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VIEWER: WILLIAMS, Col. William J. (USAF)

[Tape 1, Side 1]

Williams: This tape will be UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY unless otherwise specified at the end of the recording. Today is Wednesday, 9 February 2005. I am interviewing Captain George McGinnis at the Command Display in Pensacola, Florida. Captain McGinnis is a retired cryptologic Navy officer. He has a wealth of information regarding the National Security Agency from its beginnings through the mid-1970's. Among his vast experiences, he served as General Canine's first Operations Officer. The purpose of today's interview is to gather Captain McGinnis's remembrances during these formative years at the agency. I am Colonel Williams from the Center of Cryptologic History. This is oral history number 2005-03. [TRNOTE: Colonel Williams now addresses Captain McGinnis:] And to begin the interview, Captain McGinnis, what years did you work for General Canine?

McGinnis: Okay. Well, I was just referring to a couple of notes on that very subject. I... 1954 to 1956 – a two year period.

Williams: Okay. And what was your title and your official duties during that time?

McGinnis: Alright. I was... I had two different kinds of jobs. First of all, I was... I could say that I was a personal advisor to General Canine on field operations. This was one of my specialties having been in the field quite a bit and knowing a lot about it. So, that... um, he was... He leaned on me almost exclusively when a question of field operations came up. I was also heavily involved in planning and programming for the agency – in particular, here again, in the area of field operations. Because at that time, we were... we didn't have quite the display of field stations in the field that we really needed. Many of them were in the wrong places; many of them needed to be closed; and many new ones needed to be completed. This was a critical part... point in field operations because we were still, at that time, depending on the old, old system of direction finding – where we had individuals in stations with a direction finder sending in their bearings and plots being done in... at NSA. We were at the point of developing the... what's called the C-D-A-A, the Circularly... Circularly Disposed Antenna Array, which was to replace all of the direction finders in the world... that we owned in the world. And also, to set up a new means of intercept. So it

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was a critical point.

Williams: Okay. Now General Canine was not an intelligence officer. Can you shed any light on why he was picked to be the director of... of AFSA initially?

McGinnis: Um... [TRNOTE: Capt. McGinnis clears his throat.] Very good question. Um, I... I don't know every moment of detail. I talked to General Canine on this general subject several different times. Uh... I think that they were... They wanted a person who was not a cryptologic type of person. I think they were looking for somebody who could look in a different way at how cryptologic operations were being done. There was... uh... uh... We were still operating under the sting of what happened at the Armed Forces Security Agency. Uh, that was a very fine organization. But it was run primarily by people who were old – people who were... who only looked at the things... the way things were in the past. And things... And looked at things not in the future. I don't mean to indicate that they were not right people. All of them were. But, uh, they were simply (B% outmoded). And I think that was one of the basic problems with AFSA. And that was one of the... one of the reasons that NSA had to be formed. That wasn't the only reason, but that was one of them. (B% Oh)... By looking at a... Looking for a very bright guy on the outside that could take over and possibly run the thing was needed. I think that something here, though, that's not generally known, needs to be known. And that is the: how it was handled at the DoD level. Because NSA – although it was (B% thought) – actually was supposed to be reporting to the President directly. That was how the charter was interpreted initially. But all of our funding and all of our people came from DoD so there had to be some direction from DoD itself. And so, for the first time, DoD set up a little office, and it was run by a retired Marine general. And he had one assistant – a civilian assistant – who was a former Marine who'd been in combat and who'd been severely injured, and who was now operating as a civilian. And that was the direction from which General Canine had to operate. The Marine... Sorry, I can't remember the name of either one of those people. And I can't imagine why I can't. But the Marine general was retired, and retired, and retired. So that most of the direction actually came from the Marine that I was mentioning earlier who was the civilian. And he was a very aggressive individual. And I had a lot of dealings with him. And he was one who did a lot of direction for General Canine. In other words, I could go in General Canine's office, and he'd be talking to this guy. And they'd be talking about high-level policy matters which was [sic] expected to be implemented by General Canine because they were things that involved NSA. So I think that's an area that's somewhat overlooked. Maybe even unknown. And I would recommend that you do a little research on it. Uh... [TRNOTE: Capt. McGinnis clears his throat.]

TRNOTE: Sounds as if tape recorder was shut off and then turned back on.

Williams: Okay.

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 2

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

McGinnis: Um. [TRNOTE: Capt. McGinnis clears his throat again.] Now, to get back to General Canine and what he had had... ended up with the job and what he did with it. Um... I think I've explained the best I could why he was chosen. However, I'd have to iterate... I'd like to mention that I think he was also chosen because he was a very, very bright guy. I haven't the slightest idea what his IQ was, but it was up over the ceiling. Believe me. He could grasp the points of an argument almost instantly. He could tell you where you were right or wrong. And you would... You sometimes left his office with your tail between their [sic] legs, so to speak. But, uh, I... I was very, very impressed with his intelligence and his innate ability to work with people and make them understand [TRNOTE: he clears his throat] points that maybe they'd never even heard of before themselves.

Williams: Okay. We've talked a little bit about who General Canine turned to for information and guidance on... on cryptology. Uh, are there any other ways that General Canine got smart about the AFSA and NSA mission and... and processes besides working with this office in... in DoD and the Marine Corps officers you were discussing?

McGinnis: Right. Well, at this point – and very early after General Canine took over – he realized that he had a group of... a large group of young, very bright guys who he understood very clearly were going to run the agency. These were primarily – almost entirely as a matter of fact – civilians who, at one point in time, had been in the Army primarily. Many of them in the Navy, but predominantly in the Army. Most of them had gone as far as Army captain. And the Navy: about the same. And they were now civilians. And, uh, most of them were about the GS-12 level... 12 level. This came about in a way that the... very... [TRNOTE: Clears his throat.] very much not appreciated by the Navy. When AFSA was formed... was being formed – the... and just before it was actually implemented – the hierarchy and... and the chart was all filled out on who was going to head the various things. And names were put in it. And the Navy had the largest number of really qualified officers because the Army didn't have officers in cryptology. They had enlisted personnel in cryptology, but very, very few officers. The Navy had both. And, uh... So most of the jobs were going to be run by the Navy. The week before AFSA was formed, the Army promoted all of their civilians by one grade. And as a result, the thing flopped over. So now, we had in the... former Army captains – now GS-12s or so – running AFSA. And this continued on into NSA. However, despite the obvious aspects of the thing, these were bright guys. No question about it. And they had... been... They'd been working in... at GCHQ on the Bombe projects over there. Some of them had been working with the... with GCHQ on German and Italian crypt systems. And they were able to take over these jobs within NSA and do a pretty good job of it. But they were all pretty low-level people. We didn't have any GS-16's, 17's, 18's and so forth. So Canine realized that this group of people – whether they were former Army, former Navy, whatever – were likely to be the people who were gonna be running NSA in the future. And in fact, that's how it worked out. Uh... The Naval

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 3

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

officers, when AFSA was formed, kind of took over AFSA because they were the senior of the people. When it went into NSA, this slowly – very slowly – worked its way out of that because the NSA civilians took over and became promoted. They were suddenly people – who had been working for the Navy... Naval officers – who are now senior to them. And it re... The role reversed itself. So that, now, you're working for... You're working for the guy who used to work for you. And that happened to all the Naval officers over a period of time. If you went back to NSA, it was very likely you'd be working for the guy who used to work for you. Good or bad, that's how it was. So that's how... the kind of thing that Canine inherited. He knew these guys. He worked with them closely. He realized that one of the first things he needed to do was start getting them educated. Because almost none of these people had any – what we would call – a War College-type of experience. And so, he picked two or three to go to the National War College. Now, at that time, the National War College was the most prestigious of them all. And if you went there and came back and had done a good job there, Canine immediately recognized that. And he gave you a very good job. I believe the first one was Dr. (B% Shen OR Sheehan), and the second one was Dr. Tordella. And I don't remember the third and fourth one. But Sheehan was kind of... was a mistake. He'd done a good job as a cryppie, but he was not a very good manager. Tordella was the reverse. Tordella had his doctorate in mathematics, and he was a very, very good manager. So I think that as soon as he came back from the National War College, I think Canine realized that "Here's the one guy in the whole agency who's likely to be the best." And so, he was picked fairly early to be the deputy. But not immediately. When I was there in my period, Tordella had just come back. I remember... Tordella had been in the Navy. He was a former Navy Commander. Yeah. Commander. Lieutenant Commander or Commander. I forget which. And I remember when he came back, he was the... Came back to the area where I was working. And we sat down and had a cup of coffee and talked a long time about the War College itself. And... He was telling us... I was the... the guy who was out scouting for people to go to these schools. And... So Tordella was giving me quite a bit of direction on how... how people should be chosen, and what kind of people, and things like that. I can't remember when he became deputy. But it wasn't during my period. But it wasn't long after. At the time I was there, we... Canine's deputy was an Air Force general – major general, who was... after that tour, went to the Philippines. Was the Air Force Commander in the Philippines. The, uh... The next one, I forget. But anyway, the Air Force fellow really didn't have a job. Canine ran the thing. And he... And he recognized that this Air Force general really didn't have the moxie to run the place. (B% Formally), the deputy was doing a lot of the running. And the director wouldn't have to worry about minute details. Canine worried about everything from the bottom up. I think he realized he had to. He... He had such a mind that he could walk around through all the buildings. And he just seem to absorb everything. He'd talk to half a dozen people. And he'd walk out of there,

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 4

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

and he knew what it was all about. I used to use the analogy of the guy who was a great linguist. And he would walk into a Greek restaurant and he would walk out speaking perfect Greek. Well, that was the way Canine was. He could walk into a place. And he walked out, and he knew all about that place. And he could tell you what was right and what was wrong with it. But one of the... He had a management system that he had learned in the Army. And I didn't recognize this to begin with, because I had never been in the Army. But it's... it's a way to get people's attention. You recognize that... that people needed to know who he was and what his job was – and that he was the boss. Particularly that last one: he was the boss. Because a lot of these guys were running around... They were loose guns. And so, he said... He proclaimed that all the file cabinets in the whole agency had to match. Now why did he pick that? Well, it... it was a (1-2G): the file cabinets (1G) match. [TRNOTE: McGinnis laughs.] We had... Everything that you see had been inherited from the Army and from the Navy. The Army, primarily, had wooden file cabinets. The Navy had... I've been looking for one in here. But I don't see it. But they were pretty nice file cabinets that had a box on it and combination locks on the (B% box). And... But, despite all of that, the file cabinet colors didn't match. Some of them were this size. (2-3G) six feet tall. Some of them were five feet tall. Some of them were four feet tall, or whatever. So he decreed that the file cabinets would be placed in such a way that when you walked into an office, they would all be the same size and the same color. Boy! What a job for the logistics people. And it was... It went on for months. Because the... The people were going around and trying to inventory all the cabinets. And they'd measured the sizes and... Writing down the colors. And deciding how many they had and how many had to be moved up from Arlington Hall over to the Naval Security Station. And how many had to be reversed, you know? And all of the... And it went on, and then on and on. But, believe me, when it was finished, you knew that Canine was the boss. [TRNOTE: He laughs.] Oh, boy. And oh, by the way, a lot of the cabinets had to be repainted because they ended up... You know, they didn't have enough of the right color and so forth. So they were out spray painting file cabinets for a long time. [TRNOTE: McGinnis continues laughing.] But that was one of the ways that he used to get it across to people that, "I'm the boss, damn it. And what I say goes." He'd never... I never heard him dress anybody down. I've heard Naval officers do it to a Nav... another Naval officer. But I never heard him do it. Now, would I ever have the opportunity? You're damn right I would. Our... NSA's civilian headquarters was over at the Naval Security Station in Building 19, I think it was. And it the building... (1-2G) brick building. A nice brick building. It's still there. I guess the Homeland Security now... And they probably have their headquarters in there. He... There was an aisle that went down like this. Canine's office was over here...

Williams: On the left-hand side?

McGinnis: On the left-hand side. It had two... It had a main entrance, and then had

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~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

his escape door. He could either... He could get out of there without going back through his secretary, who was out in the main (1G)... in the other office – his outer office. My office was directly across the hall, and... It was like here. [TRNOTE: Sounds as if Captain McGinnis is demonstrating to Colonel Williams where his office was located.] Frequently, he would come over here and go like that. And that meant “You come in with me,” and we would go back and through his...

Williams: Through his private entrance?

McGinnis: Private entrance. And we would sit down. And there would be somebody in there. Somebody I knew. And he was having a heart-to-heart talk with this person. And it... it involved, frequently, field operations. Or... Or maybe not. It might have been just something that he might... wanted me to know about. But he never was dressing this person down. And by that, I mean giving them hell. It never worked that way. He was there saying, “Now look. Here’s what I want. Here’s the way it should be. And you’re doing it this way. And I don’t want you to do it that way anymore. I want you to do it like I’m telling you.” And this person might be shaking his head this way [TRNOTE: Indicating a negative head nod]. And before the interview was over, he was shaking his head this way, see? [TRNOTE: Indicating an affirmative head nod.] And it was never a case of, “Damn it, you better do it or you’ll going be out of here,” or that sort of thing. It was never... It was in a very level voice. And he was... But he was telling you, “You better do it this way,” and you understood it that way. I mean, you understood that he meant it that way. And sometimes, you just didn’t think that was right. But if you didn’t think it was right, he sure wanted you to speak up. And he would listen to you. And then he would say, “Well, you know, what you’re saying is right. But it’s not right in the overall. Because we’re trying to get a unified organization here. And what you’re talking about is the old system where, you know, the Army or the Navy was doing it their way. But here, we’re going to do it in a combined way. So that we’re not going to be an Army, or a Navy, or an Air Force – we’re going to be an NSA.” And so, that was the general consensus of how he was trying to make people understand that.

Williams: Okay. Now, my understanding is that sometimes General Canine was known for expressive language...

McGinnis: Yes. [TRNOTE: He laughs.]

Williams: That would embarrass some of his employees.

McGinnis: Yes. [TRNOTE: McGinnis continues laughing.]

Williams: Ah, do you remember anything about that (2-3B)?

McGinnis: Oh, yeah. [TRNOTE: Both gentlemen laugh.] Let me see if I can remember some of it. Oh, boy. Yeah. And this was (B% 1956 OR 1966). (2-3G) fifty years ago. Well, let’s see.

Williams: Is it... ? Is it something that he did on purpose sometimes to embarrass?

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McGinnis: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. He was... See, he had... He had come up through the Army. And he used to tell me some of the terrible stories of how things were done in the Army. Geez, I can't remember some of those things. [TRNOTE: McGinnis mumbles to himself.] Turn it off, will you? Let me think a little bit.

Williams: [TRNOTE: Affirmative response.] Okay, we're going move on to some other issues. And... And then later on, come back to that.

McGinnis: Okay.

Williams: We've talked somewhat about General Canine's leadership style. And a little bit about how he selected Dr. Tordella to be his deputy. How did he select the rest of his senior staff?

McGinnis: Okay. Um... [TRNOTE: Capt. McGinnis clears his throat.]. I think that this was probably a lot easier than it might appear. He was selecting them primarily from the civilians that... that he had there, as I mentioned earlier. And the... He was having these... a number of people give talks on some subject that was involved in what they were doing. I can remember a number of times people would be given the assignment of, "Well, I'd like for you to give a talk on such-and-such a subject," you know? And it would be in their... in their area of responsibility. It's not something that they just grab out of the air... or he would grab out of the air. And I... I attended a number of these talks. And you know, it was amazing. You could listen to somebody talk – some peop... some person who... And this would be a person who was running some aspect of NSA. Maybe a cryppie, or maybe a TA guy – a communicator – or whatever. And you could tell very quickly that this guy was falling flat on his face or that he was really doing a great job. And sometimes I would report back to Canine. Sometimes he would be there listening. The word would get back to him in any case. And this was one way he did it. He would... He would just simply feel that a person who... who could give a good talk on... on a subject that was... and have the people who were there say, "Gee, that was a great talk,"... .You have to understand that the compartmentation – hence AFSA and NAFSA, and then we had the Army and the Navy before that – was so great that many of us only knew what we were working on in our little bitty compartment. These talks would be on a general subject, but within, we'll say, the TA field or the cryppie field or something. They would be TOP SECRET CODEWORD. And many people would be invited who probably didn't know a hell of a lot about that subject. Or they may have been working in that field, and didn't know what was going on next door, see? So he was trying to educate people beyond their one little compartment. And I remember attending... Well, Henry (B% Hertzog), I can remember his name quite well because I worked with him a number of times. Henry Hertzog was a wonderful speaker. And anytime that you were going to have a talk by Hertzog, they could hardly get enough space for the people to attend because he would just give you a great talk on something or other. I remember his talk on... He gave a talk on field operations one

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 7

~~—UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY—~~

time. And that was my field. That was something that I worked on with... with Canine. And it was a darn good one. And so, I borrowed all of his slides. And I used them. And redid some of them. And I gave them back to him. And I gave him a copy of my... my talks that I had worked out... over. And so he went back and changed a bunch of his. [TRNOTE: Both Col. Williams and Capt. McGinnis chuckle.] He said, "Well, you've done a great job, too. And I'm going to borrow from you." Let's see. Buffham was another very good one. Benson Buffham. He was about a GS-12, but he gave some very good talks. And so, these... this was one of the way that he... he selected people. He selected people based on their education. Some of these guys had... (B% Let's see.) I guess they'd all been to college. Some of them had an M.A. And then very few had a Ph.D. Sheehan... Dr. Sheehan, who was the first guy to go to the War College, was one of those. But we didn't have a lot of PhDs. We had a lot of M.A.'s and lots of B.A.'s. Let's see. How else did he do it? Well, I think that the way that they were running their job... You see, they'd run... Many of these guys had run a job in AFSA. So that was a couple of years. And then, now, they were put in NSA, running it for a while. And some of them were falling flat on their face. And they were being replaced by somebody else. And he was very much involved in who was going to replace that person. So it was... It was kind of a Darwin kind of thing. You know, survival of the fittest in some cases.

Williams: Okay. Now, during the 1950's, the senior leadership at the Department of Defense probably had their own ideas of how NSA should be organized and operated. How did General Canine deal with the folks over at the Pentagon?

McGinnis: Well, his dealings was [sic] almost exclusively with this civilian that I was telling you about – I've got to... Somehow, I've got to remember his name – and the General. And... And as far as anybody else in DoD, he had very little contact with them.

Williams: What about over at CIA? There's [sic] reports that General Canine and Alan Dulles over at CIA had some disagreements. Were you aware of... of any of those issues?

McGinnis: No, I was not.

Williams: Okay. We've talked about some of the stories of... of... of General Canine. Certainly the office furniture story that you told was one that was on my list here to ask you about. [TRNOTE: Both laugh.] Certainly had an impact and... and made an impression. There's also a story about a... a woman at NSA who once confronted him with a complaint of about the heat. And apparently mistakenly called him "Sergeant"? Did you... ? Did you ever hear of that story? Or could you shed any light on that?

McGinnis: No, I didn't (B% even) know that one. I can't imagine who it was.

Williams: Oh, okay. Okay.

~~—UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY—~~ Page 8

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

- McGinnis:** It was probably over at Arlington Hall, I guess. Because, you see, as I told you, all the operations were physically over at Arlington Hall. And we were just the management types at...
- Williams:** [TRNOTE: Affirmative response.]
- McGinnis:** Over at NS... Naval Security Station. So sometimes, I went over to Arlington Hall with him. And of course, I spent a lot of time over there myself. But, no, I hadn't heard of that one.
- Williams:** Okay. Are there any other aspects of General Canine's time at NSA that you remember as... as being particularly significant or important?
- McGinnis:** Well, I made two trips to Germany with General Canine as his operations specialist. And one of them was for about two weeks. And (XG), I guess. He was very, very unhappy with the Air Force because the Air Force had, in effect, opted out of NSA. They... They said, "Well, all of our stuff is portable – mobile." And, NSA was not – through the charter somehow or another – was not in charge of mobile stuff. So the... the Air Force was in Germany. They had all kinds of equipment. But they... Technically, it was not under him, except from a... from the point of view of technical guidance, (B% because) NSA was the only place where in... where you could get technical guidance for cryptologic matters (B% if you couldn't get any yourself). So he had technical control. Okay. On these trips, we generally... He and I would sit down for sometimes two or three days. Not continuously, obviously. We'd have two or three chats like we're having. And decide well where we're going and what kinds of things he wanted to know about, and all this. We flew over and met at Frankfurt. We went separately, by the way, because in those days transportation – air transportation; that was the only way we went – was not at all what I suspect it is now where you can get an airplane and you could go over there and so forth. We could get an airplane in Germany, but we couldn't get one in the United States. So we would meet in Frankfurt. And we'd agree on what day we were going to start the trip. I would prepare a... quite a long message that would go to all the units in Germany, we'll say, (1-2G) indicate we were going to be there and what we wanted to do and what kinds of things we were interested in, and so forth. Canine, of course, had been in Germany during the war. He'd been working with Patton. And the man... You know, here's where his intellect came in. And it was so obvious. That man had a mental picture of every single alley in Germany. It was fantastic. When we were... We went. And once we got to Germany, we went two ways. Most of it was by car for the simple reason that he didn't like to fly in Army air... Army planes. He didn't trust them. He didn't trust them at all. And he told me... He said, "Now, when we're going to make a trip in an Army plane, you tell the pilot that we're not to go above a thousand feet. And that he was to be able to land any time the General told him so." In... In cars, we had generally two cars. Two Army cars. They were supplied by ASA Europe. And they had a cleared driver, so we could talk in the car. Generally, it would be he and I and... and the representative

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 9

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

of whatever unit we were visiting. And we would go... We went all over Germany. Sometimes we'd be... I don't have a map here. But I recog... recall quite well visiting every place. And I always had a map because I wanted to know where we were because I wasn't that familiar with Germany like he was. And he would look at me, "George, put that damn map away." [TRNOTE: Capt. McGinnis laughs.] And I... I never did. I... I always kept it out there. I said, "General, I want to know where in the hell I am." And he'd say, "Well, I'll tell you where we are." [TRNOTE: Both laugh.] And he could do it. He'd... We were driving down the autobahn and he'd say, "George, you see that (B% blue) village over there?" He says, "I came in there with a tank and I took that village." And he said... This is one of my favorite stories of his. He said, "We came into this town. And first thing we did was call for the (B% burgermeister). He came over there and I... " He said, "I got out and I called him over and I said... told him who I was." And he said, "I told him that he had one hour to have every single gun in this town in a pile right here." [TRNOTE: McGinnis makes patting noise.] And this guy was... You know, he was shaking because he knew what was going to happen to him if he didn't do this. And he said, "You mean, every gun? Every gun?" "Every single gun. "So this guy was running like mad, you know, getting people to go out and get all the guns and everything. It wasn't a large town by the way. I don't know how many people were there. But anyway, in an hour, he had this pile... The big pile. And people were still coming, you know, bringing guns (B% down). So then, he called the burgermeister over and he says, "It's been an hour and you don't have them all over there. People are still bringing them in." "Yes sir, yes sir! But we couldn't find them all." "Well, you've got one more hour." You know? So, sure enough, at an hour he had a big pile. So he took... called one of the tank commanders over. And he says, "Okay, run your tank over it." So he took a tank and he just ran it over this pile. He was destroying every gun in town. [TRNOTE: He chuckles.] And he told me... He said, "That's the little village over there where I did that." And that was... He... He was telling me stories like that all the time when we were driving. "Well, here's what happened here," you know? "Here's what happened here." Well, to get to the... to the business of com... (B% command): [TRNOTE: clears his throat] We would go into a place. And I had probably briefed him ahead of time that this is a place that needed to be closed. I had my own ideas about the large, large number of small intercept stations that the Army had put up in Germany. They had one every place you could imagine. And they were duplicating each others' coverage. They were... A lot of intercept operators were being wasted because they just weren't simply needed that way. So we would listen to this guy's briefing. And then Canine would say something like, "Well, what would happen if we closed you down?" And the guy would say, "Oh, oh! Oh," He'd never thought of such a thing before and, "Well, coverage on such-and-such would be lost." You know? Well, then Canine already knew, "Well, but your guy over here is doing is the same thing." "Oh, no! No. He can... He can... He's doing it differently," or whatever, you know?

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 10

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It'd be some excuse. And we'd spend maybe an hour or two, three, four hours there, depending on how much... how big it was and how much there was to see. But these small places: you could see the whole thing in thirty minutes, an hour. But he was always very kind to the people. He never... He was never mean with anybody over there. So then, we'd go on to the next place. I remember we were pretty well ending our tour. We'd been all over Germany. We had flown all the way... We'd flown up to (B% Brayman). And landed there because he wanted to visit Bremerhaven. And that was the... THE big Navy station... the only Navy station in Germany, as a matter of fact. And he really wanted to see it. And the Navy boss from Germany... from... in England... from London came over to be with us. And we... we went through the station at Bremerhaven. Well, the station at Bremerhaven – as compared to all these outfits we'd been visiting – was a gem. And I was really proud of it. It was our only station there. But he walked into that place and he... You know, it was kind of a thing. Neat, clean. All of the operators are sitting there in nice-looking uni... In not... They didn't wear whites. But they had nice-looking dungarees on. They were busy. Everyone was busy as hell. And he got a good briefing. When we left, he said, "Jesus, that's the way it ought to be you know? (2-3G), "(B% That's right.) That's what I'd like to see at every place." And he said, "Well, you keep working on it." So... We were over there, this time, about two weeks. I don't remember... If I had a map, I could probably find all the places we went. But we went every place in Germany. We went... We flew to... to Brayman. And then we flew back. And... And I told the pilot, "Now, don't you go above a thousand feet." And fortunately, it was beautiful weather for this trip. It was just gorgeous weather. And I had the map. And I could literally see every single river that we passed. And I'd say, "Well, General, we just went over Such-and-such River." "Ah," he'd say, "Yeah, okay." And he said, "Well, the next one you're going to see is So-and-so." There are a lot of rivers in that (B% area) (2-3G). Highways and all. And I could pick it all out on a map as we went along. And so, we came back. And it was a good trip. Ah...

Williams: Now, did he pretty much follow your recommendations on what sites to close?

McGinnis: He did...

Williams: Or did he make up his own mind?

McGinnis: Yeah. No, he went to the Army and he said, "Well, I want you to start closing them off. And there's... there's (B% the ones) to close." They... They didn't like the idea at all because this was a big... Much of it was a big boondoggle. They... You know, the Army occupation of Germany was a great tour. Great tour! And that was what the Army guys were trying to keep going, see? By closing (B% sounds like "AHF-SAH")... (B% That this many) people were free to go somewhere else. And they didn't want to do that, obviously, because it was such a great tour. And that was my first trip. The second trip was later. Maybe I better talk about it later.

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 11

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

Williams: Okay.

McGinnis: There's something else that...

Williams: Well, what I'm going to do is we're reaching the end of the tape. So I'm going to take advantage of this pause to... to turn over the tape. [TRNOTE: Audio ends here.]

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]

Williams: ... (1G) on the tape here. And... And talk about some aspects of General Canine's personality.

McGinnis: Yeah. Okay. One of the things that... When he was a little bit angry, he would get the individuals in a... together. And a lot of these would be women, because there were quite a few women that worked at NSA. And this didn't bother him a bit. And... But it didn't change his... his manner of speech. And he would be arguing with people, "Well, you know, I... We're not doing this the way I wanted. I'd like for you to do it this way. And stop doing it this way." And then he would say [TRNOTE: Sound of Captain McGinnis slamming his fist on the desk], "And I want to... I want to know who's going to... who's going to do this, and who's going to do that? And who's going to get the two bucks?" Well, this probably doesn't mean too much to you. But what he was saying is that "to get the two bucks" means that he was paying the girl who he had just screwed, see?

Williams: Uh huh. [TRNOTE: Affirmative response.]

McGinnis: That... That was the intent. Because back in those... Back in his Army days, two dollars is what it cost. See? And... And the women understood this, too, see? But they didn't like it too well. And particularly back in those days. It was [sic] different now. Now, I don't think it would (B% faze) the women quite as much as it did then. But probably, the first woman that heard was... went home blushing. [TRNOTE: Chuckling heard.] And was telling her husband all about this horrible man that was talking about "fucking the two (3-4B by laughter) (B% NSA)". But that's one I can remember.

Williams: Well, how did the work force react to General Canine? Was there fear? Was there an appreciation? A respect?

McGinnis: Yeah. I think it was a little bit of all of that. I remember... I... I didn't... I didn't know about the disrespect until on... about... in the 1960's. I was working in NSA R&D. And there was a guy there that was about to retire. And he was working on a little... He was working on his memoirs of NSA. And it was classified. And it was being passed around to see what... how... what to do about it. And I was one of the people that saw it. And he was in there. He said, "Well, we had this bastard who was one of our directors. I can't remember his name. I think it was General Dog, or something like that." See? And I realized that he didn't... That was a case of he didn't

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 12

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

really respect him very much. This guy was a little bit of a rebel anyway. So I guess it was perhaps not indicative. I think most of the people who worked for Canine respected him. I think they respected after he had been there a while. And they realized what he was trying to do was to unify things and make people realize that we had an organization. We didn't have the Army and we didn't have the Navy running NSA. We had NSA people running NSA. And that was what he was trying to do. And I think that people were beginning to realize that. And as time went on and they saw him picking good people to run things and getting rid of people who were not very good at running things, they had more and more respect for him. Now as far as fear, I suppose there was some of this. But I don't think there was very much of it. I remember there was one guy that I didn't feel was doing the things that he'd been told to do. He... He was involved in some of the construction overseas. And this was of great interest to me because construction involved building some of the new stations, you see? And we had a... And I had my own ideas of how a station should be built. And I was trying to get that across to this guy. And he didn't like the idea. He wanted to build them exactly like the Army had been building them for years. And the guy's name was (B% McIntyre), as a matter of fact. He was a nice guy. He was a former civil engineer who worked out on the roads of... highways of West Virginia. That was his background. McIntyre got al... and I got along pretty well in general. But he just didn't want to do some things that should be done. And he was a... It was very difficult to get him to do it. I used to talk to Canine about him. I'd say, "You know, McIntyre is just not doing it that way." And he'd say, "Well, why isn't he?" or "What's wrong?" And I'd say, "Well, I think he's just a..." Oh, oh! This is another term that he used: "an un... unreconstructed rebel." [TRNOTE: Chuckling heard.] That was the term he liked to use. (B% I mean)... I'd... I'd say, "Well, he's one of your un... your unreconstructed rebels." And he'd say, "Well, should I get rid of the guy?" And I'd say, "No, he's a good man. He's just... We've got to somehow get him across to do it our way, you know?" I don't remember... I left. And I... I'm sure Canine... McIntyre was still there. So I guess he still made out okay.

Williams: Now, how did General Canine communicate his vision for NSA to the workforce?

McGinnis: I never heard him call everybody together in the auditorium and talk to them. I don't recall that he ever did that. He did talk to small groups. I don't recall him ever talking to a large group. I could be wrong, but I don't remember... I do not remember him doing it. But he would get the... We had A, B and C Groups the most time. He'd get the A Group together – parts of them – and he'd talk to them. And he would... It would be generally some subject that the head of A Group had already talked about to this same group. And then he would talk about it. And he would listen to... You know, "Well, what... What do you guys think about this? What do you want done?" and so forth. And he would listen to them. He was... He wasn't trying to impose his own ideas. He was trying to get a consensus

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 13

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

of ideas and then make a decision. I think that's what he wanted. And I think, as far as communicating... as far as making things known, that was about how he did it.

Williams: Okay. What type of speaker was he? Was he an inspiring speaker when you would listen to him? Was that one of his strong points?

McGinnis: Yes and no. [TRNOTE: Capt. McGinnis clears his throat.] He did like to bring his barracks language in once in a while. And I've got... Just got to think of some more of it because he had some great ones. But he could make a good speech. And he... He did that a few times. But I never did hear him make very many speeches. He would talk to people. And that's mostly what he did was just talk to people.

Williams: Okay. Well, we certainly covered a lot on... on General Canine and his leadership style and the way he ran NSA. And this is very valuable information. Can you think of anything else you'd like to add about General Canine to this part of the interview?

McGinnis: Yes. I'd like to tell you about the time General Canine and I were... and I were almost killed. On my last trip to Germany with him, it was in the fall of '56, perhaps. I'm not sure which... Have you had tours in Germany?

Williams: Yes.

McGinnis: Yeah? Okay. You may know that in the fall, the fog rolls in. And this is what was happening. And so he... And we were going... We made the trip by car. We... We... We did... This was a... another one of our car trips we made. Went all over the place. And then, we were going up to, I guess, it may have been (B% Lansburg). I'm really not sure where it was. But we got up... We flew up there. And I told the pilot, "Now, (B% under) a thousand feet. That's it." And... And I was sitting in the co-pilot seat. We were in one of these small Army "puddle jumpers," I called them. It was just a single-engine plane. Probably an old... a large... What's the... ? [TRNOTE: Sounds as if he is tapping his hand against a table-top surface, presumably in effort to remember type of plane.]

Williams: Like a Cessna? Or...

McGinnis: Well, yeah. Yeah, right.

Williams: That sort of thing?

McGinnis: Not... Not really a very sophisticated airplane. And I sat in the pi... co-pilot seat with the earphones on. And Canine was sitting... It generally held four seats. Canine would be there. And then there'd be maybe one or two other people back he... Ah... Oh, Canine always sat right behind me, so I could talk to him because I had the earphones on. I was listening to the pilot (B% and all). So we got up... We got... got to this place. And I was talking to... It... And it was... We... We had lunch. And they kept, with their briefing, they... they (1-2G) running it longer, longer and longer. And it was getting late. And finally, I went to the Commander. And I said, "Look,

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 14

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

we're going to have to spend the night here." "Oh, God, we can't do that!" And I said, "Well, why not?" And he said, "Well, we don't have the proper place for him, you know? We don... We're just a small place." I said, "Well, look. It's getting late. And if we get back to Frankfurt, we're going to get caught in a fog." "Well... Well... Well, drive back." Well, it was going to take, you know, three or four hours to drive back. Maybe more than that. I don't know how long. Maybe five or six. I just don't remember where it was. But it was some distance away. It was a very nice little activity I recall. And I... To this day, I don't understand why they couldn't have put us up there. Because Canine wouldn't have batted an eye if he'd had to sleep on a cot, you know. He'd done that plenty of times in his Army career. But anyway, I went over and told Canine... I said, "Well, General, it's going to be nip-and-tuck getting back to Frankfurt. And they don't really want to... you to spend the night here." [TRNOTE: McGinnis laughs] And he said, "Well, what do you want to do?" And I said, "Well, General, it's going to be foggy (B% if) we get back there. And it's a long trip by car." "Oh," he said, "My God!" He says, "I've got to meet General So-and-So tonight. We've got to meet him." I said, "I didn't know anything about that." And he said, "No, you weren't involved. It was just (B% something else)." It was some Army general that had nothing to do with COMINT. And I said, "Well, okay." And... So he said, "Well, we're going to fly back." So I said to the pilot, "A thousand feet." So we got up in the air and we were flying along. And the pilot says, "Well, the local flying requirements are that I get up to about 4 or 5 thousand feet." And so, I said... I went to... told Canine this. And he said, "Well, if that's it, I guess we'll have to do it. I..." He said, "I want to be able to see the ground." And I told the pilot... I said, "Well, can't you get down lower? Fly at 500 feet or something like that." And he said, "Well, we've got some hills over here. And then sure as hell I'll run into one of them." So, we got up... whatever. And we... Now it was foggy. Of course, we're now on... Aircraft control systems kicks in now. And we're being told, you know, to fly certain speeds and directions and all that. So we got to Frankfurt. Fogged in. Solid (B% funk). And they... controller at Frankfurt said, "Go to..." Oh! He said, "We're going to bring you in by ground control approach." This is by radar, you see? And the pilot said, "Well, I... I don't know anything about that." And the... the controller, I could see him saying [TRNOTE: McGinnis gasps as if to indicated the controller was shocked.]. You know? And he [the controller] said, "Well, I'll tell you what to do." He said, "Go out to the marker... beacon marker and make a 90... a 90-degree turn and line up with the field." And he said, "I'll tell you what to (B% do)." So we lined up with the field. And he said, "Now, you're at," we'll say, "3,000 feet," or whatever. He said, "Come down at a certain rate." Well, this pilot didn't understand that you... you could... you can descend at a certain rate, see? And he was coming down. But he... This guy kept saying, "Well, come lower! Come lower! You're too high! You're too high! You're too high! Come lower! Come lower!" And I think the pilot was afraid he was going to run into the ground. He just didn't realize that he was... that somebody knew where he was and knew exactly

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 15

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

what altitude he was at and all that. So we... Well, finally he said, "Okay, you're over the end of the field." He said, "But you're too high! You've got to come down! You got... You're 100 feet! You've got to be down fast! Come down fast!" You know? So the pilot was trying to do this, and he didn't do it. So the guy said, "I'm going to wave you off." He says, "Go to 14,000 feet." Phew! Well, we didn't have oxygen. We didn't have nothing. But... But you see... What had happened: this controller was madder than hell. And he was just saying, "Get the hell out of here. I don't want you around here anymore." So we went to 14,000 feet. And we were circling and everybody was turning blue, of course. And so, I said to the pilot... I said, "You know, I think you've made a serious mistake." I said, "I don't recall you telling that controller that you've got a lieutenant general onboard." "Oh, I forgot!" So he got on there and he said, "I've got a... a lieutenant general on board." And this controller said, "Well... Oh, shit! Why didn't you tell me that, you son of a bitch?" Or something like that, you know? [TRNOTE: Both Williams and McGinnis laugh.] So he says, "Come down. Get down here fast." He said, "Start spinning down." So we got lined up with the field again. And... You know, it took a long time. And... So now, we're coming in again. And this controller was saying, "Now, damn it. You're too high again. Get that damn thing down another hundred... fifty feet," or whatever it was. You know? And this pilot, I could see, he was shaking. You know? He just didn't know what he was doing. I think if... I never... I... Well, I don't fl... I've flown a little bit. I really believe that I could have done a better job. I really do. But anyway, to make a long story short, we landed at the far end of the runway. We finally got those damn wheels on the runway. And the... the controller said, "Now, I'm... I'm going to do something unusual." He said, "Make a complete turn and come right back on the runway." He said, "I... Normally, you know, you turn... you're turned off to a... a side (B% place). But come down and around." We... So we came all the way back on the runway. And he said, "Now, turn off to the right." And we... we did. And we got over there. The pilot got out. I got out. We pulled Canine out. And boy, I... He... He was livid. I... I swear to God, I've nev... He was... I've never seen him this mad. But he was controlling himself. And finally, the pilot came over and saluted. And he said, "General, I'm... I'm sorry. That's the... That's the best I can do." He said, "Alright son! Get out of here." [TRNOTE: Chuckling heard.] Well, that was a close one. It really was. And I... I... I've... It's haunted me later, you know: "Here we lose the Director... the new Director of NSA and a pilot in a [sic] air crash in Frankfurt, Germany." You know? It... It was that... It was really that close. I've had, I think, around five or six close calls in airplanes, and that was one of them. Not the... Not the worst, but one of them.

Williams: Before we move and talk about Corry Station a little bit, is there anything else about General Canine that you can recall?

McGinnis: Well, one of the ways that Canine brought people together was something that had never been done before at AFSA. I'd never seen it done in the

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 16

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

Navy. And it was a... It was a great idea. We had an entertainment fund at NSA. You know, you put nickels in the Coke machine and you got... eventually you've got a lot of money. And... And... Well, we had money, of course, with the people over at Arlington Hall. That was generating money there, too. And we had a lot of money in the entertainment fund. And somebody – and I don't have any idea who it was – said, "General, why don't we have parties and invite everybody to come?" And he says, "Well, how much is it going to cost?" And the answer was, "It doesn't make any difference. We've got enough money to pay for it." So he says, "Okay. Go ahead." Well, I'll tell you about one of them – but there were a number of others. And this is... is kind of a good one. And... And it's indicative of how it worked. There's a Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. It's been there since before the Civil War and I... And... Is it still there? I don't know if (1-2B)...

Williams: I think it is.

McGinnis: Yeah. Okay. Well, it was still in business when... at... at... when I'm talking about it. The top floor of the Willard Hotel is huge. It's the entire size of the ground floor of the building, whatever that is. And somebody... the entertainment committee rented the upper... the top floor of the Willard Hotel. And they put out information: everybody, their families, the whole bunch that want to come to the party, can come. And it's free. So I remember my wife and I were walk... You had to go up the stairs to get there, by the way. So we were walking up the stairs. And here comes Canine walking up the stairs. He didn't bring his wife. I'm not sure why. Maybe he did, but he was by himself. He was walking up the stairs. And he looked over and... "Hey, George. Why don't you go in faster," or something like that. You know? [TRNOTE: He chuckles.] So he was getting on up there. And this was... It was a dance. And they'd hired a very fine orchestra and... We didn't have rock and roll in those days. We danced waltzes and foxtrots and sambas and rumbas, and stuff like that. And it was a big hit. It really was. And he... He was... He didn't make a speech as I recall it. But he was circulating around and he was shaking people's hands. And... And, you know, he was a good fellow – "well met," so to speak. And... And they did this several different times while I was there. And I... I hope they still did it after I left because we had lots of money. And... And I... But I don't remember them using the Willard again. I have no idea whether they did or not. But that was a... a really a great way to get people's attention and... and to get... to make people know each other, you know? And give him a good feel as well.

Williams: Okay. What I'd like to do now is shift and talk a little bit about Corry Station.

McGinnis: Okay.

Williams: You were the second commanding officer of the Navy's cryptologic training center here. Would you... ? Do you have the actual dates that you

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 17

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

held that position? And could you expand on what courses were taught at your command and... and what types of students you educated here?

McGinnis: Yeah. Okay. I was there from '6... – here, sorry – '69 to '71. And Captain (B%Tamberello) was my predecessor. I ne... I need to talk just a little bit about how we acquired Corry, if that's alright?

Williams: Sure.

McGinnis: The Navy's fi... Sorry. The Navy's training facility has moved all over the place. Let's see. It was up in... up in Washington at... the state of Washington. I can't remember the name of the island. But it was one of those...

Williams: Whidbey Island?

McGinnis: No, not Whidbey. Yeah.

Williams: Bainbridge Island?

McGinnis: Yeah. Bainbridge!

Williams: Okay.

McGinnis: Bainbridge. That was... It was there for a long time. And then it moved down to San Diego. And it was there, but it... it was... there was not enough space. It just simply wasn't big enough. But at that time, Captain Tamberello was the head of the Personnel Branch at... at head... Navy Headquarters. And in order to get space at that time, the first thing you had to do was apply to the Navy's office that had some kind of space any place. And then, they had to go nationally. They had to go to a Department of Defense (B% outfit). And they... Here was an index of all the facilities that were available or would be available at some point in the future. And it wasn't just former military. It was former whatever – you know, Department of the Interior, or whatever. Everybody had space that they were giving up, or whatever. So you had to give them your requirements. And the requirements were put in. Tamberello was involved with this. And the answer came back that there were "two places that seem to fit your criteria." One of them was the former Naval hospital at San Diego, Calif... at Long Beach, California. And the other one was Corry Field – now closed – and... as well as... as this hospital. The hospital was, as I recall, an eight or nine-story building in the harbor area of San Diego. And it had enough space and it was a very nice facility. All... You know... Beautiful. Not very old. And then: Corry. Corry, at that time, was probably the saddest looking place you can imagine. It had been closed for three or four years. It had to be closed because the jets came in. And it was too close to the main Naval Air Station where the jets (B% weren't going to be taught). But they couldn't also be taught here. So it had to be closed. And it... it was just sitting here idle. And vandals were getting in many of the bar... barracks buildings. The people... Vandals would get in there with brick bats and so forth and just tear the place apart. And, of course, just sitting idle things go bad pretty fast, too. So Tamberello came here, then,

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 18

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

and looked it over. And... He was... I think made a very wise decision. And he picked this one. Now, at that time, the... our local political head was a guy named Representative Bob (B% Sykes). A guy who had been in the House of Representatives for many years. He had tremendous seniority. He was on the Navy committee. And he was on the committee that had to do with closing stations and opening them and so forth. And he heard... He knew about this fact that we were looking at the place here. So he got involved with it. And, in effect, he said, "I want you to come here – and I'll give you anything you want if you'll come." And that's a pretty good offer. Tamberello spent a lot of time with him. And it... And started telling him what kinds of things would have to be done immediately. And that it was going to cost a lot of money. And Sykes' general answer was, "Let me know what you need, and you're going to get it," you know? "You may not get it today, but you'll get it." And one of Tamberello's... Inter... This is very interesting. He said "There's a house over at the Naval Air Station which, in the past, has always been used... designated for the Commanding Officer at Corry Field." He said, "I'd like to have that house desig... designated again." So Sykes said, "Okay. I can take care of that. That's rea... real easy. All I've got to do is call up the commanding officer of the station and tell him what to do." [TRNOTE: He chuckles.] That's how Sykes operated. Sykes was quite a guy. And so, that's how Corry was done. And we got money pretty fast to build... to repair and put a lot of these buildings back into shape. Of course, what we inherited [sic] was hangars: 50,000 square feet. The initial idea was that every hangar would be double-decked so that you'd end up with a lot of square feet, see? Some of them couldn't be done too well. I forget now. There's one of them which was... I think there were two of them that were done. And they decided that it wasn't a good idea. And when I was here, I relieved Tamberello. And I... I got the house, by the way. He got it, and I got it. And it's a great house. The commanding officer of the Naval Air Station now lives in it. The... The money was still coming in. Sykes used to call me up about twice a year. He would say, "What do you need?" And I'd say, "Well, you have a pretty good list already. And I'll get another list to you, you know, within a week," or whatever. Which I did. And we had... (B% At OR By) the time I got here, the Vietnam War was really hot. And the station was being operated 24 hours a day. We had three shifts. And we had three sets of schools going at one time. You can imagine. We had about twelve hundred students continuously. We graduated a class every Friday. And we convened a class every Monday. A new class consisted of about a hundred to a hundred and fifty students. The students came from the boot camps. At that time, we had a boot camp in Orlando; we had one in Great Lakes; and someplace else. I forget where now. Seems to me like it was Bainbridge, Maryland. But, anyway those were the... And... And the students were picked at the boot camp to come here. They were picked based on their scores of the tests that they took. They take the... They take a battery of tests. The first criteria, if you're in a... If you're in the know, there's certain... If you look at this battery of tests... If you pick

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 19

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

certain numbers out of them and add them up, it's the man's IQ. [TRNOTE: He chuckles.] Nobody is supposed to know that. They probably don't do that anymore. But anyway, that's how it was then. That was one of the first criteria. The second criteria is... is... is he clearable? And we had a guy... We had two guys – one guy from the Naval Security Group and one guy from ONI – who were at the Orlando... (B% Is this right?) Um... Yeah. The Orlando boot camp. And that's where our main... where we got most of our students. And they were going over them very quickly there. They... They'd gotten a rough list, you see? And then they started picking out. And the ONI guy was going through... getting information based on police records and national... battery of information available nationally (B% and from the) FBI. What have you. And he was eliminating and picking guys, and what have you. When the students came here, I had about one homosexual in each group. I had one or two who shouldn't have been picked. But in general, they were a pretty good group of guys. And we had one ONI guy physically located here at the... in... on the base. And he was continually working on the entire group – not just the guys who were just coming, but anybody that was already here. This was an "A" school and a "C" school. An "A" school is people just coming in. So... And at that time, the principal requirement was for "R" branchers, which is the intercept operator. And next was communications operators. That's the "O" branch. Then, uh, let's see. What else did we do? Oh! Then we had a... a few "C" branchers. These are people that have come back. You know, they've been out to the fleet and they come back. Then we had... I had a group over at Pensacola Junior College. About fifty guys over there. And they were getting an AA degree. These were chiefs. And they'd been picked. And they there to get there AA degree because then that permitted them to get promoted on up to warrant officer.

Williams: Now did you have any Army or Air Force or Marine Corps students?

McGinnis: Yes. We had it all. And plus Canadians. And we had a... a... In... In... In order, we had a Marine group who's headed by a Marine captain. About a hundred Marines, or less, at a time. We had an Army group. And they were here to learn Morse code – because this was the Morse code school. We had Air Force. And as I recall, they were primarily linguists. (B% And they wouldn't have been our pre-approved C equivalents.) And that's it, I guess... Oh! And then the Canadians. We had... Canadians were here to learn direction finding, primarily. We had a... a small direction finding school here at... on the station.

Williams: Now what was the relationship like between your command down here and the National Security Agency?

McGinnis: Okay. Let's see. During my period... Oh, yeah! Shortly after I took over... Tamberello went up to Washington, and he was stationed at the school. Shortly after I took over, I got a message from... at NSA saying that that they wanted to send a group of people down here to visit. And they were

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~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

going to send an airplane load. [TRNOTE: He chuckles.] About twenty people, actually. And they were going to be here, uh I think it was just one day. I think they came down in the morning, and went back that afternoon maybe. And... So I met them over at the Naval Air Station and... Oh, I don't know how we got them over here. I guess we got a bus maybe. I remember Dr. Jacobs – who was a head of the... part of the school – who is a friend of mine from my tours at NSA... And he came. And Tamberello came. And... And... We... We had a... a nice day, as I recall. Everybody had to get clearances and everything. And I detailed people to go with them. So they were going around looking at the various things at the school. And it worked out quite well. That was... That was one thing. I... Let's see. I'm trying to remember if I made more than one trip up there. I think I made at least one trip to... to the school.

Williams: Did the National Cryptologic School provide you with material or with standards that you had to meet? Or anything along those lines down here?

McGinnis: Yes. We were... We had a lot of contact with NSA in that way. And it was well received, by the way. There was no... no problem about saying, "Ah, that's NSA stuff. Throw it away." You know? None of that. It was well received. And a lot of my training officers made trips up to the school, too, by the way. There was not anything regular. If something came up, they would go up there. Maybe spend a day or two up there. That... That did happen.

Williams: Now what was the relationship between your command down here and Navy headquarters? Were they responsible for providing funding and that type of resourcing for you?

McGinnis: Okay. Well, there, you're... you're touching on a very... a subject that's really pissed me off several times. Over the period of time at... when the school was at San Diego... or when it was up at Bainbridge Island and then San Diego, it was directly under Naval Security Group. And we supplied the instructors, the people, the direction, everything. When it came here, it was under the Bureau of Naval Personnel. Now... Let's see. The... The Bureau of Naval Personnel had responsibility for all training. And how they got us, I don't know. But somehow or other, they... they took us over. And the... It was a lousy arrangement. As an example, my boss up there was a captain by the name of (B% Kinney). He came to Pensacola one time. And I knew that he was here. He came to... for some kind of a conference. Not having nothing to do with Corry. And so, I went over during the break at this conference and I introduced myself. And he looked at me and, "Okay, so?" And I said, "Well, you're my commanding officer." "Oh! Yeah? Tell me about it," you know? So I told him about Corry Field. And he (B% said), "Gee, I never heard of it." And, you know, it was just a terrible arrangement. It just was just awful. I got no help from (B% them OR him) really. We had our own officer – a Naval Security Group officer – in the officer detail part of the Bureau of Personnel. And

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 21

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

we had another officer in the enlisted detailing part of it. They made all the decisions. If I had a... a problem about personnel, I called our guy up there. And we arranged whatever was needed.

Williams: In the Naval Security Group?

McGinnis: This is the Naval Security Group man who is at the Bureau of Personnel.

Williams: Okay.

McGinnis: Yeah. We could... We could arrange anything. As an example, my... One of m... I had two chaplains. One was Protestant and one was Catholic. The Catholic guy... I'm not Catholic, but the Catholic guy and I got along just wonderfully. The Protestant guy and I couldn't get along at all. But anyway, the Catholic guy said, "Well, you know, my tour is up." And I said, "Well, yeah, I know about that." And he said, "I'm supposed to go to so-and-so." And I said, "Okay. Are you... you happy?" And he... "Yeah," he said, (B% "It'll be good with time. But I'll be happy with it.") So his... his relief arrived. The... The... This... This chaplain – my fir... the one that was here already – was an older guy. He was a commander. And he'd been in the Navy for about twenty years or so. Been all over the world. And this new guy was a new recruit. He'd just come in. And he reported in, and I shook his hand. And he went over with the chaplain. And they spent a day or two over there. And then, I got... Let's see. How was it? Oh! My ONI guy, who was stationed here, came to my office. And he said, "The guy's a homosexual. We've got to get him out of here." Then... This was like on a Friday. On a Monday, I got a call from one of the admirals over at the Naval Air Station. And he says, "You got a new chaplain over there named So-and-So?" And I said, "Yeah." "There's something wrong with that guy." And I said, "Yeah? What's that?" He said, "Well, he... he preached at the Navy chapel Sunday." See, this was the day before. And he said, "The guy must be nuts! He was prancing around all over the place. He was running up and down the aisle." He said, "My wife was so embarrassed. She couldn't believe what was going on." And I said, "Well, Admiral, he's leaving." I said, "For your information, I've already known about the problem about the guy. And he's leaving in a day or so." And he said, "Well, what's wrong?" And I said, "Well, he's a homosexual." "OH!" he said, "That explains it all!" [TRNOTE: Chuckling heard.]

Williams: Okay...

McGinnis: (XB).

Williams: Okay. We are going to conclude this tape at this time, and continue the discussion on tape number two.

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

[Tape 2, Side 1]

Williams: This tape will be UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY unless otherwise specified at the end of the recording. Today is Wednesday, 9

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 22

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February 2005. I am interviewing Captain George McGinnis at the Command Display at Corry Station, Florida and this is the second tape of our interview and we are now continuing with our discussion of Corry Station. Captain McGinnis?

McGinnis: Alright. Towards the end of my tour I got a call from Frank Austin who was the Commandant of the school and he said he wanted to come down. So he came down. I'd known Frank at NSA for many years actually. I wouldn't say we were close friends but we were certainly friends. And he visited us over at Quarters 45, which I already told you about. I have to mention that Quarters 45 was adjacent to the old army fort. The Army had a post artillery activity here and they had this fort which actually had been started by the Spanish and continued to be used by the Army. And it was just - there was a sidewalk in front of our house that led right over to the fort. And my daughter, whom you met, was about six or seven, eight years old, maybe, seven or eight years old, she had learned all about this fort by having been over there and listening to it, so she decided she was the expert. So when Mr. Austin came over to visit us, the first thing she did was grab him and say "I want to take you over and visit the fort." So she took him over there and walked him through the place and she gave him her usual spiel. And they were gone about thirty minutes I guess. And she came back. And she was sitting there drinking her drink. And I said "Abby, did you give him a good tour?" And she goes "Well, not too good. He's too fat and couldn't walk across [2g]." [laughter] Well anyway, Frank said to me "Look, I know you've got another tour in the Navy. Why don't you come up and be my Exec?" So I thought that was a good idea, it was a nice last tour to go. So we did; I went up there. Well Frank was in the throes of retiring. He had less than a year to go. So I think he was actually looking for somebody that had a good NSA background and had a training background to fill in while he was leaving. However, the job was set up for a GS-18, so there was no possibility of me taking it over, but I could always be the Exec. So I worked with Frank for about a year and we had a very nice relationship and I enjoyed working at the school very much. And Frank was getting ready to go, and Tom Pruh, who I had worked with at NSA R&D, who was again a good friend of mine, took over. So I worked with him. And then he had his year there and he retired. So then Joe - I'm sorry I can't remember his last name. He was one of the people who was sent to Harvard to take the business school. He was going to take over. So I worked with him a while and then I retired. So that was my time at the school. I considered it to be a very fine tour and I enjoyed it very much. We had two people who ran that school. One was me, largely, because Frank was visiting - I'm sorry, Frank was retiring, [1g] retired. Tom Pruh, the same way. So the second that ran it was Mary. Mary was a secretary and she was a whiz. They had three girls at NSA who were GS-12s who were secretaries. That was the highest grade that a secretary could have. She couldn't be called a secretary, she was an executive assistant. And the Director had one of these, the head of

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~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

COMSEC had one, and in effect, I had one. This gal - and I knew all three of these girls, by the way. I'd worked with them over the years I'd been at NSA and they were all top-notch people. It's really amazing how much a person like that can contribute to an organization. You know, if I would be talking - I talked to her quite a bit because I dictate all my correspondence to her. Sometimes we'd have to [1g] changing a paragraph or whatever, but she understood everything. I wrote a letter on any subject, she understood it. And sometimes she would say, "Well you know, this paragraph needs changing," or whatever.

Williams: This was at the National Cryptologic School, at Fort Meade?

McGinnis: Yes.

Williams: Where was it located then?

McGinnis: Friendship. At the airport. Is it still there? I don't know.

Williams: Yes it is, as a matter of fact. But it's moved several places since then, but that's where it is again. Can you explain the process by which training requirements were levied and how you ensured they were satisfied with the curriculum you had down here at Corry Station?

McGinnis: Well, visits were certainly one way. We had some instructions on how things were to be done. But you see, the school there didn't teach very much of the same things that were being taught down here. It was a different ballpark, really. So it was difficult for anybody at the school to be able to come down here and judge how well it might be done or how poorly it might be done. So it wasn't really that kind of an organization. And the same thing applied to the Air Force school in Goodfellow and the same thing applied to the Army school at Devens. We could do better with Goodfellow because that was language and we could monitor that quite well. Devens, we could monitor to some extent, but they again were doing things that were of such a nature that we just didn't know enough about. The only thing we could monitor was in general, because it seemed to be fitting the criteria. We could write up course instructions and this of course down here was being taught somehow that impacted on NSA, we could write up some data which needed to be included in the course instructions. That and [1g] were really how it would be done.

Williams: Okay. Well thank you very much for the very worthwhile information you provided us and the time you spent with us this afternoon. To clarify the spellings on a couple of names, it's Frank Austin, A-U-S-T-I-N and Tom Pruh, last name spelled P-R-U-H. Captain McGinnis, again, thank you very much and we will be in touch with you about the transcript.

McGinnis: Okay. Very good.

Williams: This concludes the Oral History interview. It is UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

~~UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~ Page 24

[End of Interview OH-2005-03-McGINNIS]