing an international organization for peace. And there had been a lot of study groups and a lot of discussions for a long period of time, and then in other countries there had been papers developed, views expressed. So there had been a lot of thinking springing out of the early beginnings, and some going all the way back into the League of Nations period. And then of course having come through this Second World War and thinking. . . .

about how we emerged from this one and all of that.

QUESTION: If we could just have a quickie question on your Impressions when you arrived at San Francisco, do you recall anything particular? The other delegates, for instance, from Europe: it must have been quite a revelation to them seeing a city with lights.

STASSEN: Yes, it was in that sense a very dramatic and very moving time, and of course some of the delegates would be arriving from Europe just about as fast as their countries were liberated in the war itself, and some were added on in some instances, and many of those who had been active in resistance movements or active in the war in Europe would come over to represent those countries, and likewise some other parts of the world. There was a very strong sense of what a war really meant. In fact, I mentioned Cord Meyer: while we were meeting his twin brother was killed in the war, right during the San Francisco Conference, so those kinds of events were there. I mean that the war was still going on and delegations were getting news of the war and things of that kind.

QUESTION: It was a very good choice for a meeting place actually - in the middle, as it were, of the Far Eastern war, the Pacific, and the European war.

STASSEN: Yes, I think in that sense there was a real value in selecting a West Coast city and San Francisco in particular, in that it on the one hand got a little bit of perspective of being different than Washington, the capital of our own country, and it worked out, because it could be a sort of total community for the purposes of the drafting and for the purposes of the Conference. It was the thing going on in San Francisco, whereas, in either Washington or New York it would not have had quite that same focus at that time. I think it worked out. Obviously it worked out, because we finally got an agreement.

QUESTION: Do you recall the general mood of the first Big Four conference, consultation, that you attended?

STASSEN: Yes. One thing that was very evident was that the translations into different languages were quite a problem in those early stages - understanding what was being said; slowness of sequential translation as compared with the way it has developed. Those interpreters, those translators, who had great facility were very much in demand - in other words, those who could listen to a three- four-minute presentation and then really give it back in another language were very much in demand and very much needed. But in the Five-Power meetings and Four-Power meetings and different kinds of formulations they had there, at first it was very difficult to get a real communication going. On the one hand it was the language and on the other hand there were differences of circumstances.

QUESTION: Do you have any reminiscences of your meetings with the first individual members of the Big Four, the four sponsoring Powers: Eden Molotov and Sung, for example?

STASSEN: Yes. I remember, of course, how quickly it became apparent that Mr. Molotov had felt he had very clear directions of what he could and could not do, and we very quickly learned that the right and intelligent way to go at things if some proposal was to be made to him was to present it, see that it was translated adequately to be understood and watch out for the nuances of words that could have different meanings in translation, and then to say "Let's study this", instead of trying to get an immediate reaction. Then after a few days, he would say "Let's have another meeting on such and such a subject", and then we knew they had done their studies and had their communications, and they could go forward with it. There was a period there when you might say the natural working approach of both Great Britain and the United States, and the French too for that matter, would be that something was brought forward and you start discussing it right away, and that was not

the thing to do, because you simply put some of the delegations in a difficult spot and if you pressed for reactions you just put them in an impossible position. So the matter of some patience became a very important part of that early working to give the process a chance to go through. Likewise that crucial decision to send Hopkins directly to see Marshal Stalin was so important.

QUESTION: Do you have any recollections of the opening ceremony? Was it impressive?

STASSEN: Yes, very colourful, very impressive.

QUESTION: If we get down to perhaps the substantive work and start with trusteeship, what flashes into your mind, what do you first think of when you recall the whole trusteeship debate?

STASSEN: Of course, one of the obvious things was that we were there dealing very importantly with the future of a large percentage of the world's population who were not present. I suppose in that sense a large part of the growth from the original 50 countries to 157 now, a large number of those reflect the change from trusteeship out into independent sovereign countries with their own memberships. There were so many different backgrounds about the mandates and different kinds of colonial experiences. And if in the unfolding of history, if it was not worked out right, that what happened in relationship to those peoples and to their territories and the resources that they represented, was not handled right within those areas themselves and their resources, could be the seeds of the third world war. So there was that sense of the importance of it. That's why even though it was so difficult in the early stages and still reflects many difficulties in the world, and of course the whole Mid-East matter which is still such a very intense problem is very much present as to what was going to happen in reference to the Arab countries and the Israeli and the rest of Africa - very intense issues.

QUESTION: Did you feel that the lack of Five-Power consultations prior to the Conference was a big disadvantage or did the consultative group that you chaired that was set up, did you quickly get down to these discussions?

STASSEN: In the matter of the trusteeship, I don't recall that any of the issues between the major Powers ever got up to the Five-Power Conference for decision. They all went back into each country, of course, and the progress, or lack of it, was reported to the Five-Power Conferences. But as far as I remember we had to work those language questions and substantive issue questions out within the context of that trusteeship group, because of course the Five-Powers were also dealing with the Security Council veto and many other subjects of that kind, and the military interest in trusteeship and the question of what was going to happen in the Pacific Islands and how that would affect the security of the United States and other countries cut into trusteeship.

QUESTION: But you had your own sort of little Five-Power group with the consultative group of which you were chairman, didn't you?

STASSEN: Yes.

QUESTION: Do you remember the members - Viscount Cranborne -

STASSEN: Bobby Cranborne we called him, Bobbity. Yes, I remember him very well.

QUESTION: And Mr. Sobolev.

STASSEN: Yes, he was very active.

QUESTION: And Wellington Koo.

STASSEN: Wellington Koo from China, and I think the French delegate changed at one stage.

QUESTION: I think it started as Paul Emile Naggiar. Do you remember him? Perhaps it changed afterwards.

STASSEN: Yes.

QUESTION: How would you characterize the early meetings of that group, because you met many times, didn't you?

STASSEN: Many times.

QUESTION: Was there much difficulty in working up the working paper?

STASSEN: Yes, because the views were genuinely so different: the matter of by what process would colonies or mandates end and by what process would they emerge; what would be the circumstances; what would be their rights. That was very important and very difficult.

QUESTION: What are your recollections of the long, heated debate regarding non-self-governing territories? It took quite a long time, I think.

STASSEN: It went on a long time. There were times when it just seemed like you never could get an agreement on how to handle trusteeships. We would try out different formulations and somebody would knock them down. Then we would try another one. I think one place the Chairmen of the delegations through the Five-Power group, as I recall, in effect sent out word through their delegations that there really could not be a Charter unless the trusteeship thing was worked out. In other words, they put very much pressure on us to get a section worked out, because it was one of the areas where it was very easy to say "Well, agreement is just not possible". Then in effect they would say "Well, the only way there's going to be a Charter is if there is a trusteeship".

section". Then we would go back at it.

QUESTION: Do you remember the big battle about independence going into the declaration?

STASSEN: Yes.

QUESTION: What do you recall of that debate?

STASSEN: It was very intense: what it meant and what words to use and how it would be interpreted in the future.

QUESTION: Words meant different things to different people, I think.

STASSEN: Yes. There were areas, too, where the translations and the meanings under different cultures were so important. I remember one aspect in the whole process. We came to realize that when there was some kind of discussion about the circumstance under which an investigation might be ordered in some countries, we would think about ordering an investigation as being the beginning of a process of getting in the facts, whereas, the meaning to other Governments was that if you ordered an investigation you really had already concluded that somebody was guilty. To be ordered to be investigated was sort of the last straw rather than the beginning. It was all coming out of different cultures, different forms of government, things like that, that you would find that the same word translated could have very different meaning and you had to be very alert that you didn't get some nuance like that and be talking about two different things with the same language. That also came up in the factor that, as you know, the five languages for the document were to have the same status.

QUESTION: It must have been very difficult when you were working paragraph by paragraph with the different versions and the sequential translation.

STASSEN: Yes, and we found that it was desirable if an amendment was made in one language to discuss the interpretation in alternate forms - that if it was a certain French language or a certain Russian language you might say it this way is English or you might say it that way, and if you discussed possible alternative interpretations for words you would get a greater sense of the real meaning behind the proposal. That I think was one thing that on difficult issues, and especially when you have to have in mind that we didn't then have the immediate translation - this matter of sequential translations, which is a world of difference from what you have now developed for the techniques of immediate translation and a whole staff of excellent immediate translators, interpreters - was much more difficult.

QUESTION: Yes, it makes the whole thing so long, doesn't it?

STASSEN: Not only long, but there is the potential of a misunderstanding, and it was increased in the old method, particularly if you made a statement of some minutes' length and then the interpreter gave it in the other language but gave a different sense somewhere through. We used in important things, which was almost always, to try to have our own interpreters behind us to listen to the other interpretations and immediately call our attention if they thought that there was some confusion over a meaning. Sometimes it was time-consuming, but it was very important in that process.

QUESTION: I think that as Chairman of the consultative group, you had to carry out quite a lot of informal, one-on-one, consultations. Do you recall some of these?

STASSEN: Yes. By one-on-one, they really never were one person to one person, but one delegation to one other delegation of the trusteeship people. Very frequently someone would come to me and ask for a session on a certain subject - the French delegate, the Russian delegate, or Lord Cranborne - and we would set a time and the two delegations would meet not the whole delegation,

but that part of the group. That very frequently would be Congressman Bloom and Ralph Bunche and Ben Gerig and I would meet with counterpart people from some of the other delegations when there was a special problem up. Those were very important, because you had to find your way through so many different views and different attitudes. Of course, all Governments had to do some yielding as some gaining points.

QUESTION: Strategic areas, that whole subject: does that bring back memories?

STASSEN: Very much so. There was great concern that indirectly the strategic areas might be lost to proper strategic safeguards, so there were a lot of negotiations over that. A position needed to be taken and things of that kind.

QUESTION: I got the impression from the records that you were personally very concerned about the peoples of strategic areas - for instance, in the Pacific.

STASSEN: One of the key points was how did you rightly safeguard and enhance the future rights of the peoples without prejudice to the basic world strategic interest in that particular geography, to try to structure it so that those two objectives of having a proper safeguarding of strategic significance and a proper human interest and human rights approach to the people had to be the twin matters brought forward.

QUESTION: Did you ever have the feeling of being sort of caught in the middle, having to balance on one hand the strategic interests of the United States and the colonial Powers and the interests of the anti-colonial Powers?

STASSEN: Well certainly, all the time. I mean - throughout - the whole process is trying to balance the different interests and get a basis on which mankind or humanity can make progress without war and it is always a matter of trying to find that creative centre in those different interests.

QUESTION: Do you recall - going back to the early days of the Conference for a moment - in a Big Four meeting that the Soviet Union injected the related issue of equal rights and self-determination in Chapter I of - the purposes section, I think it was - of the Charter and this was accepted as a sponsor's amendment; do you recall this? Molotov gave a press conference at the time; he called it of great, first-rate importance to his Government and I wonder whether this had any effect on the trusteeship debate and whether the United States and the United Kingdom realized at the time, when it was accepted as a sponsor's amendment, what effect it might have on the debate when they immediately brought up the question of independence?

STASSEN: I do not recall that clearly. I do recall the matter of the interpretation of self-determination and independence, a lot of discussion going back to Woodrow Wilson's points after the First World War and to the matter of self-determination within colonies where there were different groups within the same colony and what would be the - in effect - the dimensions of the group that could have self-determination and some question of - you know - splintering and how general recognition of human rights, if larger groups were then kept together within viable entities versus splintering into too many small countries. There were discussions of that and concern for the future of it.

QUESTION: Who were the key personalities, which delegates, delegations stand out in your mind?

STASSEN: Well, the major delegations had very important presentation, and some were - for varying reasons - more active in getting solutions, or advocating. Mr. Evatt of Australia was a very active delegate and really a very constructive one, in total quite an advocate. Some of those from the smaller countries in that sense - Mr. Romulo from the Philippines was a very active individual.

QUESTION: Fighting for independence?

STASSEN: Yes..

QUESTION: Mr. Fraser, who chaired the Committee?

STASSEN: Fraser, yes. There were a lot of personalities that - General Smuts was a colourful character out of South Africa with his whole background. I remember he would take long hikes up over those hills of San Francisco and nobody could keep up with him. He was very colourful.

QUESTION: How would you characterize the functioning of that Committee?

STASSEN: Well, I suppose that the right characterization really used to be that you would have to wait another 50 years and see what finally happens to all these areas and all these peoples - obviously there have been tremendous changes in these 37 years and a lot of continuing problems for all of them - almost all of them - and really make a judgement in that longer term.. It was really quite remarkable finally to get a document and I would have the feeling that it had functioned quite well. As to whether you could take the experience of the 38 years and look back and say we could have drawn that up better - you probably could, but at the time it was not easy to get anything agreed to.

QUESTION: Could we talk about the delegation for a moment, delegation meetings, the different personalities? After working with them, for instance, for over two months, how would you characterize each of them or one or two perhaps? Were there some with whom you worked well and felt more at ease with, or ...?

STASSEN: We really all kept very active communication back and forth among the seven. We would - there was a difference in who would see eye to eye on one issue or another issue, according to their background of experience and so on, and I tended to be working more closely with Senator Vandenberg and he with me because of our position in what was at that time in effect the opposing party or the other party, but we had both emphasized a lot the importance of informed policy and in the war itself, of being a united country, and so that that was the background of it. Dean Gildersleeve and I had quite a lot of discussions - different subjects, because in effect we were the two that were not in a public office at that particular moment.

She was in education and I had been in State Government and was then out, so we had a little different viewpoint sometimes, a little different perspective, especially in human rights and in the Preamble - we did quite a bit of work on the Preamble.

QUESTION: I think that she considered that you were the only one on the delegation who was really interested in that Preamble, that the others, she said, did not seem to care.

STASSEN: Well, I would not say that of the others, but it is sometimes true as a matter of - as I said, we divided up the prime responsibilities - like - in the matter of the regional approach in the - you see there had been a Latin American conference at Chapultepec and how this region, the South American, and the countries of this area would relate to the world Organization and what effect it would have - it had a lot of tensions in it, a lot of uncertainties and a lot of different views. So there would be times when some delegates would be so caught up in that that they would not give much attention to - and that was partly also a matter of reciprocal confidence - that is, I think, on the Preamble - they would discuss it in our delegation meetings but they would feel that Dean Gildersleeve would do an able job there and she did tend to turn to me to help explain to the delegation or to try to help work out some other language. We did quite a bit of work on that together.

QUESTION: Yes, from that original that was prepared by General Smuts which was so very stiff and certainly the Preamble has turned out to be a very beautiful - I think - today; it is so often read at the conferences ...

STASSEN: Thank you, thank you. Yes, I was going to say, it is probably quoted more than any other part of the Charter, is it not? That is one of the interesting things. Of course, some views will, after all - that is not a part of the actual - you might say, biting force of the document - but yet, psychologically, it has tremendous significance and it will ...

QUESTION/: We often get famous actors to read the Preamble at the United Nations Concert each year. It comes over very well, I think. How difficult was it to come to a unanimous position on the various issues within the delegation, because I think you had this wonderful freedom to put your own views, but then I understand that you would come to a unanimous decision on most issues? Did this take sometimes a long ...?

STASSEN: Well, no. One of the things from the studies of the - you know - the Dumbarton Oaks and the whole situation and then the effects of Security Council action and the veto in the Security Council - I was concerned as to the matter of self-defence in a circumstance if the Security Council was not acting and what effect that might have. So I originated the suggestion that there would be some kind of a section about nothing in the Charter shall impair the inherent right of self-defence if an armed attack occurs. And that was at first pretty much rejected; of course there was a general sort of a mind-set of those who have worked on the original Dumbarton Oaks draft of objecting to any change in it, especially in the early stages, but it soon became apparent that it needed changing and in that instance we did at one stage reach a situation where I was in effect told that - in a discussion, not a rough way, but it was very clear - since I was the only one that had put that forward and no one else had joined in it, why should I not just withdraw it, and I thought it was so fundamental that there was a stage in which I said, "well, if the Charter does not have something like this, and if you all want to go ahead, then I think the right thing for me to do is withdraw from the delegation and say why. And they said, well that would not do. Well, then I said, well, you have been resisting the necessity for this, but suppose we turn it and you each tell why you do not want to see it in the Charter. Then as that kind of discussion started, - actually I believe on that subject Dean Gildersleeve was the first one then to join me in saying this ought to be in, and then as I remember it was Congressman Eaton - but they finally came around and, as you know, it is in the Charter and that literally started with a memorandum that I circulated to our United States delegation, then after they agreed it ought to be in there, then brought it up in the five-Power meetings and talked it over and it finally stayed in. But what is it - Article 51 now? I think it is. I am not sure. But it is - you see, the problem that was thought of there is that if a Security Council action was vetoed and an armed attack was going on, then unless you had an affirmative - and then you are supposed to, you know, not use your own military force, you in effect would have to be violating the Charter in order to defend yourself and we did not want that. And that of course - that individual and collective self-defence - has turned out to be a very important principle, even though at times it is still controversial. So I do have a fair amount of responsibility in that area as to what finally happens in the long term of history of the provision for inherent right of individual and collective self-defence. You will find that was not in the original Dumbarton Oaks and so forth, but came in at San Francisco.

Another one, of course, was the matter of a manner of calling a conference to revise the Charter. That is another place where we brought it up. And that is an interesting subject because that was not in there at first. We - this has a very strong meaning and

maybe we can get into it more that many of us were working on that Charter and felt that for many reasons there were limits to what you could accomplish in getting that Charter and getting agreement and getting started. But we felt - and many discussed it - that in 10 or 15 years it really ought to be rewritten, that is, we really ought to have a new Charter and so that gave rise then to making it in effect easier to take a move for a new Charter - I think it was after the tenth year or something of that kind - and there was some resistance to that when we discussed it in the Big Five meeting. I pointed out that so many of the men of all these countries were then off in the war and this Charter was being drafted and a few of us had been called back to take part of it from the war, but that literally you could not predict how the world would be and there was just this latter part there, the beginnings of the outlook of a changing world picture, rumours of new types of weapons and that all of those who were out in the war would feel they had not been participating in their Governments, there ought to be a chance to rewrite the Charter. And finally the sentiments swung through and that Article - I do not remember now, is it 109 or something like that? - now one of my current feelings is that all of the countries have kind of drifted since that time and that it is urgent to really bring the Charter up to date and that it does need rewriting. It is a big task; it will take years to really bring through another agreement on it, but I do think that that is a part of - I spoke of the fact that many were saying there would be a third world war anyhow in 15 or 20 years, we are wasting our time - well, here we are, 38 years later and while there have been many rough moments there has not been a world war and to have the Charter do its job for the next 35 years I think we do need to bring it up to date. It is a big subject.

QUESTION: So, thinking that the Charter needs to be up to date, do you have some specific ideas that you would put forward?

STASSEN: I do have quite a few, but whether we ought to shift over to that right now - I am not certain whether we should stay back on the original ...

QUESTION: We were thinking of going into it later, I think.

STASSEN: All right.

QUESTION: I should like to get back to personalities a little bit. I was thinking of Ambassador Gromyko. It seems to me that you had a number of discussions - I

do not know whether they would have been altercations - but a number of discussions with him and I wonder whether you recall some of them?

STASSEN: Well, we did, as you say, have many, many working relationships through the years. A very able person and very clearly endeavouring to represent his country and his Government's views. No, I always found that the most important thing was to try to think through where he was coming from - I mean that in the sense of trying to analyse what would be their objectives, their fears, their concerns and their aims and then try to evaluate those in relationship to what should be done. But I guess he is one of the few who were active then that is still very active. Just right now, as I guess the deputy in the country.

QUESTION: How would you assess the general functioning of that Conference? Do think it went pretty smoothly all along?

STASSEN: Not smoothly, no, but the fact of reaching an agreement, I think, was quite a thing. And I do think that the fact that about half way through, particularly Senator Vandenberg and I and a number of other delegates here and there, tried to face up to the question of what needed to be the minimum Charter that was worthwhile to put together. On what basis would we end the war with an Organization in being, or at what point would it be better to say we have failed to establish an Organization and then see what would happen subsequently when the wars were all over, whether we could then make a start or whether there would be some other forms of inter-governmental consultations or something that would go on? That ultimate question was thought through and discussed through about half way through the Conference and I think it cleared a lot as to when was there an issue, that it should be made very clear that this was one that just had to be resolved, because if we could not resolve certain issues it would be better that we did not act like they had been resolved. And obviously, with the passage of time, our judgements can be subject to review and to , as we call it, post-game quarter-backing, but we tried to think of it that way - what kind of a Charter would be worthwhile to go ahead on and if we could not do certain things, what would be better. And one of those, of course, was the decision that there had to be something on the Trusteeship portion, that is, we could not really feel we had an Organization that could survive if it was completely silent on the whole big question of all these mandated Territories and all of these colonies. And one of the others was the veto. Then of course the matter of United Nations armed forces, which had a kind of a checkered history, where these national forces devoted to United Nations objectives performed some good functions, but obviously no real United Nations force itself has been established.

So there are a lot of those sections that - you know - academically people might - or, as I say, in looking back, the advantage of hindsight might say well, why didn't you do this or that? But we had a real sense at the time of trying to put together as good a beginning as could be put together with certain minimum standards that - unless it could have its own survivability and own functional qualities it would be better not to make a beginning. We faced up to that issue.

QUESTION: You mentioned earlier on that you did quite a bit of the press relations business, that you were responsible - I think you co-ordinated, didn't you? - any statements made by the delegation to the press?

STASSEN: Not really co-ordinated, but they officially made a decision - I don't even know whether it shows in minutes and so on - but there was a time when a delegation at a delegation meeting - there had been various indications - well there has been this story and that story and another story that had, you might say, either inaccuracies or limited accuracy and so on - and the delegations had reached a conclusion together that better to tell the press what was happening, regularly, than leaving them just pick it up here and there and that was when they decided that they wanted me to do it and then to - and they reviewed it a few times, as to how I was doing it...

QUESTION: Well the press had quite a problem, didn't they, I mean, they were not allowed to go into the committee meetings or - and so they really had quite a ...

STASSEN: No, there was no - none of the sessions, only the plenaries were open to the media, so the real work was just that they had to pick it up here and there. It wasn't an easy problem either to decide just how to brief them, but I think I established these rules - I don't remember how clearly they came through to the delegation, but we discussed quite a bit that time, it was fairly early when we decided we had to brief the media and they asked me to do it, and I said that I am never going to give them any false information, I will refuse to ever do that, but I will, at times, tell them that it is not yet the time to discuss that issue, that it is true there is such an issue and we are working on it, but it is not yet the time to tell you what the United States delegation feels is going to happen to it or what their position was on it.

QUESTION: I think the American delegates at most conferences, and I expect it was the same here, are usually much more forthcoming than a lot of the other delegates who tend to hold back, seem to think there is some danger in speaking to the media and often miss possibilities to get across to the public a particular point.

STASSEN: Well, of course, the media also being completely free you get many different kinds of results too. I remember that we discussed the fact that you brief them doesn't necessarily mean you are going to be happy with the story.

QUESTION: I remember you gave a press conference fairly near the beginning where you outlined the nine United States objectives. I think that went over quite well, for what the delegation of the United States hoped to get out of the Conference. I suppose the media tended to hang around the Big Four and Big Five meetings and that sometimes information would leak out of these meetings, get to the floor of the Committees. Did such leaks ever cause embarrassment to the United States?

STASSEN: Both embarrassment and humour.

QUESTION: Well that's nice. Tell about some of them.

STASSEN: I remember one of the really uproarious times - I can't right remember what meeting it was - a delegate got up - it seems to me he was from one of the South American countries - he said: "I see in our minutes that at our meeting last week we did a, b, c, but I read in The New York Times that what we did was x, y and z. Now what did we do?" And of course the whole meeting just broke up in uproarious laughter, because it wasn't a deeply serious issue, but he happened to find an instance in which - and the upshot of it was, I think, that the decision was made that neither was accurate, neither the minutes nor The New York Times, that actually the whole subject was still open or something or other. That was in one of those sessions. It seems to me it was something about the Assembly. You know, there was the matter of what was domestic and what was a proper activity for the United Nations, it was another one of these issues that took a lot of negotiating and a lot of different views and that language that finally evolved about within the scope of the Charter, which was the solution that emerged out of that, was an interesting sequence, but no matter whether simply by declaring something domestic that you could close off the United Nations from having anything to say about it or just how that and then how the veto might affect that and so on. There was quite a bit of negotiating and controversy over that part of the language.

QUESTION: What about - you said there were both humorous and - times where the media could be an embarrassment. Do you recall any particular time when a story hit The New York Times, for instance?

STASSEN: Well, there were times - I can't remember the exact circumstances, in fact, may be it is just as well that I don't try to recite it - but there would be times when, you know, one of the media stories would, in effect, say that the delegate from a certain country took a certain position and his or her Government would cable and say, "What are you doing? This is not the position." - you see, and the matter of sometimes they - some of this happened in trusteeship, where if there was a media report that a delegate of a country had taken a certain position on a trusteeship issue and had not in fact taken that position, but it caused embarrassment in their home Governments because there were - as I said, it is a kind of a subject where within Governments there were different views - you know - between defence department and state department or both of them and if they had a colonial department and so forth. But there were times when they would come to me to verify to their Government that they had not said the thing that was in the story.

QUESTION: You almost have to give a signed statement ...

STASSEN: Well, yes, to actually confirm that, you know, that I was in that meeting and, of course, by that time they all knew I was taking the leading role in working out the trusteeship chapter. Sometimes it would be that a certain language of a certain part of the document still had to be resolved, that it had not been agreed or something like that. But there were those kind of circumstances.

QUESTION: Governor Stassen, you seem to have had such a multifaceted role at the Conference - in fact, I hope that later today we are going to talk more about international peace and security, the Security Council and an evaluation and so on - but if I could put you a personal question, how did you view yourself, your role at San Francisco? Did you sort of consider that it was more representational, requiring a great deal of diplomacy, than technical, or a mixture of both?

STASSEN: I really viewed it as - you might say - this may seem to be a - as basically being a member of the human race on this earth, in other words, that you could not correctly try to put a national objective above the objective of all humanity - it needs definition and so forth, but you see, the background, as I mentioned, that I had been advocating that there needed to be an organization somewhat of this nature,

and had gone into quite a bit of detail on it years before the first call for a united nations, in speeches and articles. And that in turn sprang out of the fact that as a college student I had decided that in my lifetime I wanted to make a contribution toward world peace, and as I described earlier, I had felt that when the war broke out, that I needed to, and that the right thing for me to do was, as a young naval reserve officer, to go on duty and yet I thought in terms that that pulled me away from my life objective, but then President Roosevelt's action pulled me back into this, so that I felt that I rightly needed to be alert to the responsibilities of representing the security of my own country and the interests of my country, but that you really could not fulfill the requirements of getting an Organization like this going if you put those as the priority concerns. Now that sometimes gave me some problems with those of a more conservative or traditional view point and it gave some problems in definition and implementation, but that really was the way I endeavoured to operate.

QUESTION: I think you were one of the people I noticed who really thought very much about the interdependence of peoples, the need of one country for another. It is sometimes very difficult for Americans, for instance, to realize that what happens in a small country in Africa can have an effect on their own lives, on the lives of their children and the economy of the country for instance, and it seemed to me that you had thought out these things pretty far ahead of the time.

STASSEN: Well, you have to have further background there too in the sense that, you see, within our domestic political scene I had been the floor manager for the nomination of Wendell Wilkie in 1940 - you see, before the war ever started, before Pearl Harbour, in 1940 - and he was one that enunciated very dramatically that this is one world. In fact, he at one stage wrote a book - this is one - on one world and that sense - and as I have sometimes put it that, you know, in the modern world - and it is more true now by far than it was 35 years ago - that, in these decades ahead it will not be a matter of winners or losers, but the matter of a common experience of all humanity on this earth. It is as basic as that. And to interpret that along with the responsibilities of the national sovereignties and the loyalties and patriotism to your own country is not easy, but that's where it rests.

QUESTION: I did notice in reading some of the records that when compliments were showered upon you for your patience and statesmanship in piloting the working paper through the Trusteeship Committee that you were very quick to compliment the work of the members of the other delegations, your own advisers. I think it was rather a nice feeling

I remember you said once that they did the work, it fell to my lot simply to have the honour of standing up and making the motions.

STASSEN: Well, that was true too. You see, you - no one can individually accomplish things. And actually, by my true nature, I am not a patient person. I get very frustrated. But I know that just showing frustration doesn't get results and we did have really quite a remarkable devotion to objectives, back in getting this Charter put together, and that atmosphere - you spoke earlier of the atmosphere - the atmosphere of having come through the war and just in the stage of ending the war, but the war had actually still been going on when we first met and the V.E Day only coming during the Conference and then the other war not ending until after it - it was a world atmosphere that was quite significant.

QUESTION: Do you remember V.E. Day? Did anything happen on that day, or did the Conference just go on working and no particular celebrations?

STASSEN: It was nothing that you could call a celebration. There of course was a very important news - you know, a lot of informal discussions. I can't remember any certain event connected with it or what you'd call a celebration. Eagerness for news - it did it, I think, just about that time - some additional delegates arrived - it seems to me that in the case of Denmark some additional people arrived after V. E. Day, in effect, were able to come then and I think that might have happened in some other countries.

QUESTION: Did you get the feeling that there was a sort of esprit de corps among all the delegations?

STASSEN: Yes, especially, you know, when it reached the stage - well, that day when it was realized that there was a document, that no one had any other motions to make upon it of amendment or question - and they all voted for it. The session broke out into applause; that is the first time that had happened in all those weeks of struggle. And then there was some of that sort of a - from that time on - that special esprit de corps that they had all been a part of something and had different views on what it might finally mean but at least that it was something and something significant.

QUESTION: Sometimes in conferences I have found that the delegates often get such a warm feeling towards each other that they sort of have more empathy for their

colleagues than they almost do for their own foreign offices or state departments - that they get very close in their relationships. Did you find that at all?

STASSEN: I wouldn't say that. No, not, I didn't really find that kind of a feeling. But there certainly was developed a degree of rapport as human beings with each other through those many weeks, and of course, you see, in part of - you might say - the follow through in my case too was disrupted in the sense that I went right back out then to rejoin the Navy. Within a few days' after the signing I flew back out to rejoin the Navy for the rest of the war.

QUESTION: Well, Governor Stassen, I do thank you very much for so generously giving of your time. I hope that we are going to have the chance, in another session, to talk about other matters, such as Security Council and evaluation ...

STASSEN: Well, if you can - yes, if - is it available this afternoon?

QUESTION: It certainly is.

STASSEN: I must go to a luncheon meeting I have here in New York, but I'll come back if it is all right at 2.30 p.m. and then I am willing to discuss what my feelings are about potential future...

QUESTION: Evaluation and potential for future... That would be wonderful. Thank you very much.

Joan Bush: Governor Stassen, in our previous session we spoke mostly about your input to the Trusteeship section of the Charter. We touched also on how you saw your role. In this session, to begin with, I'd like to ask you: with your extremely active role as negotiator and mediator in the Trusteeship section, the debate particularly which seems to have run from early May to June 20, how did you juggle your other assignments?

STASSEN: Well, of course those were long days, but also I had a very able staff that developed the work with me. I mentioned earlier that Ralph Bunche and Ben Gerig worked with me a great deal, and then Cord Meyer and John Thompson. And then at times, when there were other assignments, there would be other members of the Foreign Service staff that would assist. That's the way it worked. But there were long hours, there's no doubt. Most of the members of the delegation, if not all, would work from - frequently starting with an eight o'clock breakfast on up to sessions that would go ten, eleven at night in different consultations and so forth.

QUESTION: Could you elaborate a little more, particularly at this moment, on the work of these advisors? Exactly what sort of work they did, how they helped you?

STASSEN: Well, it would be a variation, depending on the circumstances. Sometimes, they would go to consult somebody that you wanted them to go out and consult, and report back. Sometimes, they would do a draft of an idea or of an amendment. And other times, they would put together the different proposals of different delegations. So there was a variation in staff work.

QUESTION: Did somebody sit in for you on the various committees, to keep you up, or did you just get your information on what had happened from the delegation meetings?

STASSEN: Well, on the important committees, one of the staff people would sit in and listen and report back in addition to the official minutes which you'd get, but in order to have an immediate input as to what was happening.

QUESTION: One of the subjects we'd like to ask you about in this session is, of course, concerning international peace and security, particularly your role in Commission III, with Senators Vandenberg and Connally, I believe. Could you clarify the committee responsibilities of each of you? Were they clearly divided, or did you work as a team?

STASSEN: Well, it was clear in each instance who would be the, you might say, most responsible US delegate in one particular subject or one particular committee, and then who would have the sort of supporting or second or deputy role. And on international peace and security it was, of course, clear from the beginning that this was the most sensitive, in relationship to the ratification of the Charter subsequently by the United States Senate, and therefore that Senator Connally and Senator Vandenberg had the key roles there. And the rest of us were supporting, implementing, working along with them in that respect.

QUESTION: You mentioned advisors earlier. Which ones worked with you on the Security Council?

STASSEN: I think particularly Ralph Bunche did, and Cord Meyer.

QUESTION: Oh, I see. I thought they were specialized in Trusteeship matters.

STASSEN: No, no, not just Trusteeship. They did specialize, but they also handled other things.

QUESTION: Well, as with the Trusteeship Council in our discussions this morning, what we are specially interested in is what, of course, is not on record: interaction of the various personalities at the big-Four and -Five meetings, any consultations to which you were party, sub-committee meetings and informal negotiations with the smaller Powers, and views within the US delegation, as well, of course, as your own personal viewpoint.

We touched this morning on the right of regional groups to defend themselves without prior authorization of the Security Council. I wonder if you would like to elaborate a little more on your own involvement on this.

STASSEN: Well, I initiated the first memorandum as to having an Article in the Charter about the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs, and persisted in that as being very vital in order to have a document that wouldn't be misinterpreted in the future in reference to such a circumstance. And, of course, in the collective self-defence aspect that did involve the question of regional concerns. And there were some very acute regional concerns as to whether the - in effect, the world Organization would pre-empt the regional situation in working out a solution. And there were very active views, conferences, adjustments, on these subjects. And of course, in the very basic thing there was considerable discussion of the need of some kind of a weighted vote. But on the other hand it was soon found to be completely impossible to work out any kind of a weighted vote at that time and to attain a Charter, so that we were left with the circumstances of having an Assembly with one-State-one-vote, except for the adjustment in the case of the Soviet Union and their special plea about in effect having three votes in the Assembly, which had been that special concession that had been made to them.

And then the other side, the absolute veto in the Security Council. So then they became adjustments as to just how comprehensive that veto could be and how the Assembly could act without the Security Council stopping them, but not having the same effect as Security Council action. And there was recognition that a lot of this would have to be worked out over the future in actual experience. And of course this ties right in with my view, and our view then, that in 10 or 15 years there ought to be a weighted voting development. I think this is one of the very urgent matters for what you might call the next 35 years of the United Nations.

And in my own reflection of what we went through at the time of the original drafting of the Charter and the different thoughts expressed then, and the current situation, I have thought that perhaps the best weighted voting system to develop would be to have a new body in the total United Nations picture, and that this could be in effect between the Security Council and the Assembly. It could be a sort of a council of ministers, selected on a regional basis through weighted voting, and acting with the members of it having a weighted vote. And so that in effect this council of ministers would be somewhat like a cabinet to the Secretary-General. I think to have a more formal and clear relationship for the Secretary-General as a continuing thing, and to have a weighted voting reflection of the way in which to take action, if you think it through, is quite important for the long-term future.

And I have thought that perhaps the best method would be to take and rank all the members by population and by gross production - gross national product - put these two rankings together and thereby attain one ranking, and then take a certain number at the smallest amount of population and the smallest amount of production combined - gross national production - give them a certain amount of weighted vote, and then step up: a certain number of additional ones would have a certain additional weighted vote. So you might say that you'd have, in the 157 or more States - a certain number might have a weighted vote of 10, another number would have a weighted vote of 20, another number would have a weighted vote of 30, and perhaps on up to something like 100 votes for the largest and highest-production Powers. And these votes would be cast in regions to select regional representatives on a council of ministers, and the council of ministers might be from, like, 11 to 15, and I think working out over a period of future years, that to reflect what is very much needed now and which was not possible to work out in any manner in the original Charter, although there had been quite a few weighted voting proposals brought forward by the original Member States in various ways.

I've also felt, of course, as we originally structured it, the working out of the methods of arbitration and mediation and conciliation and judicial decisions of disputes: we could only make very limited provisions in that respect in the original Charter, under all the exigencies of that time. I think now, with the experience and with the modern situation, in any revision of the Charter, or new Charter, there needs to be a great expansion. And, I think in terms, if you had a regular group of individuals who were skilled mediators and conciliators, arbitrators: so that they could be assigned to particular disputes, and in many instances we know they would have to work on a particular dispute over a period of years before they worked a solution. But getting that kind of peace-making solution group structured and developed I think is very important.

Another area which, as you know, in the present Charter the language hasn't really been implemented - or possible to implement - is the matter of any - except in a sort of an oblique way - any armed forces or police forces under the United Nations itself. I believe that in the long-term future a highly-skilled volunteer force - individuals, multi-lingual, who would volunteer to be on a peace-keeping or police force: not a war-fighting force, but a force to step into sensitive situations and just be stabilizing

in this interview right now, other than to hope that the project would get up on the front page of the drawing board, so to speak. to say - to try to look ahead another 35 or 40 years: what kind of an Organization do you need to adequately handle it? And I think many people will bring forward then thoughts; and they have to be evaluated and discussed and negotiated in the process. But I would emphasize very, very much that the institution that we then originated in that Charter we never expected to be able to stay in its present form, or its same form for this long a time, and certainly not for the indefinite future. So that from our concepts and our work in the original drawing of the Charter it is high time to get working on, in a very priority way - high-priority way - the gradual process of re-drafting and restructuring for the future.

QUESTION: Well, given the present state of affairs in the world and the way the UN has sort of programmed its way of work these days, how do you think this can come about?

STASSEN: Well, of course, it has to be some of the Governments starting to take initiatives and some of the United Nations personnel starting to bring forward initiatives. And the, you know, the tremendous pressure of events and the circumstances such really to more kind of drift along with the present structure: that's the great problem. It's not easy to, you know, to lift out and - I think at one stage back there, when there was a certain amount of the, you might almost say, gloomy discussion that, you know, 'How could we get the job done?'; I spoke of the history of how the United States got going and first had the 13 colonies and how they almost broke apart and failed, and then suddenly out of the problems and weaknesses came the new structure. And I use that as not an exact example, of course - for the great diversity in forms of government and in economic and social and political systems - but more to say that we should not take too much counsel of doubts, but get an affirmative approach to what is needed. And certainly, the necessity of preventing a third world war is even more acute and important now than it was when we originally drafted the first Charter. And the same time, the tremendous scientific advances in communication around the world and the development of outer space make things possible now that couldn't have been contemplated at that time in the way of communication and production and distribution and the quality of life for the people.

QUESTION: Well, you know very well that such ideas have to start with Governments; they've got to be brought forward in some way. Have you discussed these ideas within the US Government, with the State Department for instance?

STASSEN: At times they have been. You really have to - this kind of initiative either has to start within Governments or among people that then cause the Governments to start to move.

QUESTION: Exactly.

STASSEN: You never can draw an exact line as to how things get moving, but - and, of course, in the original United Nations there were individuals and Government in various parts of the world that gave special push, special leadership; and you can't chart exactly how it'll happen, but I just express the hope that it will happen.

QUESTION: Well, I think they are wonderful hopes, and we certainly hope they will. And you put forward a lot of extremely interesting ideas as to how one might get down to the Charter today. Would you be prepared to sit down and - with 157 nations today - and try to re-think the whole Charter? Do you think this would be possible?

STASSEN: Absolutely. Obviously, you know, you'd divide into sub-committees and things of that kind, and working groups, and different levels of attention. But everyone should be involved in it.

QUESTION: Have you thought how you might attack this from the grass roots up, as it were? In so many of the - in so much of the work of the agencies, for instance, attention is being put on working from the grass roots up - in the World Health Organization, primary health care - starting from the bottom, working up to the top: with the International Labour Organisation; with many of the other organizations. Do you have any ideas as to how one might nurture setting forth these ideas through non-governmental organizations or through the media?

STASSEN: I think it has to start in a multiple of ways, and that you cannot predict which ones will move the most, anything as basic as this. And also, of course, that one of the fundamentals has to be that rather than criticism of the United Nations in a negative way, there has to be the affirmative turn as to how it can be improved and made more adequate for, as I say, a whole future generation. There is a tendency - and this is just human: it's universal almost - that, you know, if something isn't quite working the way an individual or a group wants it to, to just emphasize that it's not working right without taking that other step and saying, "It ought to be functioning in XYZ manner, or it ought to have its structure amended in a certain way." So that just that positive turn, which I hope will come up from many places: what is necessary to have the United Nations be adequate for its purposes for the next 35 years? Just that basic kind of change in analysis. You can say - you can put the whole emphasis: What is it that is now inadequate in the experience under the original Charter? You know, they will say, well, "How would you have redrawn the Charter if you could have foreseen what was happening how?" Well, I emphasize really we drew the best Charter we could at that time. We knew of some of its limitations, but it was a matter of do you get an organization going or not at all?

And we decided that, in the form that we were able to put together, it was desirable to get it started, and I think, as I said earlier, the fact that we are here 35 years later and more, and there has not been a third world war, is, to considerable measure, to the credit of the fact that there has been such an organization as the United Nations.

Now then, instead of the very heavy emphasis so often on negatives, I'd like to see and will be advocating continuously a changing to the positive: what kind of a United Nations should we have for the next 35 years in order to accomplish the objectives?

QUESTION: Well, again, I would go back to asking you if you think that this approach could come through the United States, in the General Assembly for instance, or do you see -

STASSEN: It might in time. You never know just how those situations develop.

QUESTION: But I mean, apart from speaking about it today, have you made any efforts to reach out to individuals in other countries -

STASSEN: Yes, yes.

QUESTION: - through any sort of organized programme, network?

STASSEN: Well, it's, you might say, through whatever avenues are open; and, of course, stimulating the academic circles, stimulating Governments, and responding to inquiries and so forth, and encouraging the media to do deeper analysis: things of that kind.

QUESTION: When you say responding to inquiries - from whom?

STASSEN: Individuals and Governments.

QUESTION: They just write to you, you mean?

STASSEN: Yes. See, I've also been active in, for instance, the World Peace through Law movement of the World Judges Association and the World Lawyers Association; when they had the world meeting a few years ago in Geneva and I was Chairman - a World Law Day. There was a lot of discussion at that time.

For example, in that respect, one of my feelings was for years that the best contribution to peace was to bring both Germanies into the United Nations. For a long time there was resistance to that. And I think the prospects for future peace have been advanced by gettin them both in. And I have been an advocate of more the universality approach, that every kind of a governmental entity that is actually in being over a territory and peoples, within the Organization - and develop that universal concept in many different ways. Now that, you know, can be debated, and it is debated. But issues of that kind need to be taken up in the future, in my view.

QUESTION: It's often said that the UN is the victim of unduly high and unrealistic expectations from people. Everybody blames the UN, as an organization, for what is really the situation in the world today. Do you agree with this?

STASSEN: Somewhat. That is, I put it this way: that in evaluating what the United Nations has and has not accomplished you have to try to think in terms of

the same world without the United Nations. You can't think of just an ideal world that had no problems within it - and then that you wouldn't need a United Nations. But if you think of the various kinds of problems of the world, and then think of it under a circumstance where you've had the United Nations or if you didn't have one at all, then I think you get a more realistic analysis of it.

I think too that this matter of expectations is a natural swing of emotions. Sometimes, you know, the emotion of gloom and discouragement becomes dominant, and other times that swings over to a high of anticipation. This again was one of the reasons - I think earlier in this group of interviews you talked about the talk I gave when the United Nations Charter was signed and before I went back on active duty in the Navy:

and I said at that time that we've established a beach-head in mankind's long struggle to find the way to peace, that it was not a guarantee of peace. There was a tendency to over-anticipate what the United Nations could and would do. And those swings of public opinion are always there in these basic situations, and you have to somewhat lean against the swing if you're going to get good policies adopted.

QUESTION: One area which, of course, needs tremendous attention, and which not only the UN, but the world, seems to have great difficulty struggling with is disarmament. What are your thoughts on this? Let me get back to the conference for a moment: did you ever bring up disarmament at the delegation meetings? There was so little in the Charter on this; was it ever discussed?

STASSEN: Yes, there was a bit of discussion, and it wasn't really possible to make any direct incorporation of it; that came along mainly later on. And of course since the War was still going on, you remember, why, you couldn't really talk very much of disarmament at that moment, although there was some discussion of the longer-term objectives. And, of course, there's been a lot of negotiation and study since that time. And there now needs to be a great deal more of it.

QUESTION: But today, how do you think that the world and the UN should be tackling this question of disarmament? Do you think there's a better way? There has to be, I hope.

STASSEN: Well, I think - if you speak from a UN standpoint - I think it would be a good thing if the United Nations directly passed a resolution that the leaders of both the Soviet Union and the United States should get together and talk: in other words, these two Members of the United Nations have such tremendous destructive capacity that it makes no sense for them to bombard each other with strong words at long distance. They really have to get in direct communication. Maybe the United Nations can stimulate that.

If you want to get into a current sense, I would be advocating that the General Assembly passed a resolution asking the Secretary-General to bring the Heads of State of the USSR and the United States together. (Laughter.) That's really getting into current issues. But it's really the kind of thing that needs to be done. The Secretary-General does have the authority in the United Nations in small disputes between people: two States, over a border or something. They take an initiative to get them together. Well, is there any greater need in the world right now than to get the Heads of these Governments that have these tremendous capabilities together? That's what you might call the \$64 question. (Laughter)

QUESTION: It certainly is. Well, I think all that's been extremely interesting particularly your ideas on the future: how you see that the UN Charter might be adapted.

STASSEN: I might say too that this should be interjected at this point: one of the very important values of the United Nations in these past years is the fact that it provides a method by which these various Powers, including the super-Powers, are brought into contact with each other. In other words, if you did not - if you stop to think; if analysts and others would stop to think in terms that if you did not have a place and a method like this, so often the impetus is to - when a dispute is arising between major Powers - is what's the result psychologically of who takes the lead to get together. And the fact that they can have an easy contact and have an entity of the United Nations to help bring them together is a good thing, and has served humanity well in these past years.

QUESTION: So, looking back from the perspective of 38 years, are you still as firm a supporter of the UN as when you signed the Charter?

STASSEN: Definitely, very definitely, and very much of one who urges that it now be made more adequate for the next generation. That is what I think: that instead of just tending - which is also a very human thing: well, we'll just work with it as it is this year and we'll work with it as it is next year - to really lift that thinking up: What do we have to do for the next generation? And what do we have to start doing now to get it ready for the next generation? That's one of the most urgent things, I would say.

QUESTION: Well, when you elaborated that very clear conception of how you saw the way things should go or could go in the future: as the UN exists at the moment, what do you think should be the principle preoccupation? Because, as you know, it's going to take time for the UN to change.

STASSEN: Oh, yes.

QUESTION: What do you think should be the principle preoccupation of the UN today?

STASSEN: Well, the number-one preoccupation should always be, how do you prevent war? And, of course, to increase the awareness of all humanity that it has reached a stage where humankind has the capacity to literally destroy this one earth, and to constantly do that educational emphasis. And then, to work on all of those matters that affect the quality of life of all the peoples on the earth, and that includes things as basic as food and health and water and land and air and all of that. In many respects, what they have been doing, and just need to constantly evaluate and endeavour to project further. Now maybe they will need to get into the matter of world finance and world capital. There are specialized agencies and institutions - in the International Monetary Fund and the bank of settlements and the World Bank - but maybe when you think of these different economic systems and the kind of consequences that can flow from them in their own diversity and their own clash, some thinking on the level of the United Nations as contrasted to the specialized agencies, of how you endeavour to assure that the competition of systems in the generation ahead shall be in a framework of a certain type of co-operation - an evolution - rather than in the framework of confrontation and destruction. That's the very far-reaching thing, and I sometimes have said that

I don't think there's as yet a, you know, a sufficient intellectual movement, in depth, what the modern world situation is, in the age of nucleonics and electronics, and that is that the - on this one earth, with all the people on it having the right to live on it, with there being room enough for all of them, yet having the capacity to destroy the earth, having the capacity for economic chaos, how should that affect the thinking of economic systems, the thinking of the role of capital and credit? I think in terms that the United Nations, as its own total entity, should not only be thinking of its structure for the next 35 years, but should think in terms that none of the specialized agencies can be looked upon as having the exclusive responsibility and authority in their specialized fields, because it does all overlap into the totality. So that I would feel that in the United Nations of the future there should be more discussion, study, recommendations, about such matters as financial policy, that there are specialized entities for, about matters that affect health and food. There does tend to get to be a departmentalization, realistically, and that can be carried too far if it then diminishes thinking and policies on the most comprehensive value and comprehensive basis, which is: what is the totality of the way in which humanity is going to live on this one world?

QUESTION: Well, Governor Stassen, that was an extremely interesting elaboration. Could I ask you to tell us something about your own early days and what influences there were in your early life that perhaps somehow pushed you into thinking, or into the direction of international peace?

STASSEN: Well, undoubtedly, of course, everything that happens to an individual does influence what they do in life, as you know. I have been one with a, you know, a deep and abiding faith in God from early childhood, and those religious convictions have undoubtedly had a meaning. And I've always taken the concept of a very deep respect for all religions and a personal concept of the Christian religion in an affirmative way, the matter of "Blessed are the peace-makers" being an affirmative injunction. That goes back to childhood and has continued.

Secondly, I think that the fact that World War One came up when I was a very small boy - now, I was born in 1907, so when I was 10, 11 years old World War One was at its peak. And that undoubtedly, you know, I'd say, raised my own concern about wars and my own knowledge of them. That was then, of course, the period when the men of our country

went off to fight in Europe in World War One. That undoubtedly had an influence. And then, another interesting factor: my parents were farmers and they did not have much formal education, but they reached out and subscribed very early to the National Geographic, so that on our farm table, from our earliest childhood, here was a monthly opening to the world with more information about all peoples. And I think this had quite an effect upon the way in which we looked upon the whole world as knowing something about it. So all of these things undoubtedly had an impact; and then, as I said, it came to the point where, with many very able faculty people at the University of Minnesota, in both my - in my academic years, I really made a sort of a decision to try to make an impact for world peace in my lifetime; and that's carried through.

QUESTION: Well, speaking about world peace, and, unfortunately, wars, brings me back to the Security Council, back to the Conference if you don't mind, to know something of your involvement in those very key issues such as the veto power, the interpretation of the Yalta voting formula, and the attempt by the smaller Powers to obtain a softening of great-Power unanimity in Council decisions on peaceful settlements. What was your involvement in these issues? Were you involved in one specifically, or did you sort of - they seem to be so intertwined that -

STASSEN: They are intertwined, and they did concern all of us in the delegation; and I think we all gave extra thought to it. There was on the one hand the feeling that there was a certain amount that was clearly decided at Yalta and that if there was to be a Charter it had to move that way. So there was a certain amount, in that respect, of going in that direction because of that agreement. But parallel to that, of course, there was a certain amount of thinking and analysis that if you did not have weighted voting, that when it came to the, in effect, war-making power, that those who had the biggest power needed some kind of a formal veto as to anything that would cause it to be used. So there was a considerable amount of discussion of that. And then, furthermore, in the US delegation there was this thinking that nothing we did would mean anything unless the United States Senate ratified it, which would take a two-thirds vote. And you almost never can, sort of, take that for granted on any issue in a body as diverse as the United States Senate, because they arise in two Senators from each of the states - at that time 48, ^{of course} now 50 - and they are elected

over a period of years: they serve for six years. So that at any one time in the United States Senate there are some who've been elected two years before, four years before, six years before: so you get a very wide range of individuals springing out of a circumstance in the movement of both the economy and the foreign policy situation. So that it is important that no one underestimates the circumstance under which this great country of ours can act in a far-reaching treaty context, with the necessity of getting that two-thirds vote. And, of course, with the, what I think was a very intelligent and able thing that President Roosevelt had done - bringing those Senators onto the delegation - we had represented right there in the delegation spokesmen for those views, and they in turn were frequently in contact with their associates in the Senate. So the whole Security Council type and the matter of veto and the matter of use of armed forces were very much caught up in that situation. And it would be impossible to really evaluate how each one of these different constraints would come into the final action. And you, of course, would get some writers who would write and say the whole thing is caused by the Yalta agreement, or somebody else would say the whole thing is caused by Senator Connally and Vandenberg and the United States Senate, or somebody else would say the whole thing is caused by the military in one country or another. It's a mixture of all of these kind of things, and the endeavour to project how it would unfold and how it would happen. And as you know, those sort of military staff provisions in the Charter really never have been implemented because they just really never did fit to what realistically could happen.

QUESTION: How confident did you feel in the delegation that the Charter would be ratified by the Senate.

STASSEN: Well, by the time we got to the end of it, we felt quite confident, because, first of all, we had a Charter that both Senator Vandenberg and Senator Connally said they'd go all out in recommending it; and, secondly, by that time we had developed such a public opinion support in the United States that that was the great underwriter of the Charter. I don't remember it exactly, but I think the public opinion polls as we ended the work had shifted so much from, you know, the doubt and the gloom and so forth. And of course in that same process, while we were working on the Charter, the ending of the European War and then, of course, the whole circumstance was such that, I think, when

we finished we were very confident that it would be ratified by the Senate.

QUESTION: But before you got to that stage there was that terribly long haul; the - ooh - the dramatic crisis that nearly threw over the whole Conference: the veto power. Could you tell us something of your involvement in that?

STASSEN: Yes. I worked very closely, especially, with Senator Vandenberg at that stage; it did seem at one stage that the Soviet Union would press for an interpretation of the Yalta agreement that literally, by a veto in the Security Council, you might say almost anything in the United Nations could be just stopped, including really also stopping the Assembly or stopping any kind of resolution or any kind of inquiry. And that was the point at which we concluded that if that turned out to be the only interpretation that there was that it would be better not to have a Charter at all. And that was then the point at which we urged President Truman to send Harry Hopkins over to go directly to Marshall Stalin. As we analyzed it, they really couldn't get a change in their instructions themselves, and that under that whole time and structure the United States had to, in effect, reach out to the same place that the Yalta language developed in the first place, which was between, then, Roosevelt and Stalin and Churchill, and get a clear modification of the language. And that's where that came up. And of course Mr. Harriman was in a part of that, and so forth.

QUESTION: Were you present in the penthouse when Ambassador Gromyko first put forward the instructions he'd received from Moscow about the - that they wouldn't agree to freedom of discussion in the Security Council. I think that was the thing that exploded: it all must have been a very tense atmosphere. Can you describe it a little?

STASSEN: It was very tense. I think that at that very first session, that Senator Vandenberg openly expressed the view that this meant that there would be no Charter; that is, if that statement remained unchanged, there would be no Charter. That was his view, and that statement of his had preceeding study, before he reached that.

QUESTION: Did you sense a really low point in the whole of the Conference - I mean among the other delegates of the other nations?

STASSEN: Yes, there were times over this period of weeks when it looked like there would not be a Charter. There were times when it was widely predicted in the media that there never would be an agreement.

QUESTION: There seemed to be so many meetings going on in Secretary Stettinius's penthouse. Did you have the feeling that the Conference had sort of split into two? I would imagine there must have been a certain amount of frustration on the part of some of the Foreign Ministers or the delegates of the other countries, who were sort of trying to carry on committee meetings while certain individualized meetings were going on in the penthouse.

STASSEN: Yes, there was. In other words, at times there were, you know, comments at what was the use of meeting if they just had to wait for the big Five to make a decision, or things of that kind. And there was a real working tension, an inter-relationship tension. In fact, of course, all their different views had influence, and we had to constantly convince them that there was an influence they were having, even though they weren't in those meetings. That's about the size of it.

QUESTION: Did you have an empathy for the 'little Forty-Five'? Did you personally have an empathy for their ideas, some of them?

STASSEN: I don't know whether empathy is the right word. But I did have an understanding of where they were coming from. I listened to them a lot, and, in fact, we tried - we at some stages even sort of divided up our delegation and our principal advisors and, you know, assigned them listening tasks, to go out and talk to and listen to people; you know, even at stages when we didn't know what we could do about the issue. But it was important that they have a chance to talk to somebody. There was that realization.

QUESTION: What was the atmosphere throughout the Conference on the day that Senator Connally let it be known that unless the voting provision was agreed to there

would be no Organization? I think he tore up the Charter or something. Were you present in the meeting that day; what did you sense through the Conference?

STASSEN: Yes. I think - I don't think there was general agreement in the delegation or advance notice in the delegation that he was going to do that. But I think that he felt from his work in that group that he had to kind of jolt them; and he did jolt them.

QUESTION: It was quite effective. You made an intervention in the committee of the Security Council that The New York Times regarded as the most effective speech of the debate. That was when, I believe, you compared certain aspects of the Security Council's role to that of a jury trial. And then again, in Commission you made another speech which they again considered impressive, when you compared possible action of the Security Council to that of a policeman saying, "Stop fighting - period!" Were these carefully-prepared speeches, or did you make them on the spur of the moment? Do you recall?

STASSEN: No, those were made in the psychology of the particular occasion, but they reflected advance study and advance consideration in our delegation about where these issues rested. Frequently it would be a question of, you know, if you could see a certain solution, potentially, to a problem; there's a question then, when do you advance it? In other words, sometimes if you advance it too soon it cannot fly, as we say. This was a sort of an intricate psychological thing. In other words, when you'd get many different views being expressed it was important that some viewpoints would get thoroughly expressed and even voted on - voted down - before another proposal could come up. In other words, if somebody thought they really had the answer to something, and it couldn't be the answer, but they couldn't be convinced that it wasn't the answer until they advanced it, had it discussed and had it voted down. And then you could bring forward a somewhat different solution to the same problem. So that this was an area, too, where this matter of having a staff that was listening and very sensitive, and where we tried to really keep the atmosphere and the state of tensions and so on in mind.

I really do not recall the specific speeches you refer to, but obviously I did feel a responsibility in those sessions I was in, and there certainly were many times - or a number of times - when it seemed like the psychological trend was going the wrong way, and I would try to make the kind of talk that would change the trend. And apparently there was some result at some times there.

QUESTION: Big happenings were going on in the Security Council, the Trusteeship was ploughing away. I'd like to go back and backtrack a moment to Trusteeship if you don't mind, and ask you if you could elaborate more on the various interpretations of independence and self-government by the different countries?

STASSEN: I know that it was a very extreme issue, and I couldn't recall all of those nuances right now, because they were - you know, the French had a very definite view, the Belgians did, the British did. And certainly the Philippines did. There were various interpretations of what independence meant, of what self-government meant, what self-determination meant...

QUESTION: Yes, I think the word self-government doesn't translate even into French...

STASSEN: No.

QUESTION: ...but do you recall how you resolved these difficulties to mesh together the Declaration?

STASSEN: Well, we resolved them in the language that finally came out in the Charter, that's really the resolution of them...and that was another one of the instances where we had to resolve the language in all of the five languages, the wording. There were some of those times when we - you know, we not only had to agree on an English language and then had to agree on how that would be translated into French and how it would be translated into Russian and Chinese and Spanish, and there would be arguments about whether a word in another language was the correct meaning, or a group of words, and sometimes you had to put in almost an extra sentence in order to in another language get the same meaning coming across. There were situations like that.

QUESTION: Well, we've agreed that you all had to have some sort of superhuman energy to get through this Conference...

STASSEN: Still it had to be human... (laughter)

QUESTION: ...but to what extent did you feel a sense of urgency that the work must be completed by a certain time?

STASSEN: We didn't feel that, really. We - I don't think there was ever any arbitrary deadline. We did feel that if you got exhaustion of delegations and then got some type of diversion of events in the world, that you could lose that moment in history and have no Charter at all. We did somewhat have that in mind, which is, you know, always true - that you can always have an explosion of some kind of an event that can then make the preceding work just impossible to carry through. So we did have that sense about it. And in that sense of course, too, the very far-reaching question - you know: suppose we were still meeting when those atomic bombs were dropped in Japan. No one can say dogmatically that the effect would have been X or Y or Z or what. That was the kind of an event that could change the psychology, the thinking, the outlook, of people all over the world.

Another interesting question there is, if the delegations were still working on the draft, would the bombs have been dropped when they were dropped? Nobody knows that one, you know. There was internal argument inside the U.S. Government about whether or not to drop them, or where to drop them.

question: It was really a very close thing, wasn't it, the dropping of the...

STASSEN: The Charter was signed in June, and these were dropped in August. It was very close.

QUESTION: Well, do you think if the delegates had had the knowledge - not that the bomb had been dropped, but the knowledge that the bomb had been developed - do you think this might have changed the outcome of the Charter?

STASSEN: It might have, but I don't think anyone can say.

QUESTION: No, of course...

STASSEN: That's the kind of thing that - you know, in real... realistically, as I say, we certainly wanted to press to try to reach the point of an agreement...but, to put it another way, and it isn't really very pleasant even to talk about - you know, if some head of some major Government had been assassinated right in that period, that's the kind of thing that could have just blown the whole thing apart, and you'd have to start again in another period of history. So that it was fortuitous that we pushed on through and actually got the signatures when we got them.

QUESTION: You touched this morning on Charter review, but is there anything else that you can tell us about your own involvement in behind-the-scenes activities before Article 109 was adopted?

STASSEN: Well, we drafted an idea for it, and then it went through a number of changes, but it basically was to try to make it clear and more practical to have the potential of a rewriting of the Charter. That was what was behind it. It was discussed a lot, about what its wording should be and how it should provide. I think it finally came out that there - it would take a smaller vote at a ten-year period, or something like that...that was kind of a compromise of different viewpoints on it....

QUESTION: Was it not on that item that the delegation gave you sort of freedom of action to work out the terms in debate as you saw fit?

STASSEN: I don't remember that particular part--I remember that I was in effect responsible for handling the item, but I don't believe I was ever given freedom of action. We almost always all worked with a matter of reporting back before you finalized something. Freedom to explore, maybe, but...not really to bind. I don't think anyone was ever given freedom to bind the delegation without coming back with it. I'm pretty sure that was always our working method.

QUESTION: What about terms of withdrawal and suspension? Were you involved in ...

STASSEN: Those went through a lot of argument and debate and so

forth...and the matter of expelling and suspending and all of that...and I really don't recall all the different nuances of that one. But I know there were many different views and it was a rugged issue.

QUESTION: Thinking about the Charter and its having been finally drawn up despite a lot of long, hard work and debate and dissension, which section of the Charter to do you feel the most proud of, from your own contribution?

STASSEN: I've never really thought of it in those terms. I think maybe it always has been as to the totality rather than as to any certain section.

QUESTION: Well then, how would you assess the contribution not only of yourself but your colleagues to the entire Charter?

STASSEN: Well, I think the entire group that assembled from the 50 countries - I would feel that there...obviously greater judgement has to occur after a much longer passage of historic time, but I think it was a very historic event and that everyone who was there and joined in that final decision, and all the Governments behind them, deserve a lot of credit.

QUESTION: The Charter reminds me of the Preamble, and Dean Cildersleeve working on this. Did you work with her at all; did you think it could be more finely written?

STASSEN: Well, I worked with her from the standpoint - I think you'd find in the archives of the United States delegation a lot of different drafts and a lot of rewriting that went on. I think at one stage she asked everyone in the delegation and every adviser to come up with any suggestions they had. And then I think she did a lot. I think she might have even turned to some of her own academic people to try to get it so that it would have a lasting meaning.

QUESTION: Speaking of academics reminds me that I think you've always had quite an affinity and connection with Harvard. Have you explored your ideas with Harvard at all? I remember you did consult with them before you joined the delegation...

STASSEN: Before I joined the delegation I had in fact also had conferences

up there before I went off to war on my foreign policy ideas. One of the things I had done - it probably should be mentioned - on the 25th anniversary of the United Nations I drafted practically a whole complete new Charter, and then it was requested and was - it has been circulated quite a bit among Governments and study groups and so forth. It would have to be redrafted again now, with the passage of time, but in order that it would be more clear what I was talking about when I said that the United Nations ought to be brought up to date and made more adequate, I tried to put it all down on paper. So somewhere in my archives I have a new Charter drafted on the twenty-fifth anniversary...

QUESTION: Well, what happened to it?

STASSEN: It's bouncing around.

QUESTION: It's still bouncing around?

STASSEN: Uh-huh...

QUESTION: Well, perhaps you should do another one - not even waiting for the fortieth...it takes a lot of work, but -

STASSEN: It takes a lot of work, and of course it would be more valuable by far if, you know, if it's pulled together from a number of sources. It's hard for a Government to officially lead in this area, that's another part of it. Maybe somewhere somebody ought to bring together former Secretaries of State and former Foreign Ministers of Governments and get some kind of group like that together or something. Or some educators together with some young people and...or maybe some - maybe different universities should start programmes within their international relations studies to see what they think ought to be in a new Charter. Thinking like that.

I'm hoping, and I've been trying and beginning again to try to stir up the thinking and with the increased tension now to what a nuclear war would mean, (with the increased attention now to what a nuclear war would mean), there is a sort of new rise of awareness of this, perhaps that can be in turn channeled to think constructively of how it should affect the United Nations of the future.

I've often emphasized that it isn't enough just to say a nuclear war would be a terrific catastrophe, but you have to take the next step and say how do you handle the affairs of the world so you decrease the danger of a nuclear war? Or of any war?

QUESTION: Do you think that your experience at the Conference was useful to you in your post-war career?

STASSEN: We have never - I really have never thought in those terms either. The most...most things in life have plusses and minuses in them.

QUESTION: A little bit of both...

STASSEN: Uh-hum.

QUESTION: You were appointed, I believe, special arms control adviser to President Eisenhower, and you were the United States representative on the United Nations Disarmament Commission for a few years, I think in the 1950s.

STASSEN: That's right, mid-1950s.

QUESTION: Were they held in London?

STASSEN: Yes, before that there was the - I was the adviser in this field at the Geneva Summit Conference in 1955. And that was a very active period.

QUESTION: As we near the end of this interview, do you feel that there is some aspect that we've omitted and that you'd like to comment on?

STASSEN: Well, my main comment would be that I think that there is a current tendency to undervalue what the United Nations has accomplished and is currently accomplishing. There are of course these swings of opinion, but I would hope that those factors that lead to that undervaluing would be turned

into an affirmative thrust towards this restructuring for the next generation: that's one of the things I would hope could be accomplished, a turn from negativism into positive approaches.

I also would say that I don't underestimate the difficulty of the United Nations functioning and being improved in the next generation, but I still have a fundamental optimism that - put it another way: I don't think bringing it up to position where it can function better for the next generation will be any more difficult task than it was to get it going in the first place. Let's put it that way. I think that, you know, when it came into being, then there was a tendency to discount the difficulty of getting it started. Now there's a tendency to magnify its present inadequacies and problems and to exaggerate what it would take to get it improved. So that my emphasis is, let's get at it, know how difficult it is, but look upon it as something that just has to be done for all humanity on this earth. I guess that's about the most I can say.

QUESTION: Governor Stassen, I'd like to thank you very much.

STASSEN: Thank you. This has been an unusual kind of a session, and I appreciate your thoughtfulness and everything, and of course responded to the letter that asked me to participate. Many of these things I haven't tried to think of in detail for years.

I might say - another interesting thing - I saved all my archives, and they are going into a new World Peace Centre within the Humphrey Institute out in Minnesota... The University of Minnesota being my alma mater, and Minnesota Historical Society being involved. So...some of the foundations have begun to put up some funds to in effect get a World Peace Centre that centres on my papers and my views, and maybe that'll carry forward.

QUESTION: You preempted my closing remarks about looking towards the future, but I think I get the feeling that you'd be quite ready to sit down right now with 156 other Governments to revise the Charter, to take a new look at the Organization, to set it going in a new direction. Is that correct?

STASSEN: Or to work with anyone who is likeminded, to try to contribute toward world peace.

QUESTION: "World peace," that's a good word to end on, I think. Thank

you very much, I think that this is going to be a most invaluable contribution to our oral history programme.

STASSEN: As I indicated in the written paper, I don't put any restrictions on its use in whatever way. In fact, if out of it if anybody reviews any of this and they want to - any responsible person wants to write me and say "Why did you think this" or "What about a different idea here"... I'm constantly in a more or less world correspondence about these things, and... I welcome it.