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Text w/Tape:

INAME: CANINE, Ralph J., LT GEN, USA (Retired)

Also in attendance:

TORDELLA, Dr. Louis W. (Lou)

LEVENSON, Arthur J. (Art)

MOODY, Juanita M.

SULLIVAN, John

GREGG, John A. (Jack)

FONTAYN, Thelma (Suzie), General Canine's Secretary

IPLACE: NSA, DIRNSA Office, 9th Floor, Headquarters Bldg.,
Ft. Meade, MarylandIVIEWER: DAVID, Stephen L., Moderator, Deputy Commandant,
National Cryptologic School (NCS)

David: I'm Stephen David. And in the process of starting this series of talks with the past generals...past directors of the National Security Agency, we have with us this morning Ralph J. Canine, Lieutenant General, United States Army, retired...

Audio test: ((TR NOTE: In the background, while Mr. David is giving the above introduction, an unidentified male speaker is heard counting, as follows:))
Five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

David: Who was the first director of the National Security Agency. He also was the first director of AFSA, the predecessor to NSA. And that was a...the... Not the predecessor, the...

Tordella?: He wasn't the first director of AF...

Canine: No, I was the last one.

David: The last one of AFSA, you're right.

Fontayn?: ((Rear Admiral Earl E.)) Stone, (B% he)...

David: Admiral Stone was the first director of AFSA. And General Canine was the *last* director of AFSA but the first director of NSA. And we have him this morning to sort of capture his personality and capture some of the decisions on tape; capture these...document these decisions. And sort of

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have them for reference and guide...guides for the future; and look at some of the decisions that were made during your time and see how they've come out to date. General, can you give us a little bit of your background before joining NSA?

Canine: Well, I graduated from Northwestern University in 1916. I was going to be a doctor, but the First World War rescued me and my future patients. It didn't make much difference about me, but the patients were the...had a ((laughter heard))...

U/I Male: (B% I would say...) (1-2G)...

Canine: Would have had a pretty bad time. ((More laughter heard.)) Not many of them would have lived, I'm afraid. I went into the Army in 1917 and got a regular commission from the 1st Officers Training Camp. And I've been...and I spent the...I've been in the Army ever since.

David: What military schools did you go to?

Canine: I didn't go to any military schools. I was...I had *no* idea of being a soldier. The reason I went in the regular Army was that they said I could get to fight quicker. I didn't.

David: Now let's plunge into the...your assignment to NSA. Can you...? We understand you didn't like the assignment initially and sort of was against coming to NSA.

Canine: Well, I was violently against it. And I asked Joe Collins ((General Joseph Lawton Collins)) why...who was the ((Army)) Chief of Staff and had appointed me to be the Army...It was the Army's turn to be a director... have a director. And why he...in the world he had sent me? I was the Deputy G-2 and had come to Washington to eventually become G-2. I knew nothing about intelligence, but I knew less about the COMINT/COMSEC business. I knew nothing. I knew a little bit about managing people after managing a good many soldiers, but this is...Except for my secretaries in one place or another, the only civilians that have ever worked for me were the...now...

David: The ones at NSA?

Canine: In NSA.

David: General, what was your...? What was so different about this agency versus your other commands? In other words, what was so unique about this one and...when you compare it with your other activities in the military?

Canine: Well, I knew what the problem was in the other ones. From the time I was a lieutenant in the battery on up to the time I commanded the 1st Division and was G-4 of the European Command in Heidelberg, I knew what the problem was. I didn't have the least idea what this problem was. I...The only...I knew what an RI company was because we had one that wouldn't move on time. And I told them that their chow wagon didn't need to go

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back to the quartermaster dump where they picked up their rations because I had already told them not to issue anything to them. And if they moved, I'd... I would tell them to feed them. They moved.

David: One of the most outstanding stories about you is the way you made sure that everybody knew who was boss. And do you remember when you had a decision...made a decision that all gray furniture would be with gray furniture, and brown furniture with the brown furniture? This seemed like a lot of wasted time.

Canine: It wasn't at all! I wanted the people to...I knew that the way you got people to do things was to know the fellow that was giving the order. And I knew that if I made them move all their files, that they'd be all mad at me and they'd know who issued the order.

David: They were mad at you?

Canine: They were mad at me. ((Laughter heard.)) They all complained.

David: Right down the line.

Canine: I had done it...I had done this before...once before in G-2.

David: At the Pentagon?

Canine: At the Pentagon.

David: Right, we followed that story very closely, too. ((Chuckling heard.)) There's another story about you that either your staff or you made a decision that you were the only one to use a red pencil.

Canine: That's right. That wasn't the first time I'd made that decision. I made that decision in practically every outfit I'd been in, was that I was the only red pencil. I wanted them to...when they saw a red pencil writing or a marking that the boss put that on there and that that was urgent.

David: We have at one time during the first few months of your command, you used the word "unreconstructed rebels". And this was part of that whole furniture/red pencil era.

Canine: We had a lot of them in NSA.

David: How did you go about converting "unreconstructed rebels" to your way?

Canine: Well, some I never converted. ((Chuckling heard.)) They had a pretty hard time. ((More laughter heard.)) I got rid of some of them. Those that I could, I got rid of, as Sullivan can tell you. ((Audio abruptly stops at this point. When it resumes, Mr. David is speaking as follows:))

David: Can we ask...? I'm going to ask you a question, and I don't think you ought to answer it yet. Has NSA gone to that point which you envisioned it would go? And I'd rather first we talk to some of the people in the group, and then we'll get to that question that, has NSA gone the route or hit the

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objective that you thought it might hit when you were here? ((Audio briefly stops; then starts again.)) Can we have somebody...? Does anybody have something to...?

Sullivan: I have a question. John Sullivan. ((He now addresses General Canine.)) General, of course, I think you know me. You were well known for your frequent unannounced visits to the operating areas and your informal discussions which took place with any employee that you came in contact with. And I saw it, this gave you an opportunity to keep informed of the work progress. And many of our employees often expressed pleasure at your...the personal touch. Can you recall any particular incidents that stand out in your mind that occurred as a result of these unannounced visits?

Canine: Well, I... On several occasions, I had my...left my badge in my desk—or on my desk. And I had gone out of the door into the hall right from my office instead of going out through the secretary's office. She had about a half a dozen badges, and she would give me one every time I went out without one. That's what they're for. That's what a badge is for.

And several times, I was stopped—really stopped. Right...you know, stand in front of me and not let me go because I didn't have a badge. And it was a little...I had a little trouble convincing the people that I was the Director. ((Laughter heard.)) So I made up my mind early that I was going out and see all the people so they knew who the Director was. And it was...That was a crime (1-2G) not to know me. ((Chuckling heard.))

U/I Voice: ((Speaker's voice is very faint.)) Okay, thank you for your (2-3G).

David: Can we bring up a point in technique of management here that you used when you appointed Dr. Tordella? At that time, he was in Plans and Policy.

Tordella?: NSA-12.

David: NSA-12. And you used the technique where you established a czar of the Project BOSTON, which was the KL-7—the off-line enciphering device. Would you describe it a little bit and talk about the...?

Tordella?: Well, only the Burroughs Company called it Project BOSTON. We never used that term "Project BOSTON."

Canine: Yeah, we never called....

Tordella?: That was their internal way of describing it in an unclassified manner. We called it the AFSAM-7...

David: That's right.

Tordella?: At that time. And we carried on the AFSAM nomenclature, I think, for

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three, four years after NSA was formed. There was a major problem, I think, in the AFSAM-7 area, as it was then called. It had largely to do with the fact that Burroughs had had no experience whatever in building an equipment like this. And I accused them once of being experts in electronics and that they knew how to take a piece of wire and put a male plug on one end and tie the other end to the motor. And Paul (B% Maravito) sort of laughed at that; every once in a while, he recalls it. But they had had no experience at all in this kind of equipment. And I think the...one of the major things that pulled that equipment through is the fact that Maravito was tagged to work on it. And he in turn selected a man named (B% Shenning), who was really a driver and a go-getter.

David: Ed Shenning?

Tordella?: Ed Shenning.

Canine: Still works for them.

Tordella?: Yes, he's now in charge of their plant, where some of the KL-7... Well, most of it was done there at the Plymouth plant. He's in charge out there today.

David: What authority did you give Dr. Tordella in this exercise? How much authority did he have?

Canine: He had the same authority that I would have had if I'd been there.

Tordella?: Nah, he put it a lot more graphically than that. ((Chuckling heard.)) He said, "If any... You tell anyone to throw one of those machines in the river. And if they don't do it within five minutes, come and tell me about it." ((More chuckling heard.)) It was complete authority, as I understood it—the Director's authority.

David: This project apparently was successful because as soon as we did have a czar in the KL-7, it moved right along. And we eventually... And right now, it's being used internationally. NATO uses it.

Tordella?: Oh, there are about 23,000 of them (3-4B)...

Canine: I was going to say was the original contract was for much less than the final number that were [sic] delivered against.

David: Twenty-three hundred, was it... was...?

Tordella?: Twenty-three *thousand* today.

Canine: *Thousand*. Twenty-three thousand was...

David: No, but the initial contract was for...?

Tordella?: Well, the initial contract was for about the order of...

Canine: Maybe 10,000? Something like that?

Tordella?: Well, I think it was less than that initially. It was the idea that we could extend it on. I think it was in the order of about 3,000 initially.

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Canine: We didn't have any trouble extending it. They were glad to get the contract.

Tordella?: It went on for several years once it got rolling.

Canine: Well, it was... It... I was out there as a consultant after I left the... after I had retired. And they were still working on ma... the (B% tail end), cleaning up some of the last contracts (B% on the) (1G).

Tordella?: Well, from time to time, we let additional contracts for spare parts—mostly these days for NATO requirements.

Canine : Yeah.

David: We could stay with the organization or go outside and talk about your... the direction you got from the Secretary of Defense in how to run the place and... I believe the Office of Special Operation was the office you dealt with in the Secretary of Defense shop?

Canine: I don't know what it was called. I have no...

Speakers: (XG). ((Many speakers are talking simultaneously as they try to remember and ascertain the title of the office in question.))

Canine: Huh?

U/I Male: General Erskine's office? ((This is a reference to General Graves B. Erskine, USMC, head of Department of Defense, Office of Special Operations.))

Canine: General Erskine ...

U/I Male: (B% DoD Office of) Special Operations.

David: Special Operations.

U/I Male: Right, right.

Canine: Is that what it was called?

Tordella?: He was Assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

U/I Male: Right.

Canine: Yeah.

Tordella?: That was his title. You could hang any name you wanted to his office, but...

Canine: When did I send you over to represent me at his office, Lou?

Tordella: I went over in 1957.

Canine: This was after you had been educated?

Tordella: Yes, sir. ((Laughter heard.))

U/I Male: Several places (XB). ((Others are speaking, but unintelligible.))

U/I Female: Mm hmm.

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Tordella?: ((Faintly, in the background.)) Oh, I (1-2G) came to work for (2-3B)...

David: Let's go back to the...

Canine: I was going to say you went from the War College, there, didn't you?

Tordella: No, I went to War College to PROD.

Canine: Oh.

Tordella: I had NSA-70 and then I had NSA-60, and then I went down to the Pentagon.

Canine: Oh.

Tordella: I think I had the dubious distinction of being worried about putting together the first, what today we would call the CCP. In those days, it was the Intercept Deployment Plan.

U/I Male: Plan, right. IDP.

David: What was the CIP?

Tordella: No, IDP—Intercept Deployment Plan.

David?: And there's (B% Common) Objective Lists at that time...just about that time, too, wasn't it? From the Secretary of Def... From (B% USAFSS)?

Fontayn?: (2-3G) Committee. (2-3B)...

David: I see Art Levenson over here. And one of the big problems you had in the old days was O64, I believe was the Techniques Div... (XB by several people talking at once.)

Canine: They wouldn't let me in there! ((Laughter heard).)

U/I Male: Yeah, they wouldn't... ((More laughter heard.))

David: And it seemed to be a place where the personalities gathered. And you wanted to get all these professionals back out into the operations and start being more intimate with the operators. Art, can you talk about that for a minute?

Levenson: Well, General Canine, I recall you made a few efforts to abolish it, but we somehow survived and...

Canine: No, I didn't make any efforts to abolish it. Those were... There were guys that wanted me to abolish it. ((Laughter heard.)) But Bill Friedman wouldn't let me. He said that was the only good joint I had in the Agency. ((Chuckling heard.))

David: They acted as a special task force.

U/I Male: Yeah.

David: Wherever there was a problem, and they would plunge in...

U/I Male: But then, you created (B% ADVA), and that...

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U/I Male: Well, that was a...

Canine: (XB.) A lot of people...

Speakers: ((Other speakers are talking simultaneously at this point; unintelligible.))

Canine: Huh?

Tordella?: (3-4B).

David: Remember during the reorganization, (B% Corson)... And the study came up with a new reorganization. Then there were business management groups...

Canine: Mm hmm.

David: And whatnot. And there was an Office of Advance Studies.

Canine: Hmm.

David: And there was a General Studies...

Tordella?: There was the whole Russian problem...

U/I Male: Yeah.

Canine: Well, that's the... We're talking about the corner room now?

U/I Male: That's right.

David: That's right. That's it.

Canine: Well, like all management studies ((he pauses))... Which...? What was the name...? What's (B% Corson's) outfit named—for the...?

U/I Male: Kinsey?

U/I Male: Kinsey. ((Other speakers also chime in with "Kinsey."))

Canine: Kinsey and Company, Booz Allen, all those outfits: they have very...they're very able, but they don't know anything about your...the business that they're in. And I did some of the things that they recommended. Some of them, I threw in the waste basket. They had very able people working on this thing. Some of them were...lived around there for a long time—and told us a lot of things. But some of the things they didn't...just didn't know: what to do, what the requirements were. We were long on technical brains in NSA and we were very short on management brains in NSA. I expect that... Well, that's none of my business. ((Laughter heard.)) I imagine that General Carter's having much the same problem that I had. Each succeeding director has problems much like the problems of the preceding director, I expect. But there were...I could go out and throw a rock and hit somebody if I had a technical problem. I had a terrible problem finding people that could manage.

David: Is this...?

Canine: So we started management schools all over the Agency.

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David: By sending the students out to various schools all over the country?

Canine: All over the country...

David: Including Harvard.

Canine: Including Harvard. I was the first government outfit, as far as I know, that sent people up to Harvard to have...to get rich quick—though it wasn't very quick. ((Laughter heard.)) They went to school every...all day for a long time. We moved them...We just moved them and their families up to Cambridge.

David: I think one of the graduates of that school is Jack Gregg, sitting with us here.

Gregg: Yes, I was there. General, hearing these comments bring back many nostalgic remembrance of you and your administration. And one that I recall rather vividly was a comment that you used to make about management. And it was that you were in favor of participative management and you wanted everyone to give you their recommendations and opinions, but...and you wanted everyone to vote. But in the final analysis, you didn't have to count their votes—and perhaps wouldn't. ((Chuckling heard.)) Would you care to comment on that, sir? ((More chuckling heard.))

Canine: Well, I meant that exactly. I asked for advice. I didn't guarantee to take it. My...I still say that there are many votes that shouldn't be counted. And...

U/I Male: You used to say it was a democratic organization.

Canine: I said it wasn't. No, I said this is no democracy. ((Laughter heard.))

U/I Male: That's what it was! ((More laughter heard.))

Canine: This is no...I may have added a couple of words to define democracy ((laughter heard)), but...

Moody?: *ET 20:40 I quote you all the time in this area to my (2-3B by laughter).

Canine: I insisted on being a dictator—not like DeGaulle, but a reasonable dictator. ((Chuckling heard.))

U/I Male: Benevolent.

Canine: A benevolent dictator. Well, I don't like that word "benevolent." ((Laughter heard.)) I don't think anybody ever heard me use that.

U/I Male: General, I recall as part of the jargon that identifies you with some of the old timers around here. Steve mentioned one of the references you used to use quite a bit was "unreconstructed rebel." Another you used to use quite frequently in talking to us was "one- and two-feather Indians." And I always wondered...I had my own ideas, but I wonder what you really meant?

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- Canine:** Well, that... The Indians were graded largely by the kind of feathers they had in their headdress. Chiefs wore a full headdress and the scalp takers had successively fewer. And when an Indian was admitted to the fighting part of the tribe, he at least had one feather in his headdress. That put him pretty low down. That's what I meant by one or two f...one- and two- ...I don't think I ever said "two feathers." One feather! ((Laughter heard.)) I...
- U/I Male:** No, I got two! ((He laughs.))
- Canine:** I insist on being quoted correctly ((more laughter heard)), if you're going to quote me.
- David:** Now, there's one thing that seems to always come up and... If a man works for this... if a person works for this agency that somehow the bug gets him—and you just stay with the organization. Even though you can earn a little more money on the outside—or a lot more money—it seems to hold the people here. And they get into some kind of a lock in to the activity, and it becomes such a part of them that they can't leave. We have Dr. Jacobs, who left to become an executive with the Air Force. And he found that he had to come back. It was just so much a part of him. And don't you all agree that this does become somehow an intricate part of your personality and (4-5G by speaking).
- U/I Male:** Well, (2-3G) (B% used to) refer to us as the "unique breed of cats." He said he couldn't understand why we stayed and he couldn't understand why we didn't leave.
- David:** It seems like somehow or other, the activity... Would you say it's the activity that holds us here or...? Juanita, what holds you here? You were a... one of the very old...
- U/I Male:** ((Laughter heard.)) She's not that old.
- Moody:** (B% Generally), they tell me I'm young! ((More laughter heard.))
- U/I Male:** (B% You're not very old; you're young.)) ((Audio blocked by others speaking and laughing.))
- U/I Male:** She's one of the young old... one of the young old ones! ((Speakers all continue to talk and laugh.))
- Moody:** I don't have any place to go at this point. ((Chuckling heard.)) Well, I...
- Canine:** We have no competition for people. You can't just go out on the street and get a cryptologic job, Steve.
- David:** Yeah, that's (B% right OR what I)...
- Canine:** That's what I've said in... many times and in many different ways. That is the commercial end of the thing. There is something about working in the cryptologic field, though, that gets into the hides of people that work here.

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And you can't drive them away. I expect that's...that is the reason that there are so many gray-headed people around this place. ((He pauses.)) Well past the time that they were big contributors to the cryptologic problem, they just stay.

David: ((Recording stops here. When it resumes, Mr. David is talking as follows:)) We're trying to limit these talks to half-hour series, so that it can be played in part rather than in the total rerun. So we'll break now for ((audio stops here at this point))... ((TR NOTE: Original transcript adds the following to the end of Mr. David's statement: "for a 15-minute recess."))

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