

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

VLADIMIR LEHOVICH

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is the 25th of March, 1997. This is an interview with Vladimir Lehovich. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Vlad and I are old friends. Vlad, can we start off by when and where were you born and can you tell me a bit about your family?

LEHOVICH: I was born in New York in 1939.

Q: When you say "New York," you mean the city?

LEHOVICH: I mean the city, Manhattan. I'm using shorthand. One from New York says "I'm from the Bronx or Brooklyn or Manhattan." I was born and raised in New York and went off to college when I was just short of 18. I went to Cambridge, Mass. to Harvard College. But other than that, it was a New York upbringing. My parents were both Russians. My father was born in St. Petersburg in 1901 and my mother was born the daughter of a Russian diplomat in Rome in 1908. They came to New York at various times. First, my father in 1924, and 1930 in the case of my mother. They met there, got married there, and that's where the great clan of Lehovich grew up.

Q: Now, what type of business was your father in?

LEHOVICH: He was by proclivity a historian who joined a bank as a young man, got locked into it with the depression, and stayed in banking his whole life and wrote history on the margins of his other work. He was a fine scholar and historian, and an excellent writer.

Q: What sort of family did your father come from in St. Petersburg?

LEHOVICH: He was from a family that had tended to be career military and career civil service for probably about 70 years before he was born. His father, my grandfather, was a general in the Russian army and was commander of Russian artillery during World War One. The family would originally go back to Polish/Lithuanian origins but had been Russified for a good 250 years.

Q: You say your mother was-

LEHOVICH: My mother was from an old, princely Russian family, the Ourusoffs. She came in 1930 from France. She had finished school there and studied art in America at Parson's School of Design and was on her way to a professional career in art. As in the case of my father, she got caught up by the Depression and wound up doing other things for a living. She worked in several places. She was a salesgirl for Bloomingdale's, Macy's and Gimbel's. She got fired from all three eventually for being rather candid with the customers about where the good bargains were and where the bad bargains were. In hindsight this was lucky because in 1934, she linked up with a new project called the School of American Ballet, which was the creature of George Balanchine, Lincoln Kirstein, and Vladimir Dimitriev, who was the third of the founders. They created the School of American Ballet, which over time became legendary in the American ballet world. She was with them at the creation as a secretary and quickly became a good manager and later on the school's executive director. Kirstein and Balanchine branched out to create the New York City Ballet Company and basically define American classical ballet for decades to come. She stayed with the school until her death in 1975, just over 40 years.

Q: Tell me about being a young lad growing up. First of all, did you have any brothers and sisters?

LEHOVICH: I have one sister who is a bit older than I. She is a teacher of French in New Jersey.

Q: What was it like growing up in this certainly Russophile - I'm not sure if it was Russophile at that point - I assume it wasn't Sovietophile.

LEHOVICH: It was Russophile and also Americanophile.

Q: But this family had certainly deep roots in another country, but also deep routes in the art history world and the history world and all that and in the middle of Manhattan.

LEHOVICH: Well, it was very exciting and it was exciting intellectually. New York is always a terrific place. When one has nothing to do in New York, go out and take a walk in the streets. The biggest hobby of most people, certainly most young people in New York, is to drop everything they're doing and go out. There are a hundred things you do when you go out. I used to just take walks. I walked over huge parts of the city. I also did a lot of art. I got very interested in art as an observer, not as a practitioner. The town is museum rich, so one samples those places and eventually gets to know sort of all the collections in town.

Q: Where did you go to school?

LEHOVICH: I went to a fine old school called Collegiate School, which is on West 77th in New York, and has the distinction of being the oldest private school in America. It was founded by conservative estimates in 1638 and by radical estimates in 1628. It ceased to exist for about three years; it was closed during the American Revolution, but otherwise it's been functioning for quite a while. It's a Dutch school by tradition and is closely tied to the Dutch West Reformed Church next door to it. It has the great virtue of beating the King James Bible into the heads of its student body four days a week every week. Next to Shakespeare, there is nothing better. Four days a week goes a long way. You really get to know that stuff. King James knew a thing or two. He knew how to write.

Q: When you left, how far did that school take you?

LEHOVICH: That school took me from about the third or fourth grade through the 12th grade. It took me a long way.

Q: Did you have any interest in foreign affairs at this point?

LEHOVICH: I was always interested in international affairs and foreign affairs. I started to read "The New York Times" when I was a kid. I didn't invest a lot of time in it, but I'm sure that I went through the front page probably four to six days a week starting maybe at age 12 or 13. The foreign affairs part of it was interesting. I won a foreign affairs prize. When I was a kid, these things were pretty easy to win. I noticed looking back many years later, my high school yearbook said that what I wanted to do was be a diplomat. Makes sense. So, that's what I did.

Q: What sent you off to Harvard?

LEHOVICH: Well, Harvard was a school which was very attractive and I had a cousin there. So, I visited him, decided that I really liked the place, and they were charitable enough to admit me.

Q: You were born in what year again?

LEHOVICH: September 28, 1939, 26 days after World War II began.

Q: When did you get to Harvard?

LEHOVICH: I got to Harvard when I was a couple of months shy of 18 in 1957 and stayed there for four years.

Q: So, you were '57 to '61.

LEHOVICH: That's right.

Q: What was your major or majors?

LEHOVICH: I wound up majoring in economics. I probably should have majored in something else. It is not unjustly called a dry profession, a dismal science.

Q: A dismal science.

LEHOVICH: On the other hand, it's very useful because I still think about many things in conceptual terms as an economist. I haven't practiced economics in the Foreign Service, but it's very hard to do politics or anything else without attention to economics.

Q: Where you exposed to the usual political science, history, as well as English?

LEHOVICH: I did a silly thing. I avoided the things I was best at and liked most. I figured I'd do them anyhow. So, I tended to do the things that I might not do otherwise. What I liked most at that time were things like English literature; I enjoyed it a lot. I had by then gotten very interested in Russian language and Russian literature. A small anecdote, Stu, if I may. I hated Latin when I was in the eighth grade. I was in a strict school which required two foreign languages, one old and one new. The price for not taking Latin (I extricated myself from that) was that I had to study Russian in a structured environment with a qualified instructor three hours a week, which I did every Saturday morning. This fellow had the wisdom to realize I wasn't going to write anything for him no matter how much he insisted because 13-year-olds don't if they don't want to. On the other hand, he knew that I'd read anything he told me to read. So, this man started to give me bigger and bigger amounts of good literature to read every week. I wound up reading an awful lot of the classics in Russian when I was in my teens. Very useful.

Q: When you were growing up, did you speak Russian at home with your family?

LEHOVICH: We spoke both languages pretty much interchangeably.

Q: Just as an aside going back there, did you run into some of the great figures in the ballet and all that?

LEHOVICH: Oh, absolutely. Yes. I'm glad you asked. Great figures in the ballet. We ran into virtually all the front-page figures in the ballet at that time. That included all sorts of good dancers and choreographers and once in a while a pianist thrown in here and there. Very nice people. Very little money, liked to have a good time.

Q: They probably enjoyed being able to go to somebody's house to get some food.

LEHOVICH: Yes, they liked to get some food. Stu, at that time, caviar was very cheap. I remember having lots of caviar as a kid.

Q: By the way, from this home environment, were you picking up anything about the Soviet

Union? Often in emigre households, the old country is the old country and particularly something as controversial as the Soviet Union. I mean, were you sort of getting anything from your mother's knee and other low joints, that sort of thing?

LEHOVICH: No, I was picking up very little about the Soviet Union, a lot about Russian culture and very little about the Soviet Union. It was not a hot topic of discussion, partly because there was no particular need to discuss it. It wasn't controversial. It was clearly a lousy system, everyone in our household knew it, and that was not a point at issue.

Q: Back at Harvard, were you caught up in sort of the Kennedy enthusiasm during the 1960 election and all?

LEHOVICH: That's a very good question because, yes, and no. I wasn't caught up in the election campaign the way that some of my friends at college were. But I was very clearly caught up in the public service campaign. The interesting thing is that in my senior year at Harvard, when I took the Foreign Service written and oral exams, there were 22,000 people in America who applied to take the written exam. That was just a spectacularly high number. It is by any standards, before then and now, a terribly high number. The only thing that I see that explains it was the popularity that Kennedy projected into public service, particularly among people in their late teens and early '20s. No question about it. So, of course, in that sense I was very much caught up.

Q: What about Henry Kissinger? Did he at all come across your bows?

LEHOVICH: Not at all. Henry Kissinger once telephoned me when I was a senior to ask me to go and interpret for him for some seance he was setting up for a group of Russian arms control people. I was in the middle of final exams or something like that. Never met the guy until many years later. My recollection of him at Harvard was as a rather quiet fellow.

Q: From sort of your Harvard colleagues and all this, where were they pointed? What were some of your friends' interests?

LEHOVICH: Well, a lot from that vintage went into one form or another of public work. I'll talk about several of my classmates. Who went into the foreign affairs community. They include folks like John Campbell, who wrote the "Foreign Affairs Fudge Factory" and founded "Foreign Policy Magazine," at least, was managing editor, and then died in his early '30s; Tony Lake; Alec Watson; Tim Wirth. Then moving a little further afield, we had Marty Feldstein, who became head of the Council of Economic Advisors, an absolutely brilliant and delightful fellow; Supreme Court Justice David Souter, who not surprisingly, nobody I've ever met remembers as an undergraduate. He was a stealth commodity when he was at college, as he was later on. I'm sure he is a very fine legal scholar. Then we had Barney Frank, another classmate, now a congressman. We had people coming out into public service from all over the place from that vintage.

Q: Tell me, sometimes that university is thrown at social historians and they say, "Ah,

Harvard." They tend to think that people who go from Harvard and then move on or something are the scions of great wealth. What was your impression of your class, of where they were coming from?

LEHOVICH: Just of the little sampling that I mentioned, the majority (and I won't go over all the names) would have come from families that didn't fit that characterization at all. The social standards at that place were not social in a traditional sense. They tended to be much more intellectual. One's status was not defined by money or by lineage. Nor, incidentally by things like clubs or fraternities which, while they existed, had a very minor role for most of the people. In that sense, it was much more like a community devoted to a particular art or a particular form of music or a particular idea might be. In this case, the community was very much an academic city. Excellence tended to be measured that way.

Q: Vlad, you graduated in 1961. What were you pointed towards?

LEHOVICH: Well, by then, I had basically joined the Foreign Service. I was invited to join it when I was a senior and told that I would likely wait a year.

Q: You took the Foreign Service exam?

LEHOVICH: I took the Foreign Service exam in my senior year in the fall, the written exam, and then the oral one in the spring of '61. The oral exam at that time was an older system, more "subjective." There were three examiners. I'm not convinced that there is any difference between something that has three human beings and is labeled "objective" and something that has three human beings and is not labeled "objective."

Q: I think so much of the exam is done to make sure that there won't be lawsuits. Could you describe what you recall of the oral exam? I mean, the kind of things that happened.

LEHOVICH: This one was in Boston - early morning session, three examiners. They weren't being tricky, they weren't being mean. They asked a couple of very subtle questions based on biographic information. One had to give them a little biographic essay before. The purpose of those questions was to see how much one had learned from the peculiarities of one's own biography. I was quite interested in that. Then they asked various questions about people, places, and things, and about in economics. A serious discussion and a friendly gathering. That went on for about an hour and a half. They had all the information from the written exam, which at that time also included a language component. It was quite a formidable written exam, more formidable, I think, than later on because at that time there was a separate entire hour of testing on language. It was like one more hour of long distance running. It was a grueling process. Anyhow, they had all of those results. I thought it was a perfectly valid way to do it. I say this because since then I've worked with the Board of Examiners, and in our times the old oral exam approach of the kind I've described is often criticized as being unobjective. I thought it was a rigorous, informative way to test people.

Q: Were there any questions that either you did well in or poorly in, really challenging?

LEHOVICH: No.

Q: So, you came into the Foreign Service when?

LEHOVICH: Right after college. I followed up on a lead and called USIA and very soon found myself in a little group of people in Washington preparing to go off with a set of cultural exhibits to tour the Soviet Union. I went with two cultural exhibits, one on medicine and one on transportation.

Q: This is 1961.

LEHOVICH: In '61 and '62. I toured it for 9 or 10 months, from September 1961 until May of the following year. We had a grand time. We went to places like Stalingrad, Moscow, Kharkov, Kiev, and put up our show with about 20 guides. Our show was absolutely mobbed. We had as many as 10,00 visitors a day. I remember at that time I was keeping an informal log of my own social activities. My count was that I was invited by an average of 30-40 people a day to go and do something afterwards, at the end of the day. I was keeping this mental log because we were all a little worried about having the KGB take care of our free time for us. If you get 30 or 40 spontaneous invitations a day, you're changing the odds a great deal in your own favor. I simply followed my instinct and was out probably five to seven nights a week with some or other character or other.

Q: I think it's very interesting because contact between the East and West was normally so circumscribed in this. What type of things would you be doing?

LEHOVICH: A very good area -because it gets a little into the social history of the former Soviet Union. This was the Khrushchev period, '61 and '62. There was no question that it was much freer than things had been a few years earlier. This was the high Khrushchev period. Things were easier then than they became a few years later. So, I had a surprising amount of communication compared to what I had expected. There was a fair amount of surveillance, I think. Anytime one was out more than once with the same person, there would either be surveillance or the other party would be contacted. There was a real fine calculus of how much you want to see people on the one hand because you are attracted to them because they're nice people, and how much you don't want to put them in a tight spot. What one did, it's very simple. One went outdoors. One goes outdoors for two or three reasons. The abysmal housing shortage which has been the hallmark of the Soviet Union; the horrible cold nature of the winter; the shortness of the day. And, no privacy. All this means you're stuck and there's nowhere to go. So, what does one do? One spends enormous amounts of time taking walks. That was probably the biggest single thing that I did with any of the large number of folks that I got together with at one time or another in the former Soviet Union, take walks. It's a little like Adam and Eve. "Adam, do you love me?" "Of course, Eve, who else?" "Did you take a walk?" "Of course, what else is there to do?" There isn't much else to do. You can go to communal centers. You can go to some rather foul movie theaters. You couldn't really go to restaurants, normally speaking. They either didn't exist or were too crowded to get in, a real short commodity. Cafes were a little

hard for the same reason. There really weren't places like that were accessible. So, one took long walks and got to know neighborhoods very well, very enjoyable.

Q: What did you find yourself imparting to the people you would walk with and they to you?

LEHOVICH: We had fairly endless conversations that would be a lot about society. A lot of it would be their showing me what was going on. With people one got to know very well, there was a very quick transition to a whole set of frustrations about the environment they were coming from. In the case of several people, the relationship was heavily based on humor. I'm a good audience and if somebody is a good raconteur or a good joke teller, I'm a person who is happy to shut up for very large periods of time. I listen and, above all, I laugh. Laughter is very spontaneous. I had a couple of people I met over there who were great raconteurs. I was a very good listener. Afterwards, I wrote down some of their best products and for a short time had one of the better joke books.

Q: So many of the jokes were nationally political, weren't they?

LEHOVICH: The jokes were delightfully political, a lot of them. They were basically jokes that were based on the sadness of the human condition or the sadness of the political condition or the sadness of the lack of food or the sadness of the shortness of the male organ or some other thing like that. In that sense, they're very similar to Yiddish humor and come from a mournful period.

Q: I always think of a sardine as a whale that has passed through all phases of socialism.

LEHOVICH: Actually, it's very good because it gives wonderful insights into a society. It's also terribly funny.

Q: Yes. Our society doesn't lend itself to spontaneous humor.

LEHOVICH: I think we're being badly hurt by what we see on television, one liners, where some bozo is writing poor jokes and it passes for humor. A lot of it is sarcasm packaged as a joke. I agree with you, Stu.

Q: In the first place, what did USIA before you went out; and, at the time, did you have an equivalent to a den mother or somebody who was trying to keep you under control?

LEHOVICH: Stu, thank you. I want to talk for minute or two about an amazing thing USIA did then. USIA took groups like the one I was a member of - i.e., groups of 10 to 20 people that they were sending off to a place like the former Soviet Union. Before sending them off to do, in effect, high class propaganda or high class publicity work on behalf of the US, they gave us a training program. My training program at USIA was two weeks. Many years later, it's still one of the most brilliant pieces of education and communication I've ever seen. For that two week period, it was run by Paul Conroy and Charles Vetter. Chuck Vetter is still around. Whenever you see Chuck Vetter, remember he was a terrific

educator on behalf of USIA, as was Paul Conroy. They ran something not too different from what had been done with some of the civil rights crusaders. They were given training in how to react to a hostile environment without either imploding or exploding. We were given much the same stuff. We worked with these folks and then later with each other for a couple of weeks on dealing with issues, with likely questions, and with different forms of unpleasantness or confrontation that might be thrown at us - a very useful experience.

We did have some keen leaders or den mothers who went with us. They were very unusual people as well. One was Fran Macy, one of the most distinguished young public servants I had ever met at that time. Another was Jack Masey, a man with artistic flair and a terrific leader. They were not related. They both happened to be together and were very much our leaders at that time. On one of these exhibits, we were led by Andrew Falkiewicz, a USIA officer. Andy, in addition to being a very smart and very entertaining man and a good leader, was also a concert-quality pianist, a mathematician, and a very good chess player. Quite an unusual guy. Career USIA officer. I met him later in Vietnam when we were both down there.

Q: Were you provoked at all? I mean, I assume you would be getting up and explaining what various things were.

LEHOVICH: Yes, we were provoked quite a bit. It was typically done by these young people who were local party activists who got their kicks by going out on weekends with red armbands on their arms and enforcing public order and doing things like that. I guess for the first week or so it was pretty daunting to be baited by these people, but not for long. The reason is that about a week later we got better at it than they were. How many ways can you be abrasive to somebody that the person won't figure out after a while? You learn certain techniques of saying nothing for a while, knowing perfectly well what you're going to say a minute later when the fellow digs himself a little deeper or you let other people tell him to shut up because he's offensive.

Q: I'm sure, in a way, in a crowd like that, you're not going to find, you might say, the full discipline that you would find maybe in some other type of meeting.

LEHOVICH: In public, we never had to deal with truly gifted opponents because they weren't there to bait us. If they were, they were being quiet.

Q: Were you feeling any of the political tensions that were coming up about this time? We're within a few months of the rather difficult time for Kennedy after his first meeting with Khrushchev in Vienna, which didn't go well at all. We were calling up the Reserves. I was here in Washington and we really felt the pressure was moving up at that particular point.

LEHOVICH: It was. Later, not too long later, with the Cuban Missile Crisis, it moved up further. The amazing thing is, at this time, the only real tension that one felt in an international relations sense was Russian-Chinese relations. Somehow, this was the hot topic. To the extent that the Russians at that time were raising international topics

spontaneously in private or group settings, that was very much the direction. It was very clear that something was changing and it was clear that the word had gone out that the Chinese were entering the bad list. The Americans had also been on a bad list, but it was so much better than a year or two before. We were pretty easy to deal with at that time.

Q: Did you find that you or any of your colleagues - were there attempts by the KGB to compromise you?

LEHOVICH: Yes, there were attempts to compromise a couple of my other colleagues. I was not put in that particular situation. I think what they were doing was conducting very intensive biographic intelligence on me, personality surveillance, psychological profiling. I think they were looking at me much more in terms of the long term than anything they wanted to mess up right there and then. I presume they knew that I was going to join the diplomatic service. I didn't conceal this kind of thing. So, the KGB was actually very decent to me. I knew that they were around all the time. They got me cabs without my knowing it or asking for it. Once, they pulled me out of a very nasty situation with a half-crazy drunk whose hobby was fist-fighting. He was very good at it. A half crazy drunk on a snowy night attacked me and was amusing himself by having me on the ground and was stomping on my ears. That's a very frustrating situation, Stu, when some guy is stomping on your ears, when you're lying on the ground, with the heel of his foot. Luckily, I had a hat on, which didn't come off. Even more luckily, a taxi pulled up, which I should have noticed earlier was in the neighborhood because of me. The driver got out and I saw from the ground out of the corner of my eye, he took the guy who was stomping on me, he hit him only once in the back of the neck, and then he stacked him like a big bag of potatoes against the wall. Then he changed the expression on his face to a friendly one and in a friendly way asked me if I wanted a taxi ride. That was the KGB. So, I didn't have any hostile behavior. The rules we played by, those of us who were reasonable about it, was not to make life hard for those guys and we didn't.

Q: I would have thought though, using young people - I've had problems with young Foreign Service officers who start playing games. I think, as you get older, you understand your surveillants are people doing their job and you don't play games. Why make it more difficult for them?

LEHOVICH: There's a big temptation to do it. I remember clearly that we were told in a very unambiguous way before and during not to do that. Apparently, it was convincing. The real reason you don't do it is because they have one of the dumber jobs in the country, and they were not being well-rewarded for it. It's not a particular glamorous job to tail people like me around. If you don't bother them, they think they've done a great job. They think they've followed you all day, know a lot about you, and have not fallen into disgrace and you haven't made an obscene gesture at them or anything like that. The only thing I ever did to those guys, which I think was a good thing to do on balance, was one evening when I was with a young lady at a cafe, one of these hard to find cafes in Moscow, called "The Cafe Lyra," which was open rather late every day and had a good omelette and very cheap champagne, a very drinkable kind. I sent a bottle of champagne and a glass with my compliments to the KGB monitor who followed me around most evenings. This fellow

then left. I didn't mean for him to leave. I hoped he might enjoy the champagne, but he left. I felt more like James Bond than I ever had before or ever have since. I don't think that was an unfriendly thing to do to the guy.

Q: Did you find there was interest in the fact that, obviously, Vladimir Lehovich is not Joe Smith. I mean, the fact about your family and all of that.

LEHOVICH: There was. That tended to be something one had to get past in every conversation. Had to get past because for me, at least, it became very monotonous. Interestingly enough, one got past it very quickly because they were actually at that time much more interested in someone as a representative of another society with whom they could communicate in their language. But it was certainly an interest.

Q: What about connections with the American Ballet company and all of that? Did you find your mother's connection there. Was ballet at all a subject of interest at that time as far as American ballet goes?

LEHOVICH: Well, it was unknown. They were very full of their own ballet. At that time, their own ballet was absolutely excellent, but it had sort of the quality of a fine piece of Thai sculpture from the Ayuthya period. When you have a fine piece of Thai sculpture from the Ayuthya period, it's the same for 300 years. It's absolutely gorgeous but each rendition is the same. Russian ballet was gorgeous stuff, but had been done the same way for quite a long time, with sumptuous costume and great style. Unfortunately, America hadn't yet visited. They would get there soon afterwards. In serious art circles, American dance caused quite a sensation. Sorry if I go on about this stuff. I really enjoy the arts; it's an exciting theme..

Q: No, I'm trying to capture the times. Were there any elements of the United States that the people you would meet would particularly dwell on? I'm not talking about the ones who were set up to criticize you, but of genuine concerns. I'm thinking of race or the role of women.

LEHOVICH: I'll tell you, one wanted to get past that fairly soon. These issues, while real ones, were raised by people who had come with the intention of disrupting public conversation. The thing that was really interesting and the thing that people wanted to know about when they could speak more privately were not social issues or politics. They wanted to find out if it was true that... For example: "Is it true that in your society, you can get a telephone in a month?" "No, it's not. You can get a telephone in a day." "Well, I don't believe that." "Anyhow, you can get a telephone." "Is it true that the American economy is as generous to its people as we always heard?" It was asked in a hundred ways. There were also questions about freedoms -what you can read in the papers, what you can write about. The freedom that was the show stopper of all of them - so basic that people often did not realize that it existed - was that there was no national identity card in America, no system of required registration for where one lived, could live, that one could go and change jobs and change locations and seek one's employment or fortune or education anywhere in the country. This was the most unbelievable thing of all and still is to some

degree. Amazing stuff. The political stuff was rhetoric for a public setting, in front of other people. These were the real questions, and they were really very exciting. Freedom to travel abroad, that type of thing. America had enjoyed a golden image in Russia from probably the 1910s on. It got heightened by some very good Soviet authors in the 1920 and 1930s and by word of mouth.

Q: And also World War II and the GIs who came over and all that.

LEHOVICH: I remember one guy who came up to me at one of these exhibits who had a rather fanatical look to him. He couldn't have been more unpleasant. He made life miserable for me for 35 minutes with nasty put-down comments, political, personal, and everything else. I really didn't like this guy at all. So, when I had a chance, I went off to spend a few quiet moments. We took breaks every once in a while. This guy comes up to me. I figured it was going to take all my self control with this guy. He comes up to me, but he's a different person. He comes up to me and says, "I have a question for you." I'm a nice guy, so instead of telling him to go to Hell, I said, "What's your question?" He says, "Listen. Do you know Brooklyn? Do you know such and such street in Brooklyn? That's where my brothers live. Now, what I want to do is, I want to talk to you about New York. I want to talk to you about Brooklyn." This guy had spent 35 minutes making an artificial spectacle of being rude and negative to me so that he could then get away with it when he came up privately to make contact about his relatives overseas. Very interesting. That's word of mouth. Those people knew.

Q: Did you find yourself dealing with people who had such a rosy view of the United States that you want to say, "Yes, but we've got our problems. I mean, this is not a perfect society."

LEHOVICH: Stu, that was a constant problem. There's a question of ethics. If people had too rosy a view, you had to let them down. But you had to do it gently. If you let them down too fast, they would think "God dammit, we've got another one of these fellow travelers from America over here." But there were people whose views, for example, of the racial society were totally rosy. They'd say, "We know that was absolute baloney, all the propaganda we're told, blah, blah, blah." I would have to say, "No, that's a case where some of what you're hearing is not boloney." But the too rosy a view has been, of course, a problem not only in the former Soviet Union, but it's a problem in all parts of the world where there is a notion that the streets of America are paved with gold.

Q: As you say, it's a matter of ethics, but it's also a matter of practicality. People should understand that we have our problems and we're wrestling with them and there is a lot of unfinished work to do.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely.

Q: Vlad, as we move away from this particular episode- But it's fascinating. This is why I wanted to spend some time on it. Obviously, you were going to go into the Foreign Service. What did you come away from the Soviet Union with, the system and...

LEHOVICH: Very simple ideas. I came away with the idea that a highly intelligent person working for years and years could not invent a worse system, primarily economic. I felt that the uniquely bad features of the Soviet Union were economic. The reason is that you can find repressive politics in a lot of other places. You could find repressive politics all over Europe in the 1930s, not just Germany, not just Italy, but it was all those poor new democracies that became little dictatorships. But you couldn't find an economy that had managed to underachieve so badly for so long. The Soviets could go into outer space, but they couldn't make toilet paper and a whole host of other things that are absolutely basic. An absolutely miserable economic system. The other thing I found which has fascinated me for years later and also in other situations, I discovered the ability of a whole society to repress certain kinds of knowledge and information. I dealt a lot with people my own age. I was 21 and 22 when I was over there. I dealt a lot with people in their late teens, early '20s, mid '20s, bright people. I fell in with a group of folks who were musicians and were very gifted kids in Moscow (I had a lot of fun with them) from privileged families and in several other places. These folks had much less knowledge of what had happened in their own country in the 1930s than I did at that time and other reasonably well informed Americans in reading the newspapers. You didn't have to be a scholar. This was pretty obvious stuff. You didn't have to be steeped in Joseph McCarthy; this was obvious stuff. I saw the same phenomenon later in Germany and then Austria. One just finds it time and time again. Society will omit from family discourse and from the oral tradition that which it doesn't like.

But one of the fascinating things I learned from Russia and from that year there is something a lot of reporters also learned - a lot of reporters and a lot of young people who were going over there at that time from America and other parts of the West thinking, "Wow, we're going to really find out, is this place great? Is it awful? How much propaganda have we been getting?" The amazing thing is, these folks would come back and say, "It wasn't propaganda, what we heard." This was the case with some very good reporters over there at that time. Basically a lot of them had gone over feeling that maybe this was a lot better experiment than we thought. They came back from there thinking it's a total failure. Very useful to go there. I took my kids many years later to Czechoslovakia and Hungary. This was before the collapse of communism when my kids were young. In three or four days, without any prompting from their parents, they reached some conclusions that had were extraordinarily valuable political insights for them as young people ever since. The details aren't important, but they saw certain things that simply don't happen in other societies. It's there hanging out, it's festooned all over.

Q: You got back in 1962 and you came into the Foreign Service class?

LEHOVICH: Right.

Q: By the way, did you have any problems getting a security clearance? I mean, this was still an era where if you had family or anything like that...

LEHOVICH: No, it was very easy. I remember these characters went around to the

various references that I had given and it seemed to be quite effortless. In fact, when I met the guy, my particular investigator, for an interview with him, he was very friendly and he quoted some of the sources that he had been dealing with. I learned a very interesting thing about security investigations from that time and then I rediscovered it recently working with young people who are interested in jobs that require a security clearance. It's very simple. A security investigator dealing with a young person (let's say 21 or 22 years old) is just very strongly predisposed to find that this person is terrific. They're not predisposed to find out that 21 or 22 year olds are no-goodniks with deep, dark secrets in their past. They're predisposed to think that it's a breeze and most of the time, it is. I had some problems with them afterwards, but that's a whole different story. This initial thing, I thought, was absolutely easy.

Q: So, you came into your Foreign Service class when?

LEHOVICH: I came in circa July of 1962. It was a big class. We had about 51 or 52 people. It was the 51st class. It was run by two gentlemen called Thomas Jefferson Duffield and Chester A. Beaman, Jr. Thomas Jefferson Duffield rather quickly became known as "the Duffer" and Chester A. Beaman, Jr. became known as "Chet the Jet." One really was a duffer and the other was not a jet in any sense. These gentlemen were the mentors of the A-100 class at that time, which was split into two sections because we were a large group -and we were a large group because it was this big harvest from the Jack Kennedy era of inspiring people to public service. Great time. I thought the A-100 class was an absolutely delightful social experience. I don't think we learned an awful lot. I think the problem with that course at that time was, it was a lot of listening and a lot of people explaining organization charts, which was just deadly. The Duffer and Chet the Jet were not inspirational figures at all. Poor old Duffield used to doze off in all of our damn classes. To top it all off, he dozed off when we met with Dean Rusk, the Secretary of State. That guy would doze off any time you gave him half a chance. But I think it was a wonderful experience and I made a lot of lifelong friends out of it. That's why it was a wonderful experience.

Q: In your class, what about women, minorities?

LEHOVICH: We had one woman, as I recall, in our class. She was a serious lady indeed and was concerned with Middle Eastern affairs. I wish I could say that I knew what happened to her in the ensuing years, but I don't. She went one way and I went another. We were not particularly strong on visual minorities, minorities that are detectable to the unaided eye. I'm sure we were stronger on those that aren't. We also were a young group. We had one fellow in our class who was 31 years old. Just for fun, other people called him "Pops." The age in the class basically went from 21 to 31, a not unreasonable approach to recruiting people. It's bring them in young, and make them your own and then keep them. That approach has changed, to bring them in at different times, make them your own for a while, and then keep them or not keep them. Anyhow, a very enjoyable experience.

It led to one fascinating insight into Dean Rusk. One of our speakers -indeed, it was one of the gentlemen running our course - at one point gave us inside information on how to

succeed. The inside information involved such things as how to be nice to the wife of your chief of mission, other forms of polite tribal behavior that was being taught by ancient members of the tribe. One of them was on how not to report in such a way as to get yourself in trouble. Basically, that piece of advice, which was anecdotal and must have gone on for 20 or 30 minutes, said something like this: if you've got somebody who wants to hear that everything is okay, and everything isn't okay, you're going to be well advised to point out that things tend to be okay rather than not okay. It was basically advice from a tribe member to shade reporting. My sense and others' sense at that time was that we were not hearing advice from the best representative of the tribe. We did not feel that our two A-100 course leaders were at the pinnacle of the profession at all.

Anyhow, one of our class members -he happened to be Dick Holbrooke -was a friend of the Rusk family. They had lived in Scarsdale, in New York, and Dick had gone to high school with David Rusk, Secretary Rusk's son. He went to see Dean Rusk at home in Washington, DC. He told him about this episode, without specifically identifying the speaker. Then a very interesting thing happened. Shortly before our class concluded its 11 or 12 week existence, we were invited as a special unusual gesture for a meeting with the Secretary of State. We all went to the State Department from Arlington Towers, where our Institute was at that time (now called River Place, and soon to stop existing). We went to Mr. Rusk's conference room and we met with him for close to an hour. He made the entire theme of the hour integrity in reporting. I thought that was very revealing. I was certainly impressed.

I might say that this was the first time I was impressed with Dean Rusk, but not the last time. I think he's one of our undervalued Secretaries of State. Certainly in terms of integrity, human decency, courage, and in terms of dedication to the people in his own organization, he ranks very highly.

Q: Just to sort of keep up on the personal side, were you married at the time you came into the Foreign Service?

LEHOVICH: No, I was single and came to Washington as a bachelor and took a flat.

I had several close friends in the A-100 class and they're worth noting. The friends were Dick Holbrooke, Tony Lake, Ron Myers, and John Campbell. Tony and Ron were married and the others were single, though both Dick and John had serious girlfriends who they later married. We five spent a lot of time together at class and outside. It was an interesting group. Among us, we tended to think that John Campbell was the brightest and most gifted. He was very well-read, a real scholar of diplomacy and history, an outrageous punster and a witty, sometimes dry and cutting, humorist. And he had written and published short stories for Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine -all this at age 22. John went on to be brilliant professionally and personally in the next few years. He was an aide to the Under Secretary, Nicholas Katzenbach. He did some astonishing reporting from Asmara, where he was consul; the kind of writing one expects Lawrence Durrell would have done in his early despatches. And, in an incredible year off, he wrote *The Foreign Affairs Fudge Factory*, a widely read and influential analysis of the State Department, and he founded

Foreign Policy magazine, together with Sam Huntington. Then, he was the first managing editor of Foreign Policy, in effect launching it and setting its style and direction. John died of throat cancer around 1971, a young man of astonishing promise. Tony Lake looked almost as promising as John. He, too, was an unstoppable punster. As I recall, our course instructors gave him the highest marks in our class, though I don't know how we found that out. Ron Myers was a man of great native intelligence and uncanny language and musical abilities, and was the only one in our A-100 group to score a perfect 80 on the language aptitude test. He had been a linguist in Chinese for the air force and regaled us with Mandarin phrases and knowledge of Chinese cuisine. He was about 24, while the others of us were 22 except for Dick Holbrooke, the youngest fellow in our class at age 21 and Fresh out of Brown. Three of us -Tony, John, and I -were from Harvard Class of 1961, though I only met them in A-100. Dick was very bright and lots of fun and sometimes deferred a bit to others in this fivesome, we all being a cocky and sophisticated bunch. He had a great ability to disregard tasks he was not interested in and focus on what he wanted to do. In this regard, he had lots of self-confidence. He read a lot and was always a great napper if there was nothing else to do. I recall his interest in the New York Times, and his friendships with a number of people who worked there. As for me, I was also a punster and well-honed humorist and a young New York sophisticate who fit in well with this bunch, and was also regarded as promising, in part perhaps because my bilingual rating in Russian and fluent rating in French were posted on the class boards and, among us young folks, were seen as a sign of accomplishment.

What happened with this bunch? Ron left the Foreign Service several years later, having started Korean from scratch and become America's premier linguist in that language, serving as interpreter for President Johnson. I see Ron quite often and we are close and loyal friends. I have great affection for Dick and Tony, whom I saw lots of later on, but have not seen much of them in recent years. Tony, indeed, was so painfully busy even in the late '60s, working then for Kissinger, that it was embarrassing for Ron and me to drop in his household late in the evening, to discover his wife, Toni, distressed that he had still not returned.

Q: Where did you want to go and what happened when you were in the A-100 course?

LEHOVICH: I wanted to go to no particular place because at that time it was very clear that we were engaged in a great blind lottery game, the first and perhaps the last great blind lottery game of our career. The first assignment was absolutely unpredictable. That was the tradition and one didn't fuss a lot about saying "I want to go here or there." One didn't give a damn. One was anxiously waiting to see what the sweepstakes said. The sweepstakes told some people that they were going to go to Guadalajara and some people that they were going to go to Nogales and some other people that they were going to go to Aleppo. Very exciting sweepstakes. My sweepstakes, with my friend Dick Holbrooke, was to be loaned to the Agency for International Development for three years to go to Vietnam. That was an unusual sweepstake and probably in part based on the fact that both of us knew enough French to be able to work in that kind of a society, but we later had to go and learn the language and things like that. So, those were the sweepstakes. In a sense, that part of it has remained. It's a nice tradition. Otherwise, you get into a horrible mess.

Q: People feel that they have to be such and so.

LEHOVICH: Yes, but we didn't waste any time imagining that we were going to be boulevardiers in Paris or expatriates in Barcelona or this or that.

Q: When did you get out of the A-100 course?

LEHOVICH: I got out probably around the end of August or early September of 1962.

Q: Before your being sent to AID, what sort of training did you get before you went off?

LEHOVICH: AID gave us four months. At that time, AID had a crop of people that it was going to send to a couple of trouble spots. The bigger one was Vietnam and the smaller one was Laos. There was also just a little bit of Cambodian interest at that time. But basically the AID group that had been put together on paper by the time we got to the early fall of 1962 was about 2/3 Vietnam and the rest were headed for Laos. In all, we were a group of about 18 or 20 people who went out to Berkeley, California for a four month experimental training program in Southeast Asian studies, community development, and some local language. It was run under contract with part of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California at Berkeley.

It was not a terribly good program. A lot of it was a psychological jumble when it got into cross-cultural issues and group dynamics, something that we were being taught in a systematic way. It's not a terribly systematic subject. There was an experimental psychological dimension which was tried with pretty negative results on this group of 18 or so people. The psychological dimension consisted of having two psychologists and a psychiatrist who were brought in. We were split into two groups and we began to meet on a daily basis, or an almost daily basis, with the psychologists. The psychologists would be talking to us in groups of about nine people while the psychiatrist (this was a real psychoanalyst type.) was sitting in the background taking notes. You could imagine how this turned us on, 22 year olds. Holbrooke and I were by far the youngest people in that particular class. It didn't really turn on anyone terribly much. There was actually one person who liked it, but nobody else liked it very much. After a few weeks of this, it tended to sour the atmosphere. One of our CIA guys who was under AID cover at that time announced (this is a very powerful fellow.) to one of these psychologists, at one point: "Stop everything." The psychologist said, "What do you really want to do right now?" There was silence. He looked at this guy and he said again, "What do you really want to do right now?" This guy said, "You want to know what I really want to do?" The psychologist said, "Yes." The guy gets up and says, "I want to throw you right out the window right now" and he started to pick him up. Stu, I digress.

Q: It's catching an era where there were these so-called t groups.

LEHOVICH: We were in a t-group plus. The damn thing about it is-

Q: I'm not sure what t-group means.

LEHOVICH: It means therapy. It began that way, but then it was changed to something else: sensitivity training, blah, blah, blah. It's okay for a while. It's less okay if there are two of them instead of one of them and it's not for a while. It's even less okay if there are two of them plus a psychiatrist sitting taking notes and this goes on for weeks and weeks. Then it becomes a nuisance. The better parts of the course were that we had some very nice area studies, training with some gifted scholars on Southeast Asia, folks who have been around afterwards for years and years, Scalapino, Zasloff, Paul Wheatley, a bunch of good folks who knew about the area; Professor Gerry Hickey, a Yale anthropologist that I later saw a lot of in Vietnam. He was an expert on mountain people in Southeast Asia. We had some good stuff with them. At least the Vietnamese-speaking people had a delightful time learning Vietnamese with a wonderful young man who was a grad student at Berkeley and was enlisted to do this. He went to Monterey and got some language tapes for us to work with and taught us the Vietnamese national anthem and some wonderful songs about Ngo Dinh Diem, patriotic songs about Ngo Dinh Diem, whom he didn't like, but he taught us the songs anyhow. We worked on these tapes with him and worked on our language and that was, in a sense, the brightest part of the day because it got us away from the God damned psychiatrist, all that kind of thing.

There was one problem which was embarrassing, but we overlooked it, being patriotic. We were being taught the wrong dialect of Vietnamese. All the tapes were Northern dialect because they were from Monterey from the language school and the language school was teaching people basically to listen. We really lucked out because we were to listen not only to North Vietnamese conversations, but we were basically to learn how to listen to pilots. Ground air control and pilots were talking to each other. I still remember such exciting statements as (Vietnamese - "phi co o dau? Oanh to co o dau?) and wonderful things like this, which means things like, "Where is the fighter" and "Where is the bomber?"

Q: I learned (Russian), which means "You can take off for Soviet (inaudible)." I'm a graduate of the Monterey Russian School. I spent a year there. Actually, we didn't learn much of that language. It was later on after my time. I was a Korean War type. They concentrated on radio language, whereas in my time, they learned regular Russian. Never used it, but...

LEHOVICH: We were lucky because the virtue of Monterey, also its curse, is that for listening in on technical communication, their stuff is great. But it's passive. In any case, in our case, it was really a hell of a way to start learning Vietnamese. But it was lots of fun. So, we did this for four months. Holbrooke and I were the two State Department characters in this experiment. We were the two youngest and we were the only two FSOs. He was just out of Brown and I was just out of Harvard. So, the other folks thought that we were typical Foreign Service officers who came out of Ivy League backgrounds and looked down on the training program and we did look down on parts of it. There's no question about it.

Q: You were there then during the Missile Crisis in Cuba.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely.

Q: How did that hit you all?

LEHOVICH: I'll tell you, it was intriguing because, first of all, we had no sense from the great distance between the East Coast and the West Coast as to what I later learned was the enormous nervousness, indeed a kind of panic, that led people to move their families to country spots for several days, the kind of tension that was going on in Washington. We had some typical sort of Berkeley demonstrations at the drop of a hat. I still remember one of the speakers there, a guy that I'd noticed earlier in Cambridge, Massachusetts a couple of years earlier showing up at all these things. The Cuban Missile Crisis was certainly a big event at Berkeley, but then everything was a big event at Berkeley, even though this was before Berkeley had hit its stride. This was before the free speech, take it all off, whatever, it was before Mario Silvio and Jane Fonda's earlier husband, Tom Hayden, and so on.

Q: I thought he was Columbia though and then moved to California.

LEHOVICH: Not to be confused with the prime minister of Australia. Also called Tom Hayden. Anyhow, after this delightful and quite unproductive... The nicest thing about Berkeley, by the way, if I can just digress, was not studying stuff at the University of California. It was being in California with money and a lot of leisure time and a car. I fell madly in love with California and went up and down the coast whenever I had a free few hours. A great place. One of the best things to do in the world was to go to bed very late, party a lot, get up very early and go up and down the coast with the windows open. Then Holbrooke and I came back to Washington and studied Vietnamese for five or six months at the Foreign Service Institute.

A couple of more recollections about our Berkeley experience. The first few days of the class we were given twenty-five books and told that, while we might not have to read them, they would be the nucleus of our individual professional community development libraries. I did not read many of them and in fact, at Halloween, Dick and I gave many of them away to children who came trick or treating to our Berkeley apartment, to the astonishment of their parents, waiting nearby. The final exam at the end of the semester was in four parts. The first, worth 25 percent of the exam, was to match the titles of the 25 books with the authors. This was not hard to do but I was so incensed by the question that I left it blank except for the note that "This question is an insult to the University of California and to the U.S. Government, which is paying for this course," followed by my signature and the date. I answered the other three questions and got a 75 on the exam overall, a pretty mediocre score. Meanwhile, with no coordination, Dick did something similar but more extreme. He simply crossed out large chunks of the exam and left early. As I recall, he failed completely.

Needless to say, our generally flip attitude toward the course, our cockiness and Ivy League educations, and our hostile attitude toward the final exam did not sit well with the course director. He took defensive measures and gave us each a terrible report card, albeit

a private one. Thanks to friendships, I got copies of the confidential reports to AID on the two of us. Mine was pretty bad and knocked me hard for attitude and maturity. Dick's was much worse and caused us great mirth. He was painted as a much worse fellow and the one who, it appeared, had made me go wrong by being a bad influence. I still have copies of these reports somewhere.

A postscript on the course. Later, in Washington and still later in Vietnam, we were sharply critical of the course. Complaints from us and perhaps others got back to Berkeley, which either rebuked or dismissed the course director, Jack Mezirow. AID, meanwhile, dismissed the director of the corresponding program, Lucy Adams. What happened then? Within a short time, Mezirow was in Washington doing Lucy Adams' former job while she was at Berkeley, running the community development program.

Q: How did you find Vietnamese training at that point?

LEHOVICH: I always thought the language training was terrific. It was certainly terrific at that point. The big problem in the old days was rote learning. I think some rote learning is great stuff for language, just terrific. The big problem with rote learning is that at some point you've got to put the text away and do something else. That was simply against the rules, but we did it anyhow. I like languages. This was a very hard language, but we weren't going at a breakneck speed.

The other problem with FSI language learning then, as now, is that basically, in my opinion, people don't learn a language eight hours a day. It's too physical. It's too near to developing a reflex. You can't learn to play tennis or ski eight hours a day. And you can't really learn to speak the language eight hours a day. You pretend to. I can learn a language about four hours a day and I'm good at it. That's about all I did in Vietnamese. I rebelled. The head of the Asian Language Division at that time, Mrs. Jordan, was difficult but indulgent and I made my deal. My deal was that I would study Vietnamese poetry every afternoon instead of having to go back to class. I did this with some guy who had just been sent over by the Diem regime, basically into political exile. He showed up at FSI as a language instructor. He spoke the wrong dialect. He was right out of the North and spoke classic northern Vietnamese, which was not the accent we were supposed to be learning. So, he and I dabbled in poetry in the afternoons. Five months of Vietnamese, which was also a chance simply to spend another five months living as a bachelor in Washington, a very exciting environment at that time.

Q: While you were taking this Vietnamese training, this covers both your time in Berkeley and in Washington, what were you getting about the situation in South Vietnam? I mean, what would you be going into? What were you hearing and all at that time?

LEHOVICH: We were hearing stuff for maybe one or two hours. It was maybe one or two hours worth of stuff that one would hear. And we read a lot. I'll talk about both of these because it was part of the learning experience. What one heard would tend to be a snapshot of something like the Krulak Mission, which was General Krulak, who at that time had just been to Vietnam and had come back. You would get sort of up to date on the latest party

line on Vietnam. Incidentally, the latest party line, I never had big trouble with it. I didn't think it was at all implausible that the communists were making a play for South Vietnam, etc., etc. We would get something that was not too far away from what one got in speeches or in the press. I remember a very good session with Lew Sarris, who was the head of Southeast Asian INR, Intelligence and Research, a very competent fellow.

We also read. Anyone who was studying a language or interested in Southeast Asia would read a few books. We read Denis Warner's "The Last Confucian." Denis Warner is an Australian journalist. "The Last Confucian" is a marvelously written book, very sympathetic at that time to the Diem regime and its cause. The cause of the Diem regime was to try to create a nationalist government in the face of an earlier communist takeover and French withdrawal. We read other books as well; Bernard Fall, Butterworth, we were pretty steeped in all the latest literature at that time.

Q: How did you see what we were doing there? Was it a good cause? Was it worth our going there? This, of course, was before our major commitment. This was back in the early '60s.

LEHOVICH: We're talking about an early period. The other thing that was coming through at that time quite clearly was that there was a real tension in working with the Diem regime because that regime was solving some of its very serious social, economical, political problems in a harsh way. This was not surprising; there are not always gentle ways to do this. But it was pretty clear that there was a tension in working with the Diem regime and a lot of what we were hearing was that there wasn't much of an alternative and one had to work with the Diem regime. Before I went over there, I felt that, given my own sense of the Cold War and my own view of the communists, to some degree shaped by having spent nine or ten months in the Soviet Union, I thought there was nothing wrong with going in and staging a major national commitment to avoid a communist takeover.

In retrospect, the way I would see it if I had been older at that time, I would have had a very much greater hesitation about the wisdom of so much national involvement in changing another society from within. I now have that hesitation much more than before. I know other people had it then, other people when I talked to then and later. I think, in a sense, the biggest problem that America faced in '61 and '62 and '63 with Vietnam was a "we can do it" type of spirit which was much too glib. Halberstam caught a lot of that. It was just clear. Folks like the Kennedys and Roger Hilsman. Roger Hilsman was somebody else who spoke to people who were on the circuit, as I was by then. There were also Bill Bundy, his brother, McGeorge Bundy, and a whole group of people who just thought that "We are going to go in there and do it and we are going to do it with the economy. We're going to take care of the economy over there. We're going to take care of the political concerns." I would go in later and do my own work in the rural program in Vietnam, quite a gifted program.

Q: This might be a good point to stop, I think. The next time, we'll pick it up when you're off to Vietnam. Then we'll go into how you got out there and what you saw and all that.

Today is the 2nd of April 1997. Vlad, let's start. You were in Vietnam from when to when?

LEHOVICH: From approximately May of 1963 until the summer of 1966 and then back again for a few months in early 1977.

Q: We'll come to that in time. What was the situation as you were told and that you picked up by osmosis in the corridors of the State Department in Vietnam in May '63 when you went out there?

LEHOVICH: The situation was depicted by and large in Cold War terms and was seen by people like me by and large in Cold War terms. The depiction was of a country that after 1955 had in the South created a non-communist government. The government was not painted in particularly rosy terms in anything I heard. Its main virtue was not being virtuous; its main virtue was that it was a non-communist government which had a chance of, one, surviving and, two, of reforming itself as time went on. Ngo Dinh Diem, who was the leader of the government and the President of South Vietnam, was a person who was described as somewhat aloof, somewhat isolated, generally a rather fastidious Roman Catholic bachelor in a non-fastidious Asian society which was not predominantly Roman Catholic -but nonetheless a man of high ethical standards and great person discipline and one who could lead a government that, it was recognized, was considerably less upstanding than Diem himself was. It was a government that was harsher and more corrupt. But the most important feature was that the situation was cast in terms of an effort to have, and maintain, a non-communist government in South Vietnam and stop a deliberate communist movement to destabilize and to take over the South. Those were the basic dynamics.

There was not an awful lot of false or naive worship of the Diem government. There was the policy that many of us remember under the slogan of "Sink or swim with Ngo Dinh Diem." I must say, I found a very, very great lesson here because I see us since that time quite often having a policy of sinking or swimming with somebody. My advice is, as soon as you hear that policy, be prepared to hear it reversed with no prior warning. "We're no longer sinking or swimming with them. He's sinking; we're swimming with someone else." That, of course, is exactly what happened with the Diem family, the Ngo family.

Q: When you arrived, what was the situation? You went to the embassy. Could you tell me what happened?

LEHOVICH: I and one other colleague of mine, Dick Holbrooke, were assigned to the Agency for International Development. We went to join its Rural Affairs Program. It was called "Rural Affairs Program of the United States Overseas Mission (USOM)," run by AID. At that time, already a very large AID mission. The Rural Affairs part of it, which I was assigned to, was very unusual and a very controversial operation within AID and within the American official community in Vietnam.

It was a special counterinsurgency program with its own budget. The budget came from

the White House and was approved by President Kennedy and some of his closest advisors. It was run by a young man, 32 years old, called Rufus C. Phillips. Rufus Phillips was a young businessman who had been an athlete and a scholar at Yale. He had then taken part with Edward Landsdale, with Colonel Landsdale, later General Landsdale, in the counterinsurgency campaign in the Philippines against the Hukbalahaps when he was a young Army lieutenant, and, I believe, at that time seconded to the CIA - a CIA man with the assigned army rank of a lieutenant. In any case, Rufus Phillips was the young leader of this group of people with an almost unfettered budget of \$10 million and a carte blanche to recruit.

He did his own recruiting, picked up a stable of people, some of whom were very gifted, a lot of whom were very unusual and original types whom one met in international work, and a number of whom were from voluntary organizations. At that time, the leading such organization was the IVS (International Volunteer Service), which in many ways is the predecessor of the Peace Corps.

It was a very fine organization. I'm still very fond of it. In a word, USOM Rural Affairs was a very unusual outfit run by some absolutely unorthodox and very gifted people - in particular by Rufus Phillips, who is one of the finest natural leaders I've ever worked with and who, at age 32, was able to lead us with great leadership skills, with great self-confidence and with great personal courage.

What we did, what the attempt was of that program, which was a precursor of the later counterinsurgency programs in Vietnam, was to seek to make local government work better, be more responsive, and be in a better position to meet popular needs than it was and to do so by working locally. We were a totally decentralized operation. We went to all 40 provinces in South Vietnam at that time, set up small operations there and worked with the local officials from that level. Some of that worked well. Some of it worked less well, but it was a very unusual effort at that time. It was a very original effort. It was probably conceptually the best counterinsurgency program that the US or South Vietnam had during that whole period. I could go on at length about this. It's a favorite subject of mine. But for our purposes here, let me just say that I think it was a very promising program. I don't think it could have changed the course of history. I think the long arm of history was evident in Vietnam over a period of time. But I think it could have done better and done better for longer than the intensely Americanized programs that followed afterwards.

Q: Let's get this down to your level. What were you doing? Any stories you have. I don't mind detail.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely. After several months of working on different programs in Saigon, I finally managed to get myself out to a province, which is what I wanted to do from the day I arrived. I went out in a car with a briefcase, checked into a hotel. There had been a US Army major who had been doing this before. He had been part of the 12 man advisory team in that province.

Q: Which province are we talking about?

LEHOVICH: I was in the Mekong Delta in the province of Vinh Long. At that time, an American presence in a large province was very small. This was a province of almost 600,000 people. The American presence was approximately 13 official Americans. Twelve of them were military. When I arrived, I made it the 13th. I was a civilian. I lived separately. The American military were my good friends, but we were not dependent on each other in any way. There were two and later three volunteers from the International Voluntary Service who also lived separately and worked separately on their own programs. Among the other foreign presence in Vinh Long province was one American missionary who lived some miles away. He was from the Christian and Missionary Alliance and had no connection with other American activities, which were either governmental or voluntary, supported by the U.S. government. The other foreign presence was a small Roman Catholic convent operation for what were called "fallen girls." These were very nice Irish sisters, also out in the countryside. Then there were a couple of French Jesuits who worked there, also far in the countryside. That was it as far as foreign presence in this province of 600,000 people, comfortably under 25 people, I think.

What did I do? I started working with rural school programs of a very simple kind which involved school construction. Does school construction guarantee education? No. But it requires a community commitment. It requires a concentration of interest, excitement. It's very good for complementing education. It helps it. It doesn't provide it.

Rural health. Rural health involved helping to organize clinics where traveling doctors or medics could come on a scheduled basis. That, again, does not guarantee medicine, but it can facilitate it and raise consciousness and make it a popular weekly or biweekly event in a particular place. We had limited refugee programs to the extent that there had been some people who had been relocated in the area where I was working. We had some other education programs. We did a little bit with vocational training, in trying to support it. Mainly what we were doing was working with rural programs in education, in health, and in some basic agricultural areas. The basic agricultural area was trying to supply certain good brands of rice that were not otherwise available in terms of seed, facilitating storing, trying to introduce some vegetable and gardening projects that were very profitable at that time, and offering a little bit of seed money to finance better ways of breeding pigs and composting pig manure and having a program that would raise corn as feed for pigs.

Now, what is a guy from New York who doesn't know a hoe from a hoot in Hades do in a situation like this? Well, the answer is you use a lot of common sense, you ask a lot of questions, you ask your peers, and you find the people locally, the Vietnamese, who know everything in the world there is about pigs and hogs and you get them to work with you.

Q: In a way, the question might be, if they know everything there is about hogs, what are you doing anyway?

LEHOVICH: We were helping them with a little money, a little attention, and with an idea that wasn't at all known or customary there. The idea was that one can work on a communal and voluntary basis, on a self-help basis, and pitch in a lot of resources locally

on something that is locally popular; and that it's part of good local government to facilitate the kinds of programs that I was talking about. That second thing I did, and others like me in our program did, was work with senior officials in the province. The senior officials accepted us as people who had an idea that was perhaps good, perhaps not, but as people who couldn't be shoved away. So, if I spent five nickels on five different occasions with a senior official in Vinh Long province on the subject of pigs or rural schools, I wasn't thrown out. I was listened to with at least the appearance of a great deal of interest at my wisdom - I being about 23 years old at that time - and the merits of the programs that I was describing. Amazingly enough, within a few days, we very often got confirmation that the head of the province or some of the senior people working with him had gone around saying, "Why isn't such and such being done better with these important programs that the Americans are interested in." We would go in and say, "That's wonderful. We heard you were supporting these things. Maybe you could support them not as American programs, just tell people it's the right thing to do to produce better schooling or better health or better pigs." We worked as stimulators and catalysts, partly because we were the big important foreign presence at that time - America; partly because we had a good idea (it was an intrinsically good idea.); and partly because we had some money. In terms of cash and resources, I recall the first year, I had about \$2 million. Most of it was in resources which was grain, cement, and certain other types of things, fertilizer, certain kinds of simple equipment. But a fair amount of it (several hundred thousand dollars) was in cash. This was not mine alone to dole out by any means, but it was very much for me there to stimulate, help, and advise, and then to say, "We have some funds if you're prepared to draw on them." Having a few hundred thousand dollars in a place where a low monthly subsistence wage was eight or 12 dollars, having a few hundred thousand dollars to help promote your ideas can make your ideas go a very long way. I thought we had a remarkably worthwhile and remarkably cost-effective program going there.

Q: What were some of the problems you had to deal with?

LEHOVICH: One problem we had was that as time went on, by the time we got into late '63 and 1964, it was pretty clear that a lot of what our program was doing was kind of built up by day and pulled down by night. We were getting into a little bit more of a guerilla warfare situation. We were also getting into a fairly coercive strategic hamlet program, an effort which preceded a lot of other similar things later on. In its crudest form it was an attempt to put some fences around villages, to train some militia forces within the village, and also to train some political action forces within the village. In its better, more evolved form it was the basic security plus other improvements in living. I wasn't involved in the fences or the militia or the political action forces, but we were very much involved in working to try to make these villages attractive and prosperous places. But it really was becoming pretty much of a polarized operation. Our program was not a program that stood purely on its own. It was part of a government campaign that was often physical, often repressive, against an organized opponent who was even more repressive, even more unpleasant. We were also in a situation where the central government of Vietnam was basically coming closer and closer to collapsing. Every province at that time was led by a direct appointee of the president of Vietnam, a person responsible to him, with direct control. So, what we were doing, like it or not, was a very political thing at that time.

Standing back, I don't really think that it was adequate to do the kinds of things we were doing in a situation like that.

Q: The government wasn't?

LEHOVICH: Our program wasn't adequate and I don't think making it twice as big would have made it more adequate. I simply don't think that at a certain point, material benefits like education and better agriculture make a big difference. The real thing in that kind of a situation was that there was a fair amount of force being applied. The lot of the Delta, incidentally, certainly the part of the Delta that I knew the best, was pretty sheltered at that time from the civil war in Vietnam.

Q: What was the capital of Vinh Long?

LEHOVICH: It was Vinh Long City. It used to be the town on Sadec, but with some reorganizations, two provinces were merged into Vinh Long. It was not a terribly violent place. One could drive around all over, and "all over" means a couple or three hours in one direction until you got to the end of that province. Rarely would you have a problem and, if you did, you sort of knew the areas where it might happen.

I was shot at on two occasions. One was very tragic because I was with a group of civil guardsmen, as they were called, sort of local forces, who would always be in certain parts of the province accompany me if I was down there. Overkill by local officials. There were 80 or 90 of them that day. It was a company. Anyhow, one of them got killed by some assailant whom we could never see from some distant place a couple of hundred yards away across the river or from a swamp. A very sad story. I had to go see the fellow's family later in the day and talk to them. Very trying for them and certainly a very difficult part of the day's work for someone like myself.

The other time, a wholly different time, was driving from Vinh Long to Sadec with my Vietnamese associate, a man from AID whom I worked with closely who is still a good friend of mine, incidentally. My last contact with him was about a month ago. He's in America and runs a restaurant in Florida. In any case, this fellow and I were driving and we got fired at a number of times from what was called simply the "banana line." The banana line begins 50 or 80 yards to one side of a road and there are a lot of bananas growing there. You can't see through the bananas, so it was a good place from which to shoot people you don't like. What we did on the way back was, we drove very quickly. We did our business in the town of Sadec and we had to retrace our steps. We simply drove very quickly. At that time my Vietnamese associate, incidentally, asked me to do the driving. It was axiomatic that among two 24 year olds, the one who had started to drive at 16 was going to be the better driver than the one who had started to drive at 21. I was. So, I drove the car faster than it had ever been driven before. I had it repainted a different color. I thought that was just the beginning of wisdom. I did it out of my own pocket. I mention this only because a couple of months later, an AID inspector came down, inspected my operation while I was away on a field trip, made some judgments about whether I was doing a good job or not without having interviewed me, and left me a bill for having defaced government

property without permission. That was repainting my vehicle. I'm simply mentioning this because it's prejudiced me ever since towards being inspected by anybody. I still don't like it.

Q: An inspector is often known as the son of a bitch from outside.

LEHOVICH: That's a very mild and statesmanlike way of putting it, Stu. I appreciate your gentleness.

Q: What about the problem of corruption from your perspective?

LEHOVICH: I have a couple of reactions about it. One, it was probably just about everywhere. Two, when it was the moderate, normal, expected level and way, it was not terribly noticed. It wasn't terribly shocking, and it didn't bother business. Three, I mentioned earlier that the subsistence wage might have been \$10 a month. For a lieutenant colonel or major in the Army, the wage was much higher. It might have amounted to \$30 or \$40 a month, but not more than that. The families were large and that \$30 to \$40 a month would basically be there for a household of eight, 10, or 12 persons when you counted everybody from wives to children to servants who were part of the household. The lieutenant colonel making, say, \$36 a month who was not trying to augment his income by alternative means was not doing his job as a father, as a family man, or as an intelligent local official. I had no moral compunctions then or later in that kind of a society about the kind of low-level corruption that is built in, that is moderate, is expected, and is actually necessary to survive. On a larger level, when it gets out of control, it gets out of control. It produces some bad effects.

Q: You had this several hundred thousand dollars. You had two million dollars you were playing with.

LEHOVICH: We had minor problems. We never had anything I remember as a terribly big one. Our stuff was popular. It was small. The aid was rationed out for small and rather well-controlled projects. We would frequently find instances where people would, say, build a structure and shortchange the structure on cement or certain other things that we were supplying and we'd complain about it. In one extreme case, a schoolhouse that was shoddily built, we took a hammer and hammered on a concrete floor and broke through it. We asked that it be rebuilt. No, we were not a particular target of corruption. I think the games of corruption were being played in bigger ways, on taxing, for example, entire regions on livestock and rice.

I had a case once when I was driving in town on a Sunday just to pass the time away. It was a beautiful town. I noticed a familiar truck that belonged to my operation. We had two fairly large trucks, army surplus trucks. A familiar truck filled with two and a half tons of goods leaving the warehouse in which we kept various of our food and other commodities, cement and so on. It was driven by two thoroughly familiar people, one of whom worked for the province with our programs and the other was a sergeant in the local military who also worked with our programs from a different vantage. Two very nice guys. I was very

fond of both of them. I complained and they were later arrested. In a wonderfully personal way, the sergeant came to me at my little house where I was staying at that time. He said, "Look, they're going to give me a very hard time about this theft. They're going to send me to combat. I can't afford that. I have six children. I'm going to have to go into combat." I said, "Look, there's nothing I can do for you." "Can you intercede and have it changed? You're my friend." I said, "I can't intercede for you. You've got to believe me. I can't intercede for you at all. I can do nothing more than report what I saw. I'm going to stay out of the rest of this." He was very unhappy. This man cried and he asked me to help him. I said I couldn't help him. Very nice fellow. He went off to combat and, as far as I know, he performed some combat and was none the worse for it. Anyhow, those were personalized levels of corruption.

Q: What about the October '63 events in Saigon? Could you explain how that was reflected on what you were getting?

LEHOVICH: Absolutely fascinating. Let me tell you what happened there. It had become fashionable to talk down the Diem government by the time that-

Q: When you say "fashionable," with whom?

LEHOVICH: It was fashionable among people who are loud mouthed or like to talk.

Q: Are you talking about Americans?

LEHOVICH: We're talking about Vietnamese. It was fashionable to talk down the Diem government by those who liked to talk loudly about politics, not a very big majority in a country like that. When the news came that Diem was overthrown, there was absolute panic, very palpable panic among everyone. This was not a panic of people dependent on that government. It was a panic of people who were terribly concerned that a predictable order was seemingly collapsing. Shortly thereafter, the news came of Diem's death. There was a palpable outbreak of mourning not based on personal friendship or acquaintanceship with this distant, aloof figure of a minority Western religion in an Asian society, but there was wailing and weeping all over the place. Stu, this happens everywhere. It's what happened in Russia when Stalin died in March of 1953. People forgot about that, but there was mourning all over the place. People knew the guy was a son of a bitch - not everybody, but a lot of the people who were crying nonetheless. So, there was that kind of a thing. I actually had told myself from the time that things were getting tense in Vietnam that if and when there was a coup, I was going to go to Saigon to observe it and that's exactly what I did. I hopped on an American "Caribou" airplane which happened to land at the Vinh Long Airfield and went to Saigon and spent the next week up there observing these weird events.

Q: Could you talk about it?

LEHOVICH: I did not observe high politics. I observed what was going on in the streets. There was street fighting. There were some buildings that were shot up in many parts of

town that had housed government activities. Some places were, I think, just shot up because people pulled on a trigger, not for any terribly rational reasons. I remember finding two kids playing with a mortar. These were kids who were somewhere between four and six years old. They were playing with a mortar, a beautiful mortar in excellent shape with just a couple of dents where it had landed. I took it away from them. I only later realized that I shouldn't be carrying this thing around myself, but I took it away from these kids, took it to where I lived. I had a little flat at my disposal in Saigon and showed it to an American Army captain who knew a lot more about ordinance than I did. When I did, he ran right out of the room!

Anyhow, Saigon was a different atmosphere within a couple of days after this coup. Initially, there was great tension and, similarly, an outbreak of concern. But within a couple or three days, it was a festive atmosphere, devil may care atmosphere, I'll be damned but I'm going to do what I want kind of atmosphere.

One of the things that I know personally from a number of young people that I knew at that time in Saigon and in the provinces was that the Diem regime sealed its own fate, in my opinion, by the way it dealt with student youth. This is my own interpretation. Student youth -meaning university or other higher education youth -tends to come from pretty prominent families. There are tens of thousands of pretty prominent families in a county of 15 or 20 million people. An awful lot of them are either senior civil servants or army officers. They're not enlisted men. They're army officers. My own sampling told me that an awful lot of the army officers had brothers or other relatives or, if they were older, children, who had either been arrested or had their best friends arrested. If they were arrested, they were in for some extraordinarily rough treatment, which some of them recounted to me in most unpleasant detail. As a result, because of the huge size of nuclear and extended families over there, you couldn't arrest one kid who was a college student without creating extreme concern in 10, 15, or 20 or more people who were close or extended relatives. There was no question that there came a certain point where the elite in the country had their families arrested. Does that sound absurd? Let's remember in Washington, DC, one eleventh of the entire population works for the city government of the District of Columbia. It is not surprising in a country that had an army of 500,000 Vietnamese, being a small country, that more or less your entire officer corps had somebody who had been arrested and mistreated.

Q: Why were they being arrested?

LEHOVICH: They were being arrested because the government had gotten fairly paranoid at that time about conspiracies or people who were disloyal. It's a pretty typical dictatorship-type of phenomenon.

Q: Was this concern about being disloyal to the ruling party?

LEHOVICH: Most of the time, although the communists were sort of an underpinning for this concern. Most of the time think it was concern about disloyalty to the Pope. Disloyalty to the Pope doesn't mean you have to work for the devil. So, anyhow, the coup

of 1963 brought about, as we recall, years and years of changing governments. As far as I'm concerned, with the end of the Diem era there, we were basically heading downhill.

Q: Let's stick to the coup. As you came back, here you were, a province boy back in the big city of Saigon. What was the attitude among the embassy officers, particularly- I assume that you were more in contact with the junior officers who often were out in the field a lot more than the senior officers.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely.

Q: Can you tell me about how they saw this from your perspective?

LEHOVICH: They saw and I sort of associate myself - we saw - the Diem regime as something that, by the very end, basically had to go. We thought it had to go, we thought it would go, and, unfortunately, we thought it should go. We thought that there was no way to continue successfully. In that sense, we were probably a little bit ahead of our elders and betters, but a only by a little bit, maybe a few months or less. That's when the decision was taken at the President's level to get rid of the guy, to get rid of Diem. Interestingly enough, when you say that we're going to change a leader like that -and I don't think President Kennedy or his advisors knew it then - there only one thing that can happen. That means the man will die. I was told that the minute the coup happened by a very wise old American counterinsurgency expert called Colonel Bohannon. He said, "He'll be dead within a week." Of course, he was right. It's inevitable.

I think we were a bit ahead of our elders and betters. My friends among the Americans at that time in Vietnam included not only the folks in the American embassy and folks in AID. These were very, very close friends. They also included the American press - for example, Dave Halberstam was quite a good friend. I saw him fairly often. So were a number of the other reporters - Malcolm Brown, Neil Sheehan, various others who were really excellent correspondents. Vietnam produced a marvelous generation of excellent correspondents at that time including sort of most of today's T.V. anchormen and a lot of other very good folks. These people ranged from being skeptical about the war to panting with eagerness to watch, frankly speaking, the United States and the Diem regime lose. I have to ascribe that kind of a view to someone like Dave Halberstam. I was fond of the fellow, very impressed by him, but I think he wanted the effort that America was involved in to lose in the worst kind of way at that time. To make a long story short, the younger Americans who were out there basically thought the thing had to go.

Q: Was there a countryfolk - cityfolk sort of split with the embassy and working out in the provinces when you would check in either in AID or the embassy?

LEHOVICH: Yes, there was. Frankly, I felt very much at home in both of these communities. I got to know quite a lot of people in Saigon, Vietnamese, as well as Americans and a few French. I still am a member of the Cercle Sportif Saigonais.

Q: Do you still pay your dues?

LEHOVICH: No, I don't pay. They don't send me a bill.

Q: I haven't received a bill in years.

LEHOVICH: I don't pay my dues because I haven't gotten a bill, but I'm still a member as far as I'm concerned. I still have my valid Vietnamese driving licence. It doesn't have an expiration date. Frankly, when I save up a little money, I expect to go out there, rent a car, and take a swim at the Cercle Sportif. But I got to know a number of people there, younger people, older people, Vietnamese who were sociable folks by nature and would stand me a good meal once in a while.

Q: Did you feel that, at least from the field, you would be giving reports on what you were doing... In no country including the United States, did we have as extensive a reporting program of what was going down at not only the provincial level, but the district level by some very bright people. Did you feel this was getting adequately translated when it got up to where decisions were made? Not just you, but others.

LEHOVICH: I wasn't primarily a reporter at that time; I was later in a second incarnation in Vietnam. I wasn't primarily a reporter. I felt that I shaded my messages a little bit, not terribly much, but a little bit. But I also think that the senior listeners or the senior audience had two ways of listening. One, they would listen and understand very well that there were some terrific problems. Two, almost as a function of leadership, they would say, "Soldier on. It doesn't matter. You're doing the right thing." This was not just with the Diem regime. This was later on. There comes a point where one does the right thing and soldiers on, professing that we will never abandon someone -until we do. Then it happens again, and then it happens again. I certainly give credit to the senior people that I knew well there for listening on two levels at once, for understanding and for continuing nonetheless. It was a situation where, until the end, one continues boldly professing confidence that one is going to do well even when one has long since felt that one is not doing very well.

Q: The military buildup started while you were there, although the Mekong was not a prime area. Were you in the Mekong the whole time?

LEHOVICH: I was in the Mekong Delta for a couple of years. But I also traveled in probably 30 of the 40-odd provinces during that time as well. I took a lot of field trips both before I was assigned to Vinh Long and afterwards.

Q: We moved into one of these rather Americanized reporting programs. Can you sleep in the district capital at night? Is it safe in all sorts of embassies? I don't know if they started on that. But particularly on the military side (This was MacNamara) when you asked the military to report, at a certain point, the reporting becomes very important for a person's career and things get shaded and all that. Did you find there was a two-layer thing, that sort of the civilian not just foreign service, but the other side was reporting one thing and the military were out there sort of reporting another thing?

LEHOVICH: To some degree. Let me give you a couple of examples. Take something like the Strategic Hamlet Program. As I say, my job wasn't primarily reporting, but when I did, I did put down whether I thought something was working well or not. I could put down that we did x amount of work in the last six months of which the effectiveness is pretty limited or pretty good. My military friends who were working with some of the same programs and who were being asked to report on anything in the world at that point, so they were reporting on my programs after a while, they would put down things like "Completed, is a success, everything is working fine. Everything is proceeding according to plan." In fact, the phrase "The program is proceeding successfully according to plan" was a fairly ritual phrase. I saw it an awful lot of times. I didn't think it meant an awful lot. You can go as far as to say I think it's like a doctor saying "Haven't had a chance to look much at the patient, but I haven't seen an illness." But "Program proceeding well according to plan" is a fairly nondiscriminate type of reporting.

(tape ended)

Q. How were your relations with the US Embassy and AID? What was the contact like?

LEHOVICH: I knew an awful lot of the American embassy at that time. I didn't know the ambassador at that time, but I knew most of the others. I was accepted pretty much. Some of them were with their family. Very friendly. They invited me to social affairs and I spent a lot of time with guys like Bob Miller, for example, who was a political counselor, and Mel Manfull, who was the DCM. He made us feel very welcome. Bob Miller is still my friend. This is 30+ years later. We're good friends. We never worked together in any other way. Other friends included Freeman Matthews, Jr.; Mel Levine. Folks who took the two Foreign Service officers who were with AID at that time very much in as family members. Their houses were open to us in the evenings. There were also good friends we'd known before, from learning Vietnamese or from, basic training, like Tony Lake and Bill Marsh and their wives. I had my own flat, as I say, in Saigon, so whenever I felt like it, I'd drive up there or fly up there and spend a little weekend time socializing.

With AID, we had some marvelous get-togethers. The most exciting were large USOM parties given by Rufus Phillips for all his people, Vietnamese and American, some of the finest parties I can remember anywhere. One event, a business affair, was a catastrophe. That's when the head of AID, a nice but not very successful gentleman called Charlie Mann, decided to gather together all 1,400 American AID employees in Vietnam. I still marvel at the figure of 1,400. He invited all 1,400 of us to Saigon for a meeting because he felt things weren't going right. He was right, of course. They weren't going right for reasons we found out much more about when the meeting started. There were so many of us that we had to rent a big movie theater downtown. I think it was the Rex Theater, one of the really big downtown movie theaters. Big. Most of the 1,400 people showed up for this meeting. Some of us had to fly in; some of us had to hitchhike in by Caribou airplane or something like that, or drive in. It was a real pain in the neck to get to a meeting like that. So, we got there and this man gets up with over 1,000 people staring at him silently. He says, "Before we begin the meeting, I want to ask who has been writing me those letters? Who? Who? Who has been writing me those nasty letters? Tell me! I want to know!" He says this as

his opening remarks to 1,000 people in the room. You know what the answer was? From every part of the theater, the answer was "I did," "I did," "I did." Everybody yelled, "I wrote the letters." People had never heard of any letters. You know what happened to the meeting, Stu? The meeting ended! It was a total catastrophe. I've never seen anything like it. I am still awed when I think of it. It was also very funny.

AID was not a well-run organization at that time. Charlie Mann was not a strong leader. He was a very nice man. We had a guy called Jim Killen, who followed him, who was a very strong man but not a very nice man; he was a remarkably obnoxious guy. My own leaders after Rufus Phillips were several. The most gifted of the leaders who followed Rufe was a guy called Samuel Wilson, a very smart guy, a self-made man, Army lieutenant colonel from humble origins in Virginia, a gifted man. He had learned wonderful Russian in Army intelligence training, a marvelous singer and guitar player, and took over this large operation as a lieutenant colonel in civilian garb, and ran it magnificently, and gave us terrific leadership and later on became head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, a three star general, and all sorts of things like that. Other people who at one time or other ran the Rural Affairs operation were Ogden Williams, Leonard Maynard, and Bert Fraleigh. I still count them as close friends and we correspond very erratically.

But AID was not a well-run organization at that time. It wasn't a very happy organization. The hard part of it -the Rural Affairs part where I worked -- was probably the highest morale. We were viewed by the rest of AID as a bunch of pariahs.

Q: Why?

LEHOVICH: Because we were not specialists in hydrology or in medicine or in anything else. Because some of us were downright weird. All of us thought that we were going to go to the provinces and simply do whatever we wanted out there. A lot of us did. That's why inspectors would come out and not even see us and give us bad reports and bills for having repainted our cars. We would return the compliment by complaining about them without ever meeting them and saying, "Get these guys off our backs."

Q: Why don't we go to the time when you came back. When did you come back to Saigon to be a provincial reporter with the US Embassy?

LEHOVICH: That would have been in '65 and '66. I left AID in the early summer of 1965, went on leave, and returned soon thereafter for a year at the American Embassy.

Q: Who was the ambassador then?

LEHOVICH: The ambassador was Henry Cabot Lodge. I got to know him surprisingly well and there was a reason for it. Cabot Lodge was a very self-confident, quite lazy, selfish, bright, and rather cruel man. He liked young people because he trusted us (No reason not to), and because we liked him, because we laughed at his jokes like hell because he was very funny, and because we appealed to him. If you were 25 years old, your chances of getting along extraordinarily well with Cabot Lodge were very high. If you

were 40 years old, your chances of getting along with Cabot Lodge bordered on zero.

Q: You were courtiers as opposed to being a challenger.

LEHOVICH: We were not even courtiers. We were just a great audience and to him we were kids. He loved us! We liked him and we were spontaneous. The other ones, who were older, were scared to death of Cabot Lodge and he was very mean with some of them. He was really mean. I mean, very, very, very nasty to some of these folks. I'm not talking about Phil Habib. Phil Habib was in a class by himself because his irreverence and exuberance were so enormous that they filled any room that he walked into. He was a total democrat. It didn't matter whether you were ancient or a kid. Phil liked or disliked people about equally.

Once in a while Lodge did a wonderful thing. Whenever there was a coup, and after a while, there were quite a few, and Lodge was in town, he would make a great show of taking the day off and going and sitting in a bathing suit at the Cercle Sportif the whole day reading newspapers and novels. Whenever anybody asked him what was going on, he'd say, "Oh, nothing much. As far as I'm concerned, everything is fine." His entire modus operandi was to project total nonchalance in these situations and to do it in an outrageous way. It worked perfectly well to the limited audience that really cared about it, but the limited audience included the press and the American military, plus a fair sampling of the Saigon elite.

By then, the embassy was dominated on the one hand by Cabot Lodge, who told us that our job was nation building, wonderful words. And it was dominated by Phil Habib on the other hand.

Q: From your observation, how did those two get along?

LEHOVICH: Spectacularly well.

Q: That's odd, isn't it?

LEHOVICH: No, they trusted each other. Neither feared the other. Cabot Lodge couldn't stand it when people were afraid of him. It was a very cruel thing because it's a no win situation. Supposing you are afraid of the guy? I was in a situation where I am aware of how Cabot Lodge treated one of the three most senior civilian Americans in his mission. He called him in and he said, "I don't like you, George (We'll call this man George.). Do you know why I don't like you?" George said, "No, why?" "I don't like you, George, because you're afraid of me, aren't you, George?" Poor old George was really left without a lot of options at that point and Cabot Lodge told George he was going to get him out of the country, but was going to fix him up with a very good onward assignment, and he did. Poor old George had to leave because Cabot Lodge didn't like George because George was afraid of Cabot Lodge. There was never a problem like that with a guy like Phil Habib.

Q: Let's talk about your view of the situation from the '65 to '66 period. Whither Vietnam

when you came in there? I mean, you brought a lot of baggage with you obviously.

LEHOVICH: My job was as a provincial reporter in the embassy's Provincial Reporting Unit. There is no doubt that it the most exciting and most fun of any place in that Embassy. I went around to a lot of provinces and basically tried to see people that other people weren't seeing - monks or priests or labor leaders or doctors. I saw very few officials. I was bored by them and other Americans were seeing them. Also, a lot of businessmen, a lot of businesswomen. Interestingly enough, women run the show when it comes to business.

Q: Oh, absolutely.

LEHOVICH: The best businesses I knew were run by women and it was wonderful to deal with them. You'd sit down, get a cup of coffee, and get straight talk for an hour or two.

Q: All you have to do is go out to the places around here in Arlington and women still run the businesses.

LEHOVICH: I was very impressed. It was very exciting the first time.

I simply have to say, Stu, it was a very exciting atmosphere. You've got to remember, this is a remarkably beautiful country. It has very nice people who are gifted, who have a good deal of charm, and who very often don't work that hard, so that you don't feel that you have to sit around looking busy all the time. They don't look busy all the time. It's not a very nervous country. A very charming country with shockingly beautiful landscapes and seascapes and rice paddies and mountains and everything else. They have some of the greatest food in the world. They have beautiful women and they have nice men. It is hard not to be absolutely caught up by a place like that. A few of us who stayed there for more than a year or two had gotten caught up in it. All the good reporters, correspondents, were caught up in it, too. A very, very exciting place.

I had an uneasy feeling from the first time I started making trips around the country as a provincial reporter. I had a very uneasy feeling that the American military presence was going to be extremely disruptive socially, destabilizing, unpopular, and in a sense, self-defeating. Self-defeating because I was caught up in the notion that insurgencies had a strong element of popular support or popular hostility to them. I think that can be exaggerated, but some of that is still there.

I was very uneasy about the American military presence. It got bigger and bigger. In a few cases that I was connected with as an observer or somebody who went there and discovered something, that I was closely involved in, it was doing things that were absolutely untenable. Burning rice fields, for example. In a few cases, destroying some villages. Mainly, it was totally dominating what objectively was the anti-communist effort there. It became completely an American effort. I think when we made that thing completely an American effort, we not only pushed it to achieve more measurable successes; we also probably gave the communists a little bit more popularity later on than they would have

had.

The communists were not very popular people. A lot of people said they were nationalists, not communists; or bandits, not communists; but they were. The leadership was, the structure was. I think we gave them a kind of lasting legitimacy that they still have. They still call Saigon Ho Chi Minh City. They wouldn't have if there hadn't been a big American buildup.

That was my concern. I viewed this whole saga of growing requests for troops, which I was very well aware of -We were pretty well informed in the American embassy of the big picture at that time -I and others viewed with utter frustration the notion that we were going to go to 200,000; 250,000; 300,000 forces. It became ridiculous.

Q: In your provincial reporting, did you have a particular area to report on?

LEHOVICH: I did the coast, the central highlands, and I could also drift in and out of other places. I was welcome to. That was the scene of some of the big buildups. It was a disturbing buildup.

Q: As a provincial reporter, what would you do and what would you bring back?

LEHOVICH: We were a fairly self-starting group of people, luckily. We weren't given a lot of guidance. We weren't given an awful lot of SOPs on what to do or where to do it or how to do it. We were encouraged to be out of town, to be full of good information and insights when we came back. We did, I thought, some very good reporting sometimes. I did some very good reporting from some of the coastal provinces, on what the actual political climate was. The two political groups that were doing politics there were lawyers and doctors.

The further you got out of the capital, the more it was lawyers and doctors who were doing it. It was also priests and Buddhist monks. It was lawyers, doctors, priests, monks, and a few others. At that time, there was a national assembly that was being started. There was a constituent assembly. There were deputies who would show up in Saigon who had been elected. We knew these guys. There were local provincial councils that were elected. We were watching, in a sense, democracy beginning.

I remember watching democracy begin in one place where I witnessed the local village chief asking the number two man in the province confidentially, and in a genuinely frank and friendly way, who on earth they were supposed to elect in these elections. When the answer was given to him that they should elect the best person, the right person (This wasn't being done for my benefit. I'm convinced it wasn't.), that answer made no sense at all. So, in a sense, some democracy we watched made sense and some democracy we watched made no sense whatsoever and was very rote stuff. But that was one of the things we were doing.

The other thing is, we were generally getting an impression of how the war was going, the

counterinsurgency campaign. Pretty soon after I started with that program, we were urged not to be roving inspectors general. In a few cases, we created simply too much trouble. I was involved once in a huge clash between some of the senior U.S. military and the American embassy over something that I came back and said was going on there. They said, "That's just not true." I said, "Of course it's true." Anyhow, that type of thing. We were after a while encouraged not to be, as Phil Habib put it, "Don't be inspectors general" because it was making his situation untenable. So, it was sometimes a bit ambiguous what we were doing out there, but we were the people who were probably the best informed on what was going on in those provinces.

Q: Before we leave it, could you tell me a bit about what was the clash that you precipitated?

LEHOVICH: I precipitated a clash about the burning of a rice crop by an American unit. I was very upset by it. I was disturbed because I thought it was one hell of a way to work and I thought it was inevitably leading to the wrong legacy in that place. I came back and made a case about it in writing and soon learned through some very angry calls to me and some very angry calls to the American embassy from the US military that what I described had never happened. I had to repeat that it had. I was told then that it never happened. Some weeks later, back in the same area of Vietnam, I took time to go to the unhappy major with whom I had discussed this thing in great detail when I was out in the area where it happened and apologize to him because I had put him in an absolutely awful situation. The poor guy. "Of course it happened," in disgusting, great detail. I had to apologize to him for having made his life miserable. That wasn't our job, in a sense.

May I just add a very interesting story? It wasn't the job of the American press to be inspectors general either, by the interesting rules that had evolved. Let me give you a really grizzly story. Horst Faas was a great war photographer. I don't know if you remember Horst Faas, but he was the finest of the photographers that were there. He was running around chasing everything that was worth photographing. In one case, he was up in the coast in one of the coastal provinces. He witnessed an American unit playing soccer with the cut off head of somebody who had been decapitated, who was a Viet Cong. Worse than that, the company was commanded by General (Inaudible)'s son, Captain (Inaudible). Horst Faas had some of the same rules that I was playing with. He was not an inspector general. He had another job to do, which was to photograph the war. He did photograph this. He went back and gave the photographs to U. Alexis Johnson, who was deputy ambassador and who, at that particular moment, was the acting ambassador, was the ambassador. He came in and he said, "Here are some photographs. Either you stop this and guarantee that you'll stop it or the photographs will get published." He got authoritative guarantees that this type of thing would be stopped, authoritative enough for him to accept them, and he gave the photographs and the negatives away. It's an interesting story. The point there is that he had another job to do in a sense, and I had another job to do in a similar sense. So, when we found things that were truly disturbing, we did things about it. But our job was not to go around and -

Q: When I was there in '69 to '70, I think, by that time the first string of the press had left

and what you had (At least my impression and I have to say, it was only an impression. I didn't deal for the most part with them.) was that you had very hungry young amateur reporters who were out really to prove how awful the United States was and to win a Pulitzer Prize, I think by exposing. I think, by that time, that was the atmosphere. I may be wrong.

LEHOVICH: No, I think you're absolutely right. There was always some of that. Sometimes it was a very positive thing. But there is a situation we all come across. If you're the White House press corps traditionally, your job is not to sit around exposing things at the White House that will cut off your access to the White House a week later. At least, that's the way it used to be played.

There were also some correspondents who began as colonial war correspondents and who still are in doing the same thing 1997. For example, Peter Arnett and Jonathan Randal, two guys I knew at the time. I was quite fond of both of them. They were delightful people. They're still doing the same thing. Where they get the energy to be war correspondents for 35 years I don't understand. I don't have that kind of energy. They love it.

Q: How did you feel your reports were received at the embassy by Phil Habib, Alexis Johnson, and the ambassador - yours and the others, but yours particularly?

LEHOVICH: Very carefully read, appreciated. They liked it. Frankly, we worked on making very punchy and readable things. These were not boring reports. It's some of the best writing I've ever done and I think my colleagues would have agreed at that time. I wish I could get the things right now, declassify them, and own them. Some are lost in the massive files of mankind.

Q: This was the time when President Johnson, who really was not somebody who was enthusiastic about this thing, viewed it as screwing up the nation's business. Yet he was caught in this thing and much of it was from the reports that were coming to him, how they were translated, and all that. Did you have any feel that there was a two tier system or two channels?

LEHOVICH: I don't know. I know that, for example, some of the stuff I wrote (I was told it) had been read carefully by MacNamara and carefully by Walt Rostow, who at that time was at the White House. I'm not surprised. These were very good reports that a lot of us were writing. So, what does it do? It doesn't make a big difference. The thing with Johnson, Lyndon Johnson is typical of people who listen on two levels. One, they listen to the bad news and they say, "God dammit, I didn't tell you to be depressed. Go out there and finish the god dammed job." On the other hand, they're listening and they're saying, "It's getting worse and worse all the time. How am I going to get out of there?" He kept this up until the very end. Whether MacNamara really believed in the summer and autumn of 1963 that the thing was finished forever, I'll never know. If he did, he had knowledge of the future that no mortal is supposed to have. That's my view.

Q: We're talking about his memoirs, which for many don't ring very true. They seem sort

of self-serving, mea culpa-ish, way after the fact.

LEHOVICH: They're mea culpa-ish and, in some cases, completely in the wrong time frame. Mid 1963, why be mea culpa about it? What had happened then that was so awful, and was going to end so awfully, that he already knew that things were terrible? Maybe he knew; the rest of us didn't at that time. I certainly didn't. I am very skeptical and think he is working out guilt feelings at the expense of historical accuracy.

Q: What about the CIA when you were there? What was your impression of the CIA staff operations and all that you saw?

LEHOVICH: They were on two levels, Stu. The career people, they were the so-called "case officers." That's what they were called in the trade. They were extraordinarily good. I think they were comparable to the crop of Foreign Service officers we'd been sending over there, who were very good.

The other side of CIA personnel, however, was that they in a hurry recruited a bunch of people who were real oafs. I remember a bunch of these guys. I remember, I didn't like the way they walked or talked or spat or burped or drank or screwed around or broke crockery or woke the neighbors at night. They were a bunch of dodos who needed adult supervision. These were quickly recruited people for some of the programs that the CIA was doing, guys they picked up off some project somewhere and recruited indiscriminately. I didn't like these guys at all. I didn't think they were doing a good job.

But the professional clandestine services career people in the CIA were awfully good. I didn't always agree with them and I didn't like it when they pretended that they were doing my job for my organization, but they did it rather well. When I was in the provinces, they had a lot of Rolexes and Polaroids to give out. If they did their job intelligently, the Rolexes and the Polaroids helped.

Q: Watches and cameras.

LEHOVICH: Watches and cameras, that's right. But they weren't Timexes and Kodaks. We're talking about good stuff.

Q: Top of the line.

LEHOVICH: Good stuff. They worked well. I think some of the programs they were working with after a while were high risk programs, some of the real physically eliminate the terrorists kind of thing.

Q: The Phoenix Program.

LEHOVICH: That type of thing. This is a high risk program. As I know from later on, I have to admit, afterwards, I spent years and years being a serious scholar of counterinsurgency after that whole business. I've written on it; I've thought about it. That

kind of stuff happens after a while in an awful lot of these wars. It's very high risk stuff. Sometimes it works.

Q: When you say "high risk," what do you mean?

LEHOVICH: First of all, you're dealing with people's lives, which should not be done lightly. Secondly, you're going to make some mistakes. Third, you may make your enemies create more hostility and do yourself more harm than intended. In one case, which was in the minds of the smart Americans at that time, it had worked surprisingly well. That was with the British in Malaya. For the serious planners in America in the Vietnam War, that and the Philippines were the two exciting examples.

Q: We were bringing in British, Australian advisors.

LEHOVICH: We were indeed. We were bringing in Australians; we were bringing in some of the very bright folks from the Philippines. One was Colonel Napoleon Veleriano, who ran a contract team of Filipinos, with some of whom I worked pretty closely. We had some of the very bright British from Malaya. I recall Sir Robert Thompson as one of them.

Q: I remember Colonel Sarong.

LEHOVICH: Colonel Ted Sarong, yes. I remember these folks, too. A couple of them I met. One of them came down and spent a day with me in Vinh Long province. I thought that he was going to learn from me, but within five minutes, I was learning from him. I learned from him for an entire day. A very gifted man, very experienced. Some of the CIA folks involved in these campaigns were, as I say, doing high risk stuff, but stuff that unfortunately is built in to almost any one of these serious counterinsurgency campaigns. Which is why the serious counterinsurgency campaigns ought to be approached with fear and trembling. Very serious stuff.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover, do you think?

LEHOVICH: In the Vietnam business - Let me just see if there is anything else. I want to cover one other thing because it's anecdotal and it's huge fun. We had a non-stop stream of important visitors out there. When I was at the American embassy for that one year, I was given some of the harder tasks of shepherding these people around, hosting them, being their control officer. The first one was Teddy Kennedy, who came with John Tunney, Congressman Tunney from California. The second one was George Romney. These were absolutely wonderful episodes.

The Kennedy visit happened when I hadn't been there for terribly long in my embassy incarnation. Suddenly, everybody began to move away from me a little bit, saying, "You really got the dirty job, didn't you" meaning I was Teddy Kennedy's control officer. I didn't understand why. First, the Mission Coordinator, a very senior officer and a very nice man called Phil Chadbourne, came up to me. He told me that "Kennedy wants one thing, he wants one thing only. He wants it every night," and my job was to see that he got it. It was

so important, I was told by the mission coordinator, Mr. Chadbourne, that I would be expected to dip into my "private stock." I didn't know what he meant by my private stock, but he kept saying, "My boy, dip into your private stock. It's that important. Use your private stock." I didn't have sherry or whiskey or anything like that. I didn't know what the guy meant. I later learned. So, that's the advice about the private stock. This was the day that Kennedy was arriving.

As his arrival time grew closer, I met Cabot Lodge in the corridor, who burst out laughing. He said, "You really got stuck with the dirty job, didn't you, boy?" I laughed, too. I'm a nice guy. He said, "I'm leaving for Thailand so I don't have to meet the guy. I hope you'll survive. Let me tell you something about those Kennedy boys. Those brothers are all the same. They want one thing. They want one thing only. They want it every night. Your job? Make him crawl for it."

Q: We're talking about two people from Massachusetts who hated each other.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely. We're talking about Henry Cabot Lodge, who had been beaten out by Jack Kennedy. That evening, I went to the airport to meet Ted Kennedy. I was immediately mobbed by many senior Americans who got between me and him and covered him with attention. That evening, I went to the hotel to work out his program with him. I came to him and he opened the door. He was on crutches because he had a broken back. He had been in an airplane crash. Of course, all the people who had been telling me "He wants one thing and one thing only" didn't realize that we were talking about a man in intense pain. He opened the door. I introduced myself to him again and he said, "Can you do me a favor? I need something and I need it real bad." I was dreading this question. I knew what was going to happen. I said, "Senator, what do you mean?" He said, "I need some aspirin and some soda water from the downstairs lobby." That's what the senator needed. Very nice man, very nice man.

Q: For the record, particularly Senator Teddy Kennedy and his brother, the President at one point, Jack Kennedy, were known as swordsmen, so usually young ladies were requisite. That's what they were talking about.

LEHOVICH: Yes, and the "private stock" was a rather flattering presumption that I had a stable of my own lovelies who would come whenever I told them.

Q: You were saying after the Kennedy episode, you had another.

LEHOVICH: After the Kennedy episode, I had another professional challenge which was clearly thrust on me because somebody there didn't like me. I say that jokingly. That was Governor Romney.

Q: He was Governor of Michigan.

LEHOVICH: He was Governor of Michigan and he wanted to be President. That meant that a lot of people thought he was a good guy and a lot of other people thought he was a

very bad guy simply because he was after someone's job.

Q: He was a Republican.

LEHOVICH: He was a Republican. Governor Romney came out there. I spent a couple of days with Governor Romney going all over the place, in town, by airplane, to villages, to other places, provinces, and everywhere this guy would gather up as many people as he could and then give a signal to the T.V. crews that had followed us. There were two planes. There was the plane the governor was in with a few other people, including me. There was the second airplane with all these news people. He only wanted the ones who had cameras. He would start his stuff. He would make the little boys squat down and do football locomotive cheers. The football locomotive cheers were when he would yell "Let's hear it for Saigon!" They'd yell. He'd say, "Now yell 'Down with the Communists!'" They'd yell that in whatever Vietnamese words they would have been asked to yell by the interpreter or local official. Then he'd ask them to yell these anti-communist slogans loud enough to hear in Hanoi and they'd yell that stuff so loud, certainly loud enough for the T.V. crew to hear. This was all being filmed and shown in America. It was okay the first time, but this happened two or three times the same day. It became rather weary. Anyhow, Romney was milking this thing for all he could so that he could come back with the strong aura of the anti-communist man, the tough man, the man who could deal with a problem like Vietnam.

Then a year later or whenever else it was, two years later, the guy says he was brainwashed. I was absolutely overwhelmed because I had spent a large amount of time with him. This guy said he was brainwashed. Then suddenly came one of the nastiest phone calls I ever got in the State Department. It was an official call from a guy that I knew reasonably well who at that time was running the whole Vietnam operation in the State Department. He calls up and asks me to write down everything I knew about Mr. Romney's visit for the record. I said, "I'll call you right back," which I didn't do. I called back a few hours later and said, "I'm not going to write down everything I know about Governor Romney's visit for the record. I'll be happy to discuss it with you if you like. But I'm not in the business of writing memoirs about American politicians." So, I didn't write down everything I knew about Governor Romney. I told him all about it. The reason, of course, I was being asked to do all of this was to prove that Governor Romney hadn't been brainwashed. I was perfectly happy to recount in detail how he gave locomotive cheers, but I frankly didn't feel for one minute that I wanted to start writing the Vlad Lehovich memoirs about Governor-Trying-to-Be-President Romney.

Q: As a matter of fact, today, if you ask anybody of our generation about Romney- Hadn't he been president of a motor company, too?

LEHOVICH: He had been president of American Motors.

Q: American Motors. All that anybody remembers is that brainwash thing, which actually blew him out of the-

LEHOVICH: Blew him out of the water. Made him look like a complete idiot.

Q: Yes. Now we can discuss this without having to write the memoir.

LEHOVICH: Of course. The reason I didn't like writing the memoirs, I knew it that day, it was unmistakable, I was going to be used on that one.

Q: Yes.

LEHOVICH: I was going to be put out in the wind on that one.

Q: Romney out there, was he asking questions?

LEHOVICH: Oh, yes, he was having a good, highly motivated, very high spirited, fact finding trip, which he was also using with almost no limits, using it to publicize himself. But he was having a very fine, extroverted time fact finding, asking. I don't think he was listening too carefully. I think he was much more interested in photo opportunities, but he was spending several hours a day talking to people who knew a lot, asking them things. But he was running the show. He had some people out there - not advance people, but he had people with him who were working on planning this trip, his people. The brainwashing thing was an afterthought. As you say, Stu, it backfired. It made the guy look like an idiot. But it didn't make him look like an idiot because people thought he hadn't been brainwashed but said he had been. People actually thought he had been brainwashed. That made him look even stupider.

Q: Of course it did.

LEHOVICH: How could you believe me when I said I loved you when you know I've been a liar all my life? Who wants a guy like that for President?

Q: How about with Ted Kennedy? Sort of his back trouble... Did he have an agenda when he came there?

LEHOVICH: My sense of his agenda and of the whole man was very decent. The agenda was to find out and to learn as much as possible and to see things. I was amazed in retrospect. You had a guy like Kennedy. His brother had been President. He had a much higher sense than some petty sense of a situation like this. I saw nothing petty in the way he behaved in his two or three days of fact finding in Vietnam. He was with his friend, Congressman Tunney, who was not in the limelight - in fact, he was almost invisible. But those two fellows had a very sensible trip by any standards of political junketing.

Q: What about some of the other junketeers? If we have such a commitment to an area, it's a damn good thing to have people come out from all elements of American society to take a look and see what we're doing. What was your impression of others?

LEHOVICH: I was briefly involved with Henry Kissinger during his trip in the mid-sixties, while he was still on the Harvard faculty and following which he reported to both

Rockefeller and Nixon. It is a brief recollection but a useful anecdote because later Kissinger had the reputation of a “swinger” and a social lion. He certainly was not that in the mid sixties. On Kissinger’s last night of a rather long visit -two or three weeks -Dick Smyser, a political section colleague who had spent much time with Kissinger, decided it was time for him to have a real night on the town. He asked me, as well as David Engle, to join and enrich the evening with our knowledge of Saigon and of Vietnamese. (David’s Vietnamese was superb). We went to a fine dinner in Cho Lon and Henry was silent and introverted. We went somewhere for dessert and he was shy and awkward. Finally, we went to the Arc-en-Ciel, one of the truly fine night clubs in Saigon with elegant setting, excellent music and first-rate food, and magnificent girls. We wanted him to see an expensive and first-rate night club, even though it was one we did not frequent. The girls at the Arc-en-Ciel were not mere bar girls, as elsewhere in town. They were courtesans, very good looking, well educated, poised, sophisticated, and trilingual. Henry was still terribly reserved. We had some drinks and were about to leave. Finally, a girl came up to him. She was perhaps the only one in the place who wasn’t a beauty, but rather a rather mangy wreck with lots of makeup and a fiery red dress. She may have been an interloper who came in from the streets. She came up to him and he stood up. She lunged against him in an embrace, flinging one arm around his shoulder and with the other giving him a surprisingly conspicuous and, it seemed, a very probing thrust into his private regions. Henry was reserved no more. He stood back, looked intently at the girl, and said, “Oh, my God, I’ve been discovered.” For a while there was some indecision about whether to continue to leave, or to stay and savor the fruits of having been discovered. Our guest had changed from a retiring violet to an aggressive social animal. We invoked the late hour and the risk of disease to make the case for leaving, and the evening ended safely soon thereafter.

Back to the general subject of visitors. Vietnam was an intensely visited place. The other folks that I came across who were visiting were, first of all, just a lot of friends or family of people out there who would come out for fun. It was a very social thing to do at that time. We also had all sorts of gurus and pundits who used to come out there. I met a whole bunch of folks from the RAND Corporation who became lasting friends. I met the Alsop brothers that way and got to know Joseph Alsop fairly well through that beginning. Various other people would come out who were opinion-making people. What was fascinating was that until the late ‘60s and even beyond, opinion leaders in America as often as not thought it was a great thing. Some of them, in a very intense way. I mean, the Joseph Alsop treatment or the Roland Evans treatment of Vietnam was very orthodox: wonderful campaign, very difficult, very important, very high stakes, and so on. In a sense, it was very high stakes. I think you're right, Stu. I think people have to go out. People should visit these places. Political junkets can be excessive and ludicrous, but an awful lot of them are a very good idea and are necessary.

Another note, an uncharitable one, perhaps, but necessary for posterity. It has to do with Daniel Ellsberg, who was with the Lansdale group in Vietnam in the mid sixties, and who later, as a radically anti-Vietnam war activist, leaked the Pentagon Papers to the New York Times. I saw Dan a number of times in Saigon and at least once in the provinces, when I hitched a car ride with John Paul Vann and Ellsberg in the coastal provinces from one province to another. The interesting thing, and the one I want to stress, is how gung-ho

Dan was about the war effort, and how hawkish he was. Dan liked to show photos to his friends. Sometimes these photos were of trips, or people, or himself. Dan was an exhibitionist and he occasionally had photos of girls he was seeing or dating and which were indiscreet photos and which his friends did not enjoy seeing because they were embarrassing and Dan was immature. He also had a lot of photos of himself and these, too, were sometimes exhibitionistic. Dan went through a phase in which he liked to wear and pose in marine fatigues while he traveled around the countryside. One photo, which was a shocker to his friends, had Dan in marine fatigues, with rifle in hand, posing with his foot on the chest of a dead Viet Cong. It was like a safari picture of the successful hunter and the game he had bagged. Dan was not involved in military action and had not shot the man, but he posed for such a picture. I saw it, as did a number of others, and it was unpleasant and was part of a pattern of behavior that led Dan's friends to distance themselves from him. I heard that the U.S. military who had been there when Dan posed found the action wrong and distasteful. In any case, Dan was every bit as extreme when he was a booster of the war effort as when he became its enemy. I have no doubt that something within him required these kinds of extreme, exhibitionistic attitudes and that his militancy and pacifism were ways to act out the same needs. I have respected some harsh critics of the Vietnam war, but I don't consider Dan to be a considered or plausible war critic and I do not respect him.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point? You left Vietnam when in 1966?

LEHOVICH: Summer of '66.

Q: And whither?

LEHOVICH: I went to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. I worked as an analyst on Soviet foreign policy for a couple of years.

Q: So, we'll pick it up there in summer of '66 and you're going to INR, working on Soviet affairs.

Q: Today is the 10th of April 1997. So, INR 1966 to '68.

LEHOVICH: That's right.

Q: Was it a wrench for you to get out of Vietnamese affairs and back into the Soviet?

LEHOVICH: The wrench was that by then, the whole Vietnamese business had become absolutely the hottest thing in the US government. Other parts of the foreign affairs establishment, including for example, the part of INR that I joined, were annoyed and even jealous of the attention in terms of people's time and certainly of the resources and the

attention of the front page of the newspapers. So, yes, I missed it so much that within a few months, I went back there for three months, sort of on loan for some programs there. Indeed, upon coming back from this brief loan, I thought I might do this again, at which point my boss told me that one such excursion was enough. But to make a long story short, yes, Vietnam had become a very fashionable thing in the US government at that time. This was before the war was flaring and when people had discovered how important at that time and how exciting the thing was without discovering that it was very unpleasant because, frankly, it wasn't very unpleasant at that time.

Q: We'll talk about your excursion back, but let's talk about INR and Soviet affairs in 1966. What was your impression of the role that INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research) played?

LEHOVICH: I think it was playing a fairly minor role in general. I think where it began to play a more important role was in the traditional craft of intelligence, the thing that involves either clandestine information or other sensitive or compartmentalized information. There, I think, INR has always played in modern times an important role because it's the plug by which the State Department is joined to that community of information. Otherwise, quite frankly, for much of the world and much of the daily activities of the world, the need for some INR early morning analysis was fairly limited. In the area that I was working on, which was the Soviet area, the need was relatively more than it might be on other parts of the world. The communist countries until they ended were really the countries where one needed people with a certain amount of background in the history of the places, a certain amount of lore on communism, some language skills, some regional skills. One actually needed some Sovietologists and even some Kremlinologists. One had some good ones in INR and one had some good China watchers. Closed countries. INR was very useful for. For a place like England or Latin American, I don't think it was terribly useful.

Q: How well did you find the INR Soviet Affairs plugged into the European Bureau dealing with Soviet Affairs?

LEHOVICH: I think they were good friends with them. It was a respected bunch. The best people in it were just terribly good and had been terribly good for a number of years. They were basically modest, hard-working professionals with very good credentials. I'm thinking of people like, just to name some names, Bob Baraz, Jack Sontag, Martha Mautner, Hal Sonnenfeldt, who was head of the thing. These were people who had useful things to say to anyone.

Q: What was the situation in the Soviet Union? This was about the time of Khrushchev's fall, wasn't it? I can't remember exactly.

LEHOVICH: This would have been shortly after Khrushchev's fall. It was the era of multiple leadership, Brezhnev and Kosygin. There was a fair amount of overseas activities in the Third World by the Soviets. Stu, just to make a long story short, I don't think I contributed an awful lot in my two years there. I was the junior man in the office. People

were terribly nice. I spent two years learning. I think I contributed a very marginal amount, but I think I acquired an absolutely first class education in those two years, not only on the Soviet Union internally and Soviet foreign policy, but a very good education on Eastern Europe and all of the Warsaw Pact states. The amazing thing is that this body of information, not just conceptually, but even factually, was often valid for 20 years at a pop. If you knew who Enver Hoxha was in Albania in 1966, that information was good for a real long time afterwards. It was not quite as good as knowing that Tito was in Yugoslavia or that Ho Chi Minh was in Vietnam when Ho was there because those people tended to last forever - or Haile Selassie in Ethiopia. Those people indeed did last forever.

Q: Haile Selassie lasted from 1913 to-

LEHOVICH: 50 or more years. But the point is, if you invested some time in the government, the theory, the system, and the personalities of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, that information was good for a real long time. The work was also very exciting and very useful as a way to learn a lot about intelligence, including aspects of it which go way beyond this interview. Also, fairly useful because I had a chance to work on the Czech task force at the time that the Soviets were contemplating what to do with Czechoslovakia.

Q: This was during the Prague spring.

LEHOVICH: During the Prague spring and then at the time when they invaded, by which time one of the remarkable things was, of course, that we had disbanded our Czech task force about three weeks before the Soviets invaded because we became convinced as a government and as an intelligence community that there would be no invasion. In retrospect, that was one of the most fascinating and important lessons I ever had.

Q: Let's talk about this. This is still quite early in the Brezhnev regime. We're still, I assume, trying to get a fix. It wasn't just Brezhnev. It was Brezhnev and Kosygin. We were trying to get a fix on what the Soviets were up to, weren't we? When you arrived, up to the '68 Czech business, what was sort of the general feeling about what the Soviets were going to do? I mean, was it a defensive posture? Was it offensive? Was it a reactions thing or what?

LEHOVICH: The feeling with Europe was, as I recall, a fairly quiet one. The focus in the US-Soviet relations? There were important beginnings of an arms control focus at that time. Europe was fairly quiet. There was concern about a lot of Soviet activities and offensives of one kind or another in the Third World and these indeed were happening. This was still the period when there were a number of countries that were "on the path to socialism" or that were indeed even considered socialists. I'm using the terms that were Soviet terms at that time. I in particular was working on aspects of Soviet behavior in the Third World and the US at that time was very concerned about apparent attempts to build friendships and coalitions and regional activities by the USSR. I can't say that it was a really exceptionally high or tense period. There wasn't a great Berlin flare-up at that time. There was the Czech invasion. That was the big event.

Q: Could you talk about the people who were dealing in INR with Czechoslovakia as the Dubcek regime came in and the sort of opening up and all? What were you getting?

LEHOVICH: It was a fascinating time. The Dubcek regime got a lot of attention. At first, there was concern about how long it might last and the concern as the Prague spring wore on got greater and greater because it was apparent that Dubcek was pushing things further than they had been pushed before.

I'd just like to digress for a minute on one particular analyst whom I remember very vividly and that's Jack Sontag, who is still in INR. I'm delighted to say for the record my recollections of some of Jack Sontag's thinking in the spring of 1968 because I think he did the best thinking of anyone in the US government that I know of. There was a day when he said "They're going in. They're going to invade. They have to. The die has been cast." This was very interesting. I asked what his reasons were and his reasons were twofold. One is that Dubcek had just permitted a multiparty environment and had therefore taken away the unique position of the Communist Party. The second determining event was that Dubcek had just permitted freedom of the press. These two were the two items that this particular analyst said with total conviction were the two that would force Soviet action because they were intolerable and incompatible with the continuation of the Soviet system as it was then known. In retrospect, he was absolutely correct. It's a remarkably simple and accurate analysis. What happened to it and what happened to a much broader sense of concern in the US government and in the press and in Europe at that time is that it was all undone in terms of being good political warning. It was all undone when Brezhnev and Dubcek got together on two occasions. One was at Cierna and one was at Bratislava. Those were two towns that were-

Q: This has to be 1968.

LEHOVICH: That would be 1968 and that would be getting, as I recall, into the early summer of 1968. What happened is very simple. There was a Judas kiss. I say the word deliberately because I'm just recalling the image of the two kissing. There is nothing quite like a front page picture of these two guys bussing each other publicly, smooching each other, to suggest to you that everything is okay. I think there is no question that it was supposed to suggest to Mr. Dubcek also that things were okay. This was done on a couple of occasions in addition to an exchange of kisses and some great public warmth. There were lovely little Czech girls with flowers who were greeting Brezhnev and things like that. To put it in technical jargon, the political warning that had been apparent to the United States and its intelligence community was completely neutralized. It was neutralized to such a degree that the prevailing wisdom in Washington was that things were okay, that things had blown over, and three things happened that in retrospect were shocking. One is that we disbanded our Czechoslovak task force because there was no need for it anymore. The second is that the American ambassador in Moscow, who is a very intelligent man, went off on vacation, a very well-deserved vacation, and third, that Helmut Sonnenfeldt, who was the head of the Eastern European and Soviet INR, also went off on a very well-deserved vacation. These were smart people. When they go off on vacation, and when the State Department mechanism disbands its Czech task force, it is a way of saying,

"There is no problem, guys." When it finally happened, which as I recall, was the night of August 21, 1968, there were a lot of frantic phone calls being made to try to assemble a handful of people who could work in short order with this information.

Q: Were you on vacation?

LEHOVICH: I was actually just about to leave to go off and do something else. I was in town. For people who worked on that area, it was one of those moments where one actually does remember what one was doing then and that day. It's like the assassination of Kennedy and various other important days. I'm simply saying it's important what happened. What happened is that we knew something was going to happen. We're one smart country with big ears and big eyes in the sky. Then we knew with a great deal of confidence that it wasn't going to happen. So, we relaxed.

Q: I'm wondering because something like this is not done with the push of a button. It's exactly what our entire sort of readiness intelligence organization is really supposed to be able to pick up and that is, movement of tanks, and troop movement. Albeit, it was behind the Iron Curtain, but this is the sort of thing that I would have thought the CIA and the National Security Agency would have been picking up.

LEHOVICH: There are a couple of things at play, but the one I'm dealing with is what's called political intelligence. That's when you just look at something, you say, "I know something is going to happen." Afterwards, you say it's not going to happen. The other business (radio noises and things of that kind), the intriguing thing that happened was, when they actually began to move, they did it without turning their radios on for a real long time. It must have been a very difficult way to move. It's not great distances. They observed radio silence when they actually made the move, but of course, by then, it was very, very late in the game.

Q: With the Czech task force, what were you looking at and what were sort of the options? Here is Czechoslovakia beginning to maybe emerge from under the Soviet embrace in a significant way for the time. Did we seem to have any options other than watch it and see what would happen?

LEHOVICH: Stu, I wish I could give you a good answer on that. I was working with the part of it that was basically watching what was happening, watching events, intelligence, and intelligence indicators. I don't know what our policy considerations were. I can make a guess at them, but that's not why we're discussing it. I just don't know. A very good question.

Q: You were really getting ready to move on. Did this come as a shock to the system of INR, at least from what you were able to observe?

LEHOVICH: What happened afterwards, Stu, was also interesting. What happened is that a lot of people who had gone off and worried about other things, and had decided this thing was not going to be a problem, changed their tune and said, "We knew what was going to

happen all along. We're not surprised, blah, blah, blah." Pack up the bathing suit, come back from vacation and say "I knew it was going to happen." Yet we had disbanded our attention completely. Amazing event and a great national lesson in early warning.

Q: I would have thought this would have scared the bejesus out of the people. This was probably something we couldn't have done much about anyway, but at the same time, a major troop movement like this-

LEHOVICH: The troop movements had been going on. One of the ways the Soviets put pressure on people and one of the ways everybody who has troops puts pressure on people is, they deploy them in positions where one begins to worry. One is expected to worry. We're talking about distances that are very small. They can really be crossed in a day's time. So, the movement had happened.

Q: This was considered to be basically a bluff or a pressure type thing?

LEHOVICH: Maybe, but for a while, as I say, people really thought that the odds of an invasion were very high and then the odds of an invasion plummeted to the point where there was confidence that there wouldn't be one.

Generally speaking, as I said, the INR experience that I had was a marvelous one. I was enormously the beneficiary of that. I don't think that's a bad idea. I think taking junior officers or young officers and using them in a way that is sometimes grunt work -Sometimes you have them come in at night, or at four in the morning. You exploit them. But basically, you're also giving them a very fine education on a whole part of the world and on a set of systems. This education was from working on material, but also simply from interacting with some colleagues who were enormously knowledgeable and who were very generous with their time and their knowledge and genuinely liked to share their enthusiasm.

Q: Before we move on, what did you do in this approximately three months in '66 when you were called back to go to Vietnam?

LEHOVICH: I went back and spent three months operating largely out of Nha Trang with what was then a sort of further, more advanced rural assistance and pacification program, which by then had evolved in a pretty large machinery. It was divided by cores at that point, with a sort of regional headquarters in each of the four cores of Vietnam.

Q: This would have been in the second core, wouldn't it?

LEHOVICH: This was in the second core and I went out to sort of help someone set up the operation out there because I knew the countryside well and mainly because I was available and thought it was a great idea to go and do it. So, we went out and I helped someone sort of take over that job. I spent about three months intensively visiting a lot of coastal and mountain highland towns and spending a fair amount of time in Saigon, simply getting another look at the country. Just to make a long story short, by then (and this would

have been the winter of 1966/67), the impression of an American military presence was really very, very strong in those regions. The war had become very Americanized. The civilian programs that I had worked with on a much more decentralized, individual level had become also fairly large and cumbersome at this point, with their own bureaucracies. The impression was of a very Americanized effort. My long-term view has been that you can't have a very Americanized effort in a situation like that for years and years and years and still have it accepted in the country.

Q: At the end of '68, you did what?

LEHOVICH: At the end of '68, one of these delightful things happened. I simply got a phone call late in the day from the personnel system, which liked me at that time, and called up and said, "Hi, would you like to go to graduate school for a year? You can pick any one of about seven of them and you can pick a lot of subjects you want to study." I said, "Sure, I want to go to graduate school for a year." I went to SAIS and did what was called Atlantic affairs, which was basically European studies under a fancier name. I did that for a year.

Q: Here you are, you looked like when you came in you were earmarked to be a Soviet specialist. You end up in Vietnam and now you're playing around with the high society people in Atlantic affairs.

LEHOVICH: It's called the long arm of coincidence, Stu. I think it's a lot better than central planning. But you're right. The rhyme or reason in that type of situation was that, if one sees something exciting, one goes and does it. It's particularly appropriate if one is single and can pack up one's belongings in about five hours and five suitcases and move around. That was the case. As a result, I had a very informative and very valuable year and, frankly, lived off of some of that intellectual capital for a good 20 years afterwards. I also had a great time.

Q: We're beginning to move into the anti-Vietnam period. The draft was up, students and professors were beginning to raise themselves. SAIS, I would have thought, would have sort of fallen outside that. Were you feeling any of that at that time?

LEHOVICH: I had a wonderful time at SAIS with the graduate students because I was pretty much of the age set, maybe a couple of years older than most. SAIS played hard at being with the times. SAIS was a trade school and still is, to a large degree. You go there, you get a degree. If you really want to push it, you can get a doctor's degree. The reason people go there is because they want to work afterwards in the international affairs community, business or government or in some other way (once in a blue moon, in academia). It's a little bit like saying, "Does the Harvard Business School have big riots about the Vietnam War?" Well, if they do, they keep it to themselves. SAIS did go through these motions, but the motions were pretty artificial. Other parts of America were definitely doing it. There were friends and family members who were all caught up by then in Vietnam protest movements.

Q: I'm trying to recapture the times. Here you had served in Vietnam and you watched the Americanization and all. Were you disturbed or engaged by this growing feeling in the United States of what are we doing in Vietnam, particularly the younger people, and did you see this as a social force that might have repercussions?

LEHOVICH: I thought it was a terrific mess that was going on, that whole period, domestically. It was to get considerably worse in the next couple of years. But what I saw happening was a situation in which I still thought there was very legitimate American objective over there, but I didn't think it was going to work. We were getting to a situation where it was just such an enormous use of American force that I was very skeptical.

Domestically, a big, sad mess was going on at that time which was to give the government a bad name for a long time, a worse name than it deserved, and which gave the military a real bad name. If one goes just a little later than, say, the period of '68/'69, one is going to the period where there were some very strong feelings within the US military and particularly within the Army, among very good professionals. I'm getting a little bit ahead of the game, but not terribly far. Let's look at around 1970. I was friends with some of the best young officers in the American military, remarkably gifted people, a lot of whom went very far afterwards, and a lot of whom got out at a very early age. There was a sense strongest within some of the best officers in the American Army that one should get out because it's giving the military a bad name. Not because one's going to win or one isn't, but it's giving the military a bad and dishonorable name and one should cut it off for that reason - cut it off in some intelligent way and not in some foolish way. Of course, the bad name is exactly what was happening. At that time, if one traveled around the country, and sort of got out of the motel on the wrong side one day and people found out that one was from Washington and with the US government, one could catch hell for that. That wasn't a lot of fun either.

Q: What was your impression of the Tet offensive? This happened during this time here.

LEHOVICH: The Tet offensive in 1968? A remarkable situation, a situation which couldn't have happened according to conventional wisdom and which, when it happened, was so scary to some of the people on the ground that I remember one of the people in charge of American policy at that time in Washington, who had just been there during the Tet offensive, came back and for days afterwards was unable to speak coherently about Vietnam for more than a few minutes at a time. When this person would begin to speak, and particularly to speak about the Tet offensive, he would begin to giggle. The person was Bob Komer, Special Assistant to the President for Vietnam. LBJ, as I heard from White House people at the time, asked that he be kept away from reporters and off TV until he calmed down. This was a person who was, to a very large degree, in charge of that effort at that time. Not a nervous fellow, but reacting very nervously to what to people there was a remarkably frightening experience. I'm damn glad I missed it.

Q: Were you by any chance, at this point, having just gone through the Czech thing, where things happened that by any conventional wisdom said wasn't going to happen, and then as an old Vietnam hand, seeing the Tet offensive pop out, was this beginning to make you

concerned about the ability of those in power, including now yourself, to come up with rational analyses of the near future?

LEHOVICH: Stu, what should have happened then to anybody in the government concerned with the big events of the day and certainly the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the Tet offensive, what should have happened is, we all should have become somewhat more humble - at least, for a reasonable period of time. People don't get humble for very long unless they collapse. It didn't really happen. There was a shocking quality to the Tet offensive because it was so big and it was so frightening and it was so unforeseen.

Q: Did something like this make want you to get back to Vietnam and put things right?

LEHOVICH: For a while, it did, Stu. But I'll tell you frankly, I'd been there for over three years and I made some promises to family members. They knew that I wanted to go back and they made me promise that I wouldn't. I literally made a promise that I would not go back because I was very tempted to go back for more of it. It is quite addictive. It was very exciting. It was something I did well and something I enjoyed. I was, as I say, single, mobile, and could pack in a day's time. My more intelligent nuclear family members had made me promise no more. I had to keep the promise.

Q: In '69, whither?

LEHOVICH: In '69, off to Brussels to work with the Common Market at the US Mission to the European Community.

Q: This was '69 to when?

LEHOVICH: '69 until early 1971. Brussels to the European Community.

Q: This was your SAIS thing.

LEHOVICH: This was the price I had to pay to go to grad school for a year under an enlightened program by the State Department, which it should continue into the future, but is underfunded right now. My punishment was that I had to go and be an ambassador's aide at a very sophisticated and intelligent, rather small mission in Brussels. I did this and I do not like much being an ambassador's aide. My ambassador was a gifted man, but it's not a great job. I spent a fair amount of the first few months trying to figure out how to join the Political Section.

Q: I would have thought that being an ambassador's aide, you were moving on in the Foreign Service, and this would be- This was a great thing for a junior officer to learn their way around, but somebody who's moving into the mid-career, it gets awkward.

LEHOVICH: I thought it was awkward and I thought it was boring. It was not a terribly big mission. I don't think there was a hell of a lot to do. I eventually merged it with being a full-time member of the Political Section and moved out physically from the

ambassador's environment.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

LEHOVICH: The ambassador was a gentleman called J. Robert Schaetzel. It's interesting to pause, in a sense, on what someone like Mr. Schaetzel symbolized at that time. Schaetzel, who was not a career diplomat, but had been in and out of the government for a number of years, was a true-blue, hard-core Europeanist. It was very interesting to see how strong the notion of European integration and European unification was in the United States at that time. It was the dominant idea among policy circles, policy thinkers, Council on Foreign Relations, all the folks who wrote books on foreign affairs at that time, and anything resembling a foreign affairs establishment. It was taken as self-evident. Its benefits were obvious. The United States to some degree was a cheerleader for European integration at that time.

Q: I would call it the cornerstone of American policy to keep the bloody Germans and French from going at each other.

LEHOVICH: Well, it had that underpinning. It also had evolved into a role, for example, in my mission at that time, of cheerleading, advising, and encouraging. We were encouraging a union, which was union political in the first instance. The underlying reasons for it were more political than anything else from the coal and steel community on. But by then it was becoming very strongly an economic union and was becoming very strongly a commercial and trade entity with which the US had a lot of disagreements. We were not members of it. Some at that time probably would have said, "Look, this is a body that is not of us. We're the outsiders. When we work with it, we're negotiating to a large degree against it. At the same time, when we stand back as the world's most powerful country, we're cheering it and we're pushing it." That indeed was happening. The mission was probably, on a man for man and woman for woman basis, as good a group of economic officers as one is capable of assembling, a remarkably good group. I was not one of the racehorses of that establishment. I had a very good time intellectually there. I don't think I made any particular contributions the whole time I was there.

Q: Was sort of the chicken war a factor? Could you explain what the chicken war was? I would have thought this would have been a shot across the bow of the American proponents of integration.

LEHOVICH: There were a number of trade skirmishes and wars going on at that time. There was an awful lot of lobbying and high politics on behalf of soybeans, American agricultural interests. It's no coincidence that Senator Percy of Illinois, which is a major soybean producer, was one of our constant visitors. In fact, anybody who was big in certain kinds of commodity region was very much on our list. The chicken war was indeed a war and it centered on different ways to keep chickens out of Europe, American chickens. Some of the ways of keeping them out was the finer points of how they're plucked and cleaned, and whether it's the most hygienic or the second most hygienic way of doing this. I don't want to get into whether we're talking about spin, chilled, or hot water cleaning or

other things.

At that time, there was another wonderful thing, even more exciting than the chicken wars as a display of how governments make up great structures to do very simple things. The very simple thing is, I want to keep your products out of my area. The great structure I create is scientific. I get the Ph.D.'s out and I get the biochemists out. In the case of the French, one of the truly brilliant things at that time was to prove scientifically that if you drink hard liquor distilled from grape, you're doing your system something good physically. If you drink hard liquor distilled from grain, like whiskey, scotch, or bourbon, you're doing something pretty bad to your system. That fine scientific structure which the French created in that period, of course, was used to put tariff and non-tariff barriers on booze from America, from England. At that time, bourbon was very popular and beginning to be very fashionable in France. This was a good way to protect cognac and keep the other stuff out. A little like the chicken wars. A lot of that stuff going on. The story though of how one looks at European integration, economic integration in the case of the European Communities and the Common Market, political integration, the growth of a European strength in NATO, these are all recurring stories. This was a piece of it in the late '60s and early '70s, but it's a long story for America.

What's really fascinating is how much of the period since World War II the United States has managed to keep a very long-term perspective on Europe. It waivers and then it gets strong and it gets weak. But it's something which has ups and downs, but continues to have strong life.

Q: Did you have the feeling in this that you, albeit carrying the briefcase of an ambassador or something, that we were part of an apparatus of the super power dealing with a bunch of local powers? I mean, this was no longer the Europe of what when we were kids we knew as the great Europe. Are we talking about a corner of the Eurasian continent now?

LEHOVICH: It's interesting, we were the super power and these were countries that had lost some of their clout. England at that time wasn't a member of the European Community, nor were a number of the other free trade area countries. But our punch and our influence with the European economic integration movement wasn't that great. It wasn't that great for a couple of simple reasons. We weren't members. We didn't have the big leverage. England wasn't a member. A lot of other people weren't members at that time. When one talked about NATO, there was just no question. With NATO, the leverage was enormous. We were the leader. That wasn't the case with the European communities and it caused an interesting split at that time in the American community working on Europe.

There were those who sort of said that the traditional Europeanists, proponents of European economic integration, are the soft minded, are the tender hearted. The tough minded, the true thinkers, the stronger people, are the NATO people, the people who think that it's most important to strengthen NATO and not worry as much about other aspects of European integration. There was even sometimes a certain either/or quality - you can't do both at once type of quality. I wound up working on both of these things quite intensively -with the European communities for a couple of years and then for a number of years later

with NATO. There always has been a bit of a rivalry in the American policy establishment. This becomes much clearer if one looks in the Department of Defense at the way various Secretaries of Defense will deal with these issues. Or someone like, for example, Robert Komer, who took over as the "NATO czar," for the Pentagon and basically liked to put down American activities with Europe that weren't NATO-centered. The logic was almost that energy spent on other things is bad because it's energy not being spent on NATO. So, a lot of cross currents there.

Q: Let's stick strictly to the Brussels time in the Mission to the European Community. What was your impression of the French and the German representation there?

LEHOVICH: They were good. The impression that I carry right now of nations there is that they really were very split. There was a Common Market commission, a commission of the European communities, which was in effect the central government, the central governing organization of the European communities. There were nationals of countries in there and there were commissioners in there. On the other hand, there were the permanent missions which were the national representatives responsible, say, to France, not to the Commission to the European communities. There was a lot of rivalry between those two. They had good diplomats there. They had some top people. The countries that always had top people, their top national figures working on these things, were the Benelux countries, particularly Belgium, and the Netherlands. In Belgium or the Netherlands, it was a fairly safe proposition that the very top people in a country in international affairs would do several things in their lifetimes. They might be foreign minister. They'd probably be prime minister as well. They would work with NATO and they would work with the European communities. That was just the way it was happening. Joseph Luns is an example of that type of person. You didn't have at that point quite the same thing with Germany, or France, and I don't think you had quite the same thing later when Britain entered. In Britain, you tended to have the elite of the foreign affairs establishment going off to NATO or going off to the United Nations. I would say that this is probably the same for the other major countries. Working actually in Brussels with the Common Market was, a lot of the times, not quite as heady. For the ministers, it was a non-stop set of visits. The Common Market at that time was really carrying to a remarkably fine point the art of making decisions all night long at the last minute, decisions which were arcane or decisions which were important (It's hard to remember which.), decisions which have to be made by midnight - which, if they aren't made by midnight, somebody physically stops a clock and then they go on to the point of exhaustion late at night or early the next morning. It's decision-making by locking people in a room and exhausting them. It's one way to do it. The survival is of the people who have the greatest ability to stay up all night. We weren't in that particular game, but we've played that game. That's a fairly standard multilateral organization situation.

Common Market ministers, I think, dreaded their visits to Brussels for Common Market affairs and rather liked them for NATO affairs. That was an easy club. A few people did all the work and others enjoyed it.

Q: You were there in '69/'71. You say these were basically true believers, but as you

finished up this thing, did you get any feel for whether the Common Market? Britain wasn't in. How realistic was this thing?

LEHOVICH: There were true believers and then there were less true believers. For example, in the US, the Treasury Department was not a true believer in this thing for very understandable reasons. There were a lot of reasons to balk at continuing to offer more or less a blank check on the future to people who might never get to organizing themselves well politically, but who sure were going to form a successful customs or economic union and keep you out one way or the other. Hard to say. There was good grounds at that time to remember that we were not going to be members of that body and that this body might have some very rough times with us.

Q: Did you find yourself and the staff there as outsiders... I mean, you had been used to places where people shot at each other and then the Soviet Union. Tanks were something. All of a sudden-

LEHOVICH: Sure, it makes you feel like an insider if they shoot at you.

Q: Did you feel that you were the country boy brought into the city?

LEHOVICH: I did feel that. I'm not sure everybody else in the mission did. But I did have a sense of members of our mission spending a lot of time to try to be accepted by Europeans as good interlocutors and as friends and as members of the circuit. That just isn't the situation that I later felt working on NATO issues or on multilateral arms control issues where the American representative was almost by definition a pillar of the establishment. There, we were not pillars of the establishment with the exception of our head of mission, who really was an old pal from the earlier days of the European movement, of all sorts of movers and shakers. He loved every minute of it. Most others of us were not really insiders.

Q: Was there any analysis or looking at this and watching as this operated to see the early signs of arterial sclerosis or something like this of a bureaucracy building up that might impede the efficiency of the European Union?

LEHOVICH: Sure, there always are. There was a lot of lampooning of the Eurocrats, of the European bureaucrats, in the late '60s and before that. The lampooning had been done in such a vigorous way by De Gaulle, who had seen a period of enormous ups and downs with the European movement, and had been so clear in the attitudes and the press, and other writings expressing concern about a centralized bureaucracy. That's been a theme from way back when and was a pretty highly developed theme at that time, too.

What was, I think, a more important theme isn't whether the bureaucracy was going to grow and become a problem. I think most people felt a bureaucracy was going to become a problem, but a lot of people just take that in stride. I do. The big question was, is it going to expand and is it going to take in the European Free Trade Agreement area, which was Great Britain and the outer seven countries. That was the big question. Toward the end of

that period, it began to look as if it was going to expand. That was the exciting thing, just as right now, the exciting thing in the late 1990s with the European communities is whether it's going to take in some of those countries that have nowhere to go right now, that are trying to join NATO, for example.

Q: We're talking about the former Soviet Bloc countries.

LEHOVICH: We're talking about the former Soviet Bloc countries. But then when we're talking about the late 60s and early 70s, the real focus was what's going to happen when the new countries come in? There were many levels of focus. One, how are they going to divide up the seats? Two, how many languages are they going to have to speak? How many interpreters are we going to have to have? Every time you add another language to an organization, you're diluting it, frankly. You're really diluting it. NATO has two official languages, but the UN has more and the Common Market has more. They are diluting clear communication an awful lot.

Q: My dates may be off, but if I recall, De Gaulle sort of resigned in a huff or something around '68, didn't he?

LEHOVICH: He died in late '69 or '70.

Q: But I think he had left. Wasn't it June of '68 when the students- So, he was basically forced out. So, you were coming slightly after this. I'm just trying to catch the atmosphere. Was there a feeling that now the French either they're not quite sure what they're doing or they're more into this union now that De Gaulle is no longer standing there and being unhappy about France getting involved with anyone else or now?

LEHOVICH: Absolutely. Now that you mention it, there was a sense of eased atmosphere and a sense that the European Community might work better than it had before. I don't recall how long that particular feeling lasted, but it was something that was in the air.

Q: One other thing. When you got yourself more integrated into the Political Section, what would a political officer do? Can you give a typical day or an example?

LEHOVICH: The areas that we worked with were the institutional and structural sides, some of the public affairs sides. We didn't work with some of the economic analysis, but we worked, for example, with industrial policy. This is how to align industry standards all over Europe. We worked with covering activities of the Council of Ministers, trying to stay in touch on a lot of current events. I had what was considered the lightest single task - I thought, by far the nicest single task - which was to work with the European Parliament. I would go to all of its meetings in Luxembourg and in Strasbourg and had a great time. There, interestingly enough, if you go, you're far enough away so that, as an American representative, you're free to go and meet people and have a good time with them. It's not a parliament that had an awful lot to do at that time. It did what it did in a very pleasant and cheerful way. I remember once having some very good and interesting discussions with the Italian communists, which incidentally, we were not supposed to do at that time, but it

was very hard not to do it if a leading Italian communist came up to you and offered to share a taxi with you. You took the taxi with him and you had a very good conversation with the man afterwards. But you didn't sit around and blow that up into some kind of a bilateral contact and they didn't either. The parliamentary activity was delightful.

I'll digress for a minute on what was to become my own favorite model of good national diplomacy, small national diplomacy. That's the role of Luxembourg. I got to know Luxembourg starting with the European communities by dropping in on the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign Affairs one time when in Luxembourg just out of curiosity. I really had no business there. But I went there and I was told that there were only 12 people there that day and that, in fact, most of them were out so that there were only three or four people. That was the entire Foreign Ministry. I got interested in how they work that way. It's so much the opposite of how we were working. I, like a lot of others, was enormously concerned by our elephantine American ways of working - in Washington even more than overseas, but everywhere. We have to clear things with everyone. We act almost like a government that doesn't trust itself. They had some remarkably efficient ways of pre-delegating authority to their people and, as a result, getting an awful lot done with missions that had one person or, as a great luxury, two people. I'm mentioning this, Stu, because I marveled at it for years and years later when I worked with NATO and with arms control. The Luxembourgers by and large always managed to field a good delegation, a tiny one, but a good one. They knew what they were doing. They made decisions. They always got a good night's sleep. They didn't run in circles. They knew the limits - when in doubt, do the right thing. When in doubt some more, consult with Belgium and Holland. If they agree on something, do it, and then tell headquarters afterwards that you've done it. Very intelligent group of people.

Q: Did you (I'm speaking about all the officers there.) keep a running brief on US interests - soybeans being very important but other things - so that you would say, "Uh oh, they're trying to erect another trade barrier here." Was that part of it or did you find the predominance at the time was, "Gee, we hope these people will get it together" and we were playing more, you might say, a passive role?

LEHOVICH: There was an excellent Agricultural Attache Office, small but superb, attached to our mission. I have to digress, Stu, as a big friend of the Foreign Service family, that the foreign agricultural specialists that I've come across in places like Bonn and the European communities and elsewhere are absolutely superb. These are some of the best people I've ever met. I was astonished how good they were. The agricultural attache was on top of every commodity and every problem with it and, as importantly, every opportunity. With our big agricultural exports, the big thing was to seize opportunities and build up trade and, of course, ferociously attack any barrier against trade whenever you could. He got very good support from everyone in the mission. The most positive things we did over there was work with big American interests. That was good. That's classical work and that made total sense to everybody. One of the ways to do it, in addition to just doing daily work, was to use visitors. When you command some of the big agricultural interests in America, you can get very high level visitors. We had a lot of the top folks in the House of Representatives and the Senate coming over for these reasons.

Q: How would you use the visitor?

LEHOVICH: Make sure that they met everybody important and make sure that they communicated their sense of how important good commercial contacts were to them personally and to the United States. We had, for example, Wayne Hayes, who was very interested in this type of thing.

Q: From Ohio.

LEHOVICH: That's right. We had important figures in America who communicated their own interests in this.

Q: Would a Frenchman pay any attention to what a Senator or a representative from the Midwest had to say? Did we have something where we could say, "You know, if you do this, we can do that." Were we talking about saying, "Maybe French wine shouldn't come into the United States if you're giving our soy beans a rough time" or something like that?

LEHOVICH: Stu, this was going on. The big question there was linking economic and security issues, which was one of the things that some of the tough-minded policymakers, as opposed to the tender-minded policymakers, constantly wanted to do. That's another theme that was going on. Not too much of it happened. Most of the time, we tended not to link our economic interests with non-economic interests. Within the economic area anything was fair. It was absolutely fair if somebody appeared to be threatening one area of American exports for us to begin asking some very pointed questions about some areas of their exports, leaving no doubt that we were looking at ways to make life hard by using the same tools. That was perfectly fair. The activity that was much more controversial was whether one was going to use European security interests as a lever. By and large, we did not do that.

Q: You really can't.

LEHOVICH: Stu, you really shouldn't, I think, from the long-term American point of view. But a lot of folks thought you should and a lot of folks came up with simple ways to do it. It's a little bit like the simple notion of surgery - "Give me that knife and I'll do some surgery." I don't think it makes a lot of sense, but it's a recurring tension.

Q: I'm just wondering, did you have sort of the equivalent of lists of every country that was involved in this Common Market effort, of what they imported to the United States, how much it was worth, and all that, so that you could sort of mix and match if they started messing around with our stuff? Was that something in your arsenal?

LEHOVICH: Something of that kind with the big difference that there was one multilateral partner. That one multilateral partner was what we were dealing with rather than the individual countries. We didn't really have individual- We could have individual balances if we wanted to keep those, but the trading rules were being played in common by

all of the members of the European communities. One wanted to lobby them very hard nationally, of course. The place to lobby them nationally usually wasn't France. You could do much better lobbying in Germany and some other countries. France was a big sinner in the Common Market because of the common agricultural policy, which had "help France" written all over it. We weren't going to get an awful lot out of France. If we wanted to lobby bilaterally, we could get a lot more with other members.

Q: Did you use the equivalent of saying, "Look, if the French are going to do this about whiskey, we might have to take certain action and that certain action may affect you Germans as well as the French because of these bloody frogs over here," causing this trouble and hoping that the Germans would go after the French. I mean, all in a very subtle, diplomatic way. I'm just trying to get some of the techniques.

LEHOVICH: Stu, I don't want to invent stuff; I don't remember too much in that area. It's a great thought, but I'm not a great resource.

Q: Why don't we pick up the next time? We're talking about '71 and you went to what?

LEHOVICH: Went off for a long set of activities with NATO, largely in the State Department's European Bureau.

Q: Let's pick it up then in 1971 when you went to the European Bureau dealing with NATO.

Today is April 14, 1997. Vlad, in 1971, you went to the European Bureau. You were in the European Bureau from when to when?

LEHOVICH: I was physically there from spring of 1971 for about two years.

Q: So, '71 to '73.

LEHOVICH: '71 to '73, during which time I also spent a long period overseas - about six months - setting up the MBFR negotiations. I then went off to work for the Counselor of the Department.

Q: In '73, you went off to work for the Counselor?

LEHOVICH: Late '73, that's right.

Q: Let's stick to '71 when you arrived. What was your job and can you explain it.

LEHOVICH: I was brought over - I was sort of sprung loose from Brussels at the Common Market - to come and work on this new nuisance of a negotiation that was just raising up its head. This was the Conventional Force Reduction Negotiation, known as MBFR, which

stands for Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions. I came over and didn't know a thing about it. The background to it was a congressional movement to bring home some of the US forces from Europe. This was a fairly partisan activity; it tended to be Democrats who pushed it and it tended to be the Republican administration and Republican members of the Senate who opposed it. It wasn't terribly well thought out or motivated. I think the real reason it was happening was the backdrop of the Vietnam War. I don't think it had an awful lot to do with Europe if people really thought about it. But it was a movement that, as we all recall, was associated with Senator Mansfield and carried out, since it was associated with Mansfield, in a civilized way that would be joyous to behold in today's day and age in anything dealing with arms control or similar politics.

Anyhow, the State Department at that time was William Rogers' State Department. The real policy on this thing was clearly being made in the Kissinger apparatus at the Nixon White House. This was the general context in which the talks were happening.

It's interesting, if I can just digress on who did what to whom at that time. The breakdown within the US government was more or less like this. The Arms Control Agency thought some kind of agreement would be really fine, and that was pretty much a knee-jerk position. Interestingly enough, the Office of the Secretary of Defense thought that some kind of an agreement would be just fine, too. They had various formulas they were trying out. This was the Melvin Laird Defense Department. Laird was a Republican from Wisconsin and he had brought in a younger Republican, also originally from Wisconsin, who was Larry Eagleburger, an FSO who was working for Laird as a young Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, having been brought there from NATO, where he had been working earlier. There were various other folks there like young Reginald Bartholomew, a GS-15 who was cutting his teeth on strategic issues. Laird had let it be known he would like to see some reductions on his watch and may have made some political promises to that effect. In any case his folks, for political reasons and perhaps just out of sheer esprit de corps and boredom with not having enough to do, were pretty intent on getting one or another kind of MBFR agreement at that time.

Within the State Department, the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs was always inclined to say, "Why not have just a little one? Let's have one. It doesn't have to be too big. If you don't like Variety A, we can try Variety B." It was a pretty casual approach to the thing. Whatever the analysis was -and there was a lot of pseudo analysis going on - it really was sort of decided by "I like vanilla better than chocolate," that is, in fairly intuitive ways. "If you want something, we'll give you something that won't be too difficult."

The Kissinger White House was very skeptical about all this kind of stuff, but not so much so that they wouldn't once in a while go and invent some arms reduction approach on their own and play around with it. But they were pretty skeptical. The other folks who were skeptical in terms of the US government were the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the European Bureau of the State Department. This was for very good reasons. The JCS and the European Bureau knew exactly what the sentiment was among the European allies on this thing and didn't take it casually. They looked at it as a very tricky business and were understandably nervous at the idea of America playing around with various reduction

formulas for its own internal Congressional reasons.

So, that was sort of the background. The result of all of this was to create a negotiation which nearly went on forever. It finally stopped at the time that the Cold War was over and then a little afterwards. In other words, it finally stopped circa 1991 under a slightly different name, but basically the same process with the same international group of characters. A lot of it was artful dodging for all these years from 1973, when the show first opened, until the end of the '80s when history finally said it's okay to do a thing like this. The artful dodging involved analyses which were sometimes real and which were sometimes very fishy and suspect; and all sorts of positions for reductions, some of which were so complicated that it would take you hours to figure out how they were arrived at and which were presented as very elegant intellectual and political creations. Sometimes the formula would be so simple that you'd say, "That's so simple that any idiot could understand it right away." That's one of these "You cut 10%, I cut 10%, and let's just not worry about it because it isn't too much" -or, "Let's worry about it because it is too much." It was that way in the early years and the interesting thing is that all of this stuff went on for years and years afterwards.

It taught me and others a great lesson about arms control. That lesson is simply that arms control negotiations and arms reduction negotiations work when people are actually ready to take the steps. And when people are actually ready for it, they then take steps which are so far ahead of what negotiators have even thought of that the negotiators have to run to catch up with them. That is exactly what's happened with conventional force reductions at the end of the Cold War.

Q: Going back to 1971, you were helping set up the process for doing this, is that it?

LEHOVICH: We were writing positions and, to a very large degree, we were working within the US government to build positions which either said it's easy to do this kind of thing or it's very bad or difficult to do this kind of thing. Our European allies liked to invite us to talk about it, come to Washington, or talk about it at NATO. For example, the English liked to have private sessions with us to prove to us how impossible it was to have force reductions. Some of the other allies were more mild than this, but everybody was rather nervous about it.

Q: Did you find as you went through this process that there were sort of true believers involved in the team that you were on, which was getting ready for this?

LEHOVICH: Absolutely. That's a very good issue, Stu, who were true believers. There were true believers from the beginning who basically thought that disarmament or arms control was good stuff and that one should do it. There were others who, after six months or a year or two years of working on this kind of an issue, became true believers in it. They would feel it was just terrible to have worked on something for so long, and with so many countries, and have nothing to show for it. There were true believers who thought that security in Europe wasn't determined by military forces at all -it was determined by other non-military considerations. Sure. Later on when the negotiations began, the tug of war

between skeptics and true believers became bigger and bigger and continued for years until finally, frankly, the true believers imploded because nothing happened. After five or 10 years or 15 years - these talks ran forever - you begin to think, "My goodness, nothing's happening. Is it my fault or is life not ready for it?" Frankly, the Soviets didn't give a big damn.

Q: Again, I want you to stick to the '71 to '73 period. What were you getting from EUR? You were part of EUR.

LEHOVICH: A lot of skepticism about the process, very much a NATO-first point of view, which I incidentally shared completely. It was a simple and sensible NATO-first point of view. If this is good for NATO, let's do it. If it's bad for NATO, let's not do it. It appeared that it wasn't good for NATO. The other thing that one was picking up was that initially the Russians thought it was a good club with which to beat American military presence in Europe. There was some interest, although never really terrific interest, on the Soviet side in doing a deal. The real background of this period of '71 and '72 is that the Nixon administration was warming up its bilateral dialogue with the Soviet Union. Eventually, this thing would become a part of it, not a major part, but part of it.

Q: Were you getting any feedback from the National Security Council sort of at your level - say, Henry Kissinger wants this or the President wants this? Were you sort of left on your own as your dealings?

LEHOVICH: My bureau, the European Bureau, was in very close touch with the NSC at all levels, including mine. The NSC chose us as the people they liked to work with on this because, basically, we shared the same skepticism. Bill Hyland was a key contact. We got lots of phone calls saying "Henry wants this or Henry wants that." Henry became almost a mythological character because he was invoked or cited or hinted so often. You never knew when he really gave a damn about an issue or not. But old Henry himself had enough of a record of being interested in this thing academically and later in government that anything was plausible. You know, Henry read complicated papers. Henry had complicated ideas. Sometimes the signals would change and sometimes we'd be given the message that "Henry's thinking about the possibility of doing something with the Soviets." Then, mysteriously, there would be quiet studies done in the NSC and shared with a couple of parts of the government outside for sort of technical accuracy to see if one couldn't figure out some simple little reduction to agree on bilaterally with the Soviets. At that time, we'd be told that Henry was interested in this. But usually we were told an awful lot about Henry because Henry was sort of a generic name for the NSC. One time, the NSC folks played for quite a while with ten percent equal ground forces reductions for each side, developing a possible package for the U.S. bilateral negotiations process then underway with the Soviets.

Q: This was a little bit of power business. Wherever you were, you could sort of invoke the name of Henry.

LEHOVICH: You could invoke the name of Henry. What happened is, this thing was a

big enough mess among the different parts of the government that the NSC had to do much more with it than they wanted to do. They had a full-time action officer, Andrew Hamilton, on this darn set of negotiations and it took a serious amount of time for two or three other people as well -like John Court and David Aaron. On a more sophisticated level, Bill Hyland looked after the politics of the process . As for Hamilton, Court, and Aaron, they were sort of mediating an interagency kindergarten which was always fighting. The fighting itself could be a lot of fun. Except for the fact that it went on rather late at night a lot of the time, it was enjoyable. It was called the "sandbox," incidentally, as in children playing the sandbox, because we could stand back and appreciate that a lot of the time we were doing some fairly absurd things involving a couple of dozen people working at full speed till all hours of the night on plans that had a very large element of boloney to them.

Q: What about the role of the Department of Defense? Again, I want to restrict it to the '71-'73 period.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely. In that period, the Department of Defense, if you looked below the surface, was of two minds on this thing. The Office of the Secretary of Defense for reasons that I think had to do with Laird's own sense of his future and legacy wanted to have some progress toward a pullout -and indeed a pullout while Mel Laird was Secretary of Defense. The Joint Chiefs of Staff regarded the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the OSD part of the Department of Defense, as the enemy. This has often been the case, but rarely was it been more obvious than at that time. The other group that they regarded, not as the enemy but as a bunch of people to be neutralized because they were dangerous and stupid, were the systems analysts, which was a whole separate and very prominent part of the Department of Defense at that time. It had become prominent under McNamara, and we were still sort of in the momentum of the systems analysts who had become powerful with the buildup of the Vietnam War. So, the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the systems analysts were the enemy for the JCS. Other parts of the government, like Arms Control Agency, were to be worked with and kept from getting anywhere as far as JCS was concerned. We in the European Bureau, including me, wound up doing a lot of mediating on these things just to move them on some kind of schedule. The reason is that we had to worry about a dialogue within NATO and we needed to have instructions and to have an American position and to have the position look respectable and intelligent. In other words, we had to say certain things on certain days as befits a great power. Most everybody else in Washington didn't give a damn and were perfectly prepared to have America walk around looking like a complete idiot on this subject.

Q: What about the Arms Control Agency? It would seem like this would be its thing and the European Bureau would only be actually acting as liaison to the other NATO countries, period.

LEHOVICH: The Arms Control Agency indeed got very excited about this. They had quite a few competent people working on it as well as some people who were less competent. They had a bunch of good people working on it. The thing is that nobody listened terribly hard when they talked.

Q: This was a real problem with the Arms Control Agency, isn't it, that it doesn't have much clout within the Washington-

LEHOVICH: It doesn't have much clout. On this kind of a subject, it was a fairly predictable position. A lot of people's positions were predictable. It was like a phonograph record. You've heard it before and didn't listen too hard when it was being played again. Basically, my office more or less took over this thing within State and ACDA.

Q: I'm talking about this time and at your level. Was this ever put to you to say, "All right, maybe this is not going to go very far. Maybe we can have a one percent reduction or what have you." But it's part of the, which was a buzzword at times, confidence building. If we can dismantle so many submarines and they'll dismantle so many submarines, bombers, or what have you, it's part of the Soviets and the American sort of getting more comfortable with each other?

LEHOVICH: This began to happen a little later. There was an interesting evolution over the next couple of years. But leading up to the start of talks in 1973 one didn't hear that too much because the origins of the thing was a congressional pressure, but not an overwhelming one. It was not overwhelming because the US Congress has never had a lot of trouble supporting NATO. No American president from Harry Truman on has had any real trouble supporting NATO. That continues through today. So what happened with these talks over time is this. Something that what began as a way to make Congress happy in a partisan atmosphere became for some people evolved a way to change history. Instead of making some reductions because some Congressman wanted reductions, some people became true believers that on should reductions because they would start a new cycle of history which would lead to detente and would lead to an improved atmosphere in which it was no longer necessary to have the same force levels. By the time one got into the mid-'70s, this kind of thinking was all over the place. There was an awful lot of detente going wild, intellectually going wild. By 1974 there was a pattern of pretty intense US-Soviet summits and some folks who were ready to think that the Cold War was going to be over pretty soon. In fact, if you read some of the US-Soviet communiqués from '73/'74, you would hear words about the "irreversibility of detente" and similar sentiments. Anyhow, this was a fascinating period in that kind of arms control. It was also a very sterile period.

Q: Did you get any of the feeling that I've had that Henry Kissinger saw the United States as losing its will to exert its authority, whereas the Soviets under the Brezhnev Doctrine, particularly after Czechoslovakia and all, seemed to be on the uprise. Any deal you could cut, detente or whatever it is, was essentially to try to, in a way, keep the Soviets from pressing too far in because the United States was losing its elan as far as leading the world. Did you sense any of this at that time?

LEHOVICH: No, I sensed none of that, Stu, neither then nor a short time afterwards when I was working with Hal Sonnenfeldt. No, none at all. I sensed, on the contrary, a rather sort of heady drunkenness at the success of dealing with the Soviets. Hadn't quite begun in '71/ It was the same kind of thrill initially that folks had from making an opening to dealing

with China. Skipping ahead a little bit, things get personalized. Brezhnev, by the time one gets to '72, '73, and '74, becomes a really great guy in senior American circles, particularly in senior White House Nixon circles. Brezhnev becomes a terrific guy. You can do business with him. You can go hunting with him. You can smooch him in front of the cameras. He's a good guy and he delivers. I remember one communique portion (This is, again, a year and a half ahead of our story) where America and Russia agreed that the process of detente was on its way to becoming irreversible, whatever that means. But if you're a poor schmoe on the street and you hear about communiqes like that, then you say, "Well, my God, it's here! Let's fold up the tents. Why do we have any of this military stuff if the process of detente is on its way to becoming irreversible." We used to produce this kind of verbiage with the Soviets. As I say, we're getting a bit ahead of the tale.

Q: Still sticking to this '71 to '73 period, you mentioned the British attitude was dubious. What were you getting from some of the other major allies, particularly the French and the Germans?

LEHOVICH: The French were staying out of this kind of setting. They were out of the military part of NATO and they rather snootily treated this in the same way, even though they privately said it's a very bad idea if the US pulls out of Europe. The French can be very French about this type of thing and they were being very French.

Q: We were talking to the French about this?

LEHOVICH: Yes, but not an awful lot because they were not shareholders in the company. The rest of NATO were shareholders. So, we talked more to the shareholders.

The Germans were getting excited about arms control and they were cut out of the big stuff, which is strategic arms, because they didn't have nuclear weapons. The French and the British always had a bigger say in SALT simply because they were nuclear powers. So the Germans really went hard after the MBFR negotiation as the one which would be "theirs," so to speak. They put some very good people to work on it. The leader at that time was Friedrich Ruth, who was ambassador for Arms Control. Ruth was an intelligent, delightful man who, incidentally, had enjoyed a splendid incarnation in the American Midwest as a German prisoner of war, was well-treated and never forgot it, and went back to Germany considerably fatter than his old pals who had stayed in Germany. For the last year or so of his POW status he was on furlough every weekend, out of prison uniform and with a pass to go to town for the whole weekend - amazing situation. Very gifted man. The Germans put together a wonderful team eventually and they were terribly interested in this situation. The Belgians rather liked MBFR, too, and had an intense man named Albert Willot as their MBFR guru, an ascetic who loved the subject and believed deeply in it. The Dutch rather liked it as well. Those were most of the countries with forces near the area we were talking about or stationed in it. Canada, which had forces in Europe as well, took the subject very seriously because if U.S. forces would be pulled out there would be clear implications for the Canadian ones.

So, NATO wanted to look good on this subject and looking good meant looking

forthcoming so that it always appeared that you were meeting your potential adversary, the communists, halfway. That said, though, you never really wanted much to happen. Basically, nobody in NATO really wanted US forces pulled out at that time.

Q: This '71 to '73. Basically, you're sounding out the various people, but this is preparatory.

LEHOVICH: Yes, we prepared positions all the time. We had different NATO meetings in which different potential alliance positions were tried out. Typically, the reaction was along the lines of, "This looks good, but we can make it better." The next time, after another meeting and another position, one would say "That's a nice effort. Let's do some more work on it." We managed to spend a good couple of years on this thing that way. Personally, I thought it was time well spent.

Q: It kept you off the streets, as the saying goes.

LEHOVICH: It kept me off the streets. Then we eventually got to the opening of the show. The NATO partners issued a bunch of invitations and invited the Warsaw Pact for talks. There were bilateral invitations from all the participating NATO countries to each of the Warsaw Pact Countries, an enormous volley of invitations all going out the same day. It was called the "multiple bilateral" invitation and it was quite an event in NATO and Warsaw Pact circles. I am glad to say I thought it up. It avoided a strict bloc-to-bloc approach and had the side benefit of making each NATO participant an active initiator and host. It also worked -and got everyone together.

Q: This was during your time.

LEHOVICH: Oh, yes. I had a wonderful time getting to those talks because we knew they were going to start sometime, but we didn't know exactly when and we didn't know which city. It was all up in the air and originally we expected the start to be in Geneva. Finally, it opened in late January in Vienna in 1973. It went on for about six months. These were the preparatory talks to prepare the negotiations. An awful lot of shadowboxing. I spent five months with those talks. I finally got myself sprung loose about a month before they stopped. It would be useful if I could go on for a few minutes about what we were doing there.

We were, by then, being led by a gentleman called Jonathan Dean, who had worked on the quadrilateral talks in Germany and spent much of his career as an expert on Germany. He had also reached the conclusion that he was an expert on negotiation. He had some good techniques. Kenneth Rush, the Deputy Secretary of State at that time, had been ambassador to Germany and had worked closely with Dean and relied on him heavily in the quadrilateral negotiations. Rush thought it would be a good idea to have Dean in charge of the MBFR preparatory talks, which is how Jock Dean got the job.

Jock Dean was basically the father of the endless reporting telegram. The endless reporting telegram is one that might be 30 or 40 or 50 pages on one negotiating session. It was really

quite a marvel to behold. When he began sending these things out, the first week of the MBFR preparatory talks, everybody said, "This is wonderful." The second week, no one said anything. The third week, there was a volley of telegrams from posts in Europe that were receiving copies of these telegrams saying, "Stop it! The overtime for our communicators is more than we're budgeted for. Nobody is reading this stuff. Stop it." The reactions were especially strong from the East European posts, which were small and working in a hard environment. But the 30 or 40 page cable became a standard.

What happened in terms of the craft of reporting was pretty strange and, I think, very suspect. Here is what happened. There would be endless talking points that were prepared for the sessions with the Warsaw Pact. These would be read out at dictation speed during sessions with the other side and the sessions could last for several others since the other side adopted the practice and read its own copious talking points out to the NATO side. In compiling a reporting cable on the session, Jock Dean established the practice to take the talking points and make them look as if they were spontaneous remarks and then plug them into telegrams. An example of how it worked: one took what amounted to a transcript of what was said by the communists, by the Warsaw Pact folks, as they read their lengthy talking points out at dictation speed. Then one took this material and other notes on the session and edited and revised and polished it to make it seem as if it had been a spontaneous discussion. One would do the same thing for the talking points used by the Western representatives. Occasionally, one would weave things in to make the text sound truly spontaneous. And one would pass off the product on the reader as a true spontaneous dialogue. The polishing up of the text to make it seem like a spontaneous exchange was done by Jock and his deputy while they edited the drafts produced by various members of the delegation, as well as the talking points used in the session they were reporting on.

The first time, the reader's reaction was, "My God, how can someone be so erudite and so brilliant for so many hours at once and remember it all afterwards so well as to write it this way." The second time, the reader would still wonder. By the 10th or 15th time, the reader would probably stop reading the messages. They tended to be very repetitive. These endless telegrams had two other features which were noteworthy. One is, they basically had no real summary. I remember, once, I wrote a summary for one of these messages which attempted to capture the essence of what had happened. It was a good, professional summary; nothing fancy, just simple reporting stuff like the first paragraph of a New York Times story. I was informed by Jock in a very terse and unfriendly manner that a summary on such a complicated and important subject will give the reader a false sense of knowledge which cannot be gained from a summary but must be earned from reading and absorbing the full material. I thought this was a totally absurd position, but Jock was the boss and he was adamant on this.

Q: Let's talk a little about where did this come from?

LEHOVICH: Let me just finish on the second feature. One feature was the absence of any summary. The second feature was that if anyone on either side said something that was controversial or exceeded instructions, such material would not appear in any reporting cable. It would simply be removed. The sheer bulk of the messages was such that the

normal reader would throw up his hands and not search for what was included or what was omitted. Some of us who had to produce these endless screeds would be amazed when they would be sent out as telegrams after editing. The one or two interesting things that might have been said in the session had been excised.

Q: Could you give a background? I assume this was coming from Jonathan Dean?

LEHOVICH: Absolutely.

Q: What was his background? In your opinion, what was he trying to do?

LEHOVICH: I think he had learned a technique working on the quadrilateral talks in Germany, which perhaps properly involved endless verbatim records. Endless verbatim records are good things. They're good to keep you from making mistakes six months later. They're just not a terribly good thing to pass off as a readable telegram. The other thing is, I think he had an absolute compulsion to overwork any subject that he came in contact with. A lot of this was workaholism. It had a couple of nice benefits on the NATO side, too. One is that it kept our NATO allies well-informed, the ones that weren't involved in some of these sessions or who had other things they had to do, who were bilateral ambassadors. And they could always send this report to their capitals if they wanted to show what was going on, sort of give them the "50 page flavor" of what happened yesterday. Another benefit for the NATO members was what Jock called "work therapy," something useful for delegations especially when nothing much is happening for long periods of time. Frequent meetings among the NATO delegations at which these long telegrams were read and discussed in detail were a fine form of such therapy. Whatever the reasons, we were producing these absolutely amazing telegram monsters, which eventually became a joke all over the US government. I don't know how long that took, but it didn't take too long.

Q: Could you explain who was Jonathan Dean and where was he coming from?

LEHOVICH: Career diplomat, a career American Foreign Service officer. He enjoyed work enormously. He enjoyed confrontation. He enjoyed arguing with friends and enemies, screaming at subordinates, terrifying secretaries. And he liked to work up to 18 hours a day and making this thing a rich process. As for the actual positions, we were shadowboxing most of the time. I could go into the positions, but I don't find that terribly interesting. We were shadowboxing.

With regard to substantive negotiating positions, in the midst of all the shadowboxing, there was one fascinating event in these preparatory talks. That was a product of the Kissinger White House operation. The Kissinger White House at one point crafted and sent us instructions which almost collapsed the talks. This was a couple of months after the preparatory talks had opened. We got some long-winded instruction which ended up by saying, in effect, "If the Warsaw Pact proposes some reductions, the US is authorized to lead or join in an allied consensus to agree on the spot." Since this was the opposite of what the Kissinger White House had been saying earlier and the opposite basically of the US position all along, it came as a bombshell. As I said, it almost stopped the talks in their

tracks. It caused a scandal, a quiet scandal, but the kind of scandal where the British communicated at top levels of their government with top levels in America and where everybody's eyebrows were raised at very high levels.

Later on, some of us asked and heard a version of what had happened. I think the source behind my sources was from the British government, who thought it important to inform people in the State Department of what the Kissinger group had been up to. There had been a private talk with the Soviets and there was exploration of making what was called a "symbolic" 10% reduction on each side. Let's muse on this for a moment. How symbolic is a symbolic 10% reduction on each side of US and Soviet forces in Europe? It's about as symbolic as going to have a little symbolic surgery done at the hospital - maybe just one toe out of 10. It was 10%. Why worry? It's the little toe; it's not the big one.

The instructions I described scared the hell out of our NATO partners, who refused to agree with them. Incidentally, for our delegation, it was an extraordinarily embarrassing situation. We played it very straight. It was very embarrassing for Jock Dean, who did not want this kind of surprise going on. Nobody did. Then afterwards, a week or two later, all the sounds from Washington was that this wasn't serious, that we should all move on and forget all about it.

Q: Were you at your level and were you getting emanations from more senior levels concerned about Henry Kissinger going off and talking to the Soviets that this was sort of the Hardy boys off on an adventure somewhere and that, in some ways, he was a deep thinker, but other times, he really wasn't serious?

LEHOVICH: There was a lot of concern and uncertainty about the secret dialogue going on with the Soviets at every level of the US government not involved in it. People were concerned that we were already in a process where we tended to be a little too deferential to the Soviets when they wanted something. If there was a text to work on, just because we were being nice guys, we would work on their version of it - not in the MBFR negotiations, but in basic bilateral things. Kissinger obviously was no dummy, but people were nervous about this. Our European friends, and the French and the English particularly, were very nervous about it. The English were very unambiguous about this. In early '73, which is the period we're discussing, we weren't too far away from detente in its very high day, which was within a year or so of that time. And not too long after that we have Nixon leaving office. Before, there was an acceleration and indeed for a while, the worse his domestic position, the bigger the acceleration. You could feel it in these kinds of activities. In any case, was a lot of concern about doing a big bilateral deal with the Soviets. Frankly, there always should be. I'm concerned right now in the mid 1990's about that when someone goes and gets in bed with old Boris or with Leonid or with whoever it is.

Q: Whoever the leader - Boris Yeltsin.

LEHOVICH: Whoever the leader may be.

Q: Sometimes there is a tendency for us to get euphoric and think a new age is dawned and

not understand that there is a lot of similarity between one period and another period and you better make sure you're doing all that one should in a prudent manner and not just think that we've broken through. In '73, where did you go after you finished this arms-?

LEHOVICH: I went back to my home at that time, which was the NATO desk of the European Bureau, worked there for a few months, happily, branching out of this MBFR business, which had gotten boring. Then late in 1973, I was asked by Hal Sonnenfeldt to come work with him. He was the new Counselor of the State Department. At that point, Kissinger was just moving in and basically setting himself up as Secretary of State. Brent Scowcroft had replaced him at the White House and Kissinger had achieved what he had wanted, which was to be Secretary of State. Sonnenfeldt was one of his close advisors on Europe and on the USSR in particular. He took me in to work to a large degree on the US-Soviet portfolio, at least initially. As it turned out, everybody up there wound up working increasingly on the US-Soviet portfolio.

Q: The title position of Counselor of the Department is sort of the swing position in the State Department. It can mean anything. Henry Kissinger coming into the State Department - how did he see Sonnenfeldt as the Counselor of the Department?

LEHOVICH: He gave him a lot of responsibility for dealing with important foreigners on East-West issues and for monitoring policy formulation in the US government and once in a while for creating policy quickly on the back on an envelope without consulting with anyone else. Sonnenfeldt was quite an influential advisor. The two of them had known each other for a while and were both very bright men. They also both enjoyed a remarkably denigrating sense of humor toward others and toward each other. It was quite interesting. When they were together, they would try to put each other down, usually with great success. They also tried to put everybody else in the world down, also with great success.

Q: You were with the Counselor from '73 to when?

LEHOVICH: For about six or seven months.

Q: What was the view that you were picking up both in the short time you were back on the NATO desk looking at the whole thing and during the time you were with Sonnenfeldt as far as, one, the "Soviet menace," if the term even applied at that time, and two, in the development of relations with the Soviet Union?

LEHOVICH: With regard to the Soviet menace, one worried about it to the degree that one had to do serious military planning. One had to have a serious NATO alliance. But that wasn't the novelty, that wasn't the new thing happening. The new thing happening was a pretty tempestuous affair with the Soviets that America had started. It had wonderful elicit romantic overtones. I'm putting it figuratively. But it was quite heady stuff for the people involved in it. It was great stuff for Nixon and great stuff for Kissinger. When one started to have these summits, one would have an agreement a day. They were long summits and one would have an agreement a day or sometimes two agreements a day... in fact, to the

point where the press corps began to get jaded. If there was a day without an agreement, they would wonder what was wrong. Some of these agreements were good things. Some of them were trivial. Some of them were probably not good things at all. But they were being cranked up beforehand, usually in a very private way, quite secretly, and they would then be acted out with a huge splash. We also had, as I mentioned earlier, a very disturbing thing, the habit of working from Soviet drafts of communiques just because we didn't want to say "no," Stu.

Q: Could you explain what the problem is of working with a Soviet draft?

LEHOVICH: Yes, problem one is that you get a draft in Russian - a technical problem. Problem two, you get a draft that is written with a lot of code words in it which mean something to Soviets and to the whole Warsaw Pact -and which are extremely hard for others to decipher, even for an astute Western student of the Soviet Union and of their jargon and of Marxism-Leninism. For example, the notion that detente is irreversible may sound pretty casual to you, but it doesn't sound casual to a Soviet. When you dilute that a few times, it still doesn't sound too casual. These communiques would arrive with all sorts of stuff coded in, which we would just have to take out if we caught it. If we didn't catch it, we wouldn't take it out - and be stuck with some unfortunate language which then we would have to argue about. And these Soviet texts sounded unnatural; they didn't sound like English, no matter how well translated. We got in the habit in this area of excessive deference or courtesy, which I think could have been avoided without being rude. We were being too nice. We were more infatuated than they were.

Q: From your position, was there a problem, particularly of Henry Kissinger and, for a while, Nixon, sort of going off and talking with the Soviets and you weren't quite sure what was being said and that type of thing? If that were true, did you find yourself trying to act as a conduit to let other people know what our guys were up to?

LEHOVICH: It was pretty secret stuff, Stu. I didn't know what all was going on under the table. More important was the legitimate concern that our security partners and our allies had because anything that might be bought or sold in these meetings would affect them. Very little that was real would not affect them, whether it was strategic arms, or European security, or various concessions that one would make, like an immigration issue. This was stuff that was of real importance to our European partners. They felt that the move was on, what was called "US-Soviet condominium," and it was a terrific concern for them. We still don't have a full history of what was bought and sold in these private sessions.

In terms of my own role, it was not so much going around and informing others about it. It was perhaps going around and not informing others about it. In the Counselor's office I was a member of a very secretive apparatus. We had some rather awkward situations where, for example, we would be working in the Sonnenfeldt office on the text of a bilateral communique with the Soviets. That evening, we would give the Soviets our version and the next morning or two days later, we would get a new version from them. My colleagues from the Soviet desk would come in to chat about business of one kind or another. I was in the very awkward position at least once of having to look up at the sky as

if the sky was very interesting while I turned these documents over on my desk so that the person who had walked into my office and who worked on this subject for a living would not know about them. The person, in this case, was Jack Matlock, then Director of Soviet Affairs for the State Department and eventually Ambassador to the Soviet Union. It was one hell of a way to deal with the professional State Department. It was very awkward for a lot of people involved.

Q: Was there an apparatus, formal or informal, so that, as these deals were being made, the people who worked on the subject living being able to come up and say, "Hey, this isn't going to work" or "This thing is really dangerous." The normal flow of State Department business is to have essentially your desk, country, whatever you want to call it, officers point out what the problems are, what will probably work and not work, to the principals as they move on and treat things in a broad thing. This is the normal thing.

LEHOVICH: This was the normal thing.

Q: Was there an apparatus for doing that?

LEHOVICH: Not really. Here, it's actually worth mentioning some of the names because there are such excellent people involved. There was a Deputy Assistant Secretary who was Jack Armitage, who was a hardworking, very knowledgeable man, who was kept very largely in the dark about what was going on. The Director of Soviet Affairs was Jack Matlock. The Soviet desk was a very large, powerful, enormously professional group of people, just top-notch people. Matlock was in charge, a very hard taskmaster, a very smart man, and a man who had no limits in the amount of work he could do in one day and the amount of information he could absorb. His deputy was Stapleton Roy, Stape Roy, just one of the best officers anyone had ever seen. It was a pleasure to work with a guy like Stape Roy on any of these subjects. He was so damn good at it. And he had a stable of racehorses down there, a whole generation of up-and-coming American specialists on the USSR and related subjects... (tape ended)-

Basically, they were cut out of this stuff. Whatever mechanisms existed were transparent and so embarrassing that it was unpleasant to use them. On several occasions when something happened that simply had to be shared to prevent either stupidity or an accident, I found myself going down to see Jack Armitage, the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the European Bureau, knocking on his door, coming in and saying, "Look, just sit there for a minute. I've got to apologize because you're not going to like this, but I have to tell you something," then tell him the item and then get out. This was an item that was vital for him and his colleagues to know in order not to look like complete idiots the next day. But there wasn't any really good mechanism. You've got to remember, Stu, that the first Kissinger visit to Russia to prepare for a summit meeting took place when Ambassador Jacob Beam was the American ambassador in Moscow and Kissinger was the National Security Advisor. Kissinger traveled secretly to Russia and Beam only learned of Kissinger's presence in Russia on the third day of the visit. That was well before I started to work on these things, but that is truly outrageous.

Q: Looking at this with Kissinger and maybe with Sonnenfeldt, was this sort of intellectual/academic arrogance did you figure that this was doing or was this boys having a wonderful game without...?

LEHOVICH: It's hard to be a psychoanalyst for these characters, but there was a lot of petty sadism in the air. You could sense the sadism in this episode I just described with Jake Beam. It comes through in the memoirs later and it comes through in some of the Nixon memoirs. There was a desire to keep things so closely to one's vest and there was such a lot of suspicion of working with other people. When you added it all up, you were getting people who were working in such a secretive way that it went against every really intelligent principle of using a good group of people effectively. There is a cost to this kind of compulsive secrecy. The cost to it was occasionally doing some stupid things, getting caught with our pants down, or setting off major transatlantic concerns. But the Jake Beam story is in a class by itself. I never saw anything later that quite equaled that. I saw things that got close to it. For example, simply the notion that Jack Matlock, the head of the Soviet desk, would come up to my humble office in Sonnenfeldt's area and, as he came in, I would greet him and turn over the communique that we were working on with the Soviets at that time so that he wouldn't see it and so that he wouldn't know about it, I found was a very embarrassing thing to be involved in and professionally offensive.

Q: Was Sonnenfeldt a willing participant in this secrecy process?

LEHOVICH: Yes. There were a number of people who had tendencies like that and whose tendencies got enormously magnified by working with Henry Kissinger. He could make people work hard and do smart things, but he sure could bring out the worst in them in terms of their sneakiness, their secretiveness, their shittiness, their petty sadism. There was an atmosphere of putdownism and petty sadism in the Kissinger inner circles that was most unpleasant and that an awful lot of people found obnoxious.

Q: That's also dangerous really.

LEHOVICH: It's dangerous. I don't like people who are so damned insecure that they take it out by putting the rest of the world down. I particularly don't like them if I have to work with them. I just think it's unhealthy. I think these are basically unhealthy parts of Kissinger which didn't go unnoticed.

Q: We're talking about '74. Where did you go after you finished?

LEHOVICH: I left for personal reasons relating to my mother's health. I left in the summer of '74 and I went back and worked, again, in the European Bureau on the NATO desk and there took over a host of exciting issues dealing with the whole European defense portfolio. We wound up working on a Portuguese crisis that was one of the major crises of the 1970's. We also worked with seemingly similar events at that time in Italy. We had the high years of Eurocommunism in the 1970's. It was a very exciting period. Working on NATO defense at that time didn't mean working on nuts and bolts. It meant working on Eurocommunism.

Q: You were back in NATO from the summer of '74 until when?

LEHOVICH: From the summer of '74 until about '77. Then I went off to Germany.

Q: Let's talk about this period, about Portugal. I agree with you - I think this was a major issue in Portugal during this time. If anywhere, we want to say the diplomats dealing with it dealt with it well and what could have been a very nasty thing came out all right. But I'd appreciate hearing your opinion. Could you explain what it is and then we'll talk about it?

LEHOVICH: What was going on in Portugal at that time was the introduction of a communist government under Cunhal, a situation in which the question came up for America of what to do bilaterally with a country which had been very close to us. We are terribly important to Portugal. Portugal may or may not be terribly important to us.

Q: Because of the Azores.

LEHOVICH: Our base considerations can be exaggerated but they're serious. But America is also of great importance to Portugal in terms of the amount of Portugese-Americans and of the role we play in the Portuguese view of the world - similar to Norway. America is terribly important. Seventy percent of Norwegians have relatives in America. Portugal isn't far behind. We had to figure out what to do in a situation like this bilaterally and also within NATO. In NATO, the strong tendency was to begin to cut back Portugese participation and access in NATO, almost symbolically, to show that there was a cost to having a NATO government with Communist ministers. What was happening at a higher level in America, at the Kissinger level, was a pretty strong, sudden reaction to go as far as possible and to be as drastic as possible against the Portugese government and in effect to judge that it's beyond repair. To use a historical analogy, to treat it the way America and England and some others treated Russia after the Russian Revolution. What we did at that time was, we sent in a force. There was a tendency to react in dire terms to the events in Portugal. That's a very easy tendency to join because it looked very ominous at that time.

The real drama of what happened, is that Frank Carlucci, who was our ambassador in Portugal, single-handedly, kept our policy more flexible and more open against some very strong objections and very strong concerns by Henry Kissinger. He kept it open to the point where it got better. After getting better, it got much better. Sometime later, the problem was solved largely internally. I cannot recall all of the historical evolution, but I recall very clearly at that time that Carlucci wanted to keep the level of tolerance for what was going on in Portugal as high as possible for as long as possible on the grounds that it was not beyond repair but within repair. He turned out to be right. Anything that was really happening in terms of NATO work with Portugal was all within this much broader context.

Interestingly enough, at that time work on defining Portugal's relationship with NATO was probably the most important thing that we were doing bilaterally with the country. We were acting out our concerns through NATO by cauterizing Portugal, by cutting it off from

this or that level of activity, but not all levels of activity.

I remember one event concerning a very large NATO exercise with about 6,000 people who were supposed to land in Portugal. This had been planned long before. It was self-evident to an awful lot of people in Washington and to a lot of people all over Europe that such an exercise shouldn't happen, that it would simply push Portugal over the brink, more and more into the hands of the communists and make the communists more and more militant. Cunhal was the man who was giving the new friendly Socialist face to communism, as were some folks in Italy at that time. The difference was, I think, that the Italians did have a mildly, mellower socialist face when they were communists, but that Cunhal did not. Cunhal was a bad guy.

Q: Cunhal had been brought up in the Soviet Union. When he came back, he was pretty Stalinist, whereas in Italy, I think it was Berlinguer who was sort of a self-produced communist, which is a different breed of cat.

LEHOVICH: Very different. This NATO exercise was a very interesting event because it was just self-evident that this thing should be canceled. At the last minute, Carlucci, who has a very clear voice when he communicates and is a very visible ambassador, communicated with Washington and said, "This is absurd. It's a member of NATO. If it doesn't want 6,000 NATO soldiers coming next week and raising hell in Lisbon, it will tell us about it. If it doesn't tell us about it, send in the 6,000 soldiers, let them raise hell, let them do whatever soldiers do and sailors. Don't worry about it. Stop tying their bib for them. Stop helping them, for better or for worse. Let them sink or swim. Give them room to do something." Fascinating because nobody else would have thought of something that basic. This doomed, obviously star-crossed exercise, took place with no ill consequences at all. It was a very important lesson because if you have a government like that, which successfully hosts 6,000 NATO forces running around its capital, that's very different from a group of people who can't stand a NATO presence.

Q: I've interviewed Frank Carlucci on this. It also prevents us from, by being tough, driving the Portuguese officer corps into a corner, where they might get so resentful that they might just go completely over to support the government that was there. This way, by not cutting off the ties, we showed them there was another way.

LEHOVICH: That's very wise. I think Carlucci did a great service for Western interests in Europe at that time by being unwilling to react on the spot and to write off a country which should not have been written off.

Q: What were you getting from the British, the French, the Germans particularly on both this NATO exercise and Portugal at that time on the NATO side?

LEHOVICH: The level of concern was very large all around. There was a consensus among a small group of NATO countries which worried the most about these events. The consensus was that one had to trim back Portugal's role in NATO and to cut off access to sensitive information. One had to disinvite them from certain meetings, meetings that had

a sensitive agenda in terms of intelligence or nuclear issues or military planning. This was not security consciousness. This was very symbolic. It worked because it was done slowly and it registered in Lisbon. What registered slowly and incrementally to Lisbon was the cost of going off in a completely different political direction from Western Europe. This is not going with America or going with Britain. This was going on a course that was divergent from Western Europe on the most sensitive issue of all. I think we worked very well with Europe on this issue. I also think we gave some very reasonable leadership on it.

Q: Was the European Bureau responding to Carlucci's calls?

LEHOVICH: Carlucci never disagreed with any of this stuff within NATO. That was absolutely fair game. No, we didn't respond to Carlucci's calls. That was on a different and a higher level. But it was very clear that this ambassador changed what otherwise would have been the direction of American policy and did it for the better. It's a great reason for not only having ambassadors, but it's a great reason for having ambassadors who are principled, resourceful, and who know how to communicate vigorously when they have something to say. Most of the time, they should shut up because if they talk all the time, nobody's going to listen. Once in a while, when you really have something important to say, it's wonderful to have a guy like Carlucci who can think clearly and then who can be very forceful when he says it. That's not a professional versus amateur. I can see an awful lot of good American politicians who would do a great job. But Carlucci, in my view, did as much in the mid-'70s for American policy in Europe as anyone I can think of.

Q: Vlad, I'd like to cut off at this point. We'll still be talking the next time about your '74 to '77 period in NATO. I would like to raise the questions of Italy and Eurocommunism and how you were seeing it there and also about Spain. In Spain, Franco was going. We've already talked about the Portugese situation. So, we'll move over to Spain and Italy and anywhere else on that.

This is the 13th of May, 1997. Vlad, we're NATO '74 to '77. Let's talk about Spain first. Were you kind of looking at Spain at all, and Franco?

LEHOVICH: We wound up getting involved in what became the hottest issue in Europe regarding Spain at that time, Spanish entry into NATO. Spanish interest in NATO while Franco was alive was sort of growing, but it was the interest of a very proud group of people who had a terrific inferiority complex vis a vis the rest of Europe. I'm talking about educated Spanish. They would sort of come near NATO and then recoil lest someone push them away. What they worked out with the United States because we managed to keep an excellent relationship and an excellent dialogue with them on a defense level was a set of bilateral briefings which we would give the Spanish after each of the important NATO ministers meetings, particularly the defense meetings. A US team would meet with the Spanish and try to give them in an hour or two a rather detailed gist of what had gone on at the NATO meetings. Sometimes it's interesting. Sometimes it's boring. I was in two or three such sessions and I had the impression that it didn't terribly much matter whether it

was interesting or boring. The important thing was that it happened and there was a consultation with NATO which would then get a little bit of publicity and would make the Spanish feel that they were on a parallel course in defense issues with the rest of Europe. Of course, the Spanish then, as later, were in a very large sense not on a parallel course with Europe because the role of the Spanish military was quite explicitly the internal defense of values rather than the external defense of values. That was a very different function from the traditional military as we know it in 20th century Europe right now and in America. What happened after Franco's death was an interest, very largely an American interest, in bringing Spain into NATO. This began, I remember, when Secretary Schlesinger was the Secretary of Defense, and this interest arose and Schlesinger was very skeptical and, in fact, was quoted as having said, "This is an Edsel," meaning "This is like the Edsel car of the Ford Motor Company. It's going to fail." Mr. Schlesinger didn't want to be involved with an Edsel. It took a long time to get reluctant people like Schlesinger in the US and a number of others and even more reluctant people in Europe to go along with the idea of Spanish entry into NATO.

Q: From your perspective, was the move to bring Spain into NATO really pushed by political considerations of we want to have an integrated Europe and we don't want Spain on the outside or was it our looking at our bases in Spain and saying they have to be in NATO because we have to have Terra Haute and - what's the submarine base?

LEHOVICH: Rota. Stu, that's a very good question. I think, interesting enough, there are several reasons one could imagine for it. One, it's good for European defense. Two, it complements or reinforces a certain kind of base structure. I think the real reason that drove it in the American mind was a third reason, and that was the idea that it would help bring Spain into a more traditional way of looking at the world, into a way that it would be closer to mainstream Europe. Very fine reasons, I think, at that time.

Q: Frankly, it worked.

LEHOVICH: I think it worked. When some of the very sizeable reluctance in Europe was overcome, then what happened is, one realized a very nervous attitude in Spain itself about this because they felt that they were very special. They kept trying to carve out unusual, special conditions for themselves to come into NATO. This, frankly, got very annoying for everyone concerned. But they came in and they carved out a sort of special relationship for them, although not terribly special. I think, in the larger sense, it worked over time. It was one of the most important things one could do at that time to help a country become part of the European mainstream. It's interesting because right now, in the late 1990s, we're seeing something parallel being done with trying to bring Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic into NATO. I think it's a different era. I'm not a big enthusiast of the current venture, but there is no question that bringing a country into the major alliance is something that brings it into a mainstream.

Q: Also, it takes the military out of politics for the most part.

LEHOVICH: It does. It does a wonderful thing for the military by subjecting them to a

group of peers who have a completely different view of what the military should be doing, of what military training is like, and of what standards are like. The NATO infrastructure and NATO standards and training programs are very helpful things in the gradual effect they have on the military of countries who think very differently. I think that was one of the exciting events of that time in relations with Europe.

Q: As you were doing your thing with your European counterparts - I'm particularly thinking of the British, the French, albeit, in and out sort of thing, and the Germans particularly - were they kind of looking at "Oh, you overenthusiastic Americans trying to do something here." You see what I mean.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely, Stu I think they did. This was viewed to a very large degree as an American show. Making it work was viewed to a large degree as an American responsibility. You know, when you actually look at it in terms of the treaty dynamics of a country joining, you realize the degree to which the United States is literally and figuratively the repository of the North Atlantic Treaty. We are literally the repository of the treaty. It lives in the United States. Just as the New York Regional Federal Bank controls gold for the whole world, the United States has the NATO treaty. It is here for reasons of safety, tradition, and history at the time when the alliance was formed. One comes here for signing. In that case, the Spanish came here for signing. It really was very much an American show. I think Europe had a much greater tendency to be reliving the Spanish Civil War than the United States has. In the US, you really have to look pretty hard, and it's usually in a large city like New York, to find people who get really excited about the Spanish Civil War. But in Europe, it's a lot easier. If they're a certain age, that's what will excite them more than anything else.

Q: Also, in the United States, it was a mixed bag anyway because of the Catholic population, which sided with the Franco side, within the ethnic groups who might get excited about this. The socialists are never that strong a force within the United States.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely.

Q: Let's turn to Eurocommunism, particularly as seen in what was happening in Italy. We've already talked about Portugal. But Italy was sort of the main Eurocommunist place.

LEHOVICH: It was a sizeable scare at that time. The scare was that communism in Italy would grow even more than the strong percentage it was getting in the votes at that time and that it would assume quickly the kind of sharp, radical face that it seemed to have in Portugal. I think this overlooked a lot of the difference in the history of the two countries and the amazing Italian way of mellowing harsh radical politics over time. Anyhow, it was a real fear. What we had to do ("We" in the sense of folks who were working on NATO issues in the State Department) on a couple of occasions for Henry Kissinger was to basically prepare mentally for all sorts of contingencies -what happens if Italy goes this way or what happens if there is a turn in Italian politics which calls for a decisive, strong, demonstrative gesture by the United States? What is a strong gesture by the United States? The kinds of things that we were quietly exploring involved what happens if we wish to

pull a lot of NATO forces, US forces, out of Italy or, more realistically, so it seemed, to limit Italian access to NATO information or to the NATO system, as had been done successfully and wisely with Portugal. We have to recall that at that time, Portugal had been for some time excluded from sensitive information in NATO and took it very hard. This ricochets through the entire military system of a country.

Q: Of course it does.

LEHOVICH: It begins to dominate. It's like having your telephone cut off at home. It's a very powerful device. There was some discussion of how to do this with Italy. Of course, the answer is, you can't do it if you have assets and military activities that are as critical as those that NATO had in Italy then and has now. Key among those, of course, were the US Air Force and other units.

Q: And the Sixth Fleet.

LEHOVICH: And the Sixth Fleet, and communications networks. Absolutely crucial infrastructure.

Q: Did the Italian military, in a way, take part in some of these discussions?

LEHOVICH: No, this was one of these typical things where it was sort of the Cabots only talking to the Cabots. In this case, this was the kind of stuff that was done without consulting with anyone else. If consulting, then in a very general way with a very small number of other countries bilaterally. The Italians were not at all involved in this. We incidentally had a similar set of issues with Greece. This was during the Andreas Papandreou government (I can never forget that Andreas Papandreou, who loved to rant about America, had been treated so marvelously by America in his exciting career as an economist and in the fact that he was chairman of the Economics Department of the University of California at Berkeley).

Q: He even served in the US Navy.

LEHOVICH: My goodness, this fellow couldn't... Anyhow, that's his problem, not mine. But we had a similar issue with Greece in those years as well. The issue is that when Papandreou announced that Greece was going to dissociate itself from the military wing of NATO and stay in the political ring, which was what France had achieved for itself in the '60s, he discovered over time that the quiet response to that is that, unless Greece committed forces of some kind to NATO, there could not be an American nuclear commitment in Greece. We've been trained incorrectly for decades to think that countries where there are American forces based which probably have nuclear weapons, don't like those nuclear weapons and wish they were out. The reason I say we've been wrongly trained in this belief is that, when you put it to the test, the first thing that happens is, "Oh, no, you're not taking them out. You can't take them out of my country. You mean, you're not going to station nuclear weapons in Greece, but are going to station them in Turkey and other countries? You're never going to take those weapons out of here!"

Q: Everything, of course, with Greece was predicated on Turkey.

LEHOVICH: Well, it was predicated on Turkey. In any case, we had quite a protracted discussion, a very active discussion, with Greece in that period over what it means to be a full member of NATO and what it means if you're not a full member of NATO if the US says it will remove nuclear weapons that may or may not be in Greece at that time. The answer you'll get is one of very great nervousness - and, incidentally, eventually a willingness to recommit forces physically to NATO. I'm mentioning this because we were in a period with Portugal, Italy, and Greece, where we were having a lot of issues centering on the identity of a country within the alliance.

Q: It really was a unique period in this.

LEHOVICH: It was a very exciting period. It came through -I think, largely by luck -it came through very well. As we discussed an earlier time, between good luck and Frank Carlucci, I think the key to this whole thing was getting through the mess in Portugal. Italy took care of itself with a little help from nature and, fortunately, the fact that some of the people who wanted to look busy were able to hold off on their instincts. I think Henry Kissinger wanted to look busy at that time and do something dramatic with the Italians, more to frustrate Portugese and others and other communists in Europe, about whom many were worried at that time. Fortunately, we didn't do anything in Italy and the situation stabilized itself. But it was indeed an unusual period. The identity of a number of countries in NATO and, in a larger sense, the identity of a lot of countries as members of a Western mind set and an anti-communist mind set, were in question at that time.

Stu, switching gears completely, I want to mention some impressions of the remarkable man who was Secretary-General of NATO for many years, Joseph M. A. H. Luns. Luns was smart, confident, intensely pro-Western, a big believer in a strong American leadership role in NATO, and a very good Secretary-General. He was also lazy, whimsical, sometimes disorganized and absent-minded, and enormously tall and craggy, a bit like de Gaulle but much nicer. Some people thought he was ineffective. I thought he was terrific and knew what needed to be done and did it. My impressions, however, are about Luns' sense of humor. He was one of the funniest people I have ever seen and I used to look forward to his visits to Washington and try to be the person who would go around with him on his various calls. I laughed at his jokes and he enjoyed that, and he was glad if I was accompanying him. I liked to attend his press conferences in Brussels, which were full of surprises for the press, sometimes very poker-faced.

Two stories about his wonderful deadpan style while chairing meetings. Arms control can be deadly dull, as we all know, and strategic arms limitation can be very deadly. Luns was chairing an endless NATO meeting in Brussels on SALT which droned on. As very often happened, he began to doze off, then fell sound asleep. A briefer briefed and droned on until he came to the subject of the treaty's withdrawal clause. Luns must have heard some change in the pitch of the person's voice because he sat up and, as if nothing was amiss, joined in and said into the microphone, "Ahh, yes... the withdrawal clause... every

gentleman should know when it's time to withdraw." Another time the session was about economic issues and this time Luns went to sleep early on. When the subject reached foreign aid, he woke up and, joining in without missing a beat, said, "Ahh, yes, foreign aid... And the less they do, the more they get..." and then drifted away into some more reverie.

Q: In '77, the Carter administration came in. It was a somewhat different ball game. Where did you go?

LEHOVICH: This is a good shift. I went off to Germany in mid-1977 and stayed there until late 1980 sometime.

Q: Where did you go in Germany?

LEHOVICH: I was in Bonn. I had an absolutely wonderful series of jobs in Bonn. I was first the head of our little internal political unit. What does that mean? That means basically the folks who were supposed to deal with political parties and the parliament. There were a couple of officers, two of us, doing that. We had what we considered to be the best job in the embassy with the exception perhaps of the ambassador, but not necessarily. We had to read the newspapers in the morning instead of reading a bunch of telegrams... put our feet up on the table, look at the newspapers, figure out what we were going to do that day. The way we decided we were going to do our work is that whatever was the hot issue between America and Germany or between America and Europe was what we were going to work on. It didn't have to be a traditional political issue. It could be absolutely anything. So, we wound up working on a lot of things and an awful lot of it had to do with the hot topic of theater nuclear forces. Some of it had to do with the neutron bomb. Some of it had to do with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the boycott of the Moscow Olympics, a number of things like this - whatever was the hot issue, we would work on and work on it with the political parties and with members of the Parliament. So, it was a very good way to look at American relations with that country because it determined what we did, I think, more than anyone else in the embassy except the ambassador at that time. After that, I was the number two in the Political Section for a year. It was a very large political section that sort of ran itself. So, I continued pretty much doing the same stuff that I had before. I would say a key impression in that period was what the Carter administration looked and felt like in a major American allied capital. It was enormously frustrating.

Q: To set this up, in the first place, could you tell me what the political situation was at this particular time and who was our ambassador and then we'll go? I think this is one of these issues, the relations between Carter and Germany, not high points, but probably low points, of the Carter administration in foreign affairs.

LEHOVICH: The situation in Germany politically was a Helmut Schmidt government coalition led by Chancellor Schmidt with the minority coalition partners being the Liberals, led by Mr. Genscher. It's worth pointing out that Schmidt, I still think, is one of the most gifted post-war leaders anywhere in the world, a very intelligent, sober, dedicated individual, a brilliant man, a very good politician, and a Social Democrat who was so

moderate and so gifted as an economist and as an economic thinker that one couldn't draw the line between the centrist Social Democrat and the conservative in Helmut Schmidt. He was like Harold Wilson in England, except perhaps even more so. Schmidt was remarkably comfortable with all aspects of economics. I think his heroes at that time were good American economic managers. He was also a guy who was surprisingly steeped in American political philosophy. Here is an example. I was one day at a 13-hour parliamentary session in the Bundestag, where Schmidt had to be present for most of the day. It was a session where he had to speak on and off for probably three or four hours during the day. It was done without notes. These were people who were very good at doing that.

At one point, Schmidt gets up and answers a group of people from the left part of the parliament on some issue. He says, "I want to quote what I was reading last night, which was Federalist Paper such and such." Everyone in the room knows he's talking about the Federalist Papers. Fascinating thing. This isn't on "Candid Camera." This is a discussion that nobody remembers later. The press doesn't take note of it. As far as they participants are concerned, there is no one from another country who is or isn't there. To have the Chancellor of Germany get up and extemporize about his readings in his leisure time of the Federalist Papers and give a terrific discussion of why there shouldn't be over centralization somewhere, I thought, was absolutely brilliant. He was that kind of a guy, very pro-American in a profound sense, because he thought America was the foundation of the free world and, like any German politician, was very conscious of the powerful Soviet presence in Europe at that time.

So, we had the Schmidt government. Schmidt, incidentally, was very high on Gerald Ford because Ford was a man of enormous common sense and no pretenses. Our ambassador was Walter Stoessel and was one of the premier diplomats of our time, who at various times of his career was ambassador in Poland and Russia and elsewhere, and Assistant Secretary for Europe. Stoessel was very gifted in dealing with the Germans.

That was the background against which the atmospherics took place between the Carter administration and Europe in general. In Germany, you could get as good a sense for this as anywhere else. The atmospherics began badly and got worse and worse and worse. A lot of it was remarks, a lot of it casual remarks, which would be made in Washington inconsiderately at the expense of countries which were being criticized. A lot of it was surprise issues being introduced in international forums, NATO being one example. But the biggest examples would come in dealings with the East and on security matters, which were very often life-critical matters in Europe, certainly life-critical matters in a place like Germany, which was divided and had to have three occupying powers for its own security - three occupying powers in Berlin - and major ground and air forces of America, Britain, and France within West Germany.

Let me sketch the neutron bomb story because this was the biggest single debacle in US-German, US-European relations at that time, and I think it was a catastrophe, very badly handled by Carter personally. The neutron bomb story was this. The US had led within NATO a campaign to introduce a field weapon that would not destroy property and

which, through radiation, would kill people, but the radiation effects would dissipate after a short time. Basically, a battlefield use weapon, and one that could particularly be used against a tank invasion, but which would not destroy a whole chunk of countryside and would not contaminate it with long-lasting radioactivity. The opposition to the neutron bomb was very strong in Europe and fairly strong in America. Quite understandably, in Germany, it was a very emotional issue because that's, of course, exactly where it was going to be used. It was going to be used in the Fulda Gap in the event of a tank invasion - a perfectly logical idea, though not very brilliant politically. But, a perfectly logical idea. The opposition to it was not unreasoned. There was strong opposition. It got terrifically emotional, an emotional boil-over throughout Europe. It also got fairly emotional in America. And it absolutely dominated the political landscape in Germany.

Q: If I recall, it was also sort of considered a capitalist weapon. Could you explain that?

LEHOVICH: It was called "the weapon that kills people, but not property." That type of thing. One of the first strong leading voices in Germany that spoke out against it was Egon Bahr. Egon Bahr was a mysterious and, to some, rather suspicious, senior political figure of the SPD, who was anxious to build bridges to the East and to facilitate the closest ties possible with East Germany. Bahr began the discussion in Germany by calling this neutron bomb project a "Perversion of Thinking," (literally. "Eine Perversion des Denkens"). What the perversion of thinking means, of course, is that the Americans are the guys who are thinking the perverted thoughts because they are thinking about our property and our lives, our European property and lives. That was some of the early discussion. As I say, it got more intense. The British were supporting us. The French, too, since the French on nuclear issues tend to be very tough folks. But it was basically the US carrying this subject.

The US made an almost ultimatum-like issue out of this thing with other countries in terms of getting NATO support for it. The most difficult support, key support, was German support. The debate was strongest and most emotional in Germany, for very understandable reasons. Schmidt hated this damn thing. It was ruining him. He felt it was the kind of thing that could get him out of office fairly easily, collapse a government. That's why the neutron bomb venture wasn't a brilliant political idea. But at one point Schmidt, despite his hesitations, basically said, "All right, I'll deliver this. I will deliver German support for it." He said that to the US and he said that to others. It put him in an enormously difficult situation. For months and months, he had to manage personally getting Germany politically to accept NATO approval of this weapon, which meant the weapon would go into Germany. At really great political cost, he did this. He did it because, at every step, every couple of weeks, there would be a personal message from President Carter about it, a message of concern saying, "I heard that things aren't going well" or a message saying, "We're watching what you're doing and we're very worried that agreement in Germany may fall apart on this." There were messages all the time, first-person messages, and constant pressure coming personally the American President. We knew that because we were in the middle of this intense communication. It was getting really quite unpleasant.

Then, of course, what happened, the reason this thing was such a catastrophe, was that after

it was approved by NATO and after a very bloody political battle was more or less over in Germany, Carter decided that it was an immoral weapon. He basically had one of these Pauline conversions on the thing. I'm speaking of St. Paul's epiphany. Well, Jimmy had an epiphany, too. He had a feeling that it was a bad thing which came on him very suddenly. He went and said, "No."

Q: This wasn't where he talked to his daughter?

LEHOVICH: I wish I could remember that. In any case, I can't remember a bigger catastrophe.

Q: Was this announced?

LEHOVICH: This became public. Whether there was a few hours advance warning to NATO partners or not, I don't remember. But it came within about a day, the whole thing. It was all very sudden. It didn't come within about a day after the approval of the neutron bomb in NATO, but it came pretty soon afterwards. The net result of this was that in a campaign which had gone on for months and months, was very bloody, and was marked by this almost petty personal nagging, where the President would be checking up on the Europeans and sending them messages saying, "I'm worried about what you may do tomorrow-" (We had to deliver a message once saying "I'm worried about the meeting you're having tomorrow with the party leadership. I'm worried that they may not agree on this thing. Do you know how important this is?") After months of this type of thing, suddenly, the President changes course. I think that was one of the big lows in US-European relations in the post-war period.

Q: What was the reaction in the embassy in the Political Section however you heard about this? I want to get this at the personal level.

LEHOVICH: There is a very interesting phenomenon which happens with a professional diplomat who works overseas and who is engaged in the activities of his country. That phenomenon is that we couldn't say anything. We were absolutely shocked. On the other hand, our discipline and our professionalism kept us from criticizing what had happened. I'll get into this a little later because it has to do with the change that a number of people had when they came back to America afterwards, a very sudden change. But the way it felt personally was that there was total disbelief. The first thing that I think people wanted to do who were engaged in active political contacts in Germany was to lay low. We didn't want to see anyone that day. Of course, we had to. But one didn't want to see anyone for quite a while because it was just too grotesque, the whole thing. I was going to say it was too embarrassing. That's not the right word for it. It's grotesque. We were sort of professionally denying ourselves any option to criticize the thing or to say that it stinks or is idiotic or this or that. We just didn't say anything about it. It really was one of the times that I have taken a seemingly abstract issue very personally. A number of us felt that way because we had invested so much time in this thing without thinking it was a great idea. It was just something that had to be done. With Germans like Helmut Schmidt and the scores and scores of others, the reaction was understated, perhaps for the same reasons, and it was

that Carter was finished.

Q: Was there a feeling both within the embassy and people that Carter was sort of a write-off or "We've got to be through this period" or "This man is not a serious..."

LEHOVICH: There would have been, Stu, if we hadn't been overseas. When one is overseas, one reacts differently to these things. I've had that several times now. I'll tell you what happened when I got back to the US, which was in the last year of the Carter administration. It happened to my wife; it happened to me; it happened to a number of other people who came back from overseas. We were so anxious to vote against that guy, suddenly it all came out. But first, we had to return from an overseas duty. I say that because I think the Foreign Service professional maintains a great deal of loyalty - to the point of actually clouding totally impartial judgement. Without philosophizing too much, Stu, I don't ever want someone representing America overseas who does nothing but think totally impartial thoughts. I don't want someone like that. I want a committed professional over there. To make a long story short, it was quite a catastrophe.

Q: What happened afterwards? Did you find the SPD delegates going around, and Bundestag people?

LEHOVICH: The psychology of the thing is that the folks on the center-right, who were willing to support this venture from the beginning were dismayed. But much worse were the folks from the center-left and left, who had supported it because party loyalty demanded it. They didn't like the idea, but they wound up voting for it and supporting it. No, they didn't say much about it. It was pretty obvious.

Q: At this time, I was in South Korea. There was a concern with the Carter administration. They were talking about pulling troops out of South Korea, which again would have been a disaster. Was there a concern about the seriousness of American commitment to the defense of Europe?

LEHOVICH: There was a concern about whether America understood. "America" in this case means the White House leadership, Jimmy Carter, the "Georgia Mafia", those folks. Some of this had to trickle over to the Secretary of State. There was just no way for that not to happen. It was on his watch. There was concern about whether the Carter White House understood what was going on in the world, whether they had a real appreciation of the Soviets. Don't forget that the neutron bomb was one story. What you just mentioned in Korea wasn't being lost on anyone. The notion of pulling American forces out of Korea at that time was just crazy. It was crazy! Of course, in Europe, everyone was concerned about it who worried about these things. A third item, which was part of the important background noise, was Carter's speech early on in the administration at Wake Forest. That was the one in which he warned the American people against an "inordinate fear" of communism. Now, for a President to begin his foreign policy term by warning the American people against an inordinate fear of communism is disturbing. It's disturbing today. The Russian leadership wouldn't understand it today. A lot of people didn't understand it in the mid-1970's. This was part of the background. So, Stu, the big concern

was whether the Carter White House had a real mental map of the world, where there were problems, where there weren't, where there were allies. A second level of concern is how they dealt with their friends and partners, which appeared to be pretty bad in Korea or in Europe. A third level was the role of America as world leader, particularly in the NATO alliance, but also in economic issues. We were having very selfish economic laws at this time. We were also having very strained relations with a lot of countries over human rights. We were picking a lot of issues, we were picking a lot of fights, on human rights. We were picking a lot of quarrels in Eastern Europe and with the Soviet Union at a time when there was enough of a plate of quarrels without these things. There were very big questions about the ability of the US to lead in the world. I would say it was the low point since 1945, since the death of Roosevelt. I can't think of a time after that when the US looked as dumb and incompetent for any reason in international affairs as during the Carter administration. It was this complex of things.

Q: At your level- Obviously, you're sitting around either at your apartment or in a bierstube or what have you, sitting down with political leaders, Bundestag members, etc. Did they ever at a certain point when you were sort of in your relaxing state, say, "What the hell is making this guy go" or something like that? Was this an undercurrent?

LEHOVICH: It was a constant undercurrent. The only thing that kept it from getting to be a dominant, constant and unbearable theme of discussion was good manners. It was just rude to sit with a nice American character over there who works for this guy and tell him again what a jerk he is because the guy looked at you with such pain the first time you told him he was a jerk. So, it was a constant undertow. It was a very embarrassing time. I don't embarrass easily overseas when I represent the U. S. and I kind of pride myself on never showing it. I didn't then, I might say, but it was mighty embarrassing. It was the low point in American leadership during my entire experience in the government.

Q: Carter had another one of his conversions in December of '79 when this benign Soviet empire all of a sudden, really quite irrationally, moved into Afghanistan.

LEHOVICH: The disturbing thing here, you're getting at the conversion part of it. Let me just elaborate on that. The embarrassing thing with the invasion of Afghanistan in December of 1979 was not that the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. That's not an embarrassment for the United States. The embarrassment was that our President was having a love affair with Leonid Brezhnev, albeit I'm glad to say, of a platonic nature. But nonetheless, it had gone to the point where the first kiss that was exchanged between the two, you may recall, was initiated by the American. We watched it. The whole world watched it, the first embrace. Brezhnev wasn't going to embrace Carter. He had been told before. He didn't make the move. The move he started to make was to shake hands. The embrace came from the American side to the embarrassment of everyone in the television age who could watch this damn thing. What I meant by "the love affair" is that Carter personalized the relationship, decided that because one could have a good time with Leonid Brezhnev at whatever social event one did, or a good conversation with him, that Brezhnev was a fine fellow, that he was steering a good policy, that he was in the American interest, that we could do business with him, and all sorts of other things. I don't mind

thoughts like that as long as you don't begin to invest your patrimony in these thoughts. Then, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, Carter took it personally. He was so shocked that he had been betrayed. Do you remember that episode? Do you remember that whole feeling of the shock of betrayal, the conversion? That was the very awkward part of it. Then the US began a campaign to work to punish the Soviets for the invasion of Afghanistan.

Q: Keep it at the German level.

LEHOVICH: I'm going to get there in a minute because the campaign to punish the Soviets for Afghanistan couldn't involve real things, physical, or even too many economic things. There weren't that many economic sanctions one could do. There wasn't anything physical one could do. One could be angry. One could bitch. One could cancel the Moscow Olympics. That became one of the great ideas. I must say, that was a wonderful idea. That was what brings it to Germany because there were several big East-West issues in the period I was there. Neutron bomb was one. The theater nuclear forces issues was one that was beginning to brew at about this time. The Moscow Olympics was one. Canceling the Olympics in Moscow was an absolutely brilliant idea. It doesn't cost anything. History will not long remember it. And the Russians took it as absolutely the worst thing in the world. It was like being put in the corner in front of the whole world, which, of course, it was. They began an incredible campaign of all the horrors that would befall countries that would join in the boycott. They used a lot of psy war on the West Germans.

Q: When you say "psy war," you mean psychological warfare.

LEHOVICH: Psychological warfare and diplomatic threats, and agents of influence that they had running around all over Germany warning parts of the German spectrum of opinion about the bad things that would happen to relations if the Germans joined the boycott. This was a case where Schmidt again basically agreed to deliver this one politically and did against most of the wishes of his party, although interestingly enough, the far left of the Social Democratic Party at that time decided that the right thing to do was to boycott the Moscow Olympics. I remember, to my astonishment, being asked by one of the far left deputies to visit him at his office. I had no idea why. I thought maybe he wanted to go to America or do something like that. I came to visit him. He was very intense. He said that he thought the appropriate thing to do was to boycott the Moscow Olympics and he wanted me to know that there were a small but probably growing number of people in the Social Democratic Party who thought that way and who were willing to work with us, willing to work basically with the US on that. That was one of the issues that came in the wake of the invasion of Afghanistan.

The other thing that the invasion of Afghanistan did is that it gave all sorts of arms control and disarmament issues a big breather, a big breather in the sense that for a while, at least, nobody wanted to pursue conventional arms control in Europe. It didn't sound interesting after a thing like this. As you recall, the strategic talks continued as if the thing had never happened. The SALT talks continued as if this had never happened. The invasion of

Afghanistan pulled NATO together a little bit and gave the far left a bad time, I would say, all over Europe, gave the far left a bad time in Germany. It made it a little easier to be a conservative or a centrist.

Q: Where did the far left in Germany stand? Were they admirers of the Soviet Union or were they running their own course?

LEHOVICH: Germany has a surprisingly centrist political spectrum. The conservatives, the Christian Democrats and Christian Socialists, are not really very far right. The Social Democrats are a pretty moderate group of socialists and leftists so that the far left in Germany was never anything resembling the far left in some of the other parts of Europe.

Q: I was thinking, the British far left Labor government.

LEHOVICH: No comparison. Here is the point. While the British Labor government was sitting doing nothing except hating the world and scowling at others for decades and decades, the German socialists were running the country very successfully with very wise economic policies and are perfectly capable of running the government right now if they took over. The wonderful thing in Germany is that both of the major political streams are capable of running the country. It made it very easy from an American point of view to do business with these people.

One of the issues, incidentally (This is getting back to one of the quirks of the Carter years.), one of the real dumb things that happened in the Carter years is that some of the Democrats, including the young "Georgia Mafia" crowd that had come to Washington with Carter, decided that in Europe, the socialists were their kind of people, as opposed to centrists or conservatives or the Christian movements. This was a big mistake because this overlooks the whole fact that America can do business with any of these people. It has to. I never really felt a similar move at that time from the Republicans, but I remember folks who came over at that time from the Democratic Party, who were in Germany trying out for size up how to build a bilateral relationship with the Social Democrats. The Clinton White House has been doing some of that as well, for example, in England. I would say that's very short-sighted now, but in the '70's to do that kind of thing in Germany was just extraordinarily short-sighted. And it's still right now as well, especially since we have Helmut Kohl going into his 4th term.

Q: What about the issue of intermediate missiles - the Pershing vs. the SS20? Was that an issue at that time?

LEHOVICH: That was an issue which was heating up at that time and continued.

Q: Could you explain what the issue was?

LEHOVICH: The issue was that NATO in response to a Soviet buildup in medium range weapons had agreed, was in the process of agreeing, to deploy Pershing intermediate range missiles which would be an added force aimed essentially at the Soviet Union. The Soviets

really started to wage psychological warfare and rattle sabers. They made an issue out of this which was one of the several big issues that they've ever made. Earlier, they had a big issue about Germany joining NATO; they had a big issue about the Berlin airlift. They've made a certain number of these "the world will end if you do this type of thing" threats and this was one of them. As with the others, what the Soviets opposed was finally done and the world didn't end. But there was an awful lot of anxiety over this. It became a neuralgic issue which again dominated bilateral relations with a whole host of countries in Europe - it certainly did in Germany.

At the American embassy, we were investing a major amount of time on this thing, mainly with the Social Democrats. The Social Democrats on defense were a pretty sophisticated group. The Defense Minister for a good deal of this time was Georg Leber, a Social Democrat who had the most total and the most emotional interest in keeping NATO as strong as possible for obvious reasons shared by almost all of the German political spectrums. That's why it was such a pleasure to work there. We had, on an issue like this, strong support at the top of the government, the Chancellor, strong support from the politician who was in charge of the Defense Ministry and support from a number of others. But it was a very difficult issue. It's an issue where, in a country like Germany, the American embassy got involved in working with individual politicians, with political groups, with basically sending signals and messages to them, showing up at various sessions and lobbying. No hands-off attitude on an issue like that, nor should there be.

Q: Did you find that your British or French colleagues were doing the same?

LEHOVICH: They certainly were. The British colleagues were working very intensely on it. The French were obviously in favor of it. They had to take a slightly more distant position on it, but were certainly in favor of it. It was a major alliance issue. German support, I think, was pretty strong from the beginning even though it was very controversial in Germany. But it was never a sure thing because, as with the neutron bomb and as with a bunch of other things in the defense and strategic area, when this thing actually happens, it winds up happening in Germany to a very large degree. There were other countries, too, that would host the GLCMs and Pershing Missiles, but Germany would be pivotal..

Q: Germany was the designated battleground.

LEHOVICH: It was the designated battleground.

Q: What about relations with East Germany? What was the status during this '77 to '80 period?

LEHOVICH: Ostpolitik was quiet but was continuing. It wasn't as high profile an issue as it had been under Willy Brandt. One thing that was going on then was the buying out of Germans from East Germany. They were literally bought out for a price tag that was something like \$40,000 a person at that time. That was big money. It was government money. There was a channel that was working on this which was largely a channel

between the two Germanies. Parts of this channel the US would get involved in. I was not working on that myself, but some good friends were. There were a lot of spy affairs, always had been. When I was there, there were probably two or three major spy scandals, but that's not news.

Q: What about Berlin?

LEHOVICH: What's interesting about looking back on Berlin at that time was the degree to which American, British, and French forces in Berlin were a popular issue. Let me be specific about this. Basically, those three forces had almost a blank check from the German government for reimbursing out of pocket expenses and other expenses involved in keeping their forces stationed in Berlin. That was one of the parts of the budget that was almost never debated. Everybody liked it. It was a big amount of money. I can't remember exactly how much it was, but it was treated as a very small price to pay for first-class protection by three great powers, by three nuclear powers. Our forces in Berlin, all three of the occupying forces in West Berlin, were very well-regarded and were viewed as excellent things, a very popular venture. I think that's what I'd like to raise. It's interesting because, if one looks at problems one has had with Japan or some other places, in an awful lot of our basing relationships, these were surprisingly absent in Germany during the cold war..

Q: Well, that was Berlin. We had still a large army in Germany. There were always automobile accidents and rapes.

LEHOVICH: We had 3-400,000 people in Germany at that time. Surprisingly popular enterprise -not wildly popular, but it's a consistent plus. The way you measure that is by what happens whenever there is a move to reduce forces. In the Carter administration, there was always talk about this type of possibility, and the grisly threat of reductions in Korea.

Q: Was Senator Mansfield making his pronouncements at that time?

LEHOVICH: That was a bit earlier. What happened in Germany is that you got a very strong reaction on this type of thing. You would also occasionally get it at the local level. In some of the key cities, the local relations with the Americans were extraordinarily good, as incidentally, you would find in the Philippines near a couple of the bases. It was a very popular venture.

Q: Was the Green Party at all a factor during the time you were there?

LEHOVICH: They were just beginning. They were a rather charming group at that time from a foreigner's point of view. They weren't at all charming from a German politician's point of view because they were a terrific pain in the neck, particularly to the Socialists. They were eating into their base. I had pretty nice relations with some of the younger Greens. They were not particularly concerned with the US. One of their early leaders, who was just emerging at that time, was a delightful young lady named Petra Kelly.

Q: She even came and talked at the State Department in an open forum one time.

LEHOVICH: I knew her only briefly. Later, she was known to a number of my friends and colleagues. She has died since in a double suicide with her husband, who was a former German general. Petra Kelly's father was an American lieutenant colonel, as I recall. She was just a joy to talk to, a very bright, charged up, energetic, concerned lady. I was there a little before the Green movement had become a real fixture on the political scene. It was just beginning.

Q: Is there anything else we should discuss? Should we go on? In 1980, where did you go?

LEHOVICH: In 1980, I went back to Washington as the number two in the NATO and related desk, the Deputy Director for European security.

Q: You were there from when to when?

LEHOVICH: I did that until 1982, for two years, a very familiar environment for me. It was the start of the Reagan administration.

Q: Let's first talk about, in a way, we're talking about a transition to the Reagan administration, but let's talk about it prior to that. What was your impression of the state of NATO, not only the atmospherics that you were getting from your colleagues and looking at it from this different viewpoint?

LEHOVICH: The state of NATO circa 1980 was that NATO had gotten a brief new lease on life. It always had a long lease on life, but it got a lot of new energy out of the invasion of Afghanistan. The invasion of Afghanistan made it perfectly fashionable to go around and say "The communists are bad people. We need an alliance, blah, blah, blah." I don't mean to be trivial about it, but it was really that kind of thing -for a while, NATO became much more fashionable than before.

Q: Because there had been a period as you say, the Carter thing, when there-

LEHOVICH: There had been a long period when there was doubt, there was concern over an "inordinate fear" of communism? When you have an "inordinate fear" of communism, the next thing you do is to say "Why do we have a large and very expensive alliance over there?" The invasion of Afghanistan cleared some of the cobwebs away. It made it clear that it made perfect sense to have a powerful, extensive military alliance there. So, in that sense, the NATO alliance was fine.

There were a couple of things on the horizon which were going to be dominant in the next couple of years. One of them was the issue of theater nuclear forces, which would not be resolved until about late 1983, as I recall. Another issue which was going to become very acute very quickly were Soviet relations with Poland and the whole evolution in Poland,

which was the movement involving Lech Walesa and Solidarnost. This was going to be another major East-West issue and major European issue that would affect NATO quite a bit over the next months. Those are the big themes that come to mind right now.

Q: Okay. Let's talk first about the theater nuclear forces work. First, what did this mean and what were the developments while you were there in '80 to '82?

LEHOVICH: It was, from an American point of view, a major question of building consensus over a couple of years in NATO, not just to agree on deployment, but then to have several basing countries take the steps to actually pour concrete and make preparations, things that are, in a sense, a lot harder than just getting a vote on this thing. A lot of energy was spent that way. A lot in England.

Q: What was it supposed to mean? What did this theater nuclear forces, what was the issue?

LEHOVICH: The issue was how to respond to a large increase in Soviet forces capable of hitting all of Europe and some of North America.

Q: We're talking about the SS20.

LEHOVICH: We're talking about SS19s and SS20s. The response that NATO, after a lot of effort, agreed on was to station a number of Pershing missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles in several countries in Europe, which would be able to hit a lot of targets in Eastern Europe and a lot of targets in the western parts of the Soviet Union. This was very simply a response to what was viewed as a new threat from the Soviet Union and also as a demonstration, basically an object lesson, that at that time and in the future, an obvious Soviet buildup would be matched or met.

The Soviets made a big issue out of this. We knew this was going to happen. That wasn't wishful thinking. I would have bet my house mortgage that this was going to happen just because I knew enough about how these things worked by then. The Russians made it look like the worst thing imaginable. The sky would cave in if this happened. There was a very large campaign that took some time until 1983, until physically these weapons actually began to arrive. At the time we're discussing, we were no longer talking about agreement in principal. We were talking about early and then more advanced practical steps to make the thing happen. In cases like this, the US has something to do with it, but Britain, where a number of these weapons would be based, was handling its own propaganda and public affairs on this. They had some opposition.

I had a wonderful time coming to London during this period and being invited to a conservative political group called "The Monday Club." Suddenly, to my dismay, I learned that I was going to be their speaker that evening, which I learned only after I was in the room. This was almost a comic opera, since I had been brought along to the event on the spur of the moment by an American colleague. Suddenly, with no preparation, I found that I had to talk to this group of 60 or 80 conservative British figures along with their

conservative MP. The reason I'm mentioning all this is that the entire subject that evening was about ground-launched cruise missiles, and I realized that this conservative type of an audience wanted to hear why these were good things. They wanted to hear ammunition from their American friends on why these were good things. After some rousing remarks from me and another American on why the NATO policy on was wise and after about an hour's session of discussing why cruise missiles were good things, a lady got up, dressed in a fine fur coat. She looked at me and said, "You and your American associates, you're nice people, you're decent people, but it's too bad that President Reagan is being served by such a group of leftists." This is after I had given an absolutely rousing speech in defense of a strategic buildup.

Stu, I mention this simply because any kind of semi-political gathering at that time in a lot of countries in Europe would get on the subject of cruise missiles and whether they were good or bad. If you quietly polled a lot of Americans at that time who were concerned with foreign affairs, a significant number of people would say that they were uncomfortable with the idea or that they didn't like it or that they were opposed to it. I mention this because it's very interesting. I think they were absolutely wrong, but that isn't the point here. The point is that there were significant reservations among some in the American thinking community on this kind of thing. I was once at an international symposium where there were two Americans from the US government. I was one and then there was another one who will remain nameless, a nice young lawyer working on international issues. In this international symposium, where about 2/3 of the folks were from the East European communist countries, someone said all our discussions would be personal and confidential. Fine. It doesn't bother me at all. It did, however, bother my colleague, who decided that he really wanted to be personal and confidential. He said, "I want to tell everyone here, I am opposed to the American decision and the NATO decision to stage ground-launched cruise missiles in Europe." I was absolutely appalled. I'm mentioning this because there was not unanimity on this thing if one polled people quietly. There should have been, but there wasn't.

Q: When one looks at this, you had mentioned this before, almost again and again the NATO and particularly when American leadership, makes a decision to do something, almost invariably as a response to a move by the Soviets, the Soviets then make tremendous noise about "This can't happen. We'll do this." They organize their demonstrations. Whatever it is, it goes through unless, of course, you have Jimmy Carter who undoes it. Did you and your colleagues sort of have the feeling, "Well, here we go again. We're going to do it, but we have to get a certain amount of flak?"

LEHOVICH: Yes. Let me just say this. I think the way the NATO decision on these intermediate range nuclear weapons was handled and the way the basing was handled was amazingly successful. I think it was amazingly successful because there was a lot of consultation. It was non-stop. This was put on the agenda in a number of capitals and in NATO and it was kept there. Luckily, America was constant on this subject. If we had wavered publicly on it, it would have been just as bad as that neutron bomb episode before. A few minutes ago we were talking about what the state of NATO. Let's not forget a very important thing that happened, which is that Reagan was elected in 1980. What happened

afterwards is not so much Reagan as an individual, but the fact that America once again began in a firm way to pay attention to defense issues, to put some more resources into it and to give clearly a higher priority to defense thinking. Some of this was badly done. Some of it was well done. A lot of money, in my opinion, was totally wasted in the Reagan years by Mr. Weinberger and by others. That's not the issue here, though. The point I'm making is that not only was the invasion of Afghanistan something that gave NATO a lease on life, but the Reagan administration's attention to defense did as well. Al Haig was a Secretary of State who just loved the NATO alliance. I mean that in the most sincere sense. That was an alliance that was crucial to him and to his values. He had invested a lot of time in it, he believed in it, he loved it, he respected it. It was an absolute pleasure to work on NATO when Al Haig was Secretary of State because he took it seriously and he thought it was the right thing. He spent a lot of time consulting on everything in the world with his NATO partners.

Q: Getting down to your actual job, where did you fit in the scheme of things or what were you doing during this '80 to '82 period?

LEHOVICH: The NATO office was a fairly large organization. We probably had close to 20 officers there at one time. We were working on arms control, on politics, on the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, on these hot issues all the time. I wound up basically working on hot issues. I found that I had to produce a lot of speeches on short notice along with a few of my colleagues there. We went around with the Secretary of State. I was lucky and was the first State Department person to travel with the Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger. It was interesting because at that time, the early relations between Weinberger and Haig were very poor. Weinberger said he wasn't going to have a State Department guy travel with him on his first trip to Europe as Secretary of Defense and simply told that to the State Department. We called them back. Charlie Thomas, my immediate boss, was the Director for NATO at that time. Charlie and I the same afternoon called a couple of key people at the Defense Department and said that if no State Department person goes, there will never be anyone from the Defense Department who will go with Al Haig on any of his trips. We just took the initiative, made that phone calls, and the whole thing changed and they very graciously took along State Department people afterwards. Weinberger, incidentally, is a total gentleman, an absolute delight to be with.

You were saying, what was I doing? My brief ran to most of the issues that were hot at that time.

Q: Do you want to talk about the Soviets and Poland? What was the situation and our concerns?

LEHOVICH: The concern with the Soviets in Poland in a way picks up from where we were talking about the invasion of Czechoslovakia long before, in '68. What I mean is that in '80 and '81, as a really independent force began to develop in Poland, which consisted of labor unions and the Roman Catholic Church eventually merging with the government into a very strange alliance. As this development was taking place in Poland the Soviets were

terribly uncomfortable for very good reasons, were very worried about it. They made a lot of threatening noises. They also made some very threatening troop movements at that time.

Q: Were these troop movements pointed towards an occupation of Poland?

LEHOVICH: Absolutely. There was not a sign saying "Invasion of Poland," but the whole point of it was to arouse concern that there might be such an invasion.

Q: As happened in Czechoslovakia.

LEHOVICH: Exactly, as happened in Czechoslovakia and as had happened earlier in '56. The anxiety became very large. At that time, (This would have been building, as I recall, toward December of 1981, I believe, the second half of 1981), this began to dominate NATO. The reason is that NATO becomes the western forum for deciding on political action or military action or an economic action when no other forum works. The debate then was over sanctions against the Soviet Union, just as with the invasion of Afghanistan. Why? Because the reality is that at that time there was nothing else one could do with the Soviets. There really wasn't anything one could do, so one tried a bunch of sanctions. The trouble is, they had all been tried before, speaking bluntly about it. There is a limit to how much you can do with a country like that, with economic sanctions or political sanctions. We were trying a lot of these out. There was a very serious concern that the Soviets were going to move. My own guess, looking back, is that NATO actions or sanctions or threats had very little to do with why things worked out the way they did. They worked out the way they did because the Soviets took a real long look and figured they would have a terrible mess on their hands if they did move in.

There was one other factor at that time, which was the new Pope. There was a Polish Catholic Pope. The information that I heard at the time and that I believe is accurate information, although I've never had it confirmed, was that the Pope had told the Soviets, he had passed a message to the Soviet Union, that if there was an invasion of Poland, he would fly in. I credit that story. It's a plausible story.

Q: We're talking about Pope John Paul II.

LEHOVICH: We're talking about Cardinal Wojtyla, who had become Pope John Paul II.

Q: Obviously an ardent Polish nationalist.

LEHOVICH: An ardent Polish nationalist who was a very impressive Pole who had taken the Catholic world and others by storm at that time by strength of personality and was visiting all over, an amazing individual. I think the Pope's existence and the kind of Pope he was served to inhibit the Russian action.

Q: Was there a serious concern that if the Soviets moved into Poland, that they might be up against the Polish army? I mean, they could have overrun it, but there is a difference

between coming in as a la Czechoslovakia or even Hungary and another one coming up against a moderate but not inconsequential army and having to fight your way.

LEHOVICH: I think the concern at that time, the best guessing in Western circles, and my guess, is the concern in Russia was that one would have had street violence, civil violence, the willingness to take casualties, and probably resistance by significant parts of the Polish armed forces, although unclear how. The chemistry then included the enormous wild card of the Polish Pope. That old story: how many divisions does the Pope have, as Stalin once asked. The answer is, the Pope then had a lot of divisions and was a formidable political force. It didn't happen, but it was a dominant theme. It was a dominant theme at the same time that NATO was building theater nuclear forces up and that there was a major US buildup as well going on.

Q: Were you involved in any theoretical planning?

LEHOVICH: I was very much at the center of the sanctions operation that we were putting together against the Soviet Union. I with one or two other people had to work, usually late at night, and come up with these sanctions. You want a political one? We'll do political ones. The next day, we would do some economic sanctions, pretty much invent them. Call up some economists, come up with some, usually overnight, get them agreed to, get everyone to agree to them. People will agree to lots of things if it is politically fashionable and if the price for arguing is to come into the office late at night. It's exciting, Stu, but it's not really a serious way to do foreign affairs. I'm not a big believer in sanctions most of the time. This was one of the experiences that made me very skeptical. They're also hard to reverse afterwards. You look weak if you reverse them. The reason you want to reverse them is that they are uncomfortable for everyone concerned.

Q: During this time, had the hostage crisis in Iran- I guess you really weren't there during most of that, were you?

LEHOVICH: I was in Germany. I was in Germany for a large part of it. I have to add there that we had very close dialogue with the Germans on the hostages.

Q: We're talking about hostages in Iran.

LEHOVICH: We're talking about the hostages in Iran. We had a very close dialogue with the Germans on it because the Germans had relations with the Iranians that we didn't have. At that time, probably the most significant Western presence there. One thing that was evident before the Reagan administration moved in, which I'd like to just mention for a minute because from my perspective was that Vance had resigned as Secretary of State over the Iran hostage crisis. Senator Muskie took over. Muskie was a real pleasure to work with, an absolutely charming man. The reason he was such a pleasure was that, by then, he was so frustrated politically, he was on such terrible terms with the Carter administration in the White House that he took the State Department as his new home, made friends with everyone, didn't have any political axes to grind with the State Department, and took them to his bosom as colleagues, subordinates, and friends. Delightful fellow. Got cut to

ribbons by Zbigniew Brzezinski at the White House. We could see that happening whenever we accompanied Muskie on trips to various ministers' meetings. He took great pleasure in winning one or another battle against the White House at that time and against what he felt was the mismanaged Democratic Party. We got into this through the hostage crisis, but I was simply mentioning that at that time the State Department, the transition to the Reagan administration was from the Muskie administration in the State Department.

Stu, there are a couple of thoughts that I'd like to put down about how the actual beginning of the Reagan administration felt to the State Department. This was interesting. Before Haig arrived, there were some White House advance teams, transition teams, that arrived that were the most awfully incompetent and politicized people I've seen in a long time. They were coming over in a terrifically partisan and angry way, thinking that they were walking into a den of Carterites, a den of partisans, and a den of democratic enemies. They had not a lot of knowledge themselves, not a lot of competence, and enormous political chips on their shoulders. Before long, in the European Bureau, at our weekly European staff meetings of the European Bureau, we had these characters appearing from the transition team, who would sit in the back of the room, take notes on what everybody said. You could almost watch them put in question marks or giving pluses or minuses to what people said and then afterwards they'd come up to you and ask you why you said so and so. They were called "the thought police." They started then to come to some of the NATO meetings that we were holding with other parts of the government, interagency meetings. They weren't too happy. They didn't think we were being forceful enough, but they didn't quite know why because they didn't know enough. I remember one of these fellows coming up and being quite menacing and quite threatening and asking me what I worked on most of the time. I pulled myself up, looked at him in a manly and forceful way, and said, "I work on NATO most of the time," I said that in my manly voice. Since he said nothing, I said, "And I just want to tell you one thing. You don't have to love NATO to be a good American, but it sure helps." He was appropriately speechless. I walked away from the fellow because I was very offended by him. Luckily, before these folks could do anything really silly (This was the transition team.), Haig moved in and as his first act, his first day as Secretary of State, he invited the transition team in for a discussion. They came in for a discussion, about 20 people. Instead of a discussion, he had the photographers come, he took group pictures of them, then he went to the door and invited them to shake hands and be photographed on exiting, and he thanked them for their job. He asked the two members of the transition team who were career State Department officers to stay behind and said, "You people will have something to do." He basically threw the others out, but he did it in a terribly nice way and he did it because they were just being silly. I'm mentioning this because that was the beginning- There was a lot of silly season in the US government on foreign affairs. Remember, we had Richard Allen in the White House at that time, who apparently was a nice fellow, but perfectly awful in other ways. We had a huge amount of ideological baggage.

Q: It was particularly bad in Latin American Affairs because they stayed on.

LEHOVICH: A couple of subjects where there was a real cost in foreign policy from ideological baggage was in Central American Affairs, where we kept on, as if we were

masochists, knocking our heads against movements in those countries that were happening. We might still be doing it if not for the cynicism, clear vision, and competence of Jim Baker, who is not my favorite leader. But my goodness, Jim Baker came in and just turned the spigots off, just turned those operations off with a minimum amount of fanfare. He didn't make a big deal out of it. He just stopped it and the pain went away and everything got better. We were doing very silly things in Latin America. We also actually wound up with, for other reasons, a very weak and strange policy in the Middle East where we basically wound up supporting Iraq in the Iran-Iraq war in a set of actions that were not terribly rational at that time - and look even dumber in retrospect.

Q: Up to this '82 period, you found that, once Haig got rid of these people- In the first place, he had been the Supreme Commander of NATO, so he knew the subject. So, I imagine that he wasn't going to tolerate any political shenanigans in his playpen, was he?

LEHOVICH: Haig thought at the beginning of the administration that he had gotten everyone's agreement, certainly President Reagan's agreement, that he was going to be the "vicar of foreign policy." That's the way he put it. It's a wonderfully Roman Catholic way of speaking about it. It's not understandable to two-thirds of America, but we knew what it meant and he knew what it meant. Weinberger didn't know what it meant and maybe Reagan didn't either. Haig decided that he was going to be the vicar of foreign policy and, for a while, while it all lasted, it was a great ride because there wasn't a lot of interference. There was one driver. He wanted to go in the right direction. He wanted to go fast. It was a pleasure to be on the same bus with him and help him along.

Q: Did you by any chance get involved in the pipeline thing during this time or did that come up later?

LEHOVICH: Which pipeline thing, Stu?

Q: I'm thinking of the gas pipeline from the Soviet Union into Western Europe in which we put up a rather vehement protest.

LEHOVICH: No, I was not.

Q: Do you think maybe we should stop at this point?

LEHOVICH: We probably should, Stu.

Q: We're finishing your time on the NATO desk from '80 to '82. So, where do we go in '82?

LEHOVICH: In my case, we go to the senior seminar and then we go overseas to Vienna for three years.

Q: Well, we'll pick up. I'll ask you a question or two about the senior seminar and then we'll go to Vienna.

LEHOVICH: Thanks a lot, Stu.

Q: Today is June 11, 1997. Vlad, we're talking about '82-'83, going to the senior seminar. This is an interesting course, sort of the equivalent to the military's war colleges. What was your impression of the senior seminar, its value, what worked, what didn't work during this '82 to '83 period?

LEHOVICH: It's a mixed impression because, for me, it was a very valuable year. I got a really good sense of the United States out of it, which is the purpose of it. It's not a program in foreign relations - at least, it wasn't at that time because we're pretty good at foreign relations. But my sense of the American trends, the American political system, and new developments in the American economy, science, technology, energy and related fields was what I really got out of it. The second thing I got out of it, which is not its stated purpose, was an absolutely wonderful time. I think that's worth mentioning because that is a very memorable experience for everyone I've met who has been in that seminar, a simply marvelous time.

Q: I did it about five years before and I agree.

LEHOVICH: What I also observed at that time in the seminar was that we had some very gifted people from other agencies, some of which took it very, very seriously. For example, the CIA took it very seriously. We had our first Coast Guard officer at that time - or at least, in quite a while, our first Coast Guard officer. They took it very seriously, too. Our military colleagues were first-rate. Some of them were destined for stars and some of them were not. It was a very good group. The State Department contingent at that time in '82-'83 was very mixed because a certain number of people were certainly being put there because there wasn't another place for them to go. In some cases, they were getting on in years and getting on in service and had a very high likelihood that they would soon retire. This was clear to them and clear to others and, in fact, was borne out afterwards. So, it was a mixed case and I'm not sure that the State people on average were as outstanding a group as the non-State people at that time. I think it's a fine program. I understand that at present it's targeted probably in a more aggressive and competitive way than it was in '82 and '83.

Q: When you got out in '83, you went to where?

LEHOVICH: I went to Vienna with the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks (MBFR), which are the conventional European force reduction negotiations.

Q: You were there from when to when?

LEHOVICH: I was there from the summer of 1983 until the summer of 1986 - basically, three years.

Q: That's a long time to be dealing with one issue.

LEHOVICH: That's a long time. I was the deputy head of our delegation, the deputy US representative. We had a fairly sizable delegation there, about 25 or more people, most of them professionals, one a two-star general, one a Pentagon GS-18, and all sorts of other personalities and folks. But three years is a long time to spend not only with one subject, but with one subject which at that time already had a well-deserved reputation of moving slowly, albeit gracefully, very slowly indeed.

Q: Let's talk about the delegation first and then about the issues. What was your impression of- First, who was the leader of the delegation, our leaders, and then the sort of currents that came from, I suppose, particularly State and the Pentagon, that were during this '83 to '86 period, the Reagan years?

LEHOVICH: I was there with three heads of delegation. I came out with Morton Abramowitz, who brought me out. Mort stayed somewhat over a year and was replaced by Maynard Glitman, Mike Glitman, who stayed six or seven months and then left me with the delightful job of running that delegation for about six months. Then Robert Blackwill, Bob Blackwill, came out. These were three very bright people. These were also three people who had been skeptical of this negotiation before, as had I. All three, however, for at least a significant part of their time as ambassadors, experienced a change of heart and concluded that this was a very important negotiation and one which had prospects for success... for success on their watch. I think they were all three wrong. I don't think it was an important negotiation. I think there were no prospects of success on their watch. I shared my views with Mort Abramowitz the first time we ever spoke of the negotiation, well before he asked me to come out with him. Neither he nor the others minded a bit of philosophical disagreement.

Q: But do you think this is part of being number one, you really get engaged; number two is able to sit back a little bit and not get, you might say, as caught up in the thing, do you think?

LEHOVICH: There's another, more important point. Without being fundamentally cynical, which I'm not, I had been there 10 years earlier to the year with the first round of these talks in 1973. When you come back 10 years later and you get back in the same canoe and they give you the same paddle and you paddle in the same water and you're not terribly far ahead of ten years before, you do get a certain sense of history. I had that sense of history and my overall sense of the Soviets and NATO was that neither one was in a terrible hurry to do this, nor was the US. As I think we mentioned earlier in this series, what I've learned in the last three or four years since the collapse of the Soviet Union is that serious arms control, not to speak of serious disarmament, happen when life is ready for them and then they have to catch up with life. Serious arms control is not decided by negotiators who decide to do something. Events cause it and the negotiators then catch up with it.

My three leaders all thought that they were in a position of perhaps shaping events and moving them faster. Sometimes people are in such a position - but in this case, I think, they

were honorably off the mark.

Q: Was there a split between State and the Pentagon? I would think the Pentagon representing the military forces would be delighted with the slow pace and State would be, as you say, hoping for a breakthrough, at least on the leadership side? Did you find this?

LEHOVICH: We did get into an interesting question, and it's worth generalizing about, with both State and ACDA. People who work, who see themselves as working intensely on arms control sometimes get a little program-oriented on disarmament. They get program-oriented and they want success.

Q: Could you explain "program oriented?"

LEHOVICH: Yes. They think that they have a program and that this program has as a goal -to conclude an agreement. That agreement would place certain limits on existing arms and activities, or might lead to disarmament. There are a lot of folks who think that their job is to produce such agreements. Let's call that for a moment an arms control community. That exists within the State Department, within the Arms Control Agency, and in a few other places. There is another group of people who will work generally on security issues who are remarkably neutral about this kind of thing. They don't view an arms control agreement with the Soviets is terribly exciting in one way or another. It's symbolically very important. But it may be a good idea, it may be a bad idea, or it may be a great big irrelevancy or a charade. Actually, most of the responsible levels, the senior levels, of the State Department tended to think that way.

Q: This was where we fell in.

LEHOVICH: That's more or less where I fell in because that's sort of where a professional NATO worker and watcher would fall in, but I think the senior management of the State Department tended to see it that way, too. The arms control folks didn't always, and our negotiators out there, for at least a while, would tend to see that there was a program objective of getting an agreement or moving toward one and that they had a real role in it. The Soviets didn't make it easy because they had staked out a fairly dishonest position for several years in these negotiations. They had basically lied about some important military data years before and that caused an enormous problem that just sort of never went away. The other thing that didn't make it easier was that, at that time, NATO was proceeding with the deployment of medium-range weapons in Europe. What the Soviets did was, at one point, and this I think was in late '83, they canceled various arms control negotiations. They had called off the strategic arms talks, which was the really important thing they did. But then they also canceled the Vienna negotiations, which actually was a very stupid thing to do on their part.

Q: Could you explain a bit of the background on this?

LEHOVICH: The background is that there was a decision by NATO to move in ground launched cruise missiles and Pershing missiles to various parts of Europe, which would be

able to strike the Warsaw Pact and parts of the Soviet Union. The reason that NATO decided to do this was because the Soviets had escalated their own strategic arms some years before that. This was a very openly planned step to restore the balance and also to teach a lesson, which is that no bad deed remains unpunished and if the Soviets are going to be putting in a major new weapons system, there is going to be a step in response. What the Soviets did is, they made this into a sort of do or die issue, "you can't let this happen," and they were very threatening and very ominous and threatened that relations would be damaged with the West and, as part of that, to prove that relations were being damaged, they would cancel various activities. They've done this on occasion.

Q: This seems to be a real tactic, doesn't it, to make a step forward and there is a response to get mad as hell?

LEHOVICH: That's right. With the Soviets, at that time, and in a sense, continuing with today's NATO debate, the debate about expanding NATO in 1997, the Soviets have this old habit of screaming that the sky is going to fall in if something happens. They're doing it less in 1997 than before because they're hurt, they're a weak country. But they could do it a lot better in the early '80s. They had done it before when NATO was being enlarged to include Germany, and on various occasions before.

Q: Currency reform in Germany even before that.

LEHOVICH: "End of the world. The sky is going to fall in. History will be changed and you will regret it." They talk that way. To prove it, they would do some things. The things that they were doing in this period was to cancel arms control negotiations. So, they canceled the Vienna talks, which means they and the other Warsaw Pact countries walked out. There was sort of an under reaction on the NATO side. Some countries said "This is awful." Most countries were much more practical. They said, "Look, what do we do? Do we close our delegations? Do we keep renting hotel rooms?" The answer there, and I played a part in formulating this response because I had a fairly clear idea of what we should do, was to do nothing. Don't cancel your hotel rooms. Make them look as silly as you can for a step like this. Then we had a wonderful time in Vienna for three to four months with no negotiations.

Q: I was wondering, were any budgeteers coming around from the various things?

LEHOVICH: No, we were very prudent people and we, first of all, decided there were going to be no unusual or forward-looking expenses made, no investments, no anything. We're going to run down capital and trim our sails and cancel any kind of discretionary spending of one or another kind. But if we had canceled and walked out, if the West had canceled and walked out, then it would have been a mutual thing and very hard to walk back. We were right because they came back and then they looked awfully silly when they came back. What we did in the time that the talks were shut down is, we basically stayed busy. We started a series of studies, analyzing military events, political events, we did demographic studies on Eastern and Western military, things that we found weren't being done elsewhere that we were aware of and we did them with our own resources. We

basically kept busy so as not to get stale and not to feel demoralized. Then they came back. They looked awfully stupid. They felt awfully stupid.

Q: It is kind of hard to storm out and then sort of come back in the door.

LEHOVICH: It's even worse if you do it in two or three negotiations at once. You basically, to use a splendid old Irish term, you look like a schmuck when you've done it. And they felt that way. Anyhow, the talks resumed about three months later. I don't think the quality of the dialogue got much better or much worse after they resumed. The rhythm of the talks was that there were sort of a lot of bilateral discussions that happened every week among all the different countries. There were 19 countries involved in these talks, 12 from NATO and seven from the Warsaw Pact. There were two or three formal or semi-formal sessions every week which were sort of scripted. On the NATO side, a very important activity in which the US played a very prominent role was to keep the NATO group meeting regularly (This would usually mean at least twice a week), a group of ambassadors and staffs from the involved NATO countries. Sometimes these were the bilateral ambassadors. Sometimes they were special arms control ambassadors. There were also various subgroups of the NATO caucus that would be working at all times. This was serving several goals. One, it was keeping in shape. Two, it was keeping a common frame of information among all the NATO countries so that when they were talking to their capitals, they were all in a similar thought process. And, as someone once put it, it was good work therapy for everybody. It kept everybody busy and actually kept us intellectually, I think, way ahead of the Warsaw Pact side.

Q: Something like this, if things are moving so slowly, I imagine that there really is a problem keeping people up to speed rather than just getting so bored they-

LEHOVICH: There is a problem of negotiation management, the 19 countries. I kept very busy. I did not have to work weekends or enormously long weeks, but I kept very busy because I felt my role and the role of a number of people on the Western side was, one, to keep in touch with all of the Western delegations in a very positive way. Cynicism is a big enemy in these things. I was a very positive creature. We all were very positive creatures at that time. We had ideas, we had programs, we had a thing to do each week and each month. Two, I kept in touch with all of the Eastern delegations, had very good relations with them. One of the interesting things for me, which made it a good investment of time, is, I spent an awful lot of those three years getting to know people from the Warsaw Pact countries in a way that I would probably not have done any other way. Some of them I got to know really very well. They always welcomed interest from and a conversation with the United States. They took it seriously. I treated them with great interest and with a lot of respect. Very good relations with the Soviets, who like nothing more than to be listened to. An awful lot of the time, these conversations would run out of steam on the subject of arms control because how often can you talk about something that's standing still? Politics is a strange subject. Sometimes the awkwardness - sit there talking with a Soviet about politics when they've just had, say, the downing of the Korean airliner - they can't talk about anything relating to that. It's too difficult for them. Or supposing, as happened a year or two after that, they just had the Chernobyl event, where their exciting new leader,

Gorbachev, waits about three weeks before he speaks publicly about that. You have an event like that - you can't even talk about those things unless you want to ruin a conversation. You can, but it becomes embarrassing. A lot of the time we spent discussing sort of philosophical, artistic, aesthetic subjects. We would usually begin and end a particular session with some arms control and strategic subjects. I found that there was a lot of energy that I was spending and that the US was spending in keeping different delegations productive and happy.

Q: Did you notice in your contacts any difference between the component parts of the Warsaw Pact?

LEHOVICH: Very little. I would say that the Soviets at that time- First of all, I don't think they were a top flight delegation. I would even go further. I would say they were distinctly not a top flight delegation compared to others that they had fielded in other places. They weren't awful, but they weren't top flight. By that time, thinking Soviets had gotten so cynical that these guys had real trouble figuring out where their country should be going or where they should be going. I'm not talking about arms control, but in a much broader way. This is why the Gorbachev phenomenon took hold so quickly. Soviet society was just very cynical by then. We had, during this period, the death of Andropov, Chernenko and Brezhnev. It was sort of one after the other. It's one duffer after the other collapsing.

Q: This is as uninspiring a crew as.. though Andropov is somewhat interesting.

LEHOVICH: He was somewhat interesting, but he was ill and he croaked very soon after entering. It was very demoralizing for the Soviets because they felt that they were representing a country that looked and felt ridiculous on the world stage, and they did. There was no question that this Brezhnev-Andropov-Chernenko phenomenon is one of the things that clarified Gorbachev's own thinking.

Q: Did you find the Warsaw Pact trying to understand Ronald Reagan? Ronald Reagan came across initially as a cowboy, not well-informed, and particularly coming out from Hollywood and all that. You were pretty early on in the Reagan time. I would have thought that there would have been a great deal of interest of "Where is this guy coming from and who is in command?"

LEHOVICH: There were a couple of interesting points with Reagan. One is, Reagan was, I think, viewed with considerable spontaneous dislike by the Soviets because he was very anti-communist. Now, that's perfectly fine. We were all very anti-communist. But he had a really very personal way of saying that, a very belittling way of saying that - "Evil Empire" type of discussion - and a lot more of that kind. So, in one sense, there was a real dislike of Reagan. But that changed very dramatically when Reagan was shot.

Q: That was in the spring of '81, if I recall.

LEHOVICH: I don't remember when, but there was a very, very interesting change when that happened because after Reagan was shot, one, it was a different kind of sympathy for

him, and two, the guy recovered and within a short time, was shown in his undershirt cutting wood out at his ranch, with bulging biceps. At the same time, you were watching these Soviet leaders die off one after the other. That's where the contrast came in. The other contrast was the whole image of the US at that time was also of a Reagan economic revolution and of a new attitude toward military spending and military power and a lack of inhibition about wanting to be strong militarily, which everyone felt over there. We were at a very sensitive place in terms of feeling a growth in American military presence.

Q: During these talks, was there an underlying thing that the Soviets had a hell of a lot of stuff, but the quality was not up to the same standard, particularly in electronics? Was there a perception of that, that maybe the great Soviet advantage of quantity was being supplanted by quality?

LEHOVICH: No, we didn't have that sense. I think one could argue that, but I wouldn't make that.

Q: That wasn't part of the...

LEHOVICH: No, I don't think it was. There were a couple of things that were always in the thinking of the Western side as we discussed the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact. There were really two considerations. One is, there are an awful lot of them and they were poised in a way to get through certain places like the north German plain very quickly. There was just no question about that. The other thing is that everyone knew that their economy was creaking and working badly and there comes a point when your inability to make toilet paper or certain other commodities which other societies make effortlessly will reflect on your war effort. Their economy was lousy enough so that the concept of successful, prolonged war was much more difficult for them than it would have been if they had a good economy. So, mainly, Stu, the notion of a hot Soviet threat at that time was pretty remote.

Let me go back to one other thing you had said. How did the Soviets and the other Warsaw Pact countries think about things? The other Warsaw Pact countries, I think, with a couple of exceptions, were a gloomy bunch (I'm generalizing). I think they were just generally beaten down in terms of any independence in international affairs. Hungary was always being very lively and creative and they had a very gifted two or three people who were working on their delegation. Unlike the Soviets, the Hungarians had their best people there. I had heard of them before. I knew they were good. They were good then, and since then the ones who were young are at the top. There's no question about it. Hungarians put their first team out there. They were coming up with bright ideas and they were a lot of fun to talk to because they were reading Western literature and they were making a deliberate point of not thinking in the same mold as the Soviets. The East Germans had a very good delegation, but for what purpose? For absolutely no purpose because the East Germans were locked in so totally with the Soviet line that the quality of their delegation was basically irrelevant. The others didn't really care. The Czechoslovakian government service, civil service, foreign service, and others, had deteriorated dramatically since 1968. I say this because I had dealings with them from the early '70s on. They had gone downhill. We didn't have a terribly good Czechoslovak group over there, and it tended to be Slovak

rather than Czech oriented in leadership. The Bulgarians didn't really care too much. As for the Poles, there was a communist in charge of the delegation, not a very loud or militant one, but man who, in his quieter moments, would acknowledge that he was a communist and an atheist. That's not a very interesting Polish representative at a time when you had Pope John Paul and Lech Walesa changing the landscape so basically. He was the man from yesteryear, although a very nice fellow.

Q: Let's talk about the NATO side. First, were there any splits, desires, within the NATO side? How did you all proceed?

LEHOVICH: On the NATO side, because this wasn't a very active period, we proceeded in a pretty civil way. The Germans had to take these talks seriously whether they were going somewhere or not. The top levels of the German government were well-informed about what was actually happening in these talks. The top levels of the American and most other allied governments were really not very informed. They sort of knew that this year things were this or that, but they weren't tactically informed. The top levels of the German government were actually tactically informed reasonably well on what was going on. The Germans took the stuff very seriously and they always wanted the NATO side to look as forthcoming as possible. It didn't mean they wanted anything surprising to happen quickly, but they wanted to look good and to look positive. That's in contrast with sort of a typical British position, which sometimes changed. Basically a typical British position was not to look any more positive than one had to in this kind of a setting and sort of give it the back of the hand. That was partly sort of a national attitude, character, but also partly, I think, a way to make sure the United States wouldn't get ahead of itself because there had been some times in the preceding 10 years when the US would get excited about these talks for one reason or another. It happened with Kissinger, as we discussed earlier in these interviews. It happened afterwards. Occasionally, American ambassadors, including the three that I mentioned and their predecessor, Jonathan Dean, would get terribly excited about these talks and try to move them forward. That was one additional reason why the British were displaying zero enthusiasm for this process and didn't really want it to look any more positive than it had to. Most of the other countries were neutral. There were a couple that had very particular interests. The Italians were always interested in not having Italian forces covered by this agreement. There are some historical reasons for that. The Greeks and Turks were always interested in any issues affecting forces on the flanks. Incidentally, I have yet to meet a Turkish diplomat whom I don't consider to be first-class. Maybe they exist; I just haven't run into them. Their diplomats at these talks were excellent. The Italians happened to be excellent, too.

Q: Did you find that the Greeks and Turks were sort of saying, "Make sure that we don't reduce something which would give the Turks advantage over the Greeks or the Greeks advantage over the Turks?"

LEHOVICH: That wasn't an issue, but they didn't want anything that would affect force capabilities in the flank region. Otherwise, they had no antagonisms in these talks in any way that I ever observed. They also didn't want what they would have considered naive or silly visionary movement to a premature agreement. I'm saying it about the way they

would have said it. The Greek would have put it that way. The Turk would have said, "Why do stupid things now?" They didn't want any nonsense. They were very happy to be sitting there. We also had a very reasonable representative from NATO headquarters who was part of this NATO caucus, a Belgian gentleman called Philippe de Burlet, who reported to the Secretary General of NATO on what we were doing. He was a very bright fellow. Each delegation had a military representative, most delegations did. American and British and Dutch delegations had general officers. At various points, the Germans would have a general officer or a colonel. Our general officer, Major General Adrian St. John, was retired and had been called back for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was one of the brightest arms control minds working for the JCS at that time. The others were military generals who were plugged into their establishments. There was a NATO military representative who was always present. This was good because as the civilian negotiations progressed interminably, the really productive work was probably being done by the military representatives. Let me just dwell on that for a minute because I think this is less understood. The Western military group at Vienna, the military members of delegation, met regularly and at an early point in its existence in these endless negotiations had taken up the task of doing certain military studies on the effects of arms control or disarmament and on ways to do it, ways to verify it, and what steps actually need to get taken. They did a lot of work. Some of this work was voluminous and some of it was intellectually rigid, meaning it was good stuff. It wasn't nonsense. At some point, they began working jointly with military representatives from the Warsaw Pact. They began to share this type of thinking, sometimes with agreement from the other side, sometimes without. But basically, by the time that we were in the mid-1980s, the serious work that had been done toward an agreement was in large degree done by the military, who had some steps actually worked out for what you do and who had exchanged these so that there was a common vocabulary, a common database - not a database on how many bodies there are, but a database on how to work. Very important work. I felt that at the time that I was there, if we had to conclude an agreement, we could have concluded one quite quickly (quite quickly means a couple or three months) without nearly as many mistakes as we would have made if this military process hadn't been going on. The same can be said for the civilian process, but I think the military process at that point was less obvious and was more important.

Q: What about France? Was France part of the equation?

LEHOVICH: France was never part of the equation. They didn't bother anyone, they didn't really care, and they weren't terribly relevant. Nobody minded them and nobody thought of them.

Q: Obviously, even though it was far away, you had to have sort of an end game. Suppose you ended up with something, an agreement, what was envisaged by, say, your delegation that might be a way of coming to an agreement?

LEHOVICH: The big unknown, and something I never tried to envisage because I didn't believe in agonizing needlessly, concerned reductions and numbers. Would there be reductions? Would there not be reductions? Hard to foresee. What was pretty obvious is that there would be limitations on forces. Maybe it would be a freeze. Maybe it would be

something that would not best be described as a freeze but that in effect was a freeze. But at a minimum, what happens if you have an agreement on conventional forces on two sides of a dividing line in Europe is, you have restrictions on future military activities. So, what I was interested in were questions of what kind of limitations there would be. In the Western side, this means basically how forces can move into Germany or not from places like America, Canada, England, France, but also Belgium and Holland. Those were the stationing forces. The worst thing imaginable would be to create some kind of naive, ambiguous or stupid regime that would then limit the ability to reinforce. We weren't thinking about the next year. We're all familiar with the history of the century. We're thinking 10 or 20 years in the future. So, that was one important concern which is what kind of limitations you have. The other concern was verification. Here we get into a really sort of difficult subject because when you look back at the early '80's. Let's go to Poland for a minute and the death of Father Popieluscu. Then to Germany and the death of Major Anderson.

Q: Could you explain this?

LEHOVICH: I will get to this in a minute. There were two very different cases, but to me, they were a key part of verification. Father Popieluscu was a Polish priest. Father Popieluscu had a lot of political enemies from the government, from the security services, and he was killed. He was killed in a crash, as I remember, with a snowplow on a day that it wasn't snowing. His body was thrown into a well. Father Popieluscu was a case that was disturbing because it was a very public case. The American major was someone who was part of the American military liaison group that had a mandate to circulate in East Germany. They were trapped physically by Soviet forces. One large truck was in front, one large truck was behind and they basically closed in on this jeep and crushed Major Anderson, who basically observing their troop movements -in other words, verifying. The reason I mention these two cases is that the notion at that time of having on sight verification of conventional force reductions aroused a lot of scepticism. It was a very controversial notion. I for one was very skeptical that it could work. In fact, I was absolutely sure it couldn't work. I was probably wrong. I was probably too pessimistic. But the reason I and others were very pessimistic at that time was because of cases like those of Father Popieluscu and Major Anderson, and the actual physical violence done in different parts of the Warsaw Pact by the organs of the security services or by military intelligence.

To get back to the main theme, the main theme was what kinds of things was one preparing for. Well, on the one hand, one was preparing for freeze or force limitations, which was one obvious thing that happens. The second thing, one begins to prepare for verification. Verification was a political requirement as well as something that a reasonable person wants. A political requirement because the American political system, the Congress, and much of the Western political system made clear that verification would be a key to the acceptability of any agreement that we came up with. A lot of people, I think, were interested in using verification as sort of an impossible test, a test so impossible that it would have to fail and therefore, there could never be any movement. But verification was the other big concern other than force limitations. I have to say, at that time, we were all very skeptical about a good verification system. We were thinking that if we had to move

to an agreement, we would either have to rely on national technical means, which had their ups and downs, but they're not commonly shared, or we would have to rely on some kind of pretty inhibited on sight verification, which would not work well. So, we were pretty skeptical. That was the other part. Those were the two main things one thought about. I didn't think a lot about how many forces would be withdrawn or not because that varies.

Q: I would have thought, too, that you were, in a way, dealing with an apples and oranges situation in that, particularly armed forces, but I imagine that most of the NATO armed forces were going through what essentially was a professionalization of the military, whereas the Soviets (and this is true even today) have shown they don't really have that professional an army. They have an awful lot of recruits who are poorly trained and that's what they've relied on and do today. It's just a different type of army. I think it's been shown by actual performance that the smaller professional army is far more proficient in doing what it's supposed to do than the large not as well trained universal military service type unit.

LEHOVICH: These are very useful thoughts. Here is what happens when one thinks about the Soviet military. Basically, you go back as far as you can. Go back to the Napoleonic war, the war with Napoleon in 1812, the Crimean war, World War I, World War II, Afghanistan, and Chechnya, and tell me one time when the Russian army was in shape to fight any one of those military engagements. They never were. They aren't now. They never have been. Maybe they never will be. Maybe someday they will be. But basically, the history there is always of getting creamed at the beginning of a campaign, looking terrible, and then catching up afterwards. The difference in the Central European situation was that the kind of forces that were available, their tank forces, to move through could have moved through. There is little doubt about it. But after that, if it's a campaign that will last more than a couple of months, the Soviets are going to begin to look awful. I think people generally thought that. But, you know, we're speaking right now in a pretty detached way. If you spoke that way to some ideologically excited American analyst working on Soviet military affairs, they would say that you were wrong. They would say that they're much better than that, the 10 feet tall business. The point is, there is just no question that two things have been constants in Russia for 70 years plus. One is that the army tends to be in lousy shape most of the time and unprepared when something bad happens. Two is that the economy is lousy. That's the way it is. That's the way it has been. It's even worse today than usual.

Q: Leaving this exercise - I won't say in futility, but anyway, this exercise-

LEHOVICH: It's an exercise in international dialogue which is extraordinarily useful because- Let me just say something so that we don't get too cynical. There was a wonderful American congressman who came out, Jack Brooks. He was on one of the key committees that worked on military money. He came out to our delegation. He was a horrible budget cutter, this guy. He was very mean about budgets. He came out to Vienna and our whole delegation met with him. We thought he was going to tear us apart because he started to say, "I want to know how much you've spent. I want to know how much you spend every month. I want to know how much you spend every year. How much does

your delegation spend? How much do you spend on housing and everything?" We told him all this stuff. He sat there adding it all up and then he said, "Just as I thought. You guys cost less than one Abrams tank. You people are a terrific bargain!" I'm serious. That was an Representative Jack Brooks, and he kept things in perspective. Our delegation did cost less than one Abrams tank.

Q: Which is our main battle line tank.

LEHOVICH: Which is our main battle line tank and whatever its cost was more than it cost to keep our delegation going for a year. It's not an exercise in futility. It's an exercise in alliance management for the NATO alliance. My motto with these MBFR negotiations was very simple and I said it very quietly to people on the Western side when they would lose the big picture. The motto was "The right course to take in these negotiations is the course that keeps NATO cohesive and happy. The wrong course is any other course." That's absolutely true. That's the way it was. We were carrying out that type of political function.

Q: Well, after carrying out that type of political function until 1986, whither?

LEHOVICH: Then I went to the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs as a Deputy Assistant Secretary. Allen Holmes was the Assistant Secretary. I stayed there until the summer of 1989 - three years, in other words. The departure coincided with the arrival of Jim Baker as Secretary of State, who-in what proved to be a rather unfriendly takeover by one Republican Secretary of State from another Republican Secretary of State -he removed basically the whole of the Assistant Secretaries and Deputy Assistant Secretaries all at once. I'm exaggerating because there were about 12 that he didn't remove. But the great majority were moved out with one big broom. There was a stampede for various forms of shelter from the stormy seas at that time. Anyhow, back to 1986, I returned for three years with the Political-Military Bureau.

Q: What were your responsibilities in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs?

LEHOVICH: My task was to work on hot regional issues, current regional issues and to work, generally speaking, with the security assistance program - that major part of it which was coming out of the State Department budget. As a result, I did not work with arms control. I didn't work with technology transfer to any great degree and I didn't work with a number of other strategic or technical issues. I had a fairly straightforward international affairs portfolio.

Q: During this '86 to '89 period, what were hot regional issues that you were particularly concerned about?

LEHOVICH: I did a lot of work consistently with the US-Israeli strategic dialogue. I found myself getting involved in various other Middle East activities, which I want to return to later on. That was one area. Another thing that I got plunged into intensively in the last year was an unfortunate set of negotiations between the US and Canada on the

Canadian desire to acquire nuclear submarines. I was head of the US delegation that dealt with them on this subject. Other issues that I was involved in were generally all sorts of security assistance issues. This tended to be working with a shrinking pool of money for a group of countries that needed it more and more. The things that I didn't work with, kind of opted out, were some Latin American and some Central American issues. The reason I did not work with those is because it was apparent immediately that there was an in-group which I was not going to be admitted into, which was a very, very small and very political group, and later turned out to be the group that was dealing with the Contras and with all sorts of other hot activities. I just stayed out of that and felt very happy for doing that. African issues were really of the dwindling-resources variety, how to agonize and cry with someone over cutting a small amount of security assistance still further. Then we dealt with base negotiations and American access issues, nuclear free zones, which was a very hot subject at that time. Nuclear free zones provided me a wonderful chance to talk with Australians about that. They had very different views from us. We worked on missile proliferation quite a bit, which I found myself getting involved with in the Middle East context, and on one trip to China with Allen Holmes, the Assistant Secretary, sort of a part of a dialogue with the Chinese on it. In addition, there were the sort of hot issues that would come up where you would be expected to be knowledgeable without really being knowledgeable. I don't want to get into it because I never was that knowledgeable. I don't know anything about Panama, for example. Just because once on a Tuesday, I managed to look good about Panama doesn't mean I knew anything about it.

Q: Allen Holmes, who has been involved both in the Department of State and the Department of Defense, could you describe your impression of how he operated, what were the main issues?

LEHOVICH: Allen Holmes had been ambassador to Lisbon, Portugal earlier. He had been a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, the senior one with Larry Eagleburger. Earlier, had for a while run the NATO desk. He was a senior, well-regarded Foreign Service officer. Allen Holmes did not start out as a specialist in any of the big disciplines of political-military science, though he was awfully good at bases because he worked in Portugal where there is an important base negotiating issue. Allen Holmes is an absolutely superb leader. I would say that his main feature that stands out among all the people who have worked for him is that he is a wonderful leader. He looks at issues and people and he is clear about where one should go. He is wonderful at bringing people along with him who work for him. He is very non-dogmatic about everything he does. There is one other quality which is worth mentioning, that he has a remarkably good short term memory. He can take something and not too long afterwards be able to repeat it virtually verbatim. It can be many, many pages long. This is good and bad. Sometimes the parts that weren't underlined come out just as quickly as the parts that were. He is somebody I had the highest personal regard for, as well as professional regard. I don't know if that was your question, but he is a marvelous leader. That's my one sentence summary.

Q: You said you were involved in Middle East issues. We're talking about '86 to '89. The biggest sort of security assistance we have is this one between Israel and the United States

and Egypt and the United States. Could you talk about how you- This is sort of a little bit outside your normal bailiwick. You had been sort of involved with NATO and the Warsaw Pact. All of a sudden, you're up to this other relationship which is more political than military, although an awful lot of hardware was going into those two countries.

LEHOVICH: I found that I had to learn quickly and the best way to do that was to go to the Middle East and spend some time in Israel and Egypt. I managed to go to Kuwait for a number of days as well on sort of a quick business trip with Robert Pelletreau, who at that time was in the Pentagon as a Deputy Assistant Secretary.

There was one other thing that was going on at this time, let's not forget. That thing was the Iran-Iraq war. The Iran-Iraq war set a very much more dramatic backdrop to what we were doing then, even by the standards of the Middle East, where there is rarely a quiet period. This is one of the things I want to get into -the Iran-Iraq war and the US policy toward it. I found myself being drawn into pieces of that and, on a couple of occasions, wading into parts where I was not invited and not welcome.

Let's go back for a minute to the role of Israel and Egypt in foreign assistance and various other things that were facing me at that time. Israel and Egypt were such a large percent of our overall aid package, security assistance package, 2/3, that they really dwarfed the rest. That part, the Egypt and Israel part of it, was basically fixed. It wasn't going to go down. It was fixed. Attempts to make it go down never worked politically. They ceased to work politically very soon after they started. The importance of this is that the overall amount was not fixed; it was going down. As a result, every year, if there was a 10% cut, that 10% cut would become a 30% cut on the average for the countries that received it. 2/3 of the overall thing was fixed and was not going to be affected, so any cut had to be taken by the countries that were not Egypt and Israel. This is why we get into situations where a couple of dozen countries in Africa with which we were working on modest security assistance programs would wind up taking very large cuts on very small programs. It was a very sad situation, I must say. I don't think we've gotten out of that by any means - in fact, it's more difficult now because today Jordan is the third one in this process. I love the Camp David process and I love the idea of a firm, predictable American commitment to the countries in the Camp David process. It's the rest of it which isn't rational. But we're getting beyond the scope of this conversation.

Q: I'd like to get your impression of this, particularly from the Israeli side, of the politics. I mean, here you are at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level and this is on your menu. You're up against something which is mainly domestic because of the Jewish-American influence within our country. Did you kind of look at this and say there was no point in even considering it and you might as well move on to other things?

LEHOVICH: One of the big issues which would come up sort of every year in discussion within the State Department was whether one should try to reduce the share of assistance going to Israel and Egypt. This would come up at the time under discussion under the aegis of Deputy Secretary John Whitehead, who in my memory addressed this issue at least twice. Each time, the answer would come back "No," but each time there would be some

attempt to think through this thing. I tended to stay out of that because it wasn't where my bread was buttered. I knew the outcome of that and I didn't want to get involved. I did talk a lot with the Israelis both in Israel and in America about some of these dilemmas of foreign assistance. They would say things like "You know, we will try to be helpful in any way we can on the desirability of increasing the overall levels of American security assistance, but we will not be helpful and we will resist any attempt to cut Israel, and resist cuts for Egypt as well." I think there actually were some attempts through the AIPAC (American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee), a group which I have great respect for and which I found to be a very formidable presence at that time. I remember going to one of their very large dinners in Washington with a couple of thousand people present.

Let me pause on that. May I digress for a minute on the AIPAC dinner? This was a huge lesson for me on American politics. The AIPAC dinner was at the Sheraton and it was circa 1987. There were a couple of thousand people in the room, a very large room, with lots of tables. I had two tickets, so I went with my wife. We were at a table of perhaps 14 people or so, mostly Jewish contributors to AIPAC deliberately selected from different parts of the United States. We were in the non-contributing category from the US government, or guests. The only other people in another non-contributing category was a congressman from the state of Washington and his wife. There was a bowl in the middle of the table. There was no one there at the table from the state of Washington. Every one of the honored guests was honored by the chairman from the podium, including the congressman at our table, who was honored with many words because he was an important man and a good man. Even I was honored with a few words, but smaller words as was befitting my smaller importance. We had a wonderful time at this table, some very exciting discussions, a lot of very informed debate about airplane sales that I was involved in. I was astonished how well-informed the people that I was talking to were on every aspect of these plane sales. Then the most interesting thing happened. It became a moment to show appreciation. At our table, a set of contributions appeared in the bowl at the middle of the table for the congressman from the state of Washington. These were sizeable contributions because, Stu. I peeked and so did my wife. These were bigger contributions than were on my horizon. They were from all the other people at the table. They went into a bowl and the contribution was for the congressman from the state of Washington. Yet all of the contributors were not from the state of Washington. They were chosen from different places. That man had a certain sense that day of getting recognition and support from a group that had nothing to do with his state. He felt, for better or for worse, observed and recognized that day and so did I. Both he and I learned an important lesson that day about the most powerful and intelligent lobby I have ever come across. So, that was my digression on AIPAC. The reason I mentioned it was because when I did discuss with people from Israel some of these dilemmas of security assistance, they would say, "Well, we'll try to help increase the level." To do that, there were some really very efficient and sophisticated organizations at work. One of them was AIPAC. So, it's not an abstract thing to say, "We'll try to help you" on this kind of an issue. There actually could be some help. It just didn't work because the general mood of the times, as it is now, was to cut monies for foreign assistance.

Q: Before we move to Iran-Iraq, what about military sales to Saudi Arabia, which became

very important within a very short period thereafter, the Gulf War?

LEHOVICH: We had military sales at that time to some of the Gulf States - Kuwait, for example, to Saudi Arabia, and to several of the other Gulf states. It was a time when there was a de facto Gulf group that was worried about Iran, that was working together. What we would do with these sales (and "we" was sometimes the Political-Military Bureau, it was sometimes the Middle Eastern Bureau of the State Department), we would work on Capitol Hill to explain them and we would very often talk to the Israelis about them. The answer we tended to get was that "You will not get our active support and you will not get a green light from us on any of these things." What was at issue was not whether we would get a green light, but whether we would get active opposition from the best organized lobby in America. In fact, during that period, there was very little active opposition from the best organized lobby. They were not fighting much of these sales. They were very serious about fighting some of them. The reason is perfectly understandable. The reason was, this year, things look one way, but if one goes back to, say, 1967, one found that, generally speaking, all of the Arab countries that could join in the war joined in, including Jordan, which was a stupid thing to do. If it happened once, it can happen again so that the opposition was not casual to the sales, but it was not as vigorous as it could have been.

Let me just get into another interesting area of this time. That gets into the Iran-Iraq War and some attitudes toward it. There was a strange thing going on in the US, far stranger than the Iran Contra Affair. This was the notion that the US implicitly at that time had decided that in the Iran-Iraq War, there was a good country and a bad country. The bad country was Iran, and all of the humiliation of the hostage issue was coming out. We were demonizing Iran in a way that, frankly, was just stupid. But worse than that, having identified the bad party, we could not resist identifying the good party and that was Iraq. When I say "we," I don't mean you or me. I mean top levels of the government like Casper Weinberger of the Defense Department, who was very emotional about this issue and was terribly angry with Iran and wanted to hurt it and to help anyone who could hurt it. A good part of the Reagan White House was acting the same way at the time. The work nationally had moved very much in the direction of wanting a certain outcome for this war -wanting Iraq to win and doing a lot of things one way or another to make it easier for Iraq to win and harder for Iran to stay in. I thought this was crazy and on a couple of occasions tried to insert that view into one or another action I was doing and found that it was not welcome, not desired from myself and probably from anyone else at that time. I certainly didn't have the bureaucratic or personal authority to do anything really significant with it. But I'm mentioning it because it was an important part of the time and for the Israelis very interesting. I was making a couple of trips a year to Israel at that time for several days each time, seeing people on a repeating basis whom I got to know quite well. One of the things there that was a source of enormous frustration was the notion that the US had picked a favorite in this sordid war, had made that side better than it really is, and wanted that side to win. It wasn't difficult to imagine what was going to happen over there. There was going to be a huge imbalance and the winner was going to come out much stronger than anyone wanted. The Israeli attitude was (I'll just phrase it in a clinical way) that, as wars go, the Iran-Iraq War is a good war and if that war wants to last for a very long time, let's not try to stop it because it makes life easier for everybody else. What it did, incidentally, was it

allowed the Israelis not to be the number one demon in the Middle East, a luxury they had simply not had, I think, since the creation of the country. For a long period of time, they were not the number one demon. When you're not the number one demon, you're not a demon, basically. At that point, other countries can deal with you in a diplomatic way, indirectly. Their relations with non-Middle East countries, like Turkey, for example, were absolutely flourishing. The views I'm describing about the Iran-Iraq war was one of the differences that the Political-Military Bureau had with the Middle East Bureau. Pretty much our whole bureau, I think, thought that we were engaged in some very shortsighted activity at that time.

Q: Could you talk about what activities we were doing that were tilting the balance towards Iraq?

LEHOVICH: We were helping any kind of a coalition building among the Gulf states, for example, that would work with Iraq. We were legitimately very concerned about Iranian missile activities, cruise missile activities, other threatening activities in the Persian Gulf; very legitimately. But then we got ourselves into a very strange activity, which was to use the US Navy to ensure protection for shipping. This began with Kuwait. We began to be an escort service, an armed escort, for Kuwaiti ships. This evolved later into the role of being a military escort for shipping, generally speaking, in the Persian Gulf. There were a lot of pros and cons to this thing. I'm not trying to dismiss this in any sense as stupid or shortsighted, but some of it was because some of it assumed that there was a certain constellation which would stay the same. Anyhow, I was not part to and I can't comment on any intelligence sharing or other relations that we were doing to help Iraq. That was in the background. I was, generally speaking, operating on the assumption that this kind of thing was taking place and would occasionally pick up some sharp insights into it from one way or another either here or abroad. It was something the Israelis were interested in. It was not a subject we discussed very loudly. There was a certain amount of this kind of tactical sharing with Iraq and I'm just not a good source on it. But more than that, there was the general sense that there was a good side and a bad side to that war. There were only two bad sides in that war.

Q: You said there was a difference between the Political-Military Bureau, which looked upon two bad sides more or less. With the Middle East Bureau, was that tending to tip over towards the good bad guy?

LEHOVICH: Yes, it would. It was also a difference, which I think has been a pretty longstanding difference, at that time on some aspects of relations with Israel and other parts of the Middle East. The Israelis thought that the Middle East Bureau tended to be a more pro-Arab bureau than they wanted. They definitely preferred to work with some other part of the State Department, which happened to be the part that I was with, in what was known as the Joint Political-Military Group, which was a formalized American-Israeli group which met a couple of times a year and which worked on security assistance and on strategic issues. We had a checklist of issues we worked on. My bureau was in charge of that. There was no question that the Israeli side wanted someone to be in charge of that who was not in the Middle East Bureau. It was a minor source of friendly friction with

some of the colleagues in the Middle East Bureau. There were so many other things to fuss with that we never really worried much about it. But one can look back over many years and make the case that the State Department "Arabists," as they used to be called, tend to be pro-Arab. I don't want to overdo that, but there were a number of people who felt that in the early 1980's.

Q: Moving to still dealing with missiles, did you get involved with China?

LEHOVICH: I got involved in China simply because I joined Allen Holmes in making a trip to China in late 1988. The point of that was to talk about missiles. By then, for a year or more, we had been getting involved as a government in missile proliferation efforts. There was a missile proliferation agreement which had been written. What I had worked on quite unsuccessfully with a couple of other people in the State Department was trying to get an agreement in the Middle East on a missile control regime. We had talked to the Israelis about this and they were frigid on the subject. They had a very good missile themselves. They knew that it what was happening was very threatening: sales from China and possible sales from places like India or Latin America to the Middle East of middle range missiles and short range missiles. But a middle range missile sitting almost anywhere in the Middle East is not only going to cover the Middle East, but it will cover the former Soviet Union as well. So, when we talked about this with the Russians at one or another point, the Russians were very attentive because they knew perfectly well that any of these developments put them within range, too. The Israelis were very chilling on this because they assumed that any agreement on the control of new missile technology in the Middle East would include inhibitions on them. I think their preference was to take their chances and count on their fine technology and their excellent organization to stay ahead. Perfectly logical.

It was against this background that we were talking with China. The discussions I joined in in China were not the first ones we had had with China. The first ones had been carried out by other American emissaries. The Chinese had given them an absolute cold shower of a kind that actually shocked these people. So, we sort of expected we were going to get a cold shower and we knew that we wouldn't be shocked if we got one. We also knew that we were going to be very polite about it and not screech and scream. We had a very civilized set of discussions with the Chinese and we basically said "You should not be doing x, y, z with missiles," but we didn't scream it terribly loud. They listened in a civilized way and talked about some other things. Then they said, "We want to talk to you people, since you're from a bureau that we are excited to see (the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs) and we want you people to tell us how you work with the American military." The real interest on the Chinese side, on the part of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, which went on for a couple of hours and then was pursued for additional hours informally, was to explore in specific detail how the US government is set up on defense issues. What they realized and what they used us for was to document that in the United States, the civilians play a major role in defense issues, in strategic issues, in arms control issues - not just a major role, but a role that is between major and dominant. They had us there and we were their interlocutors on this. It was just very exciting. Incidentally, I was in the same kind of conversation with two other countries, both in Latin America, which

made special trips or opened special dialogues to document how American deal with defense issues as a civilian government.

Q: What countries were those?

LEHOVICH: One of them was Argentina, but I will take a pass on the second one and can't recall it at the moment. This is worth pausing on because we take for granted a National Security Act, a national security system, and a pretty large mandate for the Secretary of State, who is the senior cabinet officer, and a very large role for congressional civilian inquiry into all of the minutiae and funding of defense and security issues. We are in an incredible minority of countries in that regard. The Russians do it differently and continue to do it different. We all know that. But a number of the other countries do, too. In the case of the Chinese, the people we've been dealing with on missiles aren't the decision makers on missiles. They're not the ones who make them. They're not the ones who sell them. The ones who make them sell them, and the ones who make them and sell them tend de facto to write the rules and set the national standards. So, they were very interested in how we did it.

There were a couple of other countries that were very interested in this as well. We also extensive talks on this with Australia, for example. In the case of some of these countries, it was the foreign ministries that were interested in seeing how the leader - and America is the leader - does it and how they can get to the state where the foreign ministry isn't thrown out of the room when defense issues are discussed.

So, interestingly enough, the most lively discussions with China, which began on missile issues, ended up on how to have a bigger role for civilians on defense issues in China. I was fascinated by it. That was picked up in a couple of actual set piece discussions and in at least one case where a delegation was sent to Washington to talk about this stuff, to see how the civilians have gotten themselves so that they count.

Q: Moving on to the other one that you mentioned, could you talk about the Canadian sub issue?

LEHOVICH: Yes. The Canadian sub issue came and went. Fortunately, it stopped. What the Canadians decided was that they wanted a nuclear submarine capability, which means they wanted nuclear powered submarines, not nuclear weapon carrying submarines. They came to the United States with a request to talk about this. The reaction in some of the political side of the Pentagon was sympathetic to giving them a hearing. The reaction in the Navy, particularly in the part of the Navy that deals with nuclear submarines, and the reaction in the Department of Energy, which has an important mandate in this issue, was extraordinarily negative. It was not only negative, but it was hostile and preemptory.

Q: Funny.

LEHOVICH: Extraordinarily negative.

Q: The French have nuclear, the British have them.

LEHOVICH: Well, this is what made it so ironic. The reasoning is not that the Canadians are not a great friend and partner. The concern was that there might be some leaks of technology just through a greater network on contractors or whatever, or other people involved, or that there might be a nuclear accident which would discredit the future history of nuclear submarining. There was an unspecified but perfectly obvious paranoia. I have not seen such a paranoia within the US government on any other subject. Even the NSA (I'm going to get way out on a limb), I bet you even the NSA is a little more open on thinking about talking about codes than these folks in the nuclear submarine establishment were on talking about nuclear submarines. There was a rather grizzly attitude from the beginning. We had several months of negotiations on this thing, which were superficially cordial, but were marked by a big problem. The big problem is that one true friend and ally was simply refusing to talk to another true friend and ally about something which was a reasonable subject.

Let me digress. The Canadians, in my opinion, were absolutely shortsighted and wrong to want to have such capability. There is nothing wrong with learning a lot about it, but it's expensive as hell, it's a terrible nuisance to have, it's no end of problems. They came to the conclusion quite quickly that not only were we very difficult to deal with on it, but the subject itself was a very unpleasant technology to acquire because it's expensive and very problematic. Eventually, they said, "No. We're trimming our budgets. We're cutting everything. What are we doing, getting into this incredibly open-ended adventure?" and they cut it off, to everyone's delight - certainly to my delight because I thought that these particular talks were going nowhere. It became a real exercise to keep them informative, to do a certain amount of serious sharing of thinking and information and of simply not being surly. We were under presidential orders to have these talks.

Q: Were you acting as the buffer between the Canadians who were interested in this and our nuclear establishment, which was so vehemently opposed? Were they aware of this, the Canadians?

LEHOVICH: They were very well aware because some members of this establishment were simply so open about it. They were members of this delegation. At one point, I had to break off a meeting. I just adjourned the meeting because of what I considered to be politically unacceptable comments made from my side of the table. I just closed the meeting on the spot. No, the Canadians were very well aware of this. This is not a mystery in government circles. The Navy gets very paranoid about certain things and one of them is nuclear submarines.

Q: I think one of the rationales for the Canadians to at least raise the subject was the fact that American and Soviet submarines were playing hide and seek under the ice cap up around the North Pole, all of which was around Canada. Canada felt that it ought to have something to do with this game rather than let the big boys play it there.

LEHOVICH: Of course, you're right, Stu. The reason for wanting that capability is to be

able to be almost an equal in basically the waters that are contiguous to you. I say almost an equal because the Canadian capability was not able to do what the US could do up there. It just cannot stay submerged with that power, those capabilities for that long. There are a lot of reasons you want to be able to be effective, but the price was just staggering in terms of money and other implications. So, I would say that was an unusual and not terribly cheerful negotiation.

Q: One question I would like to ask before we maybe close it off is did you see in arms sales and things you were interested in any almost relief in sight because of the turmoil that was going on with the Soviet Union? That really happened after your watch, didn't it?

LEHOVICH: That really happened afterwards. There never was any relief, Stu. There wasn't a peace dividend. Another thing that I think is worth mentioning from that period is the issue of nuclear free zones because it's one where you basically have to have a nuclear submarine capability and probably a nuclear weapons capability to be very interested in that issue. A lot of countries will say "Let's have nuclear free zones." If you're a Pacific country, that's even more tempting because that's where the bases are. The French have been very aggressive over the years and until very recently in setting off tests and, in general, in keeping the Pacific profile as a nuclear testing area pretty high. I found myself getting involved with a number of countries - Australia and New Zealand, but several others, on this subject all the time. The US and Britain were opposed to nuclear free zones that would include any countries where we had normal naval access because if they have a nuclear free zone policy, you basically can't take a Navy ship into there, any kind of a Navy ship. I'm just mentioning this because it was one of the things that was significant then; it's no longer much of an issue. The French more or less gave up on it one day and we have stopped fussing about it, but when you get back into the mid-'80's, we were spending a lot of capital and a lot of the America-related headlines in the Pacific at that time dealt with this kind of a thing: Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands. This was big stuff.

Q: What don't we stop at this point and we'll pick it up in 1989? You and everybody else were cleaned out by Jim Baker and the hostile Republican takeover of the previous Republican administration.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely.

Q: I'd like you to just briefly, the next time, talk about the takeover and what was the impression you were getting of the new regime, the Baker regime, coming in and what was motivating this, who was running the show as the new administration came in and then where did you go after that.

LEHOVICH: I went as a diplomat in residence to American University, where all people should be lucky enough to go when they're thrown out on their ear. It's a great place to go.

Q: Okay, we'll pick it up then.

Today is June 30, 1997. Vlad, you were going to talk about the James Baker takeover from the Reagan administration to the Bush administration. This is the Vice President's team taking over from the President, which would normally be a fairly friendly movement, but it doesn't sound that way.

LEHOVICH: It's interesting because it was certainly viewed by the non-insiders politically, like myself, as something that was going to be a very friendly takeover. I remember actually using that word with one of the few people I was working with closely who was a political insider. This was a political appointee called Phil Hughes, who was a very-

Q: Whom I've interviewed, by the way.

LEHOVICH: Good. I'm delighted. He is a very gifted fellow and he had been a Deputy Assistant Secretary PM. By then, I think he had already moved over to the White House as Executive Director of the National Security Council. I remember mentioning to him a friendly takeover and he basically stopped the conversation and gave me a very significant look and said "Be careful. You're going to be very surprised and I'm not sure you're going to like the surprise." He was absolutely correct. It's not that I did or didn't like the surprise, but it was the weirdest kind of takeover when the Vice President of an administration moves into replace the President and brings in one of the insiders. Jim Baker was a very successful Secretary of State in most ways. My purpose here is not to criticize his policy sense. It is, however, to say that he came in in a way that after a couple of weeks began to look very insecure and very paranoid, probably also very successful as a technique for taking over. Here are the kinds of things that happened. First and probably weirdest was the sense over time -and then it got weirder every week - that no one met George Schultz, the outgoing Secretary of State (no one, meaning Jim Baker didn't meet him). In the whole period of time from the election until the time he took over as Secretary of State after the inauguration did he go to see his predecessor to say "How are you? How is the office doing? How do your telephones work," whatever you talk about with people whose job you're taking. If you don't talk about anything, you pose for a picture looking cheerful. There was very clearly a sense that one was not going to see Mr. Schultz, perhaps because there was the sense that Mr. Schultz hadn't had a certain kind of dogged personal loyalty to Reagan, the outgoing President, perhaps for some other reason. But there wasn't such a meeting and that was weird.

The other thing that was weird was the discovery, first by inference and then sort of through inside information, that the plan of that team was to replace every Assistant Secretary and every Deputy Assistant Secretary. When you're talking about that in the State Department, which is inflated in the numbers of such officials, you're getting into probably about 130-140 people. There are a shocking number of people at that grade, but that's how big it is.

Q: These are professionals. They're not political appointees.

LEHOVICH: The great majority are professionals of those categories. In fact, it was not quite carried out that way. In a very small minority (about 10% of the cases), there were some reasons for not applying to the generalization. The generalization, as a rule, was get them all out. That was a real clean broom approach. I hadn't seen such a clean broom since Reagan took over from Carter. That was a cleaner broom than anything I was familiar with from the time I joined the State Department in '62 until now. The Reagan broom was the cleanest broom. This was the second cleanest broom. The other transitions were all fairly casual. You took out some of the obviously political types and you tended to make a point of not bothering the career types, almost as a matter of principle. That's what someone like Muskie would do. That's what most of the political appointees would do, I think.

At the same time, as you may recall, there was this wonderful show of being one of the boys. Being one of the boys meant, in the first couple of weeks at the State Department appearing, at lunchtime in one of the longer lines in the dining room. The Secretary of State would appear with the Gang of Four. The Gang of Four were the four people who were with him who were his closest inside team. One or more or all four of those folks plus the Secretary of State would appear, always without jackets to underscore their shirt-sleeved quality and pick a long rather than a short line and stand there and wait to get some food. It was Jacksonian democracy. It was wonderful. It didn't last for too long, but it was great at the beginning. It got some press play and it inspired something called sightings. "Sightings" is when you could come back after lunch and report a sighting: "I sighted Jim Baker" or "I sighted Bob Zoellick" or "I sighted someone else." A couple of weeks later, these sightings became rarer than the sighting of a prothonotary warbler at the C&O Canal path, very rare indeed. And then they stopped altogether. But by the time they stopped, this unusual and vigorous transition I had been describing was already largely complete. And it was a transition that in its early days was marked, among other events, by my own departure. So, I was no longer there for the next year and beyond to observe the rest of this. But I could focus only on the policy of the United States, which I thought was excellent.

Q: Part of your training as a Foreign Service officer is to look at other governments and, what does this mean? I'm sure you didn't put these qualities aside, you and your colleagues to figure out what the hell was going on around you. I mean, was there a purpose or was this just...

LEHOVICH: There are wonderful theories of how to take over organizations. People write books about it. There are very aggressive approaches. There are smooth approaches. There is the theory that you've got to fire everyone within the first 60 days because afterwards you begin to like them too much. There are a lot of theories. There were doubtless some theories of management that somebody thought of for this thing. I think mainly there were two things that marked this transition. Thing one was to get a lot of people out and do it very demonstratively. Since you really couldn't get at these damn politicians - there weren't that many of them in Washington...They're obvious. They leave. That's fine. But since you couldn't really find a lot of politicians in town, you had to get out something that you could pretend was a politician. That was thing one.

Thing two was that it was a very, very closed circle. It was basically four or five intimate advisers. They were Bob Zoellick. They were the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Bob Kimmit. He had been way earlier a staffer at NSC. And Dennis Ross. A little bit later, Margaret Tutwiler and one or two other people. That was the group. It was marked by a great deal of centralization as well. These people worked very hard. They controlled information and access and they controlled thinking. They controlled the orthodoxy of thinking. It was actually quite an intelligent system, but I don't recall such a centralized system since the days of Henry Kissinger who came in to be Secretary of State with people like Sonnenfeldt, Bill Hyland, Winston Lord, a few other people who basically were his private cabinet. Baker operated with a small private cabinet, did so quite efficiently.

Baker had some other features which I think are really worth noting. He was a terribly hard worker, as everybody knows. He was very consumed by the subjects he was working on. He doesn't leave himself a lot of free time. He is also a very polite man. He has almost a 19th century sense of courtesy with other people, be they foreigners or be they members of his own staff whom he may not know very well. He is in that sense a courteous man. But as you say, anyone who is a professional in the Foreign Service has been watching governments behave for quite a while. This was a strange performance. Somewhere at the bottom, it wasn't a totally secure performance.

Q: Maybe we're moving too far ahead or beyond your orbit, but one of the things I got the impression was that the group around him was more interested in promoting Jim Baker and making sure that he looked good than maybe in dealing with some of the problems of foreign policy, which is always a mistake because things are always happening and the Secretary has to take the heat.

LEHOVICH: Stu, possibly. You're getting me out of my depth. My speculation on this isn't unique at all. In one or two areas, which came a bit later on, there were some things Baker did which I thought would probably not have been done if he hadn't been such a political animal. One of them was when the Soviet Union collapsed and there was a need to create suddenly an entire structure of new missions, a striking number of new missions because it's not just parts of the former Soviet Union, but it's a whole bunch of other countries like Albania or Cambodia. These were all parts of the same phenomenon. A whole hosts of new posts had to be built up and there was the reluctance to go to Congress and ask for some resources at a time when it was pretty obvious that resources were needed, when the national interests were not being debated, when the press of all stripes was quite sympathetic to this type of thing. Anybody else would have done it except for somebody who wanted to look like the toughest budget holder and the most parsimonious budget man in the world. The former Secretary of Treasury, former Chief of Staff Baker. Another one would have gone and gotten some more money somehow. We wound up taking that whole enormous expansion out of the hide of the State Department. It was damaging, disruptive, and it was not the right way to mark a major turn in history. We had a major turn in history and you've got some credit when that happens. "We" meaning an organization like the State Department that can come in under these new circumstances and look utterly reasonable when it says "We need more resources. We have a new world we have to deal with." Everybody's going to agree to that.

The other thing, of course, which was an unusual political act, unlike that of other Secretaries of State, was leaving the job of Secretary of State to go and be the campaign manager for Bush. There was something rather noble about that because the betting man at that time would not have bet on a Bush victory. Nonetheless, he went and did it and even more amazingly, he took a couple of his people with him. He took Zoellick and Denis Ross with him. I was amazed, one, that he did it and, two, that these guys agreed themselves to do it. Dennis Ross has come back in other political incarnations for other parties. I nevertheless found that very unusual. No one was too thrilled with that.

Q: Bob Zoellick, what was his background?

LEHOVICH: Stu, I'm going to recuse myself. I don't know enough about the fellow. I've never dealt with him.

Q: Okay. You went to American University. You were at American University from when to when?

LEHOVICH: It would have been the year of '89/'90, basically, until about the summer of 1990.

Q: What were you doing?

LEHOVICH: As a diplomat in residence, I pretty much decided what I'd do. I figured I was going to do some teaching. I did it in Soviet foreign policy. I did an awful lot of research and reading. I did a lot of being useful around the university campus in the School of International Service, which meant having an open door to anybody who wanted to chat, advising people on their careers, once in a while giving them professional advice on foreign policy, working with some of the faculty on things as different as reading someone's thesis, for example, or being on a panel for something. I was spared any administrative work because I wasn't an insider. I had very good relations with the faculty. I taught a class that I enjoyed enormously on Soviet politics at a time when the Soviet Union was changing so dramatically and so quickly. While I had developed a pretty tight program on Soviet politics, we would often abandon the syllabus and focus just simply on current events because these current events, like the collapsing Warsaw pact and the collapsing Communist Party, were historical in nature. Delightful time. A very nice way to spend a year; basically sabbatical for people over a certain age mentally, over the age of going and studying formal courses. It's a form of sabbatical and it's a way to interact actively with the student community as an intellectual. I had a lot of fun. I went back, not as a diplomat in residence. About five years later, I went back on my own time as an adjunct member to teach a course on world politics. The nice thing about American University is, it's not terribly insecure about things. It's perfectly happy to let somebody without a Ph.D. teach a course if they feel that the person can do it and if they have a need for that kind of course which isn't being filled otherwise. This allows them generally to have a large and very flexible adjunct faculty and to pay their adjunct faculty minimal wages and get very good value from

Q: Did you get any feel when you were dealing with the Soviets about the academic world who were teaching Soviet subjects? I would think that it would be a rather difficult time for them. Once you've mastered Sovietology... The world was falling apart.

LEHOVICH: Stu, let me just skip ahead to just a few months after I was out of AU, I was working on another venture. This was assistance to the former Soviet Union, economic assistance. I was working with a colleague of mine who was also crashing away on economic assistance, but whose previous 25 years had been spent as an analyst on Soviet foreign policy for the CIA - on the Soviet Union and its foreign policy, domestic as well as foreign. He is somebody who in the community is a known quality, a very good fellow. He was a lifer on the Soviet Union. I wasn't, but I had spent really quite a lot of time on it, had always stayed up to date on it. I remember, we had a conversation and I suddenly saw the light. I said, "Look, here is what's going on, particularly with you. It's going on with both of us, but it's more with you than me. You are a Jesuit priest and you don't know it. A Jesuit priest needs to have two things to keep going. One is, the Jesuit needs faith, the positive. The other is that the Jesuit needs to have a devil. Otherwise, he is not going to be able to be motivated and to function because the world needs not only a positive vision, but it needs a devil. You as a Jesuit priest in the priesthood of Soviet scholars and you have just lost a devil." That guy couldn't get over it. He came back the next day and said he had talked to a bunch of his old colleagues and shared my metaphor with them and it had caught on. A number of people spoke in terms of the loss of an entire hostile system. I'm not speaking here in any cynical way. I'm being much more reflective. What happened in the United States is that all of our policies and certainly things like our aid policy, our foreign policy, our nation policy, some of our space program, science programs, and domestic education programs, all lost a very large negative reason that had been causing us to do these things. So, there was a lot of confusion. What was happening among scholars at that time was slightly different.

There had been a bunch of scholars, professional students of the Soviet Union and of Russian history, a bunch of folks who over the last 20 years or so had carved out the notion of the gentler side of communism, the good image of Lenin, for example, and the notion that Stalin had ruined something that might have otherwise evolved in a much more positive fashion. These are folks like Stephen Cohen of Princeton, Professor Tucker, Moshe Lewin, a number of professors like that. They were feeling more and more uncomfortable. They were feeling still quite comfortable with Gorbachev, but at the point when Gorbachev began to crack as a leader, as a figure, and finally when he had to leave, a lot of what they had been standing for began to collapse. That was very interesting.

Q: Had American University or any part of its faculty sort of dedicated Marxist in the philosophical sense... Some of the (inaudible) has had a rather considerable basically Marxist within sort of the American context. People feed you.

LEHOVICH: No, AU did not. It was not a very ideological group on things like the Soviet Union. There were faculty members in other areas who had some strong ideological baggage and that was perfectly fine in the University. But, no, I know what you're talking

about. It was not at that particular university.

Q: With schools around here, in the Washington area, as in George Washington, Georgetown, and American University, and, I assume, Catholic University tend to be (right near the seat of government) pretty centrist. It's rather hard not to be because you can't deal with theory as much as dealing with- The people who come there are dealing with practical measures.

LEHOVICH: Most people who work on international affairs and who work on Soviet affairs are centrists and there is a very good reason. Particularly if you work on Soviet affairs, it's that an awful lot of them at one time or another had to spend a fair amount of time over there. That will tend to take away the Marxist eyeglasses. I've seen that happen. We talked about it early on in some of these interviews. It's a very refreshing phenomenon. But what was interesting, for example, is the State Department under Schultz began a set of seminars for very senior members of the State Department on Saturday mornings. George Schultz would have a seminar which might last four hours or might last six hours. Of course, a lot of people would immediately show great enthusiasm to spend all day Saturday on a subject that nobody thought about before, so as to be part of the crowd. In one of these seminars (I wasn't there, but I had a detailed account of it afterwards), Professor Stephen Cohen of Princeton gave a long and eloquent presentation on the "real Leninism," and how the real Leninism, which was exemplified by Lenin in his late days and by Nikolai Bukharin, was subverted and ruined by Stalin. This was widely accepted since this was part of a seminar at the request of the Secretary of State on a Saturday, attended by very senior people in the State Department who hadn't cracked a book on history for a very long time. I found that the level of acceptance to this kind of thing was terribly high. I kept hearing this for a few weeks later as sort of self-evident truths -except that they weren't self-evident truths, but very questionable revisionist history which looked bad then and looks worse and worse with each passing year.

Q: Lenin was knee-deep in...

LEHOVICH: Lenin was a no-goodnik being painted as a nice guy and Gorbachev was saying an awful lot of this same stuff in public. At one point, you may remember, there was a remarkable and very embarrassing interview that Reagan had with Lou Cannon of *The Washington Post* in which Reagan started to say that, unfortunately, the real Leninism was lost and that the true face of Lenin and his true beliefs, particularly in the last year, could not happen because of Stalin (This was Reagan talking)- Cannon when he wrote a piece about it afterwards, you could see his shock as a reporter writing this stuff. The only conclusion is that Reagan heard this from Gorbachev and took it on board. This was his counterpart talking about his own country, and Reagan reasoned that he must know all that stuff. Reagan forgot what his own instincts had been telling him all his life.

So, the year at AU was a fine year, a very good way to go underground for a year if you have to. The Diplomat-in Residence program is now used in the State Department largely as a way to assign people to institutions which have important minority student bodies so that it's an outreach program to a sector in the population with which it is felt an outreach is

needed. I was there before the program was that. It was then focused in good part on leading schools of international affairs, where it was felt that having a State Department professional for a year was a good idea.

Q: It's 1990. You've had your year. Where did you o?

LEHOVICH: I had my year of escape. I discovered that it was a year later and I had nothing to show for it. So, I had another magnificent year, and I mean that absolutely seriously, with the Board of Examiners. I examined hundreds of people to be Foreign Service officers, communicators, security personnel.

Q: They break it down under specialties. When I did it, I had a year as a consular officer.

LEHOVICH: We did everybody. I was a political specialist, but I don't think that meant much, except that I had to once in a while work on certain lists of questions that my colleagues didn't have to work on.

Q: Yes, I did that.

LEHOVICH: This was a delightful year. I love examining people. The only thing that was not delightful about it was that the year was so enormously marked by pressure to produce larger and larger quotas or percentages of minority candidates.

Q: When you're saying "minority candidates," what do you mean?

LEHOVICH: I'm using sort of the standard American government definition, which breaks down about as follows: African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and a group that will include American Indians, Aleuts, and other groups that are occasionally called "Aboriginal" groups, occasionally called "Native Americans." They, in this case, also include Pacific Islanders. Basically four categories.

Q: When you're getting right down to it, where was the emphasis?

LEHOVICH: The emphasis statistically was to make sure that we had a larger percent of minority candidates. There, you could work with these four categories. The practical emphasis and the political drive for the thing was to increase the number of African Americans. The other groups were too complicated, in a sense. Asian Americans when they wanted to take the exams and compete in this thing were very highly competitive. We had rather small numbers of other groups showing any particular interest. It was motivated very largely by desire to increase the number of African Americans who were successful at taking exams. The most basic way to do this, and the best way, is to increase the number of people interested in being candidates to join. A second way is much trickier, and that is to work with both the written and the oral exam process to increase the number of people passing. There are different legalities that apply to these things. At the time that I was there, the State Department and the Educational Testing Service at Princeton, which was State's agent for devising and administering the written exam, was assigning a credit of

approximately two statistical deviations to minority candidates. Two statistical deviations at that time meant that if a cutoff score, for example, was 60 for a written exam, one might be able to have a 56 or a 57, rather than a 60 on a scale of 100 and be considered to be within two statistical deviations of 60. I don't want to get into the statistics of it. It's not necessary. The point is, one could get a certain handicap based on statistics. That was considered perfectly acceptable in 1990-91 and in fact was being done the whole time I was there.

Another question was what to do in the oral assessment process, or the "oral exam." In the oral assessment process, there was a heightened degree of consciousness in assuring that minority candidates were given a full benefit an examination process, but it stopped well short of asking people to throw the exam. We occasionally got on the borderline with that. We were once called together, all the examiners, and discussed a hypothetical situation. This was the situation in which the scores of a candidate in a the oral exam process that were so close to the norm. for passing as to be truly borderline. In this case, it was suggested, the examiners working together on that particular day might wish to ask themselves if a borderline case should not be considered to be passing if it was a minority case -providing that such a decision would be unanimous and unpressured and a true borderline case. In my experience, this actually happened very rarely because nobody liked this approach. If it was a true borderline case, if the exam process itself, the examiners were reluctant to go and say, "Well, we're going to pass the person anyhow. Let's have a unanimous vote on that."

Q: What about in the written exam during this time? I mean, the examiners take part in working with the Princeton Testing Service. Did you have the feeling that they were dumbing down the exam?

LEHOVICH: What was happening with the exam, which I thought was very unfortunate and very stupid, is that the community working on the written exam had agreed within itself that women needed to be asked different questions from men to be as successful in test scores. Let me rephrase that. Let's just say there are two kinds of questions that one is asked. Type one deals with oral language and reasoning skills. For example, grammar or comprehension of a literary text, the kind of thing that makes one excel in English or perhaps in good writing or in clear logical thinking expressed orally. Let's just say that's category one. Category two is going to lean more in the direction of perhaps mathematics and science, economics, and also many kinds of history. Let's say that's category two. The conventional wisdom at that time pushed by people who had looked at statistics, pushed by industrial psychologists and others, was that women were going to do very well, at least as well as men, on the first category: language, reasoning, reading, general literary and language capabilities. That's a huge part of any exam of this kind. It was a huge part of one's ability to communicate, both to receive information and to communicate outwards. It's terribly important. That said, the conventional wisdom also was that women didn't do as well in the second category. For example, they didn't do as well on historical questions. They didn't do well on economic questions. They didn't do as well as men. There was a discrepancy statistically in how women did and how men did. That's the background.

Against this background, what happened, which I didn't like at all and a lot of other people found was very disturbing, is that we began to water down the relative content on economics, on history, on facts, on any kind of scientific questioning, and downplay that and either minimize the weight that we gave it or minimize the number of questions and relatively increase the amount of English language capabilities. The idea was to do that exactly up to the point where the sample of women candidates would be doing as well as the sample of men candidates. I thought this was getting absurd because to say that cultural literacy in world events, which is what history is the way we were examining it, or economics is not relevant and shouldn't be examined is a shame. I think we were buying an idea which had some points for it and some points against it. We were buying it as if it was indisputable. This mind set is very similar to the mind set at that time in the women's class action suit which in 1991 was probably 15-17 years old already. It had been going on for a very long time. Most of the actual changes in the written exam were being done to try to equalize the passing rates among men and women candidates. The things that were being done with the written exam in terms of equalizing the opportunity of minority candidates were designed to give a politically correct appearance rather than to have a real effect as far as I can tell. For example, in any category of information, there had to be categories that would recognize minority contributions or achievements on a statistically comparable basis. In movies, for example, in cultural literacy, it was called the "Spike Lee question." Everyone called it the Spike Lee question because for two years in a row, there would be questions about Spike Lee movies.

Q: Could you explain who Spike Lee is?

LEHOVICH: Spike Lee is an African American movie director who made movies that were critically acclaimed, that were well-made, controversial, exciting movies. But since we didn't have to answer questions about Steven Spielberg movies or other movies being made by other producers or other directors, we were getting the Spike Lee question because it was a way to give racial balance. There were similar, sometimes fairly tortured ways to broaden the exam to all parts of the world. Remember in 1992, we had the Christopher Columbus 500th anniversary. There were a number of terribly embarrassing attempts to honor Columbus and, in the process of honoring him, to be confronted with the notion that he wasn't such a good guy, that he was a remnant of Europeanism and Europe-firstism. Anyhow, one of the things that we were doing in the exam at that time was (and this was the Educational Testing Service basically), the Educational Testing Service was being so politically correct that it was sometimes painful. I am thinking of attempts to be representative on all parts and all cultures of the world, to the point where some of it was getting so exotic that it was truly sort of collectors items. Anyhow, it's not awful stuff because statistically, if you have enough questions, this kind of thing doesn't make a really big difference. But there was, and I think there still is, Stu, in 1997 a terribly strong political correctness in this whole process.

Q: Dealing with you as an examiner or other examiners, I'm sure that a lot of them making sure that there is good representation, since you're obviously a white male, there must have been a significant number of women examiners. Also, there must have been at least several African American examiners.

LEHOVICH: There were indeed. There was a broad diversity among the examiners, which led to a very enlightened view on a number of these questions. We discovered, since we tended to feel very similarly on a number of these questions, that if we felt something was absurd, we could say it without feeling that we were going to offend somebody else. We found that somebody else thought it was absurd, too.

Q: This, of course, is that basically you were all professionals. I assume there was a concern that you wanted to get the best candidates.

LEHOVICH: We found, without making an over generalization, among the toughest examiners we had on women were women examiners.

Q: This was true in my time in 1975/'76.

LEHOVICH: I remember the sense that our women examiners were tougher on women than on men examiners. Some of our minority examiners were very tough on minority candidates. This leads into another thing which I think is a big question. I don't think it's going to get resolved very easily. But there is a notion that if there are Hispanic candidates for the American diplomatic service, there should be a Hispanic diplomat among the examiners. I suppose, if one carried it a lot further, there should be a Polish American if there are a bunch of guys from Pittsburgh with Polish-sounding last names. After a certain amount of time working with this kind of thing, I just don't believe in that anymore. But on the other hand, I'm not carrying a sword. I'm not terribly upset about it. There continues to be the notion that you have to have-

Q: I had the feeling, and I'm going back to the mid-'70s (I was doing that '74 to '75), the bureaucratic term CYA (cover your ass) on the part of the Board of Examiners to make sure they were able to say that if there was an African American being interviewed that there was an African American on his or her panel. If there was a woman being interviewed, there always had to be a woman. Not always true in favor of the candidate considering they're often tougher. But this was the type of thinking. It was really designed to put off lawsuits.

LEHOVICH: Possibly. I think that's possible. Let's just go a bit further. At that time, there was, as I say, the State Department was a bit on the defensive legally because it had taken some negative decisions in court and it was scared that it would get more lawsuits, that it was going to cost a lot of money in lawsuits, and there was also, I think, as I mentioned earlier, really an awfully big sense of political correctness at that time, particularly in the personnel system of the State Department. But one of the things that happened at that time (It was a little before I started as an examiner) was, the question came up of whether a blind person can be (tape ended)

This was during the period when Ambassador Ed Perkins was the Director General. What happened was that the State Department Board of Examiners were told not to pay any attention to eyesight, total blindness or not (this was in some particular cases) and to treat

that rather as something that would be left for the Medical Division and would not be part of the examination process. We were basically told to exclude that entire condition from relevancy and therefore to work exams in such a way that one could examine without sight, but basically that one could apply for an exam and be examined and be considered a candidate by the non-medical part of the State Department as if the consideration of blindness were truly an irrelevant consideration. That would be left as an issue for the Medical Division to deal with in its medical exams.

Under those circumstances, people were examined and found to be suitable candidates to join the Foreign Service, suitable candidates, incidentally, for worldwide availability. This was done with the thought that the medical clearance was not going to happen. Then what happened was, the Medical Division in effect said, "You've let these people be examined. You've let them pass the exams. You're the policy people. Clearly you've made a policy decision that vision is not necessary for being a Foreign Service officer. Therefore, we're not counting it among the physical criteria that we will include in our medical clearance." So, to the surprise of the personnel people at the State department, the doctors, the doctors said they weren't going to count that criterion either, that they were not going to consider it relevant. As a result, through this process, the State Department reached a decision that vision was not necessary to be a worldwide-available Foreign Service officer.

I think that that was a controversial, poorly debated, and shortsighted piece of personnel work. I say that with compassion, but I say that with the conviction that that is the case. I'm raising it because it was something that people who were working on the process of recruiting, examining, and admitting found to be a very important thing. I found that kind of thing to be very relevant afterwards when, for three years, I was Dean of Professional Studies at the Foreign Service Institute. One was dealing again with a lot of different questions of categories and quotas.

Anyhow, other than that, let me simply say that what we had talked about was not the major part of the life of an examiner. The major part is seeing a rather unusually gifted group of people and being in the position of having to flunk approximately four out of five of them, which is sad.

Q: I don't know how you felt. I gave the exam for a year with the older one, where we basically sat down for an hour or an hour and a half, three of us, and took somebody through the paces. We would get, I assume, pretty much the same caliber of person coming through. When we were giving out scores, we very seldom gave a score higher than 75. In other words, they were good, but we were not knocked out of our seats by the people coming through. This was across the board with the examiners. We were coming from all different places. I was wondering how you-

LEHOVICH: Well, Stu, you've got a combination. Rarely do you have to deal with two things which is intellectual and communication abilities on the one hand, and personality - compatible, mature, outgoing, successful personality - on the other hand. Both qualities in the examination process as it was by the time I was involved were very important for one's success. We would get people who were extraordinarily good on an intellectual level, or

people who were extraordinarily gifted with interpersonal skills, but rarely would we get somebody who was uncannily good in both categories. I can actually remember the three or four best in a year. I remember them very clearly. A couple of them I'm still interested in because I want to know how they're doing. They were people who had both of these kinds of abilities to an extreme degree and who had extraordinary interpersonal skills, along with a good deal of personal maturity, in addition to an absolutely distinguished mind. These were young people. The oldest of the group that I'm thinking of was 26 or 27 and the others were a good deal younger. I'd have to agree with you, Stu. We didn't find people who knocked us off our feet that often, but it's an awfully good group. I would say that if one took all the people we had to examine and divided it in half, the top half would be very successful candidates in corporate America. We were rejecting 2/3 or 3/4 of that top half.

Q: Tell me, we were dealing with a time when for various reasons, some quite solid, we were not only concerned about (inaudible) discriminating against blind and any other reason, but also were you seeing people who were sort of making the Foreign Service a second career?

LEHOVICH: Sure.

Q: What was your impression of that?

LEHOVICH: Well, that's a very good point, Stu. I thought about that also when I was at FSI. In my own mind, it was very much a question of age. There was a time when the Foreign Service had an age limit of 31 or 32 years. That was the oldest that one could come in to be a "generalist," as a Foreign Service officer was called at that time. Right now, for some years we've had a situation where Diplomatic Security candidates can't be older than 35, but by and large that age restriction no longer applies to others. Now, we examine people and take them in up to age 59. There is a reason that it's 59 and not 56 or 6, and we'll get to that in a moment; the reason is not a very good reason.

I think generally taking people who are older than 32 has been a very good idea. It's given us a broader group of people, self-selected, interested, mature. One of the most gifted groups that I got to know very well both as an examiner and as a Dean at the Foreign Service Institute advisor in this Institute were retired military who were coming in. Let's look at the kind of person a retired military candidate is, and here I'm generalizing on the basis of a couple of dozen people I examined. Let's say it's going to be somebody about 41 years old, a man or woman, more likely than not a lieutenant colonel. This is a person who has been responsible at one time or another for hundreds of millions of dollars in resources. Hundreds of millions is very easy to be responsible for if you're a field grade officer or a company grade officer in the military. Also, responsibility for 20, 100, or 300, or 500 people at one time. One has a very highly developed sense of management and of leadership. Even if one is not born a great leader, one learns an awful lot of leadership skills the easy way and the hard way over time. One has learned one other thing which is absolutely invaluable if you join the hierarchy called "new organization" when you're not a kid anymore. That is, people in the military know how to follow, they know how to take

instructions, and they long ago learned that half the time they're going to be taking instructions from people who are stupider than they are or who are less pleasant than they are, or who are jackasses, and half the time they're going to be taking instructions from people whom they respect thoroughly. They've learned to take instructions either way. That's an invaluable skill in our business. So, I found I was getting more and more excited by the quality of these candidates. I had never seen such qualities before in the traditional Foreign Service as it had been 10 or 20 years earlier. We were getting people who were coming in and saying, "I want to be an administrative officer" and showing that they had more talent, experience, and knowledge in administrative work, in resource management, and in leadership than almost anybody who was otherwise coming into the Foreign Service or were in there. We were very lucky. We were getting some remarkably good people this way, people who were wonderful at crisis management and a whole host of other things.

So, you asked a very good question: what about age? I'm just saying that one of the basic changes in age, which was to raise that limit of early '30s was a good idea.

The other part of it though is, why 59 and what does it mean? Stu, here is why it's 59. It's 59 because we worked -I use "we" because I'm a member of the team and I don't separate myself from my bosses even when they've done something stupid, Stu, and my bosses did something stupid to my elders and betters. They arrived at the age of 59 by working back from the mandatory retirement age of 65. There is a principle in government service in America which is that you can't hire someone unless there is an expectation of tenure. If you're hiring someone without an expectation of tenure, you're wasting the taxpayers' money and you should not hire such a person. Since the length of time it took to qualify for tenure in the Foreign Service was approximately four to five years, and 65 was mandatory retirement, you had to bring somebody in a minimum of five years before mandatory retirement or else you would be bringing somebody in without expectation of tenure. So, that's how we reached 60 as the oldest age at which we could bring people in normally into the career track in a hierarchical career service, 60. The mandatory retirement age is 65. The reason that 59 is the oldest age for the exams is to give a year before that for examining people (written and oral exams, physical exams, security clearances, and just waiting around). So, basically, 59 was arrived at that way. I think it's an absurd way to arrive at an age for hiring people. I think we're making a big mistake by bringing in new generalist at age 59. I think it's very hard to defend the \$100,000 to \$150,000 that it's going to cost us with each person we bring in before that person begins to work. That's when you count the relatively minor costs of recruiting and examining, but then the much greater costs of paying a salary to people while they're trained in basic training, consular work, administrative work, and possibly a language. We're getting into about a year of pay plus training plus a lot of other things.

Q: Was there the expectation with taking these older officers in- Let's say someone is a lieutenant colonel. Obviously, they're extremely well-qualified, but at the same time, at 41, add about 20 years, and they were coming in at the bottom. Was the feeling that they bring these skills that arise very quickly or that we were actually recruiting people who are in a second career and they will flesh out junior to mid-level things with a high caliber person, but probably the majority won't be willing to keep going?

LEHOVICH: Stu, you and I may think that, but a system never thought such thoughts as far as I can tell. Examiners and recruiters never thought such thoughts. If they did, they were being perfectly reasonable. Those were very reasonable questions, but those were not the politically correct or appropriate questions to be asking. I don't think there was much thought given to that. I think, actually, the answers are perfectly reassuring if one really asks those questions. But that's not how the decisions were made. They were made much more the way I said. "What's the maximum retirement age and what's the latest we can squeeze it in legally so that nobody will sue us?" It was very much such lawsuit avoidance, which I think led to these age decisions.

People coming in at age 40-45 are usually there for a second career and do not expect to rise to the top; but they can bring a lot of energy to the job and, in some cases, do rise. By the time you're getting to 50 or beyond, it begins to make less and less sense because of the number of years involved, given mandatory retirement at 65, and the huge investments in bringing people on board, and the opportunities lost in not being able to take in younger people who will work a longer time. This is quite apart from more subjective things like energy levels, which in America right now, one is not supposed to consider. Do people work as well, and have as much energy, motivation, ambition, zeal for work, when they're 60 or 70 as when they're 30 or 40? We're not supposed to think that way because we have a bunch of laws that say it doesn't matter. It does matter. But it doesn't matter to a decisive degree until a certain point, and we have been afraid to face up to this and instead have simply said it's fine to recruit for a pyramid-shaped career service up to age 59. I don't think it makes much sense.

Q: No.

LEHOVICH: But it happens. It's worth dwelling on this age thing as we have because, I think, we wound up backing our way into this whole thing. There wasn't an overview. There wasn't "Is it a good idea or not?"

Q: You left the Board of Examiners in '91, after a year. Whither?

LEHOVICH: I went for a short time (about five or six months) to work for the Office of the Deputy Secretary of State on assistance to the former Soviet Union. That was done when Eagleburger was the Deputy Assistant Secretary and he had a fellow called Robert M. Barry, Bob Barry, who was working as his senior advisor on Eastern Europe. The senior advisor had two deputies. They were deputy senior advisors. They were myself and Keith Smith. Keith had been there a couple of years. I only came in at the tail end and I left as soon as I could to go to FSI and be a dean. I already had that assignment. So, I knew this was going to be for five or six months. The interesting thing is, neither of the deputy senior advisers to the Deputy Secretary of State ever saw the Deputy Secretary of State, so I don't feel I was giving him an awful lot of advice. On the other hand, Larry Eagleburger is a very smart guy and he doesn't need my advice, but he certainly did not get it either. The fellow who had been there for two years as a senior Foreign Service officer, as the Deputy Senior advisor to the Deputy Secretary of State, also never saw the guy. So, I sort of felt we were

doing the Lord's work without ever talking to the Lord.

Q: Were you doing it?

LEHOVICH: We were unbelievably busy. I have to go back many years to remember being swamped with such a load of coordinating. We were coordinating different agencies and interest groups and private on a bunch of relatively new programs. They weren't all new. Some of them were a couple of years old and more. But new ribbons were put on them every year so that they looked as if they were brand new. I discovered after a while that the money we were drawing on had been available a year or two before and, interestingly, much of it was available a year or two later as well. The reason is that it's damn hard to spend money successfully in assistance to the former Soviet Union because there are very few institutions there that can successfully deal with it and there were and are an awful lot of questions of why we wanted to do it in the first place. Basically, the thing that makes sense and wears well over time is technical assistance. Technical assistance is not a transfer of resources, but a transfer of know-how. That's not easy and it's not cheap because sending a specialist, say, in law or banking to Tashkent may be costing \$700 to \$1,000 a day now. The specialist has to get paid something, which over a year amounts to a good salary. The specialist has to get money for hotels which are a lot more expensive than the Europe or Paris hotels normally, etc. You add a few overhead costs to that and you're getting into hundreds or a thousand dollars a day per person. So, it's not cheap stuff. Anyhow, this was something I did with a lot of vigor for five or six months and, frankly, was very glad to leave. I found it a confusing and frustrating venture.

Q: While you were dealing with this problem, we're talking about Russia- I can't remember, did Russia (inaudible)?

LEHOVICH: It was in the process of breaking up. I still remember when my very sophisticated CIA colleague and I, finally, reached the moment of truth when we could lie to each other no longer. I came to him in the evening and I said, "God dammit, what is Bishkek and why haven't I ever heard of it?" He said, "I don't know what it is." Well, dammit, it was the new capital of a new country. And we were pretty good professionals, but we had never heard of it before.

Q: It means "a whisk for whipping up yogurt," by the way.

LEHOVICH: Does it really? That's amazing.

Q: Yes. I spent three weeks in Bishkek.

LEHOVICH: Well, you see, we were all engaged in old-think at that time and we called it "Frunze" because that's what it had been called the month before.

Q: We're talking about the capital of Kyrgyzstan.

LEHOVICH: We're talking about the capital of Kyrgyzstan, exactly. But, no, there were

indeed a lot of countries happening right then. We were working a lot with AID and with USIA, with the Department of Agriculture, with the Pentagon on Operation Provide Hope.

Let me pause for a few minutes on Operation Provide Hope. Operation Provide Hope, which incidentally still exists (a few airplanes went not long ago under that program) was a program to provide emergency food and later emergency medical and other supplies to deal with an emergency situation in the former Soviet Union, largely in Russia, when the program began. The question is, was there an emergency food shortage in Russia at that time? The answer is, the people who knew the most about it didn't think there was. In fact, they couldn't be convinced that there was. But the people who knew less about it got a decision made in the US government, made by Mr. Baker, to declare that there was a food emergency in the former Soviet Union and to start sending food there, including plane loads of MREs. MREs for those who don't know, are meals, ready to eat. MREs are modern c rations. We were sending airplane loads of this stuff.

Q: Combat rations.

LEHOVICH: Combat rations. We were sending airplane loads of food because there was a food emergency, as if this was Rwanda refugee camp or something else. It simply wasn't that way. The harvest wasn't very good that year, but let's not kid ourselves. It hadn't been good for 70 years before that. They had had 7 decades of bad weather over there. There were a lot of other problems going on, but there really wasn't a unprecedented basic food shortage. Anyhow, we had "Operation Provide Hope" at that time, and the press, with some reason, called it "Operation Provide Hype." The program was wonderfully managed, incidentally, by Richard Armitage, who did such a good job in managing it and in making it run efficiently and intelligently that within a short time he was asked by the administration and by Jim Baker to come and replace my boss, Bob Barry, as the head of that whole program. He did. He came in and, for a while, did a very good job. He had a lot of problems because it was politically a very controversial job. Whoever ran that thing was always being used as a punching bag on Capitol Hill. Armitage came and ran it as a dollar a year man. It's refreshing there still are dollar a year men. He got a dollar a year for doing it. He brought a sizeable staff with him from the Pentagon, who were all paid for by the Department of Defense, and they took over that operation. They did a very good job of running it.

Q: What was your feeling of at the time of dealing with Russia and its former component parts about- We're talking about you and the people around you. Whither these countries and was this-

LEHOVICH: The real strong interest that we had and the thing that made this kind of worthwhile was a chance to get two or three things working better. One of them was the economic transition from a centralized economy to a more independent one. That was details, but it was also a philosophy. A lot of it was know-how, a lot of it was show and tell, a lot of it was a state of mind. That was one thing. Another thing was anything under the general level of democratization. The third one was to get something resembling a working legal system working there. I think these were the things that I found the most

exciting. One can do things with that. One works with successful programs in America which transfer that kind of know-how and knowledge. We have a surprising amount of institutions which, with very short notice, can go to a foreign country and conduct hands-on seminars on the political process and, more importantly, do it without ever having an American bureaucrat or an American government employee involved and, even better, do it with the involvement of professional party politicians from American parties. It's amazing. We can do that. There are institutions that can do that and there are institutions that will on very short notice go and work on foreign cooperatives. These are hands-on experts at foreign cooperatives. It's even more amazing that one can experts who can do that and also have the ability to work in other languages. We were flexible enough so that with a little luck, it's just amazing what one came up with. This was the stuff that was exciting. The stuff that was much less exciting was, for example, transferring large amounts of food under a loan program. We were talking about millions of tons here and really talking about sizeable amounts of money. We were talking about billions of dollars. There was always a question with these food transfers, these food loans, whether they were going to be repaid or not. The official notion was that they would be repaid and therefore were not grants, but the people actually working on the programs in the State Department, certainly in my environment, had a fair amount of skepticism about whether this was going to be a loan or a grant. I wasn't terribly upset about it either way. We are an agriculture producing country, for goodness sakes. It didn't bother me at all. What bothers me much more is to use food aid or the whole enormous American agricultural export process as a reason not to make a country develop its own agriculture capabilities to the full extent. Sometimes there were overtones of this. Generally, what was going on was a very confusing period.

The big debate, to the extent that there was one, wasn't taking place within the State Department or government circles on whether there should be a massive transfer of resources to Russia. It was a much more public debate. You may remember something called the "Grand Bargain." The grand bargain said it was time for a new Marshall Plan and the new Marshall Plan should have \$25 billion in it and possibly more and it should go for a number of things to Russia to give them a chance to develop themselves as a free society. That was boosted by Graham Allison and Robert Blackwill, who were at Harvard at that time, and it was being sold in sort of scholarly and media circles as the idea of the future, as the forward-looking idea. The backward-looking idea was this paltry notion of technical assistance that the US government was actually involved in. Let me say this -as I thought more and more about it and I concluded pretty early on that the "Grand Bargain" of transferring many billions of dollars for really large infrastructure and other projects was going to be a huge waste of money that was going to just be poured down the drain and never be found again. I'm still convinced that that's true. But that was the big debate going on behind the scenes at that time.

Q: Why don't we stop here and then we can pick it up next time. You go where, to the FSI?

LEHOVICH: I go to FSI.

Q: I think that's a good place. This will be in the end of '91, I guess.

LEHOVICH: That's right. (Inaudible)

Q: Today is the 2nd of July 1997. Vlad, we're at 1991. You've left the Board of Examiners and you're going to go to the Foreign Service Institute, is that it?

LEHOVICH: That is approximately right. There were a couple of interludes.

Q: What were the interludes?

LEHOVICH: The interludes were three months or so at USUN as what is called the "European advisor" to the US Mission in New York during the UN General Assembly. That is an absolutely delightful thing to do because one goes and spends time working with one of the regions of the world in a free-for-all, which is what the UN General Assembly is. There are so many countries and so much happening at once that, basically, for three months of so, nobody told me what to do. It was a wonderful year to be working there because it was the year that a lot of new countries were being admitted to the UN. Eastern Europe was coming into its own. The Soviet Union was splitting up. We had some amazing things. We got the two Koreas joining; the Micronesian states joining; Albania was coming out of the closet and beginning to rejoin the world. There had been a complete change in the leadership in what we used to call Eastern Europe. Surprisingly enough, one would see the Polish ambassador to the United Nations emerge as one of the most eloquent figures in the area of arms control and strategic thinking in favor of strong Western ideas. An awful lot of things were being stood on their head. It was a very exciting time. The UN mission was marvelously led by Tom Pickering, who worked more hours a day and seemed to have a better time doing it than anybody else I can think of. What I did was very simple and very satisfying.

I simply decided that I wouldn't work with any of the usual countries in Europe that we were good friends with. One, because there are so many of them it's hard to see them all. Two, because it really makes no difference. It makes no difference for someone like me coming from out of town to New York and pretend to lobby German, Britain, and France, or any one of a number of other countries. So what I did was concentrate on all of the new or politically reborn countries - Eastern Europe, the Baltics. There were three new ambassadors from the Baltics, suddenly. I had a marvelous time with a small constituency of maybe 10 or 15 countries. Also, the smaller European countries that weren't used to the ways of the UN - you might take, for example, Liechtenstein. Liechtenstein is very skillfully represented during the General Assembly, but it is not in the UN the rest of the year. It was delighted to be courted by an American representative who would call up and say "If you don't mind, could you perhaps come to the meeting tomorrow? There's going to be a vote." This was a UN session of the General Assembly and the answer was "Thank you very much. I didn't know that, but I'll be there." One of the Baltic representatives was the marvelous ambassador from Lithuania, who was 87 years old. When I called him, he said, "Oh, very good. Thanks for letting me know. So, the voting is tomorrow. Good.

Well, I know where it is and I certainly know which way to vote. You don't have to worry about that." This gentleman, incidentally, the UN ambassador from Lithuania, who was 87, was the senior diplomat in America at that time. He had been the Consul General of his country in 1927. When Lithuania disappeared in 1939/'40 after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Act, this man didn't disappear. America kept honoring his presence as a diplomat so he basically had an unbroken period of service from 1927 through the 1990s. Very exciting experience. I have no great achievements to report except for helping to initiate a group of colleagues into some of the reasons why America votes the way it does, and making the day for several countries by calling up and saying I'd like to lobby them. They loved the word. I was asked several times, "Do you mean you're really going to lobby us? The United States is going to lobby us? I have never been lobbied and I've never heard that word used." I said, "It's a very honorable word and it's what I'm about to do to you soon." The reception was very nice. They liked to be lobbied. Being lobbied means being paid attention to and not only asked to vote a certain way -the American way -on the issue, but being told why America thought it was important. It makes a big difference. Anyhow, a delightful time. After that-

Q: I want to stick with this for a minute. We both grew up in the period where there were a couple of big issues. One was to protect Israel from itself and from UN votes. The other was to keep communist China out of the UN. This was up to about the early 1970's. Here was a time of absolutely fantastic change. Did we have any game plan or were we sort of playing it by ear as new countries were appearing on the scene, the Soviet Union was breaking up?

LEHOVICH: The game plan was to help a wonderfully fortunate time in history be as fortunate as possible. That particular year, that particular period, the early 1990s, was a time when the UN was working magnificently and when there was indeed a lot of cooperation on a lot of issues from the most unexpected quarters. The issue you mentioned relating to Israel was still with us because the biggest single effort we made ("we" meaning the United States) in that General Assembly was to reverse a particularly obnoxious UN resolution of many years standing, which was the one that equated Zionism with racism and which had always been a major nuisance for the US in the UN. Through a large lobbying effort, it basically was turned back.

That was the year when the two Koreas were joining, when Russia had not fallen apart, but was almost visibly in the process of doing so, and indeed fell apart around Christmas Day, around December 25, 1991. The pressure was evident a few weeks before and various people were dealing with the question of multiple representation from the former Soviet Union. While you can do some planning for this, until something is actually happening, it's premature. We did have a situation, which was fascinating, where we were dealing in totally separate ways with the missions of Ukraine and Belarus.

Q: They had been put in under the first UN agreement. It was considered a fake agreement.

LEHOVICH: Exactly. Stalin had wanted all of the Soviet republics to be admitted to the

United Nations as separate nations, which is a totally ridiculous position. Instead, he generously took as a fallback position to have three nations admitted: the Soviet Union, plus Ukraine, and Belarus. This was also a totally absurd position. These three missions were located in the same building in New York with the same sour-faced guards and the same microphones bugging all of them. Suddenly, they discovered that they had diverging interests. Ukrainian interests were so divergent that it made it almost difficult to work with them at that time because they didn't want to meet us at their place if they could avoid, it because their place was run by the Soviets. It was before the time that they didn't want to speak Russian. That would come a bit later, although I wound up speaking English with the Ukrainian ambassador at that time, who is now the foreign minister, Mr. Udovenko. Even though his Russian, of course, was perfect and mine was very good, he preferred to speak English even at that time. It was perfectly fine with me if he feels that way. It gives me a slight advantage in communication.

Policies? If we go back to that time, America's had a very successful, very intelligent approach under the Bush administration. With regard to changes in the Soviet Union, our approach was moderate, gradual without lording it over anybody. We had a very mature approach to what to do with a Germany that was about to grow and become two Germanies. We had a mature approach, a very tolerant approach toward the collapse of communism. I think that was really some of the wisest foreign policy I've ever seen. I was very impressed with it. I have three cheers for the Bush team.

Q: How did some of the Pacific powers (Micronesia, the Marshalls)-

LEHOVICH: We had two of them at that time. We had Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. There was a very amusing and slightly embarrassing episode that I had when the Micronesian delegation was taking its seat at the UN General Assembly on the day that it was going to be sworn in. They had the head of government, the foreign minister, and a whole team there. They had about nine seats reserved for them with a big ribbon in front and they couldn't fill them. They only had eight people. One of the eight people was an old friend of mine, a New York lawyer called Peter Rosenblatt, who had been part of the Lyndon Johnson administration.

Q: Whom I've interviewed by the way.

LEHOVICH: Wonderful. He's a splendid person. Peter was a card-carrying Democrat and started working as a political appointee in the Johnson administration and got to love the government, got to love Southeast Asia, and later returned to private law practice in Washington. He later was our ambassador to the island countries of the Pacific, including Micronesia. At this time, in 1991, Peter was the legal representative and the lawyer for Micronesia and he was part of their delegation. He hailed me from that box that wasn't quite filled. I came over and across the dividing ribbon, introduced myself, shook hands with the foreign minister and the government, and various other members of the delegation, who thereupon told me that I had to join them, since I was a friend of Mr. Rosenblatt's. I said I couldn't because I was not a member of their delegation. They explained to me that they would take it amiss and would be very upset if I didn't join. So, I got past that dividing

ribbon and sat down with their delegation, which a few seconds later had to stand up and receive the applause of the entire General Assembly. I, of course, stood up and received the applause, and then I noticed the American delegation, including Ambassador Pickering, looking at me. I must say, I have to hand it to him, Ambassador Pickering, he never mentioned it afterwards, though he knew something was fishy. But that was a particularly nice moment. That is a little gloss on a day that really was an historic day. We had a two Pacific island territories joining, and we also had the two Koreas being sworn in that day. That's exciting.

Q: What was the mood or feeling about having both Koreas join together, North and South. We had no relations with North Korea.

LEHOVICH: People were utterly relaxed about it because one of the two Koreas was successful, normal, well-liked. The really interesting thing at that time with the Koreas was the degree to which, for example, Russia was not only courting South Korea, but if you followed the Soviet press and the Russian thinking on foreign affairs, you saw a whole school of theory saying that democratic but authoritarian governments, governments with a firm sense of vision, of their own role in society - code words sort of for South Korea or for Pinochet - governments like this are good governments. We should be a government like that. In other words, South Korea was not only an economic hero at that time, say, for the Russians, but was also, along with a couple of other countries like Singapore, being examined as a possible political model. There was no problem with the admission of the two Koreas. The other Korea was joining and the other Korea was nothing from nowhere at that time and, I'm afraid, still is. So, no problem there, Stu.

Q: What about with East Germany? What were people thinking about East Germany? It hadn't joined when you were there. What were you getting from your delegation and sort of the general thought about it?

LEHOVICH: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the East Germans had been in for quite a while. But the question then was about the unification of the two.

Q: The East Germans were in. I'm talking about the unification.

LEHOVICH: I don't have any particular insights on that. I have a lot of my own thoughts, but they're not based on anything other than newspapers.

Q: This session was less than a year after the US had led this very successful counterattack on Iraq, which had seized Kuwait. Did you find that in the UN, the fact that the United States looked like it had a pretty efficient military force, could do something to oppose blatant transgression on another sovereign power, Kuwait -the fact that we had led this thing very successfully, do you think that this gave us added clout within the UN at that particular time?

LEHOVICH: I think we looked very good in the UN for many reasons. One of them was that we had been very graceful in the way the Bush administration handled these changes

in Eastern Europe. There could have been a childish way of handling that and luckily we didn't do that. I think we got a lot of credit for that. We also had a lot of credit, frankly, for being on the winning side of history at a point when that was obvious. It wasn't obvious a year or two later or a year or two before, but it was quite obvious that particular year. The other thing, which of course was fascinating at that time in the UN was that on an issue like Iraq, the Russians were being very cooperative and had not yet talked themselves into thinking that they had to have a sharply different interest on a matter like that. I'm sure I don't really think they do. But a lot of countries think they have to have a sharply different position from the Americans, including France. The Russians hadn't yet talked themselves into that state of mind on that particular issue.

The Security Council was preoccupied with Iraq all the time. Luckily for my own peace of mind at that time, I didn't have to work on the issue because it was in a closed circle and Security Council affairs were Security Council affairs. My constituency tended to be the other folks outside all that.

Q: You mentioned that the Bush administration had dealt gracefully and in a gentlemanly way with the tremendous change, particularly in the Soviet Union, not to lord it over the Soviets. Was this just by inference, or from Pickering or others, or was it from very definite instructions: "Don't overplay this. Just be nice about this..."

LEHOVICH: I recall no such instructions, but I think it was built into the way that Bush and Baker dealt with Gorbachev and Shevardnadze and a number of other people. Also, it was made possible, of course, by the new maturity of the Soviet Union at that time, which at that period was reacting in a way that made its interest compatible with the interests of an awful lot of the rest of the world. As I say, earlier, before it had talked itself into thinking that it had to have a sharp difference on certain issues.

Q: You were saying that you didn't deal with the major Western powers, sort of the NATO powers, and concentrated on the other thing. But how about with France? Did France, which always seems to pursue a course contrary to the one we'd like, did it seem to be doing that at that time?

LEHOVICH: Not that I recall, Stu. Too much was happening that was much more exciting to us than the Western Europeans talking to each other. They themselves were all much too interested in what was going on with the big picture. The only other folks that I found myself working with were countries like Spain, Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, which occasionally are pursuing very strong particular interests of their own, and which sometimes bear grudges against others in the world. I found myself spending quite a bit of time with these folks on different voting issues.

Q: How about the Cyprus problem, which is Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus? Was that an issue?

LEHOVICH: No, I didn't get involved in that. It wasn't an issue at that time. I did find myself dealing with one other country, Malta, at that time. I learned a very simple truth,

which is that I was spending a disproportionate amount of time working with Malta on very minor issues for them and not even very major issues for most of the other countries, just the daily business. I found that they, in the little world of the United Nations, were exactly what they had been for years everywhere else in the world. They're what's called a "high maintenance customer." They want a lot of attention for every little thing. They required a lot of maintenance without very much reason.

Q: You left this temporary assignment and then where did you go?

LEHOVICH: I went where we had been at an earlier session where we talked about assistance to the former Soviet Union. I think we've already more or less covered that, not chronologically, but we've sort of covered that. That ended around May of 1992. At that point I joined the Foreign Service Institute as the Dean of the School of Professional Studies. That was a time when FSI was headed by Brandon Grove and was about to move to the new campus within about a year. That was one of the most thoughtful and civilized and satisfying periods of time that I had in the government.

Q: So, you did this from 1992 until when?

LEHOVICH: For three years, until 1995.

Q: What does the Dean of Professional Studies do?

LEHOVICH: We have a surprising number of people who come to FSI every year for one or another form of training. I would say about 12,000 a year at that time. The school that I was in charge of had every year 5-6,000 different students. These may not be different physically; they may be the same person taking more than one course in a year. We didn't keep track statistically that way, but we did have 5-6,000 enrollments in different courses from a lot of the government -from the State Department, but also from the foreign affairs agencies and from a total of about 40 different agencies in the government. We also were running something that I was largely responsible for at that time, which was a program for training foreign diplomats from some of the new countries. In the first year that I was there, we had a course for 20 diplomats from Albania and Bulgaria, new diplomats. At that time, let me just mention that the Albanian Foreign Service had about 102 diplomats in it altogether for the whole world. Only two of them were holdovers from the previous regime. In other words, 100 of the 102 were new diplomats, which is why both Eagleburger and the Under Secretary for Management, John Rogers at that time, why they both jumped on the idea of offering diplomatic training to this country and a little bit later to Bulgaria as well. Very exciting. So, your question was what does FSI do and what did I do at that time? Well, I worked with this particular school, a large number of students, a faculty of probably about 100 people at any one time, of whom the vast majority were full-time, Civil Service, Foreign Service. We worked on professional training, consular officers, administrative officers, economic training (both short term and long term - for example a one year economic course and a two week economic course). We did political training. We did a lot of training in communications and quite a lot of training in leadership, in management, and various skills involved organization and dealing with

people. We had responsibility for information management training - that is, computer training, and the training of some communications specialists, secretarial training, and, not least, we were responsible for the basic training for junior officers. There are probably two courses in the State Department which are the best known. The best known single course offered in the State Department is the A-100 course for junior officers. Possibly the second best known, simply by rumor or reputation, was the senior seminar. We were not involved in the senior seminar, but I found myself quite involved in the basic training of junior officers. I discovered a number of people who would be coming in whom I had examined a year or two before. I went to some of the off-sites. There were a couple of off-sites each cycle for the junior officers. I went to some of these and generally kept up with what we were doing with them. It was a very efficient, very intelligent program. We worked with them for about 12 weeks and covered a lot of material. We didn't cover a lot of facts. We covered much more ways of thinking, behaving, acting, communicating, a certain sense of identity, and a sense of how to follow, how to lead, basic training of a non-military type. A very popular course. Those were the kinds of things that I was involved in.

We branched out at that time into something that was led by a new director who arrived at FSI, Lawrence Taylor. Nobody had heard of Larry Taylor when he came to FSI. I hadn't heard of him. None of the other deans had heard of him. The Director of FSI had never heard of him. The Deputy Director of FSI had never heard of him. Larry Taylor was the Economic Minister Counselor in Canada. He came. He was chosen by the Under Secretary for Management and did an absolutely sensational job - I think the best director of FSI in anyone's memory. There have been some very good ones before. One of the things he did which was just exceptional was to adjust our curriculum to new national priorities. He was well aware that America's top priority at that time in foreign affairs was America's economic well-being and American competitiveness - a priority which was stated by the President and the Secretary of State and which was terribly popular publicly. He decided to take the entire curriculum of the Institute and see what one could do with all of it in support of that priority. That's a fairly daring idea because that goes way beyond the wide range of activities that I described that I was involved in. It also includes the large language school and the School for Area Studies. We worked on this. Amazingly enough, we found within a few months that we could adjust virtually the entire curriculum of FSI without becoming ridiculous or extreme about it so as to serve that priority of American economic competitiveness better than we had before. The really interesting thing is not doing it in an economics course. That's essential but its obvious and we were doing all that anyhow. It was to do it in areas that are remote from economics or trade, particularly in the language area. Absolutely amazing. The language teachers, and there are hundreds of them in this Institute, discovered that they were very excited about being drawn into an American policy issue. I looked at different curricula in Indonesian, German, Russian and various other language offerings. There were significant changes and additions to the language curriculum which would serve the notion of American competitiveness. It was absolutely amazing what you can do with such a priority. It's amazing what you can do in consular training if you take American competitiveness as a priority and if you bear in mind that in an awful lot of our posts, the consular officer has a unique access and unique insights. It's amazing what you do if you work with administrative officers on this. In many places, they are the people who know the most about the local scene. That was a very

exciting thing. I was a good follower in that, a good follower of what I thought was a magnificent policy lead and discovered that almost everyone I worked with was enthusiastic about it. Great pleasure to work on that.

Q: Speaking of the junior officer course, I haven't been following it, so it's not a loaded question. I would think that in any organization where we depend so much on the morale, people going out and doing difficult things, that when you catch a new officer coming in, you want to throw the best and the brightest of our officer corps into training them. But there is the other thing within the Foreign Service that somehow training is second rate and if you want to get ahead, you avoid the FSI. This would seem to be a very key place. I'm talking about the junior officer. How did you find that?

LEHOVICH: Stu, just a word on FSI and two or three specialties. Let me just say that if you're a consular officer and you have a chance to be in charge of consular training at FSI, that's a very positive thing to do. I worked with Mary Ryan, the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, to make sure that the people we had in consular training were her top candidates and were our top candidates. We had the best people in the business. We were, in that area, wonderful. In the administrative area, we had a very good choice. It became a very hot thing working at FSI at that kind of stuff. The Orientation Division was a hot division the whole time I was there. We had a lot of candidates who wanted to come and either run that division or work in it. We found that we could do very well in getting terrific people. The Foreign Service part of it was about three people at any one time. They and the civil service people were excellent and we got a lot of mileage out of them. Another important thing: with the A-100 course, we could get absolutely anybody we wanted as a speaker. We didn't try to get secretaries of state because they would complicate the schedule. But I remember when I wanted to get Tony Lake from the NSC, it was very easy. I knew it would be "yes." It was an immediate "yes." The only thing to negotiate was when. Again, you don't want to do that too often because that just makes life difficult for scheduling and you can't get a person like that in every cycle. But you can get other top people in every cycle and we did. We had the best people in the State Department every time we had a new cycle of junior officers. I know very few people who said "No." It didn't take any arm twisting. It's a little like the senior seminar. Would you like to come and speak at the senior seminar? The answer is "Sure." If you're Brent Scowcroft, the question is "And how much do you charge, General Scowcroft?" His answer is, "I charge nothing. If you want, I'll charge you \$25,000. Otherwise, I'll charge you nothing." But you get these speakers. We had the ability to do very good offerings for the junior officers.

There is an interesting problem worth mentioning in terms of manners and work culture, particularly with regard to junior officers. The younger people who come in, who are the great majority, in a lot of cases have problems with being courteous, civil, considerate, good team players, in short with various forms of good social behavior. They're smart. They may have very good interpersonal skills in a clinical sense. They may be articulate. But in too many cases they have the kind of an edge that can be difficult to work with overseas, difficult to work with in the State Department. I don't think we were able to do much with this. I think that's always been a problem. It's a problem that's described by ambassadors, who are often surveyed on, and who say, "Well, I don't like rude people" or "I

don't like people who are a pain in ass" or "I don't like people who aren't team players and I keep getting them." That's true. One does keep getting them. That's not very tractable, we found, to training programs. For a while, it was the thing that I thought was the most important that we could do. We tried various things, though with mixed success...

Q: How would one do this? We're really talking about a certain amount of arrogance.

LEHOVICH: The way one does it is with extended team efforts and team exercises, basically. You or I as instructors can't come in and say to somebody "You've got personality problems which I'd like you to take care of right now" because that doesn't work very well. It happens from peer pressure and from peer suggestion. From a training point of view, the way that it's done is by fostering as many situations as possible where there is a team effort by people who trust each other and are candid with each other. It helps if they like each other. Then, a certain learning process can take place that allows participants to recognize why and how they may be a pain in the ass to others. It's expensive to do that. You sometimes have to haul people away a number of miles to some place which is removed from the eight-hour day. But we did a little of that. I think, someday with more resources, we might wind up doing more of that.

Q: I would have thought that part of this, it would be difficult with the new officers coming in because we have this group that we have already talked about, you have the people in the mid '30's up to the '40's, and then you have the young people coming in. Normally, the young people coming in that one would think are full of the arrogance, the brashness - I mean, these are very bright people. Otherwise, they wouldn't be in the Foreign Service. They have been selected and all that. They haven't had people tell them "No." I found this as a supervising officer sometimes. I think I'd be the first person to say, "You know, that was a dumb thing to do." The retired lieutenant colonel had had those edges worn off more or less.

LEHOVICH: Absolutely. Stu, that's one of the reasons that I the other day was very high on some of the folks that are coming in for a second career. But an interesting thing would happen in some classes, particularly the larger classes, where you would be getting over 40 people in an incoming class. We had classes as large as 50 or 51. You try to keep 50 as an absolute maximum because things really begin to fall apart exponentially even before you reach that point. But what would happen in the larger classes is, there would be a split along age lines, which I thought was a very unfortunate thing. It was informal and it may not even have been noticed by a number of the people, but there was a pattern. The folks working with that program cycle after cycle would notice it quite early on when it was happening. That was really very much a split of the folks who came in from the old, traditional age of, say, 30 or below, and folks who would come in substantially older. Let me just mention that because of some lawsuit and similar considerations we had at least one person who was over 61 and just entering basic training and several people who were very close to that age, in other words, substantially older than the 59 years old that was the normal cutoff. That also sets off some questions about training focus and areas of interest. Take pensions and retirement, for example. Someone who is, say, 25 years old listens fleetingly to the pension system and moves on right away to more interesting things. Same

with any mention of such a boring subject as mandatory retirement at age 65. But if you are 59, not to mention 61, these are the most exciting subjects in the world. On many subjects, there is a difference in attention span between the young and the old based on what they find relevant and exciting. This gets back to the theme of ages that I was being critical of the other day. I think we have encouraged much too big a span in ages.

Q: At a certain point, if you're talking to a group (I keep using the phrase "retirement lieutenant colonels," but this is used as sort of an example), I would think that one could get this group together and say, "Look, you've all led troops or you've been involved in offices and all. We're having trouble. This is the thing. Can you get out and mix and mingle?" Or did one have to be very careful not to try to use this group as trainers of their juniors?

LEHOVICH: No, they really weren't trainers of their juniors. They were all in it together, I think. It is a peer group. The difference is that it is a peer group where I would always look for who the youngest and the oldest was in these classes. About half the time, the youngest would be 21. Very typically, the oldest would be in the upper '50's. By then, I had been in the Foreign Service for 34 years or so. And even so, I would discover something that always amazed me: The youngest person in the class was younger than I was when I joined, and the oldest person in the class was older than I was at that time... and I had been in the business for 34 years. I felt that we were overdoing it in the age span that we were encouraging.

Q: Moving away from the A-100 course to Area Studies - you had Area Studies, didn't you?

LEHOVICH: I did not have Area Studies in the School of Professional Studies at that time. I worked carefully with it, but was not...

Q: Did you notice a phenomenon that I get sometimes from people who were doing area studies and other studies and I don't know whether exaggerating something, but they say, "You know, these students today, they just don't read anymore." Was this the teachers talking?

LEHOVICH: Well, let me tell you, I had two incarnations. One was as an adjunct professor at AU. The other was at FSI. At FSI, we're working with adult education. A-100 is fine. You can tell those people "You've got to read this. You've got to know it all" and they'll tend to do it. But most of the other courses at FSI were not really heavy on reading. Consular training was pretty heavy. They had to pass an exam and be legally certified; they had to do certain things. But most of the 130-odd courses that were offered in the School of Professional Studies were not really heavy on reading. Adult education generally isn't very heavy on reading. Perhaps it should be more so.

I do want to mention a couple of things that were important from an FSI vantage. The State Department at that time was, I think, neglecting a lot of the traditional professional skills of diplomats in a management philosophy that was extolling almost a cult of management

skills per se apart from whatever subject skills or knowledge might be involved. The things I'm thinking of deal with Area Studies, and with the notion of the State Department overseas as a platform for other agencies. I just want to talk about these a little bit because I have a podium now and because I think it was a real problem. Area Studies was not being treated with enough interest at that time or enough resources. Within FSI it was, but not elsewhere. The Under Secretary for Management and a number of other people who were kibitzing on budgetary and financial matters thought that this was one of the things where you could cut corners and it didn't make any difference. When you look closer and closer at that, you discover that both John Rogers, one Under Secretary for Management, and his successor, Richard Moose, were folks who had themselves decided that the really important thing for a State Department professional to do was to be a good manager of resources. I don't disagree that one should be a good manager of resources if one has to manage them. I just don't think that history or America judges the State Department from year to year on management skills. It judges it on many other things than that. We discovered that our top leadership in the management area, the leadership that was giving us our guidance and our money, had arrived at a very different set of priorities from what, for example, I had and that other people had. I mentioned before that you could see this in Area Studies and in the notion of the State Department as a "platform." Let me explain that second one. The idea that became particular popular under Dick Moose was that an American embassy was important for many reasons. One of the most important, and the one that their focus was on, was as a "platform" that permitted other parts of the US government to do their job in a particular country. The Department of Commerce, the FBI, which was growing by leaps and bounds in its overseas presence at that time, and a myriad other agencies that are involved, I don't disagree with any of this. But this notion of Dick Moose and Co. simply paid no attention to the fact that the well-run American embassy brings judgment and knowledge that is not supplied comparably by any other part of the American government.

Along with the idea of the "platform" was the simplistic notion that the better communications you have, the more the Internet works, and the more instant voice communication you have, the less one really needs an embassy because one can do all this stuff from Washington. There was an absurd video which was cranked out at that time on a model embassy. That video showed a breathless Foreign Service officer receiving something from a printer, and that something was called a "demarche." Then he would jump into a car and fight traffic through Rome or some nice crowded city like that, fight traffic all afternoon to get to the foreign ministry before it closed, run upstairs, and deliver the "demarche." What I mean by delivering it is, take a piece of paper, hand it to someone else, and leave. It had absolutely reduced the notion of delivering a demarche to nothing more than delivering a piece of paper. I was astonished to watch this thing being pawned off as a video (What was then called the "C Street Series") that the Under Secretary for Management was organizing. It was a series of videos that was supposed to be sent out all over the world to all employees in the State Department so that they could keep in touch with clear central thinking. This wasn't clear thinking. This was stupid thinking. I just wanted to share a couple of these thoughts with you because as Andy Warhol would say, you only get 15 minutes on a microphone in a lifetime, and my 15 minutes is almost up.

Q: Did you find that sort of in the ethos of the senior Foreign Service that there was a problem getting officers and others, the secretaries and all, to be trained because you wanted to be promoted, if you wanted to be in sight of the powers that be and get a better job and all? Training was alright for sort of ordinary folk, but for the real people who were going to move ahead, they wanted to stay close to the principles on the seventh floor or what have you.

LEHOVICH: You're absolutely right, Stu. The exception would be if you really want to learn a language well, there was only one way to do that. That's to learn a language. That didn't apply to certain short courses, but that's a very fair generalization. The amazing thing is, if you look at it empirically, there isn't any great proof that training has made difference x, y, or z with people. I personally think it has and I think it can, but I don't think it's been viewed as an important road to success.

Q: I always recall meeting an old friend of mine from Yugoslavia, Larry Eagleburger, on the elevator one time. He said, "What are you doing, Stu?" I said, "I'm in the senior seminar." He looks at me and says, "What do you want to bother to do that for?" In a way, the proof in the pudding is, I did not become Secretary of State and Larry did.

LEHOVICH: I agree. I think you made a big mistake. If you had avoided the senior seminar, I'd be your driver right now because I was in it. Absolutely. I don't want to overdo it because I think there is a certain civilized quality to the Foreign Service Institute which is addictive to people when they see it early on in their career and it's important for them to think of it as an improving and worthwhile way to spend some time. I think there is room to have a lot of people think that, but you're right, there isn't a big enthusiasm for training.

Q: During this time, we're talking about '91 to '94?

LEHOVICH: '92 to '95.

Q: '92 to '95. Were there any courses that you had to fight to keep alive or were there ones that were being forced on you that you didn't think was...

LEHOVICH: Not anything too awful. We were told once in a while to go cut some courses for budgetary reasons. Amazingly enough, we'd often wind up really not having to do it because the budgetary cuts weren't as severe as one might expect and were overstated for effect or overstated to look good with OMB or the "Reinventing Government" exercise of one kind or another. We did make things more efficient. We consolidated a few courses. But frankly, we were in a position of increasing our curricula rather than cutting it back, just trying to do it without spending a huge amount of money on it.

Q: We've already talked about the United Nations and the old world was falling apart. You couldn't do very well with a course in the Cold War and all that. We had other priorities and all, commercial or problems of trying to build greater fairness in hiring practice, employment practices and all, equal opportunities type thing. Were you having

to respond to a changed world because the world was changing, getting diplomats ready for the (inaudible)?

LEHOVICH: Well, I'll tell you several ways in which FSI was changing as the world was changing. We were changing very fast. We were very conscious of the need to reflect a changed world. We took several things (apart from economic competitiveness) and integrated them all over the place into course work. These were the global issues of population, democratization, environment, drugs, various things like that. They are good, they are interesting, they are not hard to integrate and there are plenty of people who can get excited about those things and are willing to help. The trick is to do it in a way that's good educational policy, not boring, not fatuous. We managed to do quite a bit of updating in that regard. We didn't have to worry an awful lot about changes in the Cold War. That was helping itself along.

We did a very exciting thing, which I'd like to do more of. We had a special program in administrative and political issues for a group of foreign service nationals from about 15 countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union who came over. It was a spectacular course. A very bright group of people. We worked on some administrative basics. We worked on communication and reporting skills. This was some basic exercises in writing, communicating, reporting, very similar to the kinds of things that were done to junior officers in the A-100 course. In fact, we adapted that material. They couldn't do enough of it. They wanted more and we would have done more, but you can only do this thing for a certain number of weeks because there are huge per diem and related costs to this. Luckily, this was the European Bureau picking this up as its particular expense. But that in a sense is adjusting to the Cold War. I would like to see the State Department get into the business of interesting a lot more in foreign service nationals than we do. The reason for it is simple: they are 1/3 of the Foreign Service as we know it, which is about 24-25,000 people and about 8,000 of that are foreign service nationals. There is a very big difference about them. They were there last year, they'll be there next year, and they put in more years at any post than any Americans do. The best of them are superb. The worst of them I don't worry about. I'm only interested in what the best of them are like. The best of them are absolutely superb. They will save the American Foreign Service officers and the staff from committing very stupid mistakes time after time.

Q: As all of us will attest.

LEHOVICH: As all of us know. They will internalize and honor American interests in a very commendable way. They are good reporters. They will do a certain amount of good representation. They are marvelous at training. They don't mess around. They really take advantage of it. We had a couple of cases, very exciting cases, of embassies finding the money to send foreign service nationals working on economic issues to Washington to take special economic training, either a regular course or, much more interestingly, a course in very intensely hands-on work with these folks. We had one, I remember, from the Netherlands who came for several weeks and was doing very sophisticated work including a lot of computer techniques and a lot of it was on line with international data sources, and he went back and did this kind of thing in a way that enhanced the dimension of that

embassy's economic work significantly. This was wonderful stuff. I wish we could have done some more of it.

Q: I understand all the obstacles against it, mainly money, but was there any effort to expand what happened more or less by chance because of the breakup of the Soviet Union and its satellites? You had Albanians and Bulgarians and, later, Kyrgyz and others coming here to get basic courses in diplomatic practice to develop something equivalent to what our war colleges have been doing for a century or more and that is bringing officers from other countries to go through one of these things as a bonding. It would seem unnatural. It was a difficult time, but was anything worked on during the time you were there on this?

LEHOVICH: This kind of training can take an enormous amount of human time from a lot of people. After a while, you have to begin to assign a price tag to that. We came near to burning out a bunch of people in doing these training courses for foreign diplomats because we had to provide the hospitality and some of the sort of moral support and social support and networking that we don't ever have to provide for people who arrive in Washington on their own and whom one sees from 9:00 until 4:30 every day. Here, you were really responsible in a much larger way. With the various groups that were in town, we had some a couple of real health crises. We had some very interesting police involvement with one the people, which I just won't go into. But what I'm saying is, we were parents. As they say in Latin, you're in loco parentis for these people. It was really very time consuming. If we were to do this on a more regular basis, we would either have to create a sort of group that could do it and not try to improvise each time (improvising is fun, but it's just exhausting) or we would have to decide to do it through a private or non-governmental group or an existing educational institution. I've actually spent a lot of time with a couple of institutions talking about this, schools that could do it. I've talked with a number of private individuals who could do this. This is a whole other way to go. I think, personally, the right way to go is for America to sponsor that kind of training through other institutions and work them closely with the US government and the State Department.

Q: It would make good sense. I mean, for one thing, you can draw on to a certain extent adjunct faculty, the retired ranks, which we've done a little, but also move into universities. The only problem that I see with universities is that often, they tend to get it wrong as far as what training people consists of for diplomacy. Too much emphasis on law, on theory. That's what universities do.

LEHOVICH: I couldn't agree more with you, having never studied the theory or the law, but having figured out a lot of that damn stuff over time. I agree with you, Stu. Nonetheless, the Hoover Institute at Stanford, for example, has been doing some terribly exciting stuff with diplomats for several years right now. Others, I think, could also do work of quality. I think it's important that we offer an American approach to diplomatic training, which is hands-on and focuses on skills much more than on theories of law or international relations -in short, a very practical approach.

Q: I think that's our great forte.

LEHOVICH: Really, it's our forte and it's surprising how almost alone among the advanced countries we are in not shoving law and politics and books on foreign affairs at our people. They are supposed to read speeches and books on foreign affairs as part of a broader professional focus, not so much as course work and, over a lifetime, they will or won't do that. We're not there for basic education. Instead, we should thrust communication on them, problem solving, and still more communication. I remember the absolute outrage of certain people when they're told that they have five minutes to prepare something which can't last more than 30 seconds. They said it was going to take them an hour or two to prepare and it was so important that it has to last for several minutes. We would simply repeat: "You've got five minutes to prepare and 30 seconds to present. You get cut off after 30 seconds." They told us that it was absolutely absurd and we reminded them that, in television, the sound bit was considerably less than 30 seconds and that the statesmen of the world were learning how to work that way. We weren't just being trendy. This is very practical stuff. There are similarly practical things in reading and writing and so on. For example, what other foreign service in its consular training takes people to morgues, where they have to look at what happened the day before in a major city, and also gives them counseling with a psychiatrist on how to handle grief - not their own grief, but the grief of people they may have to work with. I think that's amazing. We do that kind of thing. Other people sit around in their airy-fairy stuff about consular law and the Vienna Convention. The Vienna Convention is very interesting, but it's not at all as interesting as how to deal with a catastrophe. So, I think we have a lot to offer in that regard in training. That kind of practical training could be hard to farm out, except that there are already a number of small companies that exist in Washington that rely very heavily on retired FSOs. A bunch of very good small enterprises.

Q: When you left the FSI in '95, what was your impression of training? What point had it reached at the FSI? What should have been done and wasn't done?

LEHOVICH: I think the training was good some years ago and I think it's probably even better right now. I think we are doing very well in the training. My own concerns just standing back, not even in my job, but standing back as a friend of American diplomacy, I can't overemphasize good language training. I can't overemphasize good consular training, but we're always going to do that. We need the good language training and the good area studies.

Q: With the language training, talking to somebody who at the age of around 51 or so took my last session of Italian, there really is for the normal person a real falling off as age moves along. To put somebody in their '50's into intensive language, maybe Italian if you've already studied French and Spanish, you can do alright, but other ones, you really push the envelope.

LEHOVICH: It's not a young man's game for two reasons. One is what you're mentioning, which is the high likelihood that one's learning abilities slow down. Congressman Pepper notwithstanding, but they do. There is a whole other reason, which is return on investment. State has never been really smart in planning people's careers for them, perhaps rightly

because ultimately America is a democracy, our institutions are full of smart people with a lot of bureaucratic skills. They're going to do what they want. I would not have done what someone told me to do over the last 30 years. I did basically what I wanted to do. However, there is a question of why we are teaching someone in his mid-50's a two year course in Korean in terms of return on money. If that person is a senior officer and it's two years of training, we're talking about a couple of hundred thousand dollars in obvious cash outlays, but the total outlays are probably going to be \$400,000 for that particular enterprise. I think we're getting a ridiculous return on that kind of an investment and once in a while there are cases like this and in fact I'm thinking of one right now. There are less exciting cases going on all the time. One could also look at the senior seminar and say, "What age should that happen at?" When I was in the seminar, we had someone who was 51 who was taking the seminar, who was our oldest member. That person was retired a couple of years later and so were several other people and everybody knew it and they knew it, and that's a big investment, too. There are these kinds of questions. People worry about them and people do reinvent the wheel all the time because they lose the patent for it a year or two later and forget about it. They have to reinvent it.

Q: You retired. What happened?

LEHOVICH: After that, I kind of did useful things for a few months. The problem is, I was at a point where I was simply not going to get either a regular two or three years assignment. More likely, some kind of political appointment. So, I was waiting around and then I went off with OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) for six months to be the team chief for OSCE in Crimea, in the Ukraine. I went to the town of Simferopol and spent six months there.

Q: Let's talk about that. Would you explain what the organization was?

LEHOVICH: The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which used to be called the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, has been in existence since 1974. In the last few years, it's become a much more action oriented outfit, which no longer simply talks about human and economic rights, but has gotten very organized. In many European countries right now where there is some tension or conflict it has a presence for preventive diplomacy and mediation, as well as simply an act of presence in case there actually is some violence or some threat of violence. OSCE groups are, for example, in Tajikistan; Moldova, Yugoslavia among other places. There has been a team in the Ukraine for several years with headquarters in Kiev. The reason for the team is a dispute, occasionally marked by very hot rhetoric, between Russia and Ukraine over the proper role of the Crimea. Crimea was always part of Russia and then it was part of the Soviet Union. It has the port of Sevastopol, which is the headquarters of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, and it has an important place in Russian history and legend. It is absolutely a part of Russia if you look at it from that point of view. If you look at it geographically, it is certainly sitting there as part of Ukraine. It was given in a rather unthoughtful and gratuitous action by Nikita Khrushchev in 1954 to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Ukrainian SSR, as a gift from the Soviet Union. It was a meaningless gesture because it was a centralized country at that time. It became a meaningful gesture when Ukraine

became an independent country and claimed Crimea as its own and discovered that there was an argument about this and a sub-argument within that argument about the role of the port city of Sevastopol. That's why we had an OSCE team there. A lot of what we were doing was talking to Russians in Crimea, who had a largely Russian parliament at that time, but also with Ukrainian and Tatar members. We talked to Ukrainian authorities and we talked to basically anybody who felt an interest in this issue. We had an international team. My little team in the Crimea was myself as an American, who was the team chief, along with a Swiss and a German. Then we had a couple of local representatives and we spent our time very productively working with Crimeans who wanted to talk to us about these problems. Crimea also had a parliament. The parliament has a comic opera quality to it. It is new, it's beautifully built, it has machines that count your votes in a very musical way. It has all the attributes physically of European parliamentary democracy. It looks just like every other parliament. It's a little smaller. But it's got a certain comic opera quality to it and it behaves sometimes in a comic opera way. It's got a lot of strange characters in it. It's got a lot of gangsters in it. It's got a lot of people in it who just love to have the immunity from prosecution that being a parliamentarian gives. It has a lot of blustering Russian nationalists in it. It has some Crimean Tatars who assert that they can't stand the Russians for a number of historical reasons. It's a very colorful group, not terribly important, probably. It has the ability to cause a lot of trouble if it wants. It was absolutely thrilled to have this international organization come and pay attention to it. That is to a very large extent what we did. We did some very useful mediating of potential tensions, although I have to say in all candor that at the time that I was there, Crimea was not a fighting issue and was not a real flashpoint of world tension.

Q: Was the idea that if all was set and there was a local dispute that might blow up, it was a good idea to kind of show up and say, "What's the problem?"

LEHOVICH: We showed up at all sorts of things where we were welcome or unwelcome. We showed up at various demonstrations. We showed up at groups, at meetings that ethnic groups were having. They had no idea somebody was going to show up. We'd show up at them, particularly if we wanted to give them a little boost. We wanted to give all the little ethnic groups a boost at that time. The interesting thing with Crimea is that at the start of World War II and right afterwards, an awful lot of people were basically grabbed and shipped off to Central Asia and never heard of afterwards for many years later. They'd drift back or they wouldn't drift back. A lot of them were Tatars, but a some of them were German, Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, and various other groups. If these groups wanted to come and talk to us, we were happy. We used to show up at various events, say, held by the German minority. They'd be absolutely amazed that we would show up, even more when we'd start speaking German with them.

Q: You had a Swiss, an American, and a German. How did you work together?

LEHOVICH: Neither of the other two was a diplomat. One was an economist and one was a historian. We were lucky because we became inseparably good friends. We could work in three languages. Our working language was English, but we all spoke good German and we all spoke good Russian. We were just very lucky. It worked well. The chemistry was,

by sheer luck, excellent. It could have been bad. It wasn't really rough living, but it was fairly spartan. It was a collapsing society in many ways. Simferopol is a dump of a city. Our hotel, the Hotel Moskva, is a typical Soviet-era hotel and is run down and much of the year is what I call a "no heat/no hot water" kind of hotel. You know, it gets 13 below in the winter, so a no heat/no hot water kind of hotel can be spartan if you'd allow it to get to you. So, you have to be resourceful: put on an extra sweater, have a drink, eat more food. Sometimes wheedle and cajole to get some hot water turned on.

Q: Did the Black Sea fleet intrude on your deliberations?

LEHOVICH: The Black Sea fleet, I think, didn't terribly much like my organization. We did visit the mayor of Sevastopol a couple of times. He was always in good cheer. He, incidentally, was a high temperature physicist named Semyonov. Mr. Nemtsov, who is now Deputy Premier of Russia, is former physicist. A third figure, who a leading Crimean Tatar politician called Arifov whom we saw a good deal of, is a theoretical physicist. I like physicists who go into politics because they're a lot of fun to work with, they are logical as hell, and they're very good politicians. The Black Sea fleet wasn't a big problem for us. We went once to pay a visit on the Ukrainian Black Sea fleet rather than the Russian Black Sea fleet. We did this for two reasons. One, we knew we'd get a very warm reception. What choice did they have? They had to treat us as if we were wonderful, even though they were very nervous. They were very nervous because they're not used to this. The other reason we did it is because when you go and pay a call on the Ukrainian Black Sea command, it's perfectly obvious that the next time you'll call the Russians, and they'll have to receive you because someone else has just received you. So, we had no big problems with these folks. We didn't spend a lot of time with them.

Q: What was your impression about the Ukrainian central government? Were they playing the "We're Ukrainians and you Russians are outsiders" Were they playing the nationality game?

LEHOVICH: They were being very careful and so were the Russians. The stakes are very high. The intertwining of Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine was just massive. Russian had long been the dominant language of the big cities. The current president of Ukraine, Mr. Kuchma, had a real hard time switching to Ukrainian. He took lessons. He worked hard. I've been in a lot of situations where the official language will be Ukrainian and then as soon as the doors are closed and the cigarettes are lit, the conversation switches to Russian. The same thing, to a much greater degree, in Belarus. So, everyone was being very careful about this. The Russians were being terribly careful about this because they had a war in Chechnya. They had a separatist war in Chechnya. The last thing they thought they could afford was to be seen to be encouraging a separatist movement in Ukraine. Indeed, they were trying to control the separatist movement. I don't think the issue is going to come to blows.

Q: What was your feeling when you left there? You left there in '96?

LEHOVICH: Yes, late '96.

Q: What was your feeling about the state of Ukraine?

LEHOVICH: The same as the state of a lot of the former Soviet Union. The Ukraine would be fairly typical, whatever national differences there may be. The big problem was that there wasn't a clear economic change yet. Ukraine was lagging behind Russia in its economic development and in its privatization. It was doing better than it had before in some ways, but it was still lagging quite a bit behind Russia. And Russia was lagging behind where Russia thought it would be itself. The other thing is, which is a real structural problem with Ukraine politically, that you've got a parliament and you've got a body politic in which an awful lot of people are not deeply convinced, not fundamentally and profoundly convinced, that there should be a separate Ukrainian country. For example, almost all of the communists (and that's a very large group in a parliament like that) are very skeptical about the notion of a sharp separate identity. They've accepted that there is a country right now, but I don't know how deep that acceptance is. A significant Russian minority will have the same view and perhaps significant other groups will have that view, too. They have some very big questions about their nationhood, the kind you probably didn't have in early America. Those who felt most strongly against independence from England left America.

Q: They went to Canada.

LEHOVICH: They went to Canada. The Randolphins would go to Canada or England. Some of our leading figures would go off. Anyhow, my sense of what's going on there is that we're going to be dealing with the whole former Soviet Union for a couple of decades as a society which is politically and economically finding its way. That sounds like it's obvious, except that five years ago, we were all afflicted with schemes to do a complete social change in two or three years, including some of the economic ideas. We were going to have an economic miracle overnight and we were going to have a real system of politics overnight. This was as shortsighted a thinking in terms of, say, Albania, as it was in terms of Russia. I certainly think now that my own thinking at certain points in the early '90's just wasn't being realistic enough. But with others, it was even less realistic. I remember a lot of the economic euphoria in the early '90's. That's why I say, we have to think in terms of a couple of decades and then you have to think in terms of, at least with Russia, of a situation where that country wants to solve its own problems.

Q: Then you sort of left and came back and retired?

LEHOVICH: That's about it, Stu.

Q: Okay. We'll stop at this point.

LEHOVICH: Terrific. Thanks a lot.

End of interview