

Twining: Oh, it was, it was, oh it was!

Q: How closely did you keep to it, as a development?

Twining: Oh, I checked with Benny, and I told Benny, I'd see him all the time, "Benny, listen, I don't want you to ever come in here unless you're in trouble." And he came in damn few times. I said, "You run it. God damn, I don't know anything about missiles, but I know you've got the best people in the world running it, and if they can't do it, and your manning system is no good, we're going to fail, but you run this thing and I'm going to leave it up to you." And he was a pretty young boy then. Here's what you're up against. These are the pressures on the management approach. There are a number of skeptics among the scientific fraternity who constantly derided the soundness of the ICBM program. I need only to mention Vannevar Bush's book. It emphasized logically that this nation could not develop an ICBM for many years to come. ^{In this connection,} Now, this was true. Many adherents to the Bush philosophy were generally in favor of the incremental approach, taking a little bite off at a time. We'd have never got this ass across the board.

Q: This was a crash program?



Twining: Yes. They would move ahead first with an Intermediate Range

Ballistic Missile, an ICBM, and then go to ICBM. Their briefs were bristly backed with such comments as "Let's walk before we run." Fortunately the position of these scientists did not prevail. It could easily have been so, had it not been for the knowledge, strength and stature of the Van Neumann group. See, we established this group first off, the Van Neumann group, and everybody in the country knew that they were the best.

Q: Were they fully cognizant of the Russian program?

Twining: Oh, yes.

Q: Did they get any help from the Russian -- ?

Twining: -- we had very little of it, very little. We couldn't get the dope on it.

Q: It was almost an independent development, then.

Twining: Yes. I want to say one thing. . .

The Minuteman program, that was a smaller missile program and the same thing to a lesser degree, not quite as -- I was not in that thing -- Tommy White. But they did the same thing.

The Polaris program was done somewhat like that.



Q: How close was the President to this development?

Twining: Oh, he had his reports. He had his own scientific advisors over there, you know. He had a boy from -- Kistiakowski, Gillian and that crowd. They were right on his private staff, and they kept him informed. That was a great period, I'll tell you. They really moved on that thing. And what marked me, I've heard a lot of this -- when the war ended, we knew nothing about ballistic missiles, zero. Of course, our scientists had been working on this a long time, leading scientists. They knew about all these forms and what they had to do and all that.

Q: And these men of German background had experience in Germany.

Twining: Surely. And when they would diagnose something and tell us, and then to go ahead and make it or do something, by God, they were right all the time. Pretty soon -- it didn't take you long to have faith in these people.

Q: That's what you acquired out in Wright Field, wasn't it?

Twining: Oh yes, I've got it in here somewhere, Benny said, if we had to do a thing like this today, under the present management of the Secretary of Defense, we could not accomplish this kind of a thing.



Q: When a program like this is under way, how closely is the Congress or the key men in the Congress, how closely are they keyed in on all this?

Twining: They're keyed in pretty well. See, Shriver would have to report to them. The Air Force would report. My own staff knew all about this. They followed it. They kept up to date, and they would testify on the Hill all the time about it, and then Shriver would be called in as special witness, and he would tell, and they were very happy with the whole program. That went along real well.

Q: And this was all done in secret. It wasn't in full committee ever, was it?

Twining: Oh, no. No, no. A lot of it was highly secret. They couldn't do much about it. But it was a great program.

Q: Well, it didn't require any special legislation to weigh the contract procedures and all of that? When you want to certain factories, certain manufacturers?

Twining: No, we just moved right in and violated all the rules. We didn't have the procedures. They knew the bill would be paid, and



if one
were asked to do something by Shriver's group, a company
say, they knew right away they were going to get paid and
everything was all right. They went ahead and did the job.

Q: The statutes weren't actually changed then --

Twining: -- no, no--

Q: -- just ignored?

Twining: That's right. That's right. Yes, we accomplished a
great deal, I'll tell you.

Q: There's another subject that came up early in the Eisenhower
Administration, and that was the whole Far Eastern situation
centering around Taiwan, Formosa, Formosa Doctrine, Dulles, 1954.

Twining: -- yes -- yes -- yes, that's right --

Q: Tell me about that.

Twining: Well, I think Ike handled that pretty well. We went over
there and participated, you know, actually helped them, but we
didn't get into combat, and this gave the Chinese a great lift,

