

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR DONALD KEITH BANDLER

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Initial interview date: February 23, 2003

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Q: This is a Foreign Affairs Oral History Program interview with Ambassador Donald Bandler. Today is February 23, 2003. This interview is being conducted under the auspices of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Ambassador Bandler can you give us some personal background, where you were born, what's hometown.

BANDLER: I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Lankenau Hospital in April of 1947. First child of Fred and Estelle Bandler. We lived in Wynnefield Terrace on the west side of Philadelphia. I was about two we moved from that area called Winfield to Bala Cynwyd, where I grew up until I went away to college.

Q: Could you tell us where did the Bandlers come from and something about your father's education and work?

BANDLER: My father's family came from Vienna, Austria and Northeastern Europe. My grandfather, Isidore Bandler and his wife, Fannie (nee Lorber), eventually moved to the United States, to the Philadelphia area and settled in Germantown. They were a well thought of business and trading family. Isidore was a dapper, well-liked and respected businessman. He died in 1924, when my father was 12 years old. Isidore and Fanny had two children, Rosanna, and my father, Fred. Rosanna Marcus, died in June, 2013 at the age of 104 years old. She was a healthy and admirable woman—a fine golfer and bridge player. She did charitable work in Great Neck, New York.

Isidore and his colleagues manufactured brass furniture at his factory on Broad Street and sold it to dealers. He had multiple furniture stores in Philadelphia, including one at 7th and Market Street. I have memories of a merry-go-round in front, which was a rotating platform in the window with a display of a room of furniture. He sold brass beds, sofas, chairs, and lighting fixtures. The store was located in an historical area, near Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. The likes of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin had lived nearby in the past. The Declaration of Independence was written just a half a block away.

Q: What was your mother's maiden name?

BANDLER: My mother, Estelle Cooper Bandler grew up during the Depression and post-Depression eras. Her father, Samuel Cooper was well-schooled and a bright man. He

and his wife Anna Cooper (nee Good) were both religious. They had a corner grocery store in southeastern Philadelphia on Catherine Street, during the Depression. But he also had a pharmacy and turned his hand to other occupations, trying to make a living, as everyone did, during those times. My maternal grandparents, Samuel and Anna Cooper, had three daughters. The eldest died as a young child in a car accident. My mother, Estelle Cooper was the second daughter. She is a beautiful and smart woman. Her younger sister, Ruth, married Burt Wendkos -- a business man who was generous and had quite a jolly disposition. For example, he had a pin ball machine business, and I remember he gave one to me when I was 12 years old. (Ruth died in 2011.) Estelle was born in 1920 in Wilmington, Delaware and died in September, 2013.

During the war, a lot of people in the Philadelphia area went to work in factories but my mother worked in professional, government positions. There were many other cousins, uncles, aunts, grandparents around Philadelphia when I was growing up. Estelle was a very attractive and popular young woman, and Fred was a bon vivant, a dapper young man around Germantown and broader Philadelphia. He always had nice cars, including some convertibles over the years. He loved cars, just as I do. He and Estelle met and married right after World War II in Great Neck, New York. I was born a year after in 1947.

Q: You mention religion. What religion were both parents?

BANDLER: Jewish. Both families.

Q: There is an observation that those who were Jewish who came out of Vienna were not very religious and opposed to others. Did your family fit this pattern?

BANDLER: I would say so, yes. My mother's part of the family descended from an Ashkenazi Jewish family. My grandfather on my mother's side was very religious. He spent a great deal of time going to synagogue and praying.

My grandfather, Isidore, was not an observant Jew. However, he had a strong interest in ethics. On Sundays he would attend the Ethical Society on Rittenhouse Square, and would sometimes take both of his children with him.

I sometimes muse about how much families have changed since I grew up. On my mother's side, there was a cousin's club that would meet about once a month, in addition to other gatherings for the Holidays. I remember the music - the accordions, clarinets, maybe a violin. A hundred or more people were there, table cloths; dancing, singing, playing with other cousins. Most of them were living in Philadelphia, and others drove in for parties from 30 or 40 miles away in lower income suburbs. But all the family was living in the same general area.

My sisters and I didn't experience anything like that in my generation. During the weekends, my father spent a lot of time with us. Amy, Beth and I loved going with him to our country club, Radnor Valley. On other occasions, Fred would drive us all around in

Manayunk or Conshohocken. I don't think there is much of that going on these days. Mobility, wealth and opportunities have changed Americans, and their families.

Q: What about the education of your mother and father?

BANDLER: As I mentioned before, my father was dapper, handsome and easy going but a somewhat rebellious guy. Since his father had died when he was only 12 years old, the family felt he needed more discipline and male influence. And so, at age 13 his family sent him off to Pennsylvania Military College, a preparatory school.

Q: This was how they took care of rebellious kids in those days.

BANDLER: That's right, a nice Jewish guy at the Pennsylvania Military College, learning discipline and resisting it at the same time. I think he probably felt that it would be good for him – toughening him and giving him discipline. He loved to work with his hands, and he was indeed a very handy man. He inherited most of the family business and some money. As WWII was beginning, my father was managing the family furniture business. He was called before the draft board in 1943. His attorney and friend, Bob Wolf (an important Philadelphia attorney) was sitting on the board. He recused himself due to this relationship. My father was drafted without consideration of his family obligations. Fred went off to WWII in the Third Army, in General George Patton's Signal Corps.

When World War II began, Fred was one of the soldiers that had to swim into the beaches of Normandy on the third day of the Alliance's attack. Fred was able to get onto one of the boats off the coast of Normandy, and then he and his outfit hooked around the southern side of Paris, and then moved ahead with his contingent aiming to move into Germany's concentration camps. Fred did a great deal of photography, something I picked up from him.

I remember that up in our attic at our home at 111 Dartmouth Road, there were three or four large boxes of photographs, mostly in small format, from the war. We still have an 8x10 picture of General Patton, that Fred took, developed and printed. There were also very small photos of the liberation of the concentration camp Flossenbürg, outside Nuremberg. (Buchenwald and other concentration camps). Fred collected many hundreds of small 2x3 pictures – something I had never seen before.

We inherited a 400 page leather bound "guest book" from a German guest house (Gasthaus) that my father took from the guest house when he liberated a camp nearby. It has comments from visitors about their stay in the southern German Guest House from 1936-45. This large and old leather book contains writings, drawings, and poetry of visitors from Long Island, Japan, Sweden, London, and Germany, many of whom actually liked the Nazis.

My father's legacy was his kindness to all people. While educated at a military academy, he did not pursue higher education, and was probably not ruthless enough to be a truly good businessman. He and I often strolled down Market Street for a Horn and Hardart's

hot dog with mustard and sauerkraut. I used to walk around the store, enjoying going up and down on the elevators – from the first floor to the 6th or 7th. Fred had a personal office, and he was very open about his business plans and ideas. He had Doris there to keep the accounts, handymen to put things in the right place at the right time, fixing the elevator when needed, and men who drove the big yellow store truck, with black stripes. There was a local collection team that would go around the neighborhoods to get the furniture in and out.

Fred followed his father's footsteps in furniture and maintained stores on Market Street in Philadelphia, Ridge Avenue in Roxborough, Woodbury, New Jersey, and Hanover, Pennsylvania. This was retail work, that is, collecting \$1.17 per week on the \$139 living room set that was purchased on sale. He worked in the furniture business that had been left to his mother and supported her, inherited it, with his sister Rosanna when his mother died, and then he kept the store and ran it.

Fred was relatively successful – upper middle class, I'd say – but then he sold most of his stores. In about 1966, the federal government appropriated all the land on the north side of the 700 block of Market Street to build a federal courthouse. My father's long-standing business was closed. Since he had a hundred year lease of his store, but did not own the building, he was out of luck. The owner of the building made out like a bandit from payments from the government. Although Fred didn't become wealthy, he led a comfortable, upper middle class life style. The family had two cars and a lovely house and as I mentioned earlier, belonged to a country club as well. He loved playing golf and swimming and frequently took us to the country club. He put my two sisters and me through college.

Estelle and Fred Bandler were masters at giving dinner parties – from a table of six to a catered event – of 40 to 50 friends in our home. Many of them were quite wealthy in their own right, and they would let me ride in their Ferrari, Bentley or sleek Thunderbird.

Q: I take it he did not go to college?

BANDLER: No he did not. After graduating Pennsylvania Military College, which was a prep school, he entered the family business, to take on the role as head of the family, supporting his mother.

Q: How about your mother?

BANDLER: Estelle Bandler went to Randolph Macon College, but unfortunately she did not have a college degree. She was the more intellectual of the two, had an active mind, was well spoken, interested in literature, politics, society and her family.

Q: Was she sort of the driving force in the family as far as you were concerned?

BANDLER: Probably, yes. My father Fred was a bon vivant and more relaxed. Estelle was the one holding out high expectations for the children. I was supposed to be a great

tennis player; an excellent student. So yes, she provided a good deal of my drive for success.

Q: Let's go to Bala Cynwyd Elementary school. Do you recall any teachers who stand out in your mind?

BANDLER: A good question. I remember kindergarten and first grade more than anything else, oddly enough. In kindergarten, my first teacher was Mrs. Wax. She was a lovely person, and she and Estelle Bandler maintained a great relationship over the years. I was large for my age, and strong enough to do some wrestling and self-defense techniques. I had an alliance with a small buddy who was full of energy, that's Hank Julicher. Hank and his older brothers grew up in an FBI family. Hank and I were arrested for setting off firecrackers, and my parents had to rescue us lest we be taken into custody. Hank was short and thin, and I was rather tall for my age – so, we were sort of a team – a “Mutt and Jeff” operation. We ran around together whenever possible, and both of us had a bit of a naughty streak at times – a predisposition to make some trouble.

Cynwyd, Pennsylvania is not very far -- only a couple of miles from the Philadelphia line. We had very good schools. So, I went to Cynwyd Elementary School, which was about a mile from my house, and I walked there and back. Bala Cynwyd Junior High School was very memorable, and I enjoyed it. I played football, soccer, and especially tennis over those years. I had strong memories of the principle, George Washington Kirkpatrick, a solid but tough guy. My mother would often drive over to see me play sports, notably tennis – which I still greatly enjoy.

The first book I remember reading in school was a book about Sparta and Athens. I was quite interested in the fox being smuggled under a Spartan child's clothing. That impressed me very much, and I also remember reciting the Gettysburg address.

I had a science teacher who was quite good and gave us good projects to do. I made a little telephone that I could barely hear. Math was not my forte, and I can remember feeling that I was destined to read and enjoy good books.

When Hank and I were in first grade, there was a big snow storm, and one of the first grade girls, Joanne, came in late. Mrs. Wax left the classroom to give the front office the attendance. While Mrs. Wax was gone, my classmate Joanne came in quite late. Hank and I told her it was too late -- she had to go back home. So she put her winter coat, her boots and hat back on and walked back home all by herself. Hank and I got into a lot of trouble and they sent me back to kindergarten for a week as my punishment. What a humiliation! I remember well the embarrassment of a first grader going back to kindergarten, a lesson I would never forget.

Q: By the time you went through elementary school, this would bring us into the early fifties, I guess. Even at that age, before you hit the teens, did the outside world intrude much around the dinner table? Was this a topic of conversation, the Korean War or Cold War?

BANDLER: The neighborhoods in the Philadelphia suburbs were typically a middle or upper middle, many of which were Tudor-style homes. Most of the streets are named for colleges – notably, Dartmouth Rd., Princeton, Harvard, Amherst Road, etc.

Our next door neighbor was the Sawyer family, Tom and Nancy Sawyer. They were the parents of twins, Tom and Jeff and a daughter, Cindy Sawyer. When I was 13, the Sawyer family invited me to fly to Winnetka for my Christmas vacation. I recall a major snow storm, and the airplanes were cancelled, so we took the red eye train, and Nancy picked me up.

On the other side of our home were the Chryslers, whose father was the CEO in of the Container Corporation of America. Freddy Chrysler had a brother, who could never stand still, and he was always on a pogo stick. Dickey Chrysler became a dentist. Fred and Estelle were friendly with the family.

The political ambience was clear in our neighborhood; they were virtually all big Dwight D. Eisenhower fans – who were returning triumphantly from World War II. My parents were both registered democrats. My mother was a strong Adlai Stevenson advocate and she worked hard to support his Presidential campaign. Unfortunately, he lost.

My father Fred, on the other hand, was indifferent to politics. I rarely if ever heard him engaged in political discussion and debate, unlike Estelle, who was a strong advocate of good causes. Our neighbors were trying to sell souvenir Eisenhower plates, and I think there is still one around our home in Bethesda. Estelle was a member of the World Affairs Council, and took me to various lectures, including one where Richard Nixon spoke.

When I was in the seventh grade, there was a public speaking contest sponsored by the Lower Merion Rotary Club. I was asked to represent my school, Bala Cynwyd Junior High. My parents were invited to listen to the debate. John Facenda, who was a commentator on television, was one of three judges. My friend Stan Casper and I were debating one another. When the speeches were over, I was announced the winner. John Facenda announced that he did not agree with the outcome – a very unpopular stance. This irritated not only my parents, but my school principal, who was in attendance. They thought it was poor taste on his part. However, I walked home with the trophy. Over the years, Stan Casper and I have maintained a great friendship, and we never gave two hoots about that public speaking contest. In fact, on our last move back to the USA from my final Foreign Service posting, I found the trophy in our storage and decided to send it to Stan as a joke.

Post-World War Two prosperity was being enjoyed by all and it seemed that everything was booming. There was a high comfort level in our family; upward mobility, handsome cars, trips to Sarasota, Florida and the beach every summer. It was not unusual in our neighborhood, when kids turned sixteen, to get a Ford Thunderbird, a jaguar or a convertible or fancy car. For my part, my father and I went to a used car lot to find my

first car and I ended up with a Volvo with a stick shift that could hold 4 or maybe 5 people.

The ambience in our neighborhood and beyond was very Republican. Eisenhower was seen to be as a leader who could bring peace and prosperity to the country. Things moved rather easily; country clubs; cowboy and Indian outfits, the Egyptian theatre, Marilyn Monroe and country clubs. My mother encouraged me to go to Haverford School, an outstanding private school, but even though I was accepted, I chose to attend the brand new, modern Harriton High School. I insisted on staying in public school to be with my friends. I grew up and went to school with the same cohort of kids. They called themselves the Purple Gang: Rick Cotter, Hank Julicher, Charley Biddle and his brother, Steven Biddle, and the Aiken family.

We were a bit naughty, and a little mischievous. We had a club house, the Four Aces -- that sort of thing. One day, I threw a baseball that broke the window in a neighbor's home. Estelle had it replaced and the neighbor appreciated that -- apparently it had been broken several times before -- but this was the first time someone took responsibility and replaced the window. In the woods in back of our house, there were various kinds of forays down into the woods.

That is how I remember the ambience of my childhood, and politics didn't really impinge. But I do remember the Middle Eastern wars in 1956, the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, which had a big impact on me.

Q: In a family that was quasi-religious, did Israel play much of a role, or did you become involved with religion?

BANDLER: My sisters and I always went to Sunday school and went to the synagogue on the high holy days. We celebrated the Jewish holidays, but we were not very religious. I had a Bar Mitzvah in a famous reformed Synagogue in Philadelphia. I went on to be confirmed at age 16. The synagogue was very social, and I made some good friends there. I remember one of the things I really enjoyed was the comparative religion year. We visited Catholic and Protestant Churches, and talked to people. That was very interesting, and ecumenical. I was always drawn to that.

Israel was an important matter in Jewish life and it was a big thing in Jewish families. After the newspapers wrote articles about Israel my family (the cousins club) would pass around charity cups for handicapped kids and for Israel bonds. But I was always interested in military affairs, I had little toy soldiers and I was interested in battles. I was very focused on the television series called "Victory at Sea." I loved it.

I remember when my sister Amy was born. My father and I, while my mother was giving birth, went to the movies near Pennsylvania Lying-in Hospital. "Victory at Sea" was a fantastic documentary with music by Rogers and Hammerstein. I still see it from time to time in black and white, that opening music with the swelling sea. [Ed: "Victory at Sea was a television series on the NBC network, which first aired on October 26, 1952, and

ran for 26 half hour episodes until May 3, 1953. It was made into a film in 1954.] Later in my Foreign Service career, I was a senior-level political-military officer. The Middle East came back up; I was the Director of the Office of Israel and Israeli Affairs working on Middle East peace for a little less than two years. It wasn't so much Israel the state, but the struggle for the survival of Israel in the different wars. I remember coming home one time, and I honestly don't remember which war it was, but my mother was in tears. The war started badly, may be it was the 1973 Yom Kippur war. She was quite taken apart by that. That was an emotional concern.

Q: As you moved into junior high, did you find any courses that your particularly liked or didn't like? Or teachers you liked or didn't like?

BANDLER: Junior high was basically positive, and I won awards for scientific work with another student. I have good memories of the whole experience; a nice cohort of kids, who I liked, and my circle of friends broadened as we met new kids in Junior High. I played football and then went into soccer. We had very good coaches. I also played on the tennis team. I had good courses. I had a lot of friends.

Rock and Roll was beginning - the Twist (a dance style); Chubby Checker and what not. By seventh and eighth grade there would be a pizza and coke party with Chubby Checker music and the Twist every Friday night. It was a fun era.

Q: Looking back nostalgia-wise, it wasn't bad.

BANDLER: No, it was good and the courses and the teachers were really good. I remember enjoying biology and dissecting my first frog. I always liked English and literature, and I didn't mind spelling. Math was not my strong suit, but it was OK. I participated in student government. I had a good time. It was a very regimented and patriotic school. Here's a good anecdote about the cultural history of America. The Principal of the Junior High was George Washington Kirkpatrick. When I was in eighth grade mini-skirts had come into style, and he banned them from school. He started to send the girls home when the short skirts were above their knees. He would put a sack on them, which he had in his office, so they would go home wearing the sack. The mothers and fathers would come in to complain and then he would start complaining back at them about the mothers having too much make-up and having their nails all done up. So this was a very different America in that respect.

Q: Well in that part of Philadelphia was there any Quaker influence? I'm thinking about war and that type of thing?

BANDLER: Yes, there was Quaker influence. Quite a few of my friends, especially the ones from downtown Philadelphia who I got to know through my synagogue Rodeph Shalom attended Friends schools. I also had cousins who went to those schools and one of them became a prominent Vietnam War protester. Yes, the Quaker theme was definitely around and I was somewhat influenced by it.

Q: By the time you were going through junior high and high school, what books in particular struck you as you grew up?

BANDLER: Off point, but I did do a fair bit of public speaking and liked it. I remember in elementary school memorizing and delivering a long poem in a competition and I won. Then I was in the public speaking contests in junior high school and went into the Optimists oratorical contest and won against very tough competition, a guy named Stan Casper, a year younger than me at the time. He was eleven, and I was maybe twelve, and I won for our region and he came in second. We have been friends ever since. We are still friends; he lives in California. He still claims he did better on that speech than I did and that he was robbed. John Facenda, the big local newscaster, told his mother that actually he had voted for Stan because he felt Stan was better!

But you were asking about books. Let me think about it. Nothing really just comes into mind. I was reading The Hardy Boys (by Frank W. Dixon) and I liked that. I read my way through all of it. I did not particularly like Dickens, or Shakespeare, or Dante's Inferno. I preferred good American novelists. But I'm guessing I probably wasn't doing too much of the curriculum reading; such as Upton Sinclair's The Jungle. Perhaps I didn't have the time or desire to read much on my own. It was later that I became a more avid reader.

Q: Again, at home around the dinner table were there many discussions about things?

BANDLER: Our family ate together frequently and there was plenty of time to discuss issues, sometimes when my father was away my mothers and sisters sided against me but I tried to hold my own. There were a lot of public affairs discussions. My mother was interested in current events, so we spent time debating current issues and politics.

Q: Then you went to high school; this would be 1961. Just before was the Kennedy-Nixon campaign of 1960 affect your interest? This is one of the campaigns which seems to have seized a lot of people.

HARRITON HIGH

BANDLER: Yes, I was in high school from 1961 to 1965 and college from 1965 to 1969. What I recall well, of course, was the Kennedy assassination. I was in high school, the tenth grade. I was sitting in German class. Frau Spielman, who was a German national, heard the loud speaker system. All of the students went under their desks. In a word this scared the heck out of the students. She laughed about it, but it was a nervous laugh. Two people took it terribly amiss. It was such a shock. Almost everyone in my generation remembers where they were when John Kennedy got assassinated on November 22, 1963.

I was very taken with Kennedy, and I watched the Kennedy-Nixon debates. I don't think my political consciousness was strong enough to decipher much of the details. But I would say I was already a little bit of a liberal in my thinking and probably more

conservative on the political military side. I remember, the image of Eisenhower out on the golf courses after WWII was a point of derision. This was corporate America and the prevailing attitude was that the rich will get richer and that was a good thing. Kennedy stood for more opportunity and youth, and a new spirit with more openness to integration and civil rights.

There was one thing I wanted to say about high school and the academic side; I had a great English teacher my junior year. This was honors English, and she, Evelyn Peters, is the one who I think helped to build a literary opening for me. She was just charged up about excellence. We had a very good anthology, a compendium called Man and His Measure, and we spent a whole semester studying excellence and reading good books. Essays, poems, short stories, novels are all clustered around themes, and I think she really was a standout teacher. Another great teacher was Dr. Kauflin. He was also a psychologist, and he had an outstanding psychology class. I truly enjoyed having those classes. In Chemistry, we were doing some real live projects at Harriton. It was a pretty good academic situation.

I was the kind of person who at certain points would dwell for months at a time on things like “What is the universe?” “What is an atom?” You know, thinking about silly conceptual questions for long periods of time. Then there was the atomic bomb. I remember that I went to summer camps in Maine; quite a privilege and a great time. I just loved it. There were many different camps in Maine to consider.

My junior high school math teacher, who went to Harvard, ran one of the camps I attended, Ranger Lodge. It was a very down home camp, where 40 or so campers could swim across to Long Lake and back. The food was horrible though.

I was reminded of the camp because during the summer of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, I was at camp Ranger Lodge. I remember our bunk counselor taking us outside to watch the skies. The stars in that part of the Maine sky were just unbelievable. We slept outside on the basketball court. Our counselor was scared that there was going to be a nuclear exchange with the Soviets. He wanted us to know things that were going on, and that could threaten us, and that we needed to be one with nature. This made an indelible impression on me; laying out there under those stars and hearing about nuclear war and the Russians and Cubans. Of course for my generation, you probably saw parts of this too, but in a different way; the movie On the Beach [1959] with its mushroom cloud exploding. That enhanced our impressions. It certainly makes you think through your mortality, among other things, and that we were very focused on Cuba and the Soviets.

Another camp, Takaho, was a very upper end camp, with great facilities – baseball, volleyball, football, plays, archery, getting up at 5 am, and going to the water’s edge. At Takaho, if we did all of our chores for the week, then we were allowed to have an ice cream cone at Howard Johnson’s. I also went to Camp Powhatan. All this happened in the Long Lake, Ranger Lake and Sebago Lake region, and not too far from Portland Maine.

Q: One question before I forget. I'm trying to chronicle changes in America, did you find having a Jewish background made any difference or had things reached a point where this was not an issue? In my generation, it was.

BANDLER: I think there was something there. In my generation, if you were Jewish you were identified that way. In the schools I attended, approximately a third of the students were Jewish. There were a lot of fights. There was the Purple Gang, which I mentioned to you because I had been friendly to all those guys. When it got to late junior high and high school, they got nasty and they would beat people up; not me, but just the neighborhood guys. They were not Jewish, and they would pick on people who were different. This nasty little gang included Charlie and Steven Biddle; they would pick on someone because they were Jewish. At Ranger Lodge Camp, I was the only Jewish kid there, and I had to fight a few times in that camp because somebody was going to pick on me because I was Jewish. So, I probably had eight or ten fights that season. Rolling around in the mud, head locks, yelling and getting into some tough fights. It is something that was there, and that was part of our identity. I think it probably changed over the years, but maybe not so much as one might think.

Take an era like today. There is a lot of talk under the surface about the extent to which the war is being driven by Jewish people who are around President Bush, such as Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz. I think it helps me in some ways as I developed a conscience - that I was not exactly like the average American and therefore I needed to be respectful of all differences in society. On the other hand, however, I think this goes for me and a lot of other people, Jews recognize that America has been incredibly accommodating, but not faultless. There were some things that could have been done differently, like FDR's (Franklin Delano Roosevelt) stand on not allowing refugee ships to land in New York and a few other things, tremendously open, welcoming, generous too. This is true in more than virtually any other culture.

Q: I assume like most major cities the inner core of Philadelphia had a large African-American community. Did these urban problems and issues intrude where you were?

BANDLER: Not really. I think I described the general neighborhood and the socio-economic situation. Beyond that there was the Main Line with the Merion Cricket Club and other clubs. We were only ten to fifteen minutes away. Bryn Mawr and Haverford were both very upper end, and the Main Line was considered to be "old wealth." On the other side, nearer to us was Belmont Hills - actually up on a hill, and it looked like a small Italian hill town that you might see in Tuscany today. This was considered to be lower middle class. I had one friend who lived next to a gas station, and we spent a lot of time there. It was an interesting introduction to socio-economics. Of the male kids from Belmont Hills, probably 70% ended up in the Vietnam War. This is a well-known phenomenon so I won't belabor it.

The African-American community started near the city line, about 3 or 4 miles away, and north and West Philadelphia had some neighborhoods with serious issues. I would drive through them. A lot of people wouldn't or won't go there. I never felt too threatened or

uncomfortable by going into those neighborhoods.

At the time, Wilt Chamberlin was playing basketball at a very high level first for the Philadelphia Warriors from 1959-62 and then for the 76ers from 1964-68. His skills were astounding, notably scoring 100 points in a professional game. That was a tremendous influence in those days, particularly since Wilt was born and raised in Philadelphia. My uncle, Dr. Stanley Lorber was the team doctor and would sit on the bench by Chamberlain and the other players during the games. Sometimes he would get me in to watch a game.

We had a live-in housekeeper who really helped bring my family up. She was an African-American woman, Hattie Johnson. She died a number of years ago. We were all incredibly attached to her. She was a wonderful person, and in many ways she was an emotional second mother to me and my siblings. While my mother was demanding, on most occasions she was giving and supportive. We were taken care of to be sure. When Hattie wasn't with my family, she lived in a very rough part of north Philadelphia and had a little house. Frequently I would drive her home on her days off.

My father's furniture store was downtown on Market Street. I would work and help him in the summer times, near Connie Mack Stadium in north Philadelphia. It was literally burned out, horrible looking, and that was emblazoned in my mind. I definitely had a strong leaning toward integration, and civil rights. I got more involved in civil rights advocacy later in my life, after College.

KENYON

Q: You graduated from high school in 1964, I take it college was very much in the cards for you? What were you thinking about doing in college?

BANDLER: I had compiled a good academic record at Harriton High School, there were two high schools in the area and this was a new one out near Villanova, Pennsylvania, a public school. I ranked high in my class had a couple of near 800 boards, and I had done a lot of activities. I looked at Ivy League schools almost predominantly, either it was one of the most competitive years of all time, which it was a very competitive year as the baby boom generation against made itself felt. It seemed there were always classes with not enough chairs, say 29 chairs and 37 students. Harvard, Yale and Cornell, and I got on the waiting list for two, so I was scrambling, you know I didn't apply to enough schools. I was probably overconfident and I think maybe there was a...the guidance counselor and I did not see eye-to-eye. So I got into a couple of other, you know, there was no safe school on my original list. So a friend of mine had gone to Kenyon College and really liked it, and so I was accepted there lickety-split and into a couple of other place, but I chose Kenyon, partly because I liked this guy. He was saying great things about Kenyon. Interestingly another guy, one year younger than me, virtually the same thing happened to him, so he came to Kenyon because I had and the other guy had. We all liked it.

It was a very interesting small liberal arts men's college at that time. It is now co-

educational and much larger in size. It was 680 men in the middle of rural Ohio, totally different from anything I had known. It had a strong literary tradition, including the Kenyon Review as well as an Episcopalian Theological Seminary. While at Kenyon I did a lot of roaming around central Ohio looking for dates and a normal social life. It was rather reminiscent of the movie Animal House (1978).

Q: Where did you go for girls?

BANDLER: We went to Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio; Dennison - but Dennison had barriers up because there were men there that didn't want the Kenyon guys taking their dates; Ohio State, but we thought it was too big. We also went to Lake Erie College for women, or back over to Chatham College in Pittsburg. We had to travel. These were weekend road trips.

Q: I had the same experience going to Williams College in western Massachusetts. Road trips. But now as far as your studies, were you pointed toward anything?

BANDLER: Kenyon was a very strong teaching college. It had first class professors; a particularly strong political science department, which I loved. I was asked to do a double major in Political Science and Economics. I also had a great course on Thomas Mann, and I learned to read German literature with Professor Hecht.

We started out with a two day seminar to gather, with an advanced reading list, into discussion groups. Obviously, there was an excellent literature department. Poetry was featured, as was a lot of English literature in Kenyon's gothic buildings and its lovely old churches. The Kenyon Review was a small but high quality literature magazine. Re economics, I was asked to major in that subject and I almost did but decided to major in Political Science. No doubt Kenyon had a top notch economics teaching faculty. The Kenyon professors were very dedicated people. The Religion and theology classes I took with professor Don Rogan were great classes. Comparative religion was really great stuff.

Q: Now you were on campus from 1965 to 1969 when there were two major social events occurring. Let's first talk about the civil rights movement, because this was the beginning of the Great Society and Lyndon Johnson's legislative agenda.

BANDLER: I'm not sure I would call Kenyon a liberal arts college, even though it might have a bit of flavor from the outside. First, the campus had a lot of people from Ohio; now, it has become more cosmopolitan with a national reputation. The students were often seen as having a very liberal background in a very middle-America. For example, Mount Vernon, Ohio is known as an all-American city. It was only an 8 hour drive or so to Gambier from my home in Philadelphia. It is the town where Dillinger's gang robbed in the People's Bank of Gambier in 1933. It seemed to be in good shape by the time I arrived at Kenyon. Jonathan Winters, Olof Palme and especially Paul Newman are some of the rich and famous who went to Kenyon. The three of them shared a triple room. All of them were patronized at a small bar called Dorothy's. I didn't go there much. Kenyon has a very good acting program. Paul Newman and his wife have been down to the

theater, and given money to the college. All of those three had amazingly interesting careers; Olof Palme became Sweden's President after he left Kenyon, Jonathan Winters, who wanted to play football, ended up in Hollywood as a comedian and actor; and Paul Newman, who we all know, was a terrific actor.

I studied with the likes of Professors Robert A. Goldwin (my father-in-law), Harry Clor, Herr Hecht and "Fightin' Bob" Horowitz. These men had a profound influence on me. Professor Horowitz and I played handball at school, and in later years we played squash. He was open-minded in the classroom, and he encouraged us to read the great books, especially Aristotle. On one occasion he brought a rifle into the classroom, and we were quite surprised to see him brandishing it, but he was using it as a teaching tool in reference to the 2nd amendment of the Constitution. I was particularly interested in Greek and Roman literature, and that fanned some early interest in the classics. I actually ended up getting my Master's Degree in the classics from St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico, but that comes later.

But you were trying to get on to politics and civil rights. The Political Science faculty was a really first class faculty. It was centered on ex-University of Chicago renegades who basically lost the battle of teaching political philosophy versus political science. The students of Professor Leo Strauss from the University of Chicago have been dubbed neo-conservatives. Some of these students who went on to be eminent professors are Walter Burns, Allen Bloom, Robert Goldwin, Joseph Cropsey, Robert Horowitz, Harry Clor, Martin Diamond and many other graduates of Leo Straus and the political philosophy school. They think it is the Greeks, it is Machiavelli, Locke, Hobbes, and Rousseau. It's the American founders who are tremendous followers of the American founding and the whole inter-relationship between Madison and Locke. But on the ideals level, as well as the political level, it was just great. I got involved and I majored in it.

During the summer of 1968 after my junior year at Kenyon, my friend John Kaufman and I went on a student ship that sailed from New York to Southampton, in the U.K. We spent a few days in England and then we bought a small car for about \$175 and met some International students who were interested in travelling to the Continent with us. We took a ship to Calais and started driving onward to Paris, France.

When we arrived in Paris, the traffic was in a horrendous snarl. The Left wing students were protesting in the streets for reform of the "bourgeois" university system and an end to the "police state." Both French and German student leaders were making the decisions about which car would be allowed to go through the barricades that had been set up by the French police in hopes of keeping the protests contained. However, the students had taken over and were deciding if a car could go through or not. Most fortunately, our Japanese guitar playing traveling buddy leaned out of the window, singing and playing his guitar. The radical left student group saw us – and waved us right through so we were able to get to the Left Bank, near St. Michel.

I also recall in my junior year at Kenyon that the best seminar I ever attended was the John Locke seminar, taught by Bob Goldwin. He was a great teacher and a Locke

scholar. We spent a whole semester on one chapter (chapter seven) On Property. The theme of On Property is increase, which is the key to Locke's philosophy. Our professors were conservative, center right, sometimes right, sometimes far right in political complexion. Anyway, in the spring of my junior year, after I was in the seminar, my professor Bob Goldwin invited the whole class, which was about 18 or 19 people, to his home. We were having a cocktail party, and Bob Goldwin was serving a pretty potent punch. I'm assuming that was when the drinking age was 18. His daughter, Jane, showed up in Gambier with her friend Hannah, for a weekend visit from her College. Her younger sister Liz and her brother Seth were younger and lived in Gambier. Jane had come home from St. John's College in Annapolis, MD for some days and I met her that night at the party. Well, we wound up getting married --and I remember thinking then, "That's my wife, she will be the mother of my children."

So, I have gotten to know the Goldwin family very well over the years. I had a wonderful and interesting relationship with my former professor and current father-in-law. We didn't get along as well during the Vietnam War era. I was a war protester and I was in the main stream of the student movement. I had a high lottery number, so I didn't have to worry about going to the Vietnam War. I was certainly protesting it, and I remember at Kenyon that two friends of mine engineered a walk-out when Bob Goldwin, soon to be my father-in-law, invited a very conservative speaker from Chicago, Morris Abram. He ended up in foreign policy on the human rights side of things, and was an esteemed conservative human rights thinker. My friends engineered a walk-out, and the political science faculty really took this very seriously. They wanted them thrown out of school--this is not civil discourse, you don't walk out; this is the liberal tradition. So that was one of the numerous points of tension and conflict of that era, protesting, drugs, and rock music.

I remember we had a concert series at Kenyon in the course of the year where I met Charles Lloyd, a progressive, far out saxophone jazz player. So, Jane's dad, Bob Goldwin attended the concert and I asked him, after the concert, whether he liked it. The students virtually all loved it. It was a wonderful counter culture kind of thing. Bob didn't like it though. "How could I like it?" he said. "You can't even tap your feet to that music." It was better when Sam and Dave came for the spring dance. Their music, allowed more unity between the faculty and students, all generations could tap their feet to the music and enjoy it together.

So, I have gotten to know the Goldwin family very well over the years. I had a wonderful and interesting relationship with my former professor and current father-in-law. We didn't get along as well during the Vietnam War era. I was a war protester and I was in the main stream of the student movement. I had a high lottery number, so I didn't have to worry about going to the Vietnam War. I was certainly protesting it, and I remember at Kenyon that two friends of mine engineered a walk-out when Bob Goldwin, soon to be my father-in-law, invited a very conservative speaker from Chicago, Morris Abram. He ended up in foreign policy on the human rights side of things, and was an esteemed conservative human rights thinker. My friends engineered a walk-out, and the political science faculty really took this very seriously. They wanted them thrown out of school--

this is not civil discourse, you don't walk out; this is the liberal tradition. So that was one of the numerous points of tension and conflict of that era, protesting, drugs, and rock music.

Q: What about, you mentioned that the faculty there were some sort of refugees from the University of Chicago, did the Hutchison University of Chicago Great Books thing, was that part of the core...

BANDLER: You know this about me, or you just guessing!? That's very prescient of you. That was an interesting movement. Leo Strauss, whom I mentioned, this whole generation of conservative thinkers; Leo Strauss, Robert Goldwin, Allen Bloom, Paul Wolfowitz, Abe Solski at the Pentagon, Richard Perle, and numerous others were part of the University of Chicago political philosophy group. The bestselling 1987 book, The Closing of the American Mind by Allen Bloom, was read on campus and elsewhere;

Allen Bloom was a key person on the ground of the next generation and the first generation of "neocons." There was a whole coterie then, and I came to know many of them; Terrance Marshall, St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland; Hutchison's creation; and Bob Goldwin of course. When he left Kenyon, he became the Dean of St. John's College, and my wife to-be was a student at St. Johns and the Great Books.

I think this is a brilliant method of teaching; to start with a very well thought through open question and have the students lead themselves through profound thoughts.

Q: Was this method being used at Kenyon or was it using a different approach?

BANDLER: Yes, but very little. It is interesting that it wasn't used very much, because the seminars were quite interactive. St. Johns was known for its tutorials and preceptorials; these were very formal, twice a week, two and a half hour seminars. The seminars did not previously exist at Kenyon College, but Goldwin instituted them, with the establishment of the Public Affairs Conference Center. It was one of the most exciting things we had on campus. He brought the idea with him from the University of Chicago, where he had established a conference center based on the St. John's style of seminar discussions. He organized a seminar once a year at Kenyon and then it led to a book. Each seminar was based on big subjects, such as civil rights in America. I became involved in Conferences and really appreciated that he brought such interesting people to Kenyon to be the participants. Professor Goldwin made a point of inviting prominent leaders from all different viewpoints to come together to discuss topics such as civil disobedience. James Farmer, an African-American civil rights leader was there as well as Paul Goodman, best known as a social critic and anarchist philosopher but also a prominent civil rights activist on the pacifist left. He was a somewhat cranky and unique thinker. Robert Novak, a very conservative media commentator out of the Chicago area and Donald Rumsfeld were also part of the conference to discuss civil disobedience. This was a really interesting mix of speakers on the right, left and center. In fact, the book that

came out of the conference is called Right, Left and Center. It is a very serious and relevant Political Science discourse.

Civil Disobedience was quite relevant in those days. I remember the year between high school and college (1965), I spent the summer hitchhiking from where I lived in Pennsylvania to California and back. When I traveled through the Deep South with my 2 high school buddies, we were stopped in Ocean Springs Mississippi by someone who was after white “civil rights’ workers. This was only six months to a year after James Cheney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan near Philadelphia, Mississippi [Ed: murdered the night of June 21–22, 1964]. We lived through that era and my experience that summer in the South had a big influence on my life. I was able to see that civil disobedience was a real commitment to change. From my experiences that summer as I traveled through the South, I recognized the bravery of the Freedom Fighters and their efforts to save American cities from burning along with the minds, souls and hearts of America.

Q: Did international affairs, because you will eventually end up in this particular kettle, did that intrude much in what you were doing?

BANDLER: It was always there and I was always interested, perhaps in part because of Israel, but it goes well beyond that. In college at Kenyon, it did not have a great international curriculum--it was more political philosophy, and more international relations. However, we did focus on reading from other cultures and in some ways, perhaps, that is more instructive and significant than studying international relations.

St Johns

Q: Today is April 17, 2003. Don, we are at 1969, you said you were going to do some alternative teaching after Kenyon, what did you mean?

BANDLER: I meant that I considered going to law school and had been accepted at a couple of good law schools, but instead of that I chose to teach from 1969 to 1971 in Annapolis, Maryland, in a private school called the Key School. Teaching was an alternative to joining the Military and going to Vietnam in those years. I had a high draft number so it was unlikely that I would be drafted but it felt right to do something for our country besides military service. The Key school was a Kindergarten through 12th grade program, which was related in some ways to St. John’s College. It had St. Johns faculty on the Board and some of the founders of the St John’s Great Books curriculum set up the Key School as an experiment in education. The students did a K to 12 curriculum which used some of St. John’s educational methods, such as the seminars, great books, reading original books rather than text books, that sort of thing.

Q: How did you find that took?

BANDLER: By the time I got there, I think the grand experiment about replicating St. Johns in a K through 12 school had kind of worn away. I was attracted to seminars and

interactive teaching, so I pursued it some and I also enjoying reading original sources. So I taught eleventh and twelfth grade history and there were plenty of opportunities and the pleasure of education younger people.

Q: Where did the student body come from?

BANDLER: From the wider Annapolis Maryland neighborhoods.

Q: Was this a conscience effort to reach into the Black community, or not.

BANDLER: No actually, not per se. For myself, my wife-to-be was going to St. John's at the time, so I was attracted to the idea. Instead of going to law school, I decided to put that on the shelf, and live a little and do some teaching, traveling. I moved to Annapolis and got this teaching job and also started going to St. Johns in Santa Fe, New Mexico to take a Master's program in the summer time. It is true that I joined the OEO, Office of Equal Opportunity. In Annapolis the OEO was a community based organization and also a center for what you might call racial politics and civil rights activity. That was interesting to do. And there was at the public high school near the Key School where a riot broke out one time, it was actually a food fight in the cafeteria. Several civil rights leaders who also happened to be associated with the OEO had come in and were community activists, responsible people working within the system, but civil rights in Annapolis in the 1960s was quite different from Annapolis of today. The students were expelled from the public school. Some of the fellow teachers and I suggested, so that they didn't get knocked out of school, offering them a private school scholarship. That is what happened. This became a very controversial subject at Key School, including with the board and the principal who had made the decision to do that was fired at the end of that year. These kids, there were two of them, and they were very bright, one has emerged as a real leader, a major civic leader in Annapolis. Carl Snowden is his name. They did well. They made it, we got them through their senior year in high school. They graduated and went on to college and did things. Several of the teachers quit in protest. Some of my colleagues there were returned first generation Peace Corps, for example Andy and June Hanson, notably Kennedy Peace Corps people who had been in Africa. I was interested in Africa and Europe, and I had been thinking anyway that it was time to travel and see the world.

We designed an international education abroad for Key School, and I ran it. It was a one off event. I took a small group of five students, who were seniors, and we traveled all around Europe, starting at Edinburgh. We took a long bicycle trip from Edinburgh to London. We studied English literature in the lake countries. When we got to London, the students spent six months living with families in other parts of Europe. During that time I tracked the progress of the students -- some in Spain, some in Germany, etc. It was a very idyllic adventure, and I spent a year there. I used that year to obtain a job working for the Ministry of Education at the Northwest state in Nigeria for the following two years.

During the spring of 1972, while the students were living with families, Jane and I married in Paris. All of the students who were studying abroad with me attended our

wedding. We had some time to kill before moving to Nigeria. As Jane always wanted to be a potter and she applied for and received an apprenticeship in Ireland. We moved to Ireland for her apprenticeship and I worked on a farm for three or four months for one of the very few Protestant farmers in the Irish Republic. From Ireland we went back to St. Johns again for the summer Master's program, and then off for two years in Nigeria.

Wedding and Ireland

Q: We're going to pick up a piece here of the wedding, which was on 27 of March, 1972, and you were saying you were married in Paris?

BANDLER: Yes, Jane and I were married in a suburb of Paris, called Saint-Maur. Jane had relatives in Paris, the Tfirst family. They were delightful. They were so open to all of us and we just loved them. The family was made up of two daughters, a son, a mother, and a father. Over a period of many years we all tried to get together as much as possible. Mostly it was us going to Paris and being with them because they didn't travel very much in the U.S. One of them was a model. She's quite beautiful, and her husband Jean-Claude was a race car driver. I liked cars and race cars, although I have never really been in a real race. About a year or two later we were meeting up in the ski country in France and Italy. He was driving, and having been a race car driver he just loved to put down the pedal. So, the time when he should not have put his foot on the pedal was when he went up on top of this hill and there were two roads intersecting, relatively small traffic. Jean-Claude got to the top, and the other driver smashed into him. He was in the hospital for about two or three months, and then he died from AIDS, which he contracted from one of the blood transfusions. That was unfortunate because that was close family for us. He was a little too crazy, a little bit too much speed.

Q: How was it that you knew this French family?

MRS. BANDLER: The father, Jean Tfirst was the son of a Viennese family. He actually was a Vienna Choir boy and his mother was a relative of Jane's mother's family, Daisy Lateiner (Goldwin). His mother was Jewish but his father wasn't, and he wasn't raised Jewish. In fact, from the age of 5 he was raised in the ?? due to being one of the Vienna Choir boys. He went to France just before the World War II. He fled Vienna because he didn't want to serve in the army. His met his wife while in France and they married and he became a French citizen. I never heard him speak German. Jane's family lost contact with him, but Jane's uncle did genealogy as a hobby. When he did his family tree he found Jean Tfirst, in France, after the war. We have remained friendly with the family.

BANDLER: By a lake.

Q: So you guys got married and were hanging around France?

MRS. BANDLER: Yes. We were married in 1972. I was working in London while Don was traveling around with his students from Key School. We thought it would be romantic to get married in Paris. The Tfirst family agreed that I could come and live with

them in order to fulfill the French requirements for foreigners to marry in France; you had to live in the country for three consecutive months, post banns and go through other required formalities. We were the first all American couple to be married in the suburb of St. Maur. After we were married on March 24, we went to Ireland for several months.

BANDLER: Jane was working in a pottery and the potter said I had to have a job or I would be a distraction to Jane and her focus on learning pottery. Brendan Dwyer lived across the street from us in the small town of Duleek, Ireland. He owned the pub, and he also had a chicken hatchery.

BANDLER: My first day on the job I had to learn how to handle the chickens with Brendan Dwyer. The coop where the chickens lived was about three and a half feet high, and it had about 1,000 chickens in there. I had to pick them up; they go upside down with their feet between your fingers. I had to try to get three of them at a time in one hand. Basically I could only get one chicken at a time, because they come up and they start pecking you. So after my first two hours I quit. That was the fastest quitting I ever did in my life.

BANDLER: Then I got a farm job, which was a good job indeed, with me milking the cows the old fashioned way. Eventually, the farmer got the new fashioned milk machines, with the tubes and suction cups, so that was an improvement. And, I had a drunken farm hand who was supposed to work alongside me and teach me what to do, but he was quite inebriated on any given day.

MRS. BANDLER: He was the farmhand that Don worked with all day, every day, so Don did most of the work. The Farmer liked Don a lot because he said Don was young and strong.

BANDLER: Nothing like being young and innocent.

NIGERIA 1972-1974

MRS. BANDLER: From Ireland we went to Nigeria from 1972 to 1974 and taught. We were hired by the Nigerian government to teach in government schools.

Q: And yours was a program that the Nigerian government had recruited people-

BANDLER: They recruited us from England.

MRS. BANDLER: Most of the expatriate teachers in Nigeria were recruited from India and Pakistan. In the 1970s Nigeria did not have enough educated Nigerians to teach in the schools, so they were hiring people from other countries.

BANDLER: We were in the small town of Bida, Nigeria, which is in the West Central part of the country. We would go occasionally to Kaduna because it was a relatively close City. Kaduna had one Western style modern hotel with a swimming pool. There were no

swimming pools in Bida and not a single Western style hotel. In fact we had no running water in our house.

BANDLER: We had a big barrel of water on our front porch. There were issues, there.

MRS. BANDLER: Every morning our students would carry buckets of water to our house to fill our rain barrels, and that was our water supply.

BANDLER: We had modern a bathroom in our house with a shower and all the modern plumbing. However, the water supply station was built on low land and our house was on a hill so the water never, ever ran into our pipes. The only solution we could figure out was to put up bamboo screening on the porch, next to the rain barrels so we could take our showers outside by pouring the water over our heads with a cup. Very Peace Corps.

Q: But this was the Nigerian job then, upcountry teacher.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes. That was when we were teaching in Nigeria. Don was teaching many subjects in a Government Teacher Training School. I was teaching English in a Government College Prep School.

BANDLER: I remember one special day when we decided to barbeque. We dug a hole near the side of our house, put some firewood in there and we barbequed a piece of meat on the fire. It was the first time we had had eaten meat in God knows how long. The meat was grilling on a good wood fire when Jane and I went inside to get something for the dinner. When we came back out the fire had gotten so hot it caught the very dry grasses on fire that were outside the BBQ pit. There was no way for us to contain it. The fire burned for what seemed to us to be about 50 miles until it reached the Bako river.

MRS. BANDLER: There was nothing we could do to stop it.

BANDLER: So I was absolutely appalled that we had caused such a big burning destructive fire. I was very worried, and was sure this would be a big disaster and the talk of the town. It was horrible. I had to get to the Principal immediately to make sure that he knew what had happened. So I went to the Principal, Malam Anagi, and he said that we shouldn't worry about it; the grasses are always supposed to burn anyway. That's just the way it is in Nigeria until the river stops the fire.

We had another interesting story too. We got to know two families who lived on either side of us in Bida. One family was from India (Kerala) and the other family was from Pakistan. They were very generous and hospitable neighbors. They were both arguing to have us come to dinner at their house, so they could show off their cuisines. The Indians were talking about how much better their food was, and the Pakistanis vice versa. That was great for us as we ended up getting great food.

MRS. BANDLER: We helped the competition and worked the situation to our benefit. We loved both cuisines and were always ready to be invited. So, after a meal at the

Indians we would stop by at the Pakistanis and say what a delicious dinner we had the night before. We knew we would then get a dinner invitation from our Pakistani friends for the next night so we could brag to the Indians about how delicious it had been.

BANDLER: Also while in Nigeria we roved around in our car, our little orange VW, and we drove up the coast and had a very nice time. We drove to Ghana and instead of staying in a hotel we slept on the beach. We slept on a picnic table in Accra, Ghana. So we hit four or five countries and some of those countries had the land had been washed away so it was a pretty bad situation. I don't know how it is now but it was pretty bad then.

Q: Tales of Africa.

BANDLER: Yes. That reminds me that back then, even in that era, I was interested in photography. Malam Anagi lent me his Nikon camera. It was really a first class one, and he let me use it all over the place. I've got about 600 to 700 Kodak slides from our 2 years in Nigeria. But eventually it led us to an art school in Glamorgan in Wales, where Jane and I really enjoyed exploring photography and pottery.

Q: When you arrived in 1972, how would you describe the situation in Nigeria?

BANDLER: First of all we were going to work in the Northwest State. So, Nigeria was under the leadership at that time of General Yakubu Gowon, who was from one of the minority tribes. I would say that if you look over the sweep of time, he was one of their best moderates. He was a member of a minority tribe, in favor of multi-tribal, multi-ethnic and relative prosperity in Nigeria.

Our conditions were definitely sparse: no running water for two years: no air conditioners; sometimes very little electricity. We loved the students. Jane and I were both teaching. I was developing universal primary education programs, which was an important initiative in Nigeria. Many of our colleagues in teaching were part of a kind of a domestic Peace Corps which Nigeria had created -- in part to get members of the Ibo Tribe to live in the North, where the Hausa tribe was the majority. The goal was to try to get more of a tribal mix in different parts of the country.

Q: Now, you were where? And what was the tribal group there?

BANDLER: A small town called Bida. The majority tribal group there was Nupe, about 600,000 people. They had their own tribal language, which was a 5 tonal language. Jane and I took lessons from the Irish nuns who lived in Bida. They had written the language and made a grammar book so they could teach the language to the missionaries. But the dominant culture was Hausa, Fulani and in this case Nupe. We travelled all over the country. We were one of the few Americans in Nigeria because the Peace Corps had been kicked out just after the Biafran War. The war was from July 1967 to January 1970. The Peace Corps ended its presence in 1970, two years before we arrived. The story goes that the Peace Corps was kicked out because one of the Peace Corps volunteers wrote a

postcard home to friends in the States. It was pulled out of the mail and read by Government censors (as if that person was encouraging revolution and the Nigerian civil war). The Government decided they did not like what was being said about their country by American guests and they decided to kick out the Peace Corps. There weren't very many Americans in Nigeria when we were there. There were British volunteers and Canadians, but we were the lone Americans in that part of the country. It was a fascinating time.

Q: What was the status of Biafra at that time?

BANDLER: There was no longer any Biafra. At that time there were nine or ten states in Nigeria, the one we were in, Northwest State, we were in the far southern part of the State in Bida which is about one hundred miles north of the Niger River, which bisects the country – and it goes progressively towards the Saharan Desert.

The capital of the State was Sokoto, which is an ancient city on the gold and salt roads through the desert there. There were mud houses and camels through the city. The whole state was Muslim.

We got a horse. The whole idea was that Jane would ride the horse to her school, because she was in a different school from me and where we lived. That project floundered because the horse reared up at any bridge, so we couldn't get it to go over bridges.

We had a great time, getting to know the Nigerians. It was a dynamic country and people were smart, energetic and had a decent educational level.

There is a lot of commercial dynamism in Nigeria and Nupe land in particular. Unfortunately, Nigeria has had a devil of a time creating sustained good governance. So, there were tremendous problems of corruption and tribal competition. They have had a lot of military rule. Nigeria has over one hundred million people. They tried to do a census when we were there. Like many censuses, it was harder to do that you would think it might be. There were three big tribal groups that compete.

Q: How did you find the educational system within the context of the corruption and bad governance you mentioned? Was there a good delivery system?

BANDLER: I would say, "Not." The educational system was based on the British colonial inheritance. The teaching method was largely a system where the students were taught to regurgitate what the teacher writes up on the board. The students would write it down in their blue book and at the end of the year the students would have an exam. They would do well in the exam if they memorized everything in the blue book and wrote it on the exam. Teaching was simply done to pass the exams. The fact that the reading list was British derived, wasn't too bad, but the educational system was totally lacking in what I think is so great about American education; which is problem solving, people thinking on their own two-feet, learning to express themselves clearly, and debating great questions and issues. Of course students need to also learn a corpus of information. I saw it as too

much regurgitation, without a balance of questioning and discussion.

Q: I talked to somebody who later, in the mid-1980s went to Nigeria, to go to university to teach and said it was impossible; essentially the students had shut down the universities. How were things when you were there?

BANDLER: There were two or three big universities in and around us. Ibadan, was the closest one to us, and that was pretty functional. There would be an occasional student strike, but it was pretty good. There was Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, which was about 200-250 miles from us. We went through towns in our orange VW. We also went through the beginning of the real northern Sahelian part of Nigeria. Some of the good universities are in the Ibadan, Ife, and Ibo areas. The Ibo tended to excel in education.

I wanted to mention the domestic teachers' core. We had graduates from the great universities in Nigeria in Bida with us, and got to know them well. They were well educated people, with a British-derived education. By the time you are in high school, you are taking your "O" levels, and if you finish your "O" levels in math you are considered a mathematician. They concentrate early.

Q: Did you find in the students and the system, if you did well in high school, could you keep moving up the system, or was it one of these things where it eventually boiled down to it was whom your family knew for jobs and positions?

BANDLER: Old boy networks, tribal affiliation and family affiliation, counted for a lot in Nigeria. Who you were and who you knew counted even more in Nigeria than it did in Western Europe or the United States. Of course, it makes a difference all over the place, but I would say even more so in Nigeria. If a family member becomes successful or wealthy in Nigeria, his whole family expects to be taken care of by him. In the Muslim area of Nigeria where we lived a family can be quite extensive, with four wives who might have a dozen children, and then grandchildren and cousins. And, in effect, the tribe is considered a great extended family. So, the number of people who rely on a successful member grows fast and becomes a very big responsibility.

Q: I've been told in the Foreign Service he who marries an African woman is marrying a very extended family which will expect him to care for them. But, did you find while you were there that coming from a Muslim area...was there a different approach to education? The student goes so far and, in a way, his intellectual curiosity is knocked out.

BANDLER: Well, as I said, I think that the system is pretty good at knocking out intellectual curiosity. Let me give you a specific. One of the things in my teaching there is that I worked with students on current events and I would raise issues and frequently try to debate them, to go back and forth on the big issues of the day. My wife tried to do the same at her school. We were not trying to change the system, it wasn't all we were doing, but we were trying to take a segment of the class time to do things like formal debates and discussions. At one point one of the leaders of the class came up to me, discretely, and asked me if have a private discussion. I said, "sure." So the thrust of the

discussion was, “Mr. Bandler, we like you very much, you are a very good teacher. Thank you very much, but, you know, no more debates please. Soon we are having our blue book exams. There are only three more months to go, and we would prefer if you would just stick to the curriculum.” Actually, there was no curriculum other than trying to figure out what these exam questions would be. I persisted with the hybrid, and I think nobody really revolted so it was OK.

Q: During these two years, 1972-74, what were you pointed towards?

BANDLER: I had spent a year in Europe and was now experiencing two years of living in Africa. I was getting bitten by the international bug. I was enjoying living the international life and learning the different cultures and languages. I was starting to think about what to do after Nigeria, and I had a couple of different instincts. I was doing an awful lot of photography and it was coming out well. I was thinking about doing photojournalism. There is a great photography program at the University of New Mexico, Beaumont Newhall. I was considering applying for an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) there and going in that direction, or the Foreign Service.

So I have a Foreign Service anecdote for this interview. In Nigeria, the system of government was the old colonial system, called the G.O. or Government Orders. One of the Government Orders was that you could only leave your government post twice a year, because in the old days, if a river washed out a bridge, it could take you six months to get back to you worked. So they were very cautious about people traveling. When we got to Bida, it took a while to get into our house. So we stayed at a guest house, terrible accommodations, terrible food. Then we moved into the house assigned us only to discover there wasn't much electricity, there wasn't water. So we needed R and R (rest and relaxation) from time to time, so we would go to Kaduna and stay in a nice hotel, the Hamdala Hotel, and spend the weekend swimming, if nothing else to cool off. Very hot place. Bida was in a valley surrounded by seven big hills or mini-mountains, so there were all the worse circumstances of weather inversion. We used up our two official trips, so we were looking for a third. I went to the head master, the principal, and said, “I am going to take the Foreign Service exam at our consulate in Kaduna. Can I have a special exemption to make this trip?” He got it cleared and I went up there, went to the Consulate in Kaduna, and took the Foreign Service exam. Both Ambassador Pete Chaveas and I remember him administering the exam. We were both looking good, he in a suit and me in my dashiki. By then I had meet a few people from the embassy.

After taking the exam we became friendly with one of the young Foreign Service officers in Kaduna. He came to visit us in Bida. He brought us some American food (peanut butter, canned goods). He was rather shocked by our sub-standard living quarters and ended up staying for only a few hours.

We had two dogs, Yawa and Kai, and we had a house keeper. We thought we were living rather luxuriously....

Joining the Foreign Service

During the summer of 1973, I went to St John's College graduate school in Santa Fe, New Mexico. On the way from Nigeria to New Mexico Jane and I stopped in Brussels to see her parents who were posted at USNATO. Jane's father was there with Donald Rumsfeld, who held the title Permanent Representatives from February 1973 to December 1974. Jane's father, Robert Goldwin, was a senior policy advisor, a newly created position. So we were exposed to Foreign Service life during this visit. I had been thinking about the Foreign Service anyway, as I had taken the exam recently. The whole life style looked great to me. I remember I met people, including Steve Ledogar, the Political Counselor and Jim Goodby, who was the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission). Everyone was friendly and it just looked wonderful. I think that experience in Brussels really set my aspirations toward the Foreign Service. I forgot about photography and thought this is what I want to do.

Q: Then you took the oral exam?

BANDLER: I took the written exam and the results came back. It was a crawling pace in those days you will recall. The results probably came in some time in the late fall of 1973. We were leaving Nigeria and coming back to the States in the summer of 1974, so we settled in to Washington D.C. I took the oral exams sometime in early 1975. I passed, and it took another year before I joined the Foreign Service in June, 1976.

By the way we had a friend, Chuck Butterworth, a professor at University of Maryland, he was the one who- I was interested in going into the Foreign Service so Chuck Butterworth said alright, well let me get you in touch with a professor of mine and maybe he can give you some tips. So we get on the phone and he asked me some really arcane questions in American history, none of which I did well on, and he said well, at the end of the conversation he said gee, I'm sorry, Mr. Bandler, I think you should just forget about this. You're not meant for the Foreign Service so if I were you I would just, you know, go do something else. I said well thank you very much and you know, maybe six months later I was in the Foreign Service.

Q: Do you recall any of the questions in the oral interview?

BANDLER: I do. One of them was, you were at a diplomatic reception, the United States has just done a nuclear test. You show up at the reception, I think they set it in a Third World country, maybe Nigeria, you are out in the middle of the reception and the Indian ambassador comes up to you in a confrontational mode and begins to criticize the United States for persisting in nuclear testing. "How do you respond, Mr. Bandler?" Of course, don't ask me now how I responded (laughter).

Q: From 1975 to 1976 I used to ask those questions. It is a lot easier to ask them than answer them!

BANDLER: I thought it was a good question. It is the kind of thing one thinks about is required in the Foreign Service, learning to think on your feet. How do you deal with

people when you are out there under the klieg lights handling tough questions?

Q: How did you wife feel about this? Was she interested in the Foreign Service?

BANDLER: I think she was, but did not pursue it was a vengeance, I would say. When we went back in 1974, by the spring of 1976 two things happened. One, I joined the 125th entering A-100 class and was sworn in on June 7. But just before that in April our first daughter was born. So Jane had been a little busy on that front and she was going to graduate school at the time and she was doing a Masters in Montessori teaching

A-100 Course

Q: How did you find the A-100 course, the basic officer course?

BANDLER: I thought it was very good. It was well organized. There was always something to do. There was, and I found this frequently to be the case over the years, there is too much "talking at," too much briefing. So if you get a great briefer and he or she is funny and transmits a lot of information, it is wonderful. Otherwise, it is less so. I think A-100 could have used a little more interactivity when it came to Consular Affairs. You do some exercises. But a lot of it was sitting in a seat being talked to, and Q's and A's, i.e., questions and answers. Compared to the other end of the career when I did the senior seminar, in 1993-94, it was the same thing. You bring in the expert, he or she gives a lecture and then the speaker conducts a Q and A session. I thought for very senior people there is not enough value added. Our senior seminar class tried to move it along towards more interactivity, more seminar settings.

Q: How did you find the composition of your A-100 class? Were they a heterogeneous group or were they...?

BANDLER: Pretty much. I think we probably had approximately thirty percent women in State Department... I'd guess twenty-five to thirty percent, and maybe two obvious minorities.

Q: Looking at your class, one of the things that has been said is that women tend to leave the Foreign Service in greater numbers than men. Did you find the women stuck to it or not?

BANDLER: I don't have the statistics at all, because I have not been able to keep up with everyone, but I would say that my guess is certainly fewer women stuck with it than the men, but not by a dramatic proportion. Some of the women with who I started are still very active and doing very well. Mildred Patterson is one, although she has just retired. Nancy Cady, Marisa Lino and others; I still know and stay in contact.

Q: While you were there, did you have a feel for what you wanted to do in the Foreign Service? An area specialty, or type of work?

BANDLER: I am chuckling again because I did not have much exposure... some of my A-100 classmates, for example one of the guys had been on the Hill, and worked in the foreign policy area so he knew the State Department and he knew the interagency process. No one in my family before me had been, to my knowledge, been in government, in the federal government. So, other than the short exposure and whatever study work I did to get ready for exams, and I didn't do too much of that, I was relatively unfamiliar with the terrain. So, if you had asked me that question in A-100 I probably would have said, and I think I did say, I was really interested in Africa.

I was already oriented toward politics. I was finishing my law degree, I had finished it. When I entered I had a year and a half or two under my belt at law school. So I wanted to stay in Washington for the first tour to complete my law degree. Of course, most first tour officers go out to post and serve as consular officers, but the exemption was made and I ended up staying in Washington for the first five years, which was really unusual, along with Tom Miller, who is another guy in my sort of cohort in the Foreign Service who is now ambassador to Greece. Both he and I, we were vying for who would be the longest in Washington at the beginning of our careers.

I got my wish CU/AF, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Africa Affairs. I was the West Africa, Francophone person on the desk. Now I thought this was just great. I was always interested in culture and education, and African Affairs.

I didn't really know that I was in the Siberia of the Foreign Service, and I still enjoyed it. It was a good introductory tour to the State Department. I ended up doing it only a year and a half, because of the restructuring of USIA (United States Information Agency) in 1978. When Cultural Affairs duties went over to the new USIA, I opted out.

CARNEGIE FACE TO FACE

Since I was in law school at night, during the day I was looking for something else to do. I was recruited for and offered the job to be the Director of the Carnegie Endowment's Face to Face program, and I did that for about a year and a half -- directing foreign policy seminars, something right down my alley. It was just great to broaden and deepen debate about American foreign policy to open up the foreign policy process. This came as part of the package of reforms after Vietnam.

Q: How was this organized? Was this the Carnegie Institute sponsoring this?

BANDLER: This was a detail from the Department of State to Carnegie and there were a series of FSOs (Foreign Service officers) over the years who ran the Face To Face program. So the idea was to go over on detail for a year and come back and it would be broadening. And indeed we had great audiences, foreign policy think tankers and congress and the U.S. press. We kept audiences U.S. only, so this was a chance for Americans to get into a deep and dirty debate about our foreign policy and pull the stops out a little bit.

Q: I'm wondering about the value of this; how this gets translated into policy. Is this people talking and you responding to the questions?

BANDLER: No, I'm sorry; my job was to determine what might be interesting and important topics across a range of issues. We tried to cover the important geographic areas and the functional issues, such as Arms Control. The nuclear debate was big, and I did a whole series with the Director of the American Arms Control Association -- debates like Richard Pearle versus Gary Hart on nuclear arms control, and Paul Nitze. We paired people who had something to say, the leading experts, and putting together a state of the art audience. I handled an Arms Control series, and a long series on Africa, as an example.

The bureaus at the Department and the NSC and people on the Hill and the press, you have friends out there who actually like to use the Carnegie program for a pet subject or a speaker or something like that. That part of the job was doing that kind of networking. So I was getting to know people at state in a new context. It was mostly DASs (Deputy Assistant Secretaries) and assistant secretaries because you were getting a very high level from the outside who were attracted, both as speakers and as participants in the discussions. There was usually a twenty minute presentation followed by questions. The way I did it, I tried not to make it a Q and A (question and answer format) but a discussion in which people could persist in difference of points of view and pursue a set of themes instead of one question after another.

Regarding Africa, for example, I had a call from Ambassador Lannon Walker, who was the PDAS (Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary) in the African Bureau at the time suggested that I got to know Carli Enrusa or was it Jean Nguza Karl-i-Bond, who had been a former Finance Minister and I think a former Prime Minister briefly in Zaire, but he was on the outs with President Mobutu. Indeed, there was a feeling that Enrusa, who was expatriated in Belgium, if I am not mistaken. He might have lost his life if he did not have some sort of help. So, the help we gave him was to invite him over to the Carnegie Endowment and introduce him to a great audience, have him meet them. The audience was Members of Congress, to build up his image in the U.S. We thought it would not be lost on the Embassy of Zaire, and it was a very interesting conversation about the future of Zaire. We did a series on the future of Zaire, two or three seminars.

But also European issues, arms control issues, Asia, and we really went around the world. Carnegie had very good people, notably Paula Stern. On the other side Richard Burt was in the office next to me, and he was very plugged into Europe and the year of the missile, and he was an advisor on European Arms Control issues. Paula Stern, on the other side went on to be Chairman of the International Trade Commission. I worked with her on economic issues. It was a terrific opportunity to develop breadth in foreign policy issues.

Q: Did the Carnegie Institute fit any particular niche in the Washington establishment? You know, you have the Brookings (Institute) which is kind of Democratic and the American Enterprise (Institute), which is kind of Republican. Did the Carnegie fit into this kind of categorization?

BANDLER: Yes, just one clarification. It is not the Institute. There are four of five named after Carnegie, the Institute is on the educational side, and there is a Foundation for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which is still in town. Basically, it is center-left, and it is more associated with the Democrats. A Foreign Policy magazine is published there. They have keen scholars. So one of the things I set out to do was to make sure to try to get a better mix of liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans. That was the idea of having, rather than one speaker, sometimes two and making it a debate. So we had visitors like Steven Hadley, Deputy National Security Adviser, and Paul Wolfowitz would come over occasionally. We really set about to make it a broad focus, because that was the idea of the program. It came at the same time as the dissent channel, and I think Bill Harrop was head of the American Foreign Service Association. He and that crew helped to give birth to this dissent channel, as one of the manifestations we are going to open up foreign policy.

Q: Did you find yourself as a junior Foreign Service Officer running up against the establishment; the desk officers for Zaire or the equivalent the arms control specialists?

BANDLER: Well, you know, I was more the impresario for these things so I didn't run up against them too directly. But if it was a high level debate, it helped give me a very good education; I felt comfortable doing it, yes.

Q: So you didn't run across getting noises from the State Department establishment questioning, "Why are you debating this?" or "Why did you invite that guy?" or something like that.

BANDLER: No I didn't. I thought State to view it more, those who knew about it, to view it more as... first of all they like to come, we served a good dinner. It was great networking, although that word did not exist in those days. It was great networking for them. They get to see a range of people in their field who it was helpful to meet. Outsiders. And it was very convenient to meet, these crowds were may be twenty to twenty-five people, prominent people in the field, and the right and interesting mix. So that's one thing, and secondly I was always working with them to find out what should we be talking about? Do you have any suggestions as to who to bring. I think they enjoyed it.

Consequently, I had an easy pick of assignments coming out of there because I had gotten to know Tony Lake and he asked if I would come over and be his special assistant. I had gotten to know (African Bureau Assistant Secretary) Dick Moose because of the Africa work and he asked me to come over and work with Robert Houdek, Bill Harrop and Walker in the Africa regional office and congressional relations. They were seeing many congressional contacts and had a lot of congressional contact in that job. So I chose the latter one and went off for a year and a half in AF/I (Bureau of African Affairs, Office of Inter-African Affairs). Enjoyed the congressional work. Really glad I did it. It's a box which is almost mandatory for... to check that box somehow or other in the course of the career, to have the full suite of skills, particularly if you are going to be in political or

economic work.

Q: You were doing this from when to when?

BANDLER: Let's see, Carnegie Endowment was 1978 to 1979, that was during the Carter Administration. AF/I was 1980-81, that was also about a year and a half because I took six months of French. In AF/I the congressional work, a lot of it was centered around the Lancaster House Conference [Ed: The conference met from 10 September to 15 December 1979; the final agreement signed 21 December]. This was the transition, not at all clear that it was going to succeed, from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe. Senator Helms wanted to lift sanctions, the congress was...he was putting a lot of pressure on that and gaining a growing constituency of support including in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, so one of the big efforts there was to try to keep that conference going and not lift sanctions long enough to see if you could get this peace process to succeed. And, it did.

It was a big effort and it went up to (President) Carter. I mean I remember, I think it was the decisive day went down with Dick Moose and I think with Lannon Walker as well, and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Democrats had just about given up on this route. We kept making promises the conference would end and therefore the pressure from their colleagues and Senator Helms was going to end. It wasn't ending, so, I think Senator Paul Sarbanes (Democrat-Maryland) was the last staunch support of this but he was running out of gas, so we had to figure something out to do and in the car down there I suggested something to Moose so we went into the hall and immediately felt the pressures and Moose got on the phone and called Cyrus Vance. And Cyrus Vance got on the phone and called the President. It was an elaboration of this sort of core idea that we would set up a trigger where we would lift sanctions unless during the thirty...the President would report to the Congress on the progress whether or not it deemed the continuation of sanctions. So, with some reluctance I think that the whole chain of command agreed to this. And the reluctance was coming from the top, I believe. That's what prevailed and it passed in I think a unanimous resolution within the next day or two; that that's what would happen. In the interim, the idea that the President would send a report came down to, would be the assistant secretary of State, was going to be a State Department report. A few other little wrinkles changed.

This was my first adventure in implementation of negotiated deals. Here we are, you know, we agreed on one thing, how do we go back to Senator Helms and his chief of staff I think at the time was John Carbaugh, very difficult. And part of that chore fell to me and I think...as a matter...I had gotten to know Carbaugh a little bit because we had invited him to Carnegie Endowment seminars. He was a...so I just went in a told him the way it was, I'm sorry we thought it would be a White House report, but it hasn't turned out that way and I hope you understand there was not anything we could do about it. And ask for your understanding because the core of the deal was there. He had to go talk to his principle and he said, "Yes, that was OK." And that sort of worked out. I wish Zimbabwe had worked out a little better in the long run.

Q: Yes, I want to ask you, what was your impression or maybe your colleagues impressions, of Mugabe at that time?

BANDLER: We didn't know an enormous amount about him. Our Rhodesia and Zimbabwe expert did and he was not considered the lead runner. I think it was (Joshua) Nkomo who most people thought would prevail. I did go out on a trip to Rhodesia during the time and on the ground we had our RLO, Rhodesia Liaison Officer, and that was Ambassador Jeffrey Davidow, who went on to have a fantastic career and do great things in the Foreign Service. And Jeff was doing a great job as sort of a one-man show, and the Brits were out there with Lord Soames representing the United Kingdom and he had another high lord with him, I think Peter Jay was on his side out there. So we went out there to meet them as a policy visit. Jeff Davidow kept his powder dry. He would give you a good analytical briefing about the constituencies and the size of the tribes, and the politics of the election, but persistently at least from everything I know, refused to make the prediction. And I think that was probably pretty smart in retrospect because Mugabe was a surprise winner.

Q: How did you feel about wither Africa after this exposure? That things were moving along in the right direction?

BANDLER: Great question. My next tour was to Cameroon. So I liked the people in the Africa Bureau; this was really like a family bureau. People had devoted large parts of their career to it. There was real dedication and they were smart and good. Bob Houdek, working for him was a whole lot of fun. Jennifer Ward was his deputy, Marty Cheshes; so it was very enjoyable working there. They created this political officer position in Cameroon. I don't think it was actually the heartbeat for me. To go back out to Cameroon. My young daughters, who were then about two and four, I had been nearby in Nigeria. But, they were so good at team building, I wasn't going to say "no." So that's what I did.

But I was already feeling, and this is part of from Nigeria and other things, that I have been immersed in the issues and I have become more immersed in the issues and the realities that there was a lot of corruption, that there was a lot of tribalism and that there were really grave issues of economic development which were not amenable to any kind of a quick fix. There were too many bright young people wearing white shirts, understandably, and working in the capitals, but the capitals were flooded with that, with bureaucratic jobs. (But) you needed productivity and an economic engine to get kicked over, but it won't happen with that amount of corruption. So I was a bit dispirited about...then there was a lot of attention on apartheid and apartheid related issues and I felt that this was such an intractable problem, that I wasn't sure that South Africa ever was even going to be, you know, to move voluntarily away from apartheid. That it did later was a pleasant surprise.

Q: How did you find the representatives of the white settlers in what was at that time southern Rhodesia? Ian Smith and company...

BANDLER: I didn't...because I wasn't working the Rhodesia...there was a small working group that I was part of. Ray Seitz, I remember, would come down and sit in it for the Secretary, he was [Deputy] Executive Assistant, because the Secretary was interested. It was a great policy group and that was another good learning experience. But I was not immersed enough in the politics of it to know. I was doing, you know, sort of a wide swath of issues, whatever was coming up in congress, such as the focus on the Lancaster House, And by the by, in December 1979 you will remember the invasion of Afghanistan and I became corralled into working with Nelson Ledsky on the Olympic Task Force. This was when President Carter decided to boycott the Moscow Olympics, as one in a set of sanctions after the invasion. So that sort of changed my life there in that period, a fascinating little chapter.

Olympic Task Force

One of the things that happened, we were trying to organize overall the boycott effort. It became apparent fairly early on that the American athletes, a goodly number of them, and a goodly number of people who had thought about sports and politics in the U.S. opposed the politicization of sports and did not like boycotts. These athletes had been training and were ready to go and they wanted to go. So it was decided that the President would host the American athletes in the White House. So, we had to write a speech for the President which we did and that had a lot of legal issues in it, like freedom of travel, the constitutional quasi-right of the freedom of travel. We wrote that speech and then it got re-written the evening before it was delivered in the early hours of the morning. We went over there for the athletes and the speech had a line in it which did not go down right with the Germans. And it led to an extended debate, spat between the President and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. That became a difficult relationship. Or this was one of the triggers making it a difficult relationship. So there we go.

And then we went off to another famous chapter which I am not going to regale you with in detail because it is another day. It takes a little time to talk because there were so many fascinating elements to it. But I think a book has been written about it and that is the Muhammed Ali trip to Africa to try to rally African leaders to come along with the Olympic boycott. A colleague of mine, Bryant Salter, headed off on Secretary Brzezinski's back-up airplane; the Secretary was heading off to the Khyber Pass. En route in the back-up plane were all the military guys with their calculators out figuring out how much aid. Our Consulate had just been burned down, I think it was Karachi [mobs attacked Embassy Islamabad November 1979 in response to rumors the U.S. was involved in an attack in Mecca], then they went on to India to pick up Muhammed Ali and then went onward to Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, Liberia, and Senegal. On a fascinating and somewhat successful tour.

Q: What was, how did Ali impress you? Was he, I don't mean to sound condescending, like most people I doubt that he was overly aware of some many of the factors that went into this decision. Was he committed, or how did he get into this?

BANDLER: Another thoughtful question. You will recall the position he took on the

Vietnam War, strong opposition, and he went to prison during what would have been the peak of his career. Standing up for principles that he held. So I think it was that, his sense of principle, and as an American Muslim the invasion of this Islamic country was something he had already spoken out about. And some people noticed that and they noticed that Africa was a problem and they felt that since he was such a hero in Africa, I believe this was after he had had the fight in Zaire, in Kinshasa. This is what brought it to mind. And he agreed to do it and he went off. You are right, he had not, he is not a political scientist by profession and there were some issues he had not thought through and I think, we landed in Tanzania the first stop and a stringer from the Washington Post asked some tough questions, basically, “Why are you here on this issue. The issue here in Africa is apartheid. That is what you should be doing. Aren’t you selling out your people?” That was...it was a hard question for him to handle and it took a day or two for him to think through that and discuss those things and to decide in his own mind that he was comfortable that he was doing the right thing. Even though it wasn’t apartheid. In the end in his mind it wasn’t an either/or choice.

But part of it when we picked him up in India in Delhi he was thinking about other things. He was training. He was doing some fighting. He...and then the Soviet Ambassador came over with messages from Brezhnev to him to try to talk him out of the trip. And he was a persuasive guy, you know, “Brezhnev your friend. He wants you to come to him and discuss this. You are getting a one-sided position. Before you go to Africa, you shouldn’t do it. This was actually an interesting exposure to what at the time we called active measures. I don’t know what we call it now. It was somewhere between diplomacy and active measure, but there were certainly efforts made along the way to confuse him and derail him and introduce doubts.

Q: I think you will find yourself in a very difficult almost moral dilemma; I mean you are going to take this man who is essentially a sports figure who has strong convictions and other people are working on him and –particularly if the Soviets are working on him – you try to convince him, but not sort of hustle him off to a room or something.

BANDLER: So the sequence was a little different, I mean this was the decision and then he goes. There was no indication of any of that until actually in Delhi this occurred. Then lo and behold in Dar some others,...let’s put it this way, the meeting in Dar es Salaam, which was with most of the cabinet but not (President Julius) Nyerere, who was up country. Two things happened, one a conduit was found to inform him that Nyerere would be happy to see him as long as he turned around, renounced his presidential airplane and his presidential visit and came to see him up country. A message which was passed by some...well a conduit. And then we went into the first meeting with senior cabinet including if I am not mistaken the prime minister, or deputy prime minister, but an array of ministers and on the way in was handed a letter, which said he is an Uncle Tom and a sell out and he is doing the wrong thing. Why is he doing this? Ali at the beginning of the meeting hands it across the table to the prime minister or deputy prime minister and says, “Look at what I am being exposed to. Now you tell me, if this is true I’m going to stop this trip.” So that was a pretty dramatic moment. We’ve got sitting at the table this American team, a very good team by the way, Lannon Walker, Louis

Martin, the liaison to the African-American Union from the White House, Frances Cook and Harry Geisel, and so on; Bryant Salter, I mentioned. So he looked at it and took some time, no one really knew what he was going to say. And he said as I recall, "Don't pay any attention to this Mr. Ali. Somebody is trying to confuse you and mix you up. You have every right to be here and have a discussion with us about American views and your own views about the invasion of Afghanistan and we respect you as a figure who has stood up to his own moral judgments and we would like to have a discussion with you and throw that away."

Q: Must have been a tense moment.

BANDLER: Yes, heaving a sigh of relief.

Q: How did the trip in total go, did you think?

BANDLER: Well, I think there were mixed results, because the first... a lot of this is the press and a lot of what comes out in the press first has a tendency to snowball. Since he had a hard time in the initial press conference that got it off to a little bit of a shaky start. The next stop was Kenya and that went very well, by the numbers, and (President Daniel arap) Moi was very supportive. He was going to do the boycott. So that was helpful.

And then over to Nigeria. The interesting thing there was Ambassador, I think it was Don Easum [Ed: Easum, was ambassador from May 1975 to October 1979. He was followed by Stephen Low, November 1979 to July 1981], hosted a big reception that night and Ali was going to speak and come to the reception and we would join him. By the way, I mean the crowds, Ali when he got into Nigeria, into Lagos, he would just wade into the crowds and shadow box and all of a sudden from hundreds you would have thousands, I don't know how big that crowd got, but it was big. They just loved him. So, but at that reception Ambassador Andrew Young was also going to be there and I think this was after he had left the administration and his UN (United Nations) job; but he was taking the opposite position. So that was an interesting moment, to see, you know, both of them would have Ambassador Easum's microphone and how that was going to work out; that evening two different positions.

And then in Liberia, Tolbert, I think was supportive; and in Senegal, was it (President Abdou) Diouf, or an older (President Leopold Sedar) Senghor at that time? I think I was Senghor. Frances Cook knew him very well from her work there as PAO (Public Affairs Officer) and I think she used to give him English lessons among other things. She knew him extremely well. In any case, he was equivocal, but very pleasant and said, as I recall, a very balanced plate of things about this. So, there we go, and there is a whole other level of tertiary detail which gets even more interesting, but there you go.

I think if you look at it and you see what the results were and 50-50 hindsight one would say that this was a bright idea which needed some more, needed to be poked and tested. And somebody really needed to think through, was the man prepared? Did he really feel this with conviction?

Q: I interviewed somebody who got involved in at the State Department planning sessions in response to Soviet behavior. So here are a bunch of guys sitting around trying to figure out what to do and their reference is Soviet actions not the impact of their response domestically. On the farmers of the grain embargo, for example

BANDLER: Yes, this is the usual thing aka foreign policy by list. I would say that President Carter and we see this much more in his post-presidency years, and maybe it wasn't obvious, that probably a good thing that it wasn't as obvious. But here you have an Annapolis graduate, who worked on a nuclear submarine and the military had some exposure to him and did not want to bring out the military tools. He worked hard to do it, so you're right the way you put it. We had to do something, and it had to be a credible list, e.g. three or four things.

We know that in the end, we had a two track policy. When you rack up the list of things and you get the brainstorming, and then you have to take the time to needed for success. This is a lesson learned, and I think we all drew that lesson. In retrospect we had not made a clear recommendation.

Ali didn't really want to be briefed on the airplane. He had other things on his mind, so that was part of the problem. We had not recognized that he would go into it as coldly as was the case. And then during the trip he warmed up; he thought it through; he pounding on table... By the way, Bryan Salter and I were fascinated by Ali's card playing, and then he would very quietly sit there and close his eyes. When we flew into Kenya, he was on the runway. The press was rabid, and Ali did not have notes.

CAMEROON

Q: Well, after this what did you do?

BANDLER: Then I went to Cameroon, stayed a year and a half; as a political officer, in a newly created position. Our ambassador was Hume Horan [Ed: Ambassador from July 1980 to May 1983, and interviewed by ADST.] What a great opportunity that was, one of our leading Arabists.

Q: We are returning to our conversation with Ambassador Bandler. It is June 29, 2011. I'm David Reuther. Mr. Ambassador, last time that you talked with us you were just about to go off to a tour in Cameroon. How did that assignment come up?

BANDLER: I'm not sure exactly how it turned up. I wonder if Frances Cook, who was Ambassador to Burundi during my time in Cameroon and knew me well, had a hand. Anyway I was assigned to Yaoundé, I had a background in Africa going way- going- with deep roots on that and we could sort of skip up and do some of that very quickly so maybe not right not.

Ambassador Hume Horan was, I thought, a superb ambassador and I really enjoyed

working with him; I think we had a good team.

Early in my tenure, Ambassador Horan wanted me to go up to the border and see what was going on because there were apparently some CIA people living in a small house and doing things that were not appropriate. The area was up in Kousséri, which is almost as far north as far as you can go in Cameroon and then there's the Chari River and then across from that is Chad. Then there's also a big desert, you know, with Nigeria, where there's really no border. [Ed: According to Ambassador Horan's ADST interview and David Shinn's (his DCM) ADST interview, the Embassy had a safe house in Kousséri from which officers from the evacuated Embassy N'Djamena could report on events in Chad.] Hume got in touch with me and said, you know, Don, deal with this; I want you to get those guys out of there and you will stay up there and spend the next four or six months to get things back into the appropriate posture of where we should be and sort of turn this thing around. So that's what I did. Jane would come up with my kids, I think she came once or twice up there. You have to fly in and you have to take long car rides.

So we did get that settled. Meanwhile I decided it was right to go over to the other side of the river. So somebody had about a 1955 American car, came over to my side, put it onto a pontoon or something and we moved the car over there and then we went around and we got to know everybody. Well, the first thing that we saw when we arrived was Gaddafi's forces who had come down from the north to that side of Chad and so fortunately I saw those guys depart and I would say it was probably 10,000 or 15,000 troops on the way out. So anyway they headed off; I ended up in that house where the CIA had been and spent a few months doing it, trying to get things rectified, scoping out the other side of the border. And then Harry Geisel, the famous Harry Geisel [Ed: Harold Geisel was an administration cone officer. He would be the Counselor of Embassy for Administration when the Bandlers were station in Germany in the late 1980s. His oral history is on file with ADST], comes up and brings blankets, food, because, you know, it was pretty sparse, and Harry and I did a little airlift, in effect, and it would be good to talk to Harry about it because he probably would have some more to say about it. So we did get into the airplanes, we moved the things off and basically things kind of resolved itself.

Q: Let me get my chronology straight. When did you start your assignment to the Cameroons?

MRS. BANDLER: I'm pretty sure it was 1981, in January of 1981 because I remember- wait, maybe it was earlier, like December. I remember we got there and we were there for Christmas. Our house wasn't ready and we lived with another family.

BANDLER: Once we had our own housing, we had a party for all the people we could find. There weren't that many but we found them and Jane, do you remember that? Somebody chose the wrong film, the defense attaché.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, Hume Horan was the ambassador and our first party, we weren't going to be stuffy diplomats; we were going to be, you know, just relaxed; we were going

to have pizza and a movie. And the only movie that was around was “Blazing Saddles.” [Ed: “Blazing Saddles” was a satirical Western comedy film directed by Mel Brooks released in February 1974. According to Wikipedia, the film satirizes the racism obscured by myth-making Hollywood accounts of the American West, with the hero being a black sheriff in an all-white town. The film is full of deliberate anachronisms, from the Count Basie Orchestra playing "April in Paris" in the Wild West, to Slim Pickens referring to the Wide World of Sports, to the German army of World War II.]

BANDLER: And we had never seen “Blazing Saddles.”

MRS. BANDLER: And we asked a couple of people, said you think it’s appropriate? And they said yes, it will be fine, be fine.

It really wasn’t too appropriate since definite black/white and they used the word “nigger” and it’s, you know, it’s funny, it’s great but not for that audience. And Mrs. Horan was aghast. And the gas for our stove went out and so we had to run around the neighborhood trying to find places that would- we could have our pizza cooked for the party. After that we decided we were going to be formal.

BANDLER: To get back to your question I think our tour was late 1980 to the summer transfer season of 1982.

Q: Now can you describe the embassy in the Cameroon? How big would that embassy be?

BANDLER: Medium size or maybe a little less post but for Africa I could say it was a medium sized post. The political section was pretty small. We had an econ guy whose name I should remember but it’s been a lot of years back. [Ed: The Economic-Commercial Section Chief was Duane Sams, during most of Ambassador Bandler’s tour in Yaoundé.]

Hume knew that I had developed a good relationship with the, you know he was not an assistant secretary and- because they didn’t really use that nomenclature but he was a key guy. He wasn’t the minister but he, I think he was the second level minister. And we got some intel which we thought was reasonably- something that we really needed to take care of because there was going to be another border war between Cameroon and Nigeria. The area in dispute was along the coast. It was sort of marshland with waters and you know, it’s a very difficult place to work. So the Ambassador said Don, go talk to your friend about it and see if you can work this out and avoid an unfortunate outcome. Of course, the embassy in Lagos was also very much aware and they had more than two consulates there so they could follow things. In any case, Horan says go see the guy and he gets onto an airplane and we fly over to Lagos and they resolved the whole thing. No wars.

Jane and I were, I must say, very happy that this was happening because we were supposed to be going on home leave and had that war been going on, you know, it would

have been a very different situation.

I think we wanted to go to Asia at that point.

Policy Planning Staff

And let's see, while we're at it I'm thinking about in State; I was in SP, policy planning, rather, policy planning, and that was a really good- I know we're sort of going back and forth but we can find it in the right place, I think, and that was a very interesting time. Paul Wolfowitz was the head of the office there with Ruth Whiteside, Don Bandler, and Alex Wolff were the three people who were the front office workers for Paul Wolfowitz. And then we had a Naval guy. Let me see; I have to pull him out. It's going to take a little bit. He was a firebrand. I mean he- in the SP group on any given day somebody was going to get whacked. Why wasn't that paper there? That was more the tenor up there and that got pretty wild and they had really good people.

EUR/RPM

Q: You've had Africa experience up to now. In the summer of 1983 you return to Washington for a Department tour in the European Bureau. How does one get into EUR?

MRS. BANDLER: I don't know how it happened but it was definitely a switch.

BANDLER: That's the good question; that's the good question. I was assigned to EUR/RPM, the Office of Security and Political Affairs of the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs to be exact, from 1983 to 1985.

Just loved it. I had a great group in that office, you know, (John M.) Mike Lekson. We had (Deputy Director) Ray Coldwell and George Ward was the number one. [Ed: George Ward was Special Assistant to the EUR Assistant Secretary from 1981 to 1984. His Oral History interview is in the ADST collection.] They were a first class operation. They were very serious minded and there was a lot to do. This was during the time when we had the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe) process.

BANDLER: When I reported to EUR/RPM, the Madrid follow up meeting to the CSCE was winding down. The 35 nation meeting resulted in an agreement on human rights and security, and mandated a series of supplemental meetings (totaling seven). My job was to develop and manage a post Madrid CSCE strategy for the US. I was also responsible for planning and implementing all aspects of our participation in the Budapest Cultural Forum and the Ottawa Human Rights Experts Meeting and major aspects of the Helsinki Tenth Anniversary.

It was a big multinational negotiation. In fact, the CSCE process was about the implementation of commitments on security, human rights and economic issues under the 1975 Helsinki Act. It was critical to US efforts to promote respect for human rights in the USSR and was a central plank in the Allied approach to East-West relations. I utilized the

NATO Political Committee as a focal point for Allied coordination and cooperation on human rights policy, pressing our Allies to insist on Eastern implementation of the Madrid agreement. I had to organize and coordinate Allied demarches to the Soviet Union and Eastern European States. It was also my responsibility to develop and secure support for the US approach for integrating bilateral, multilateral and private CSCE efforts, as well as define the US goals and objectives for each of the seven supplemental meetings.

So this was really a negotiating discussion and it had to do with the Russians who, you know, newspapers, you couldn't really get a Russian newspaper so, you know, they're basically trying- I would say the U.S. and the European side, leaving aside Russia, we spent a lot of time talking about, let's say soft, you know, the soft side of things. And we had a lot of conversations, we were up at midnight, 1:00, 2:00 in the morning trying to pull the thing out, whether it was going to fail or not and lo and behold it, you know, about three hours- about 3:00 in the morning we got the- we got it done.

Q: These are multinational negotiations?

BANDLER: A big multinational negotiation. And it was all about things like, you know, the ability to get newspapers into foreign countries, media, you know basically broadening relationships in and across various countries. And it was fascinating and we had a lot of good people working on it and we ended up, you know, at 2:00 in the morning with five of us, we had to, you know, just get- it was too big so we had to get a smaller group and make it- get the hammer.

Q: And who is in that group? Where was this meeting?

BANDLER: It was in Canada. --The Ottawa Human Rights Experts Meeting.

Q: And the American reps, representative negotiators would be?

BANDLER: We'd have to dig it up. Ambassador Scanlan headed the delegation to the Budapest preparatory meeting at the Budapest Cultural Forum in November 1984. I was selected as one of the two principal NATO negotiators in agenda negotiations with the Eastern bloc and the neutral/nonaligned countries. I worked across from an ambassador-level Soviet Official.

Q: Let's try to do that.

BANDLER: Ray Caldwell and George Ward were key players.

Q: You may recall George Ward was deputy directors in EURRPM.

BANDLER: Yes.

Q: So who was the office director of EURRPM?

BANDLER: Roz Ridgeway was the assistant secretary at the time, I believe [Ed: EUR Assistant Secretary from February 1983 to July 1985 was Richard Burt.] It was an interesting thing. We had Mike Lekson and you know, Mike has always been very interested in nuclear affairs and SLCMs (Sea Launched Cruise Missiles) and GLCMs (Ground Launched Cruise Missiles) and all such matters, whereas I was considered, you know- Well first of all I didn't get an office in the office so I had to get an office around the corner so that was sort of annoying.

Q: Nothing like being the junior officer.

BANDLER: Right. Well, I wasn't so junior. I was progressing towards a little higher rank. I was also the point person for East-West human rights issues and I worked directly with the EUR front office and Assistant Secretary Abrams. I accompanied Ambassador Kampelman to Europe on a presidential mission. (I received a commendation for that trip for being "superb in every way"!) Max Kampelman was a key person in respect to human rights and he had a tremendous amount of work to do. He did it smoothly, working at very high levels. Max was able to bend things in a very helpful way. There were various movements that were subtle but important, but no one wanted to magnify. There was an Israel angle with a lot of the migrations into Israel at that point in time, and Max was involved in that as well. [Ed: Ambassador Kampelman was assigned to the U.S. Office for Arms Reduction Negotiations (Geneva) in March 1985. An Oral History interview with Kampelman is in the ADST collection.] He spent time with Mr. Shikolov, who was the number two person, and (Lieutenant General Sergei) Kondrashev was the military leader at hand. I believe the General was surely an intelligence person.

Anyway, we had a decent set of relationships with a lot of different countries. It would be interesting to talk to Max because I do see him from time to time. I'll see if I can get something with a little bit more details.

Q: Well as we were saying this is the Reagan period which worked to develop a different relationship with the Soviet Union. So OSCE became part of that effort.

BANDLER: That's correct. And Max was very, very engaged in it throughout. And you know, I mean he has a lot of different turfs that he cares for a lot but this was a big one.

Q: Who was driving the use of OSCE in this way, to get these agreements with the Soviets?

BANDLER: Who was driving it?

Q: Yes, in our bureaucracy?

BANDLER: I think Roz Ridgeway. I think it was Roz would be the main person. We could check that, fact check that, but I think it was Roz. And it would probably have gone to Max because he was the Counselor in the State Department at that time. [Ed:

Ambassador Kampelman was Counselor from July 1987 to January 1989.] And you had Vernon Walters around and we haven't talked enough about Vernon Walters; there's a tremendous amount of stuff that I'd like to talk about on Walters but we have to find out if that's- that we're in the right chronology. But we should really- Walters. I mean this is Germany and other matters because he was the counselor at that time, counselor of the Department.

Q: Let's get back to EUR/RPM. How long were you in that assignment?

BANDLER: 1982 to 1984.

I recall on another occasion, Max Kampelman thought it would be important to go into the Jewish enclave of a small Italian town. Max wanted me to see that and Dick Shifter as well. Shifter and Max cared very strongly about all this. Max was getting Jews out of North Africa and things like that; Shifter was doing similar activities. We travelled on a train to a town in Austria where both men had roots. This was around the time of the OSCE. We were really pushing hard on the OSCE and I think it was a very, very good move, the OSCE.

So anyway, there's something I forgot earlier or maybe I already mentioned it. Max told me, by the way, I just can't handle your smoking. This is when we were back in the U.S. He said to me, Don, you should see a hypnotist to help you quit.

MRS. BANDLER: So he was able to hypnotize Don.

BANDLER: I had been smoking for all those years.

So I met with the hypnotist. We talked and he gave me an anchor—the word “om” for me. Afterwards, I used the word Om whenever I was stressed and felt like smoking and I never smoked again. My sister was a smoker. I share the method with her and also stopped smoking. So it was pretty amazing.

Political Military Officer, Paris Embassy

Q: Well then your next assignment after EUR/RPM is Embassy Paris. A major embassy. You were assigned as the political-military officer. Let me ask was there a separate political-military section or were you of the political section?

BANDLER: Yes, there was a Political-Military Section. Adrian Basora was the deputy and Joe Rodgers was the Ambassador, a political appointee who was less familiar with the inner workings of the Foreign Service. [Ed: Ambassador Rogers served in Paris from September 1985 to January 1989.] Adrian and I worked very closely with him as a result. On one occasion the Ambassador Rogers and I went on a submarine together, while Adrian stayed at the Embassy, holding down the fort. We spent a couple of days down in a submarine, making a stop at Malta. It was fascinating, one of the most interesting thing

that I could imagine. And we were getting on aircraft carriers and getting our caps that they love to give you. The Navy was great at it.

Q: So your immediate boss was Basora?

BANDLER: Yes, Adrian Basora was the head of the Political-Military Section and Peter Berger worked with me under him.

Joe Rogers and I went into an American Submarine. It was fascinating. Our U.S. Submariners were quite silent, to say the least.

Q: Well as pol-mil officer what kinds of things would you be assigned? What were you looking at, what was your portfolio?

BANDLER: The portfolio would be of course be Political-Military Affairs, which was noted. There were lots of missiles in use. In that era there were Submarine-Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCMs) and Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles, GLCMs.

Russia was one of the two key players- and everybody had their eyes on them. The United States was the other player of course and the kinds of missiles that we have ready for nuclear missile deployments. There certainly were a lot of missiles on the Continent, which could reach Moscow or some of the major cities nearby. It was a sticky time to be sure. We had to be really careful and thoughtful about steps and actions that we or the USSR might take.

Q: One of things that occurred while you were in Paris during this tour was the fortieth anniversary of the end of World War II. Ceremonies may have required some work for the political section.

MRS. BANDLER: Actually, I think most of the planning and events were finished when we actually arrived in 1985.

However, Don participated in that one medal ceremony in the place where the parachuters came down in Sainte-Mère-Église.

BANDLER: Yes, Saint-Mere-Église. I was dubbed to go up there, and I was delighted. It is always interesting to see Normandy. We met up with a group of about eight or nine women. The Ambassador told me just to go up there and do that; this will be a wonderful thing, you'll enjoy it, and don't worry about the work. It is an important thing to do.

We met somewhere near Sainte-Mère-Église with the church that is so famous. We walked with these little old ladies, the youngest ones were in their seventies and the oldest were close to 100 years old. We walked a long time and we looked at the various cemeteries where they knew exactly who was there and when they were buried. It was very moving. I must admit that I shed tears because it was such a remarkable thing and I just loved it. So that was a great piece of working together with the French.

Q: Now in 1985, President Reagan came out for the fortieth anniversary in May I guess. Did you get involved in planning for the presidential trip or staffing it out?

BANDLER: I'd say more staffing out. It was a big, it was a big operation, a big operation, and- but yes, we worked very hard in the embassy on that to make it happen and make it right and we did.

Q: Those are consuming events, aren't they?

BANDLER: Ooh, you are not kidding. And then you go to the- when you pass the battlefield and you've got that- the American cemetery so you have to stop there for an hour or two. It's quite something. It's moving.

Michael Healy, yes, Michael Healy. And Don Hilbert, yes; Don Hilbert was- I didn't remember; that's good to know that Hilbert was there. He was good.

Q: Now how- If you're pol-mil officer, how big was the defense attaché's office? Because France is not part of NATO so it's a much different relationship.

BANDLER: Yes, I would say it's relatively small. Brigadier General Don Hilbert, U.S. Army, was the Defense Attaché. Now he is living somewhere in DC where he runs a project, which is for veterans who need assistance. So, he does some really great work in that regard. And he's also part of WIFA, the Washington Institute for Foreign Affairs, and he's active on that. His successor in 1986 was Brigadier General Roland Lajoie, U.S. Army.

Q: With France not being in NATO, did that present special policy problems on the pol-mil side?

BANDLER: Yes and no. The French can be very sticky, as we know. On the other hand, if you have the right relationship with a French equal, or if you are in the right place at the right time, it is easier. Also, we had Admiral Ulrich Weisser on the German side. He was Germany's senior officer on submarines and aircraft. He was someone I was close to for a long time.

Q: In the Paris tour how did the Franco-German relationship impact in a policy way with the Embassy?

BANDLER: I wasn't there for every single part of it, but there are all kinds of configurations of relations between the French, Germans, British and Americans, depending on the current issues and the leadership.

Q: What kinds of issues would come up in that context? Let's stay in Paris.

BANDLER: In the French Foreign Ministry, there were individuals with an unusual

amount of sway. For example, there are people like Francois d'Aboville who didn't like America all that much. He wanted France to lead, and he wanted the Germans to be steady and close with America. It was a sensitive relationship with d'Aboville, but he was exceptionally smart and he knew everybody. He would be in some of those conferences that we talked about. Philippe Guelley was the number two after Ambassador d'Aboville and then after that there is the Minister level or Deputy Minister levels. We got to know all of the key people. I was a get go person in Paris in those days and I enjoyed that. d'Aboville would say Monsieur Bandler, vous avez cinq minutes? Ca va? Dit moi. Exactement, Monsieur.

Q: Just the facts, man. At the time that you were in Paris, how did American-Soviet relations play with the French?

BANDLER: We have the GLCM-SLCM discussions. That issue dominated for quite a long time and if it wasn't GLCM-SLCM. There were other high level ballistic missiles issues in play.

Q: Well we were saying about how the French were reacting to America-Soviet discussions because when you're talking about the missiles I believe the French wanted their missiles kept out of the count as the Americans and the Russians tried to even up their sides the French would say our missiles don't count on the Western side and I would assume that that would cause some long policy discussions with the French to either get them to cooperate or isolate them. These would have been the kinds of issues that might have come up.

BANDLER: Yes. You just touched on something that I wanted to go back to, or actually go forward because Jean-David Levitte was assigned to Washington for a six year tour in their beautiful embassy here in Washington. He and I were very close friends for a long period of time. He became my go to person, dealing with French-American relations. He is the one who gave me the French Legion of Honor both in the United States and in Paris. That was just a great relationship. He is well thought of in France and throughout Europe, and throughout Asia as well. He is just an extraordinary diplomat and has done tremendous things. I think he's number two or three to President Sarkozy (now President Hollande). He was someone who made an exceedingly important contribution working with the U.S. and France, keeping European affairs right at the center.

Q: That raises an interesting question; in the course of your work who would be your French counterparts?

BANDLER: It's not that I was a counterpart of Jean-David, but I had an open door to Jean-David and that was precious.

Q: So you were working with the Quay D'Orsay most of the time?

BANDLER: Yes, we planned and executed the NATO Fiftieth Anniversary Summit which was held in Washington in April 1999. It was a very important meeting in that it

was pulled together the British, French, and Americans. President Clinton assigned me the job of running it.

Q: Did you have an opportunity to work directly with French military?

BANDLER: Yes. For example, a French-German battery of huge artillery massed somewhere in the middle of Germany and I was invited to go there, which the French encouraged me to do. It made a real mark. You can see how much attention there was paid to this and how important it is for Germany at that time.

There's another thing about, you know, this Franco-German relationship. There's a lot we could talk about there because the turf is there and it's not very far to go from the French part into Germany. I mean it's an hour and a half and see Bonn.

Q: Did Ambassador Rogers work style create a difference in the way the embassy functioned or felt?

BANDLER: I guess I would just say that the Ambassador was a political appointee from Tennessee. Other members of the Political Section were David Engel was the deputy. Lino Gutierrez, my dear friend and great colleague, was around the corner. I had the pol-mil portfolio, under Adrian Basora. So when it came to pol-mil, Adrian dealt with the Ambassador. David Engel left for some reason and I don't remember the timing exactly. There was one other person who had an alcohol issue and there was a second person, I'm not going to mention names, who got into trouble.

Q: We were talking about the atmosphere of the embassy once Rogers arrived.

BANDLER: Yes, Joe Rodgers liked to go on submarine rides, and he liked to go out and do things generally. He was from Tennessee, he didn't really know much about the Foreign Service. So I had the opportunity to work closely with him on these submarine and other matters.

Q: You were saying that Ambassador Rodgers is from Tennessee. His father fought in World War I and while he was Ambassador to Paris he decided, I understand, to tour his father's old battlefields. Did you get involved in that as pol-mil officer?

BANDLER: Yes. I saw a lot of battlefields, mostly vectoring towards Germany. I was close to him; we had a good relationship. And I saw those battlefields in several incarnations and we were heading easterly towards Germany and Russia.

Q: Victor Comras was consul general in Strasburg at that time and mentions in his ADST interview touring battlefields with the Ambassador. Were you there on some of these trips?

BANDLER: Yes, I think that's right and Strasburg is a nice little town, better than nice, it's actually quite a good turf. But there wasn't a whole tremendous amount to do relative to being in Paris. But yes, I'm sure that was a lot of fun. I went many times and it was

harder to go over into Germany from the Paris side. That's just a beautiful part of the world there, coming in from Bonn and in from Paris with all the cemeteries and all that, yes. Of course you see even more of it as we've talked about on the northern front.

Q: Right. Who was the DCM when you arrived?

BANDLER: Bill Barraclough, was the number two and had a different kind of issue, which made him leave by 1986. I loved Bill Barraclough; I thought he was a great guy but something went wrong. We don't need to go into it. I thought he was a really good guy.

Q: So you not only have a political appointed ambassador but you have some turnover at the DCM position that's hard on guiding the Embassy. How did Rogers run his staff meetings? Include a number of people or just his section chiefs?

BANDLER: I think it was done internally. Maybe David Engel would pick it up or you know, the other- But it was not a, how to put it, it was pretty much in that- You know, because of Joe Rogers and then when Barraclough also has a problem, you know, so it just- it ends up being people like me and Tony Wayne and, you know, Gutierrez, who would pick up other things from the embassy during that era.

Lino was doing Latin American Affairs, which was a little bit less important in that Embassy, but that was where we developed strong ties right from the beginning given the turn over.

Q: You mentioned the opportunity to go to Sainte-Mère- Église earlier; did you get any other travel opportunities during this tour?

BANDLER: There was a lot of travel. I don't know exactly when and where, but Jane and I could see it from the point of view of our housing. We were on Avenue de Breteuil with our kids, ranging from our son Jeffrey, Jillian and Lara. So we had a nice beautiful apartment there. And then I was in Emile des Chemel, which is the DCM's residence. It was a wonderful place to be. My predecessor was Avis Bohlen, and she filled it with beautiful books and taste and so those were wonderful days. I think actually Avis was a most intelligent, thoughtful and serious minded person. She's just outstanding and is her husband, David. She had a great run and continues to join in foreign policy activities.

Q: In 1989 Schultz attended a conference on chemical weapons in Paris. I would assume that you would have had some responsibilities to write the papers, prep the delegation. You would have had some responsibility to back up the secretary's delegation for a conference on chemical weapons, January 1989.

BANDLER: Yes. And I think that conference was held in Paris, and I sat in for a one or two days of meetings, and I obviously told the Embassy that that's what I would be doing. Maybe the DCM would have been there. And it was an important conference and useful.

Q: And 1989 is a change in administration and Secretary Shultz had come in January and the new secretary of state, Baker, comes to Paris in February for his first meeting with Prime Minister Rocard and Foreign Minister Dumas. I was just wondering if your section would have, again, been involved in staffing these visits.

BANDLER: Yes. There were a variety of visits and lots of staffing to be done. I'm going to cut across again to say that I saw the same thing with Secretary Baker in Bonn. He just turned up one day. I was in the Embassy one afternoon and all of a sudden I saw him come in. I think he had to have one or two other people with him. We spent a lot of time together. He was happy to have somebody in that embassy to guide him a little bit and get everything done right.

GERMANY

Q: Today is the 6th of July. We're returning to our conversation with Ambassador Bandler.

Your next tour is in Germany. Do you recall how you received the assignment to the political section of Embassy Bonn?

BANDLER: Good question. I'm not really sure how it happened, except for the fact that the French-German relationship was considered a critically important node for American, German-American, French-American relations.

Anyway, Jane and I really enjoyed Paris. I was then assigned to Germany. So sold the Peugeot and bought a Mercedes and drove to Germany with our children. I recall we had to wait at the border for a long time before they let us pass.

We did so, and shortly thereafter, our whole family was seeing and hearing the Berlin Wall being chinked away by citizens with hammers and chisels.

So we arrived in the summer of 1989. Here's what I recall happening. There was a large European group; it was one of these ships where young people go across to England and then go off and do things. So here there was a big event in Scandinavia and George Ward was just coming in as DCM.

And the ambassador was Vernon Walters [Ed: Walters was ambassador from April 1989 to August 1991]. Yes. In fact, I had dinner recently with George and Harry Geisel and some other people whom we know closely, and we talked a lot at that dinner table, about Ambassador Walters.

So Walters calls me in the first day and permitted me to go to Scandinavia and have a wonderful Euro event on these ships. And I could tell from George, who I liked very much, I knew him well enough to the core that he was going to say "Don, are we doing this again?" I responded, "Yes, George, I think this is an important thing to do, and I

think it's worthwhile for the embassy and that is my view. So George came back and said "okay, go ahead and do it." Of course, the Ambassador wanted me to give him a report when I came back. It was quite a spectacular Euro-Atlantic event.

We dug into our assignments at Bonn. Harry Geisel, because of his administrative skills, just to have someone like him in the Embassy makes a big difference in a positive way. So we had a remarkable Ambassador in Vernon Walters, and a very strong DCM as well. As we got into the routine I was in the political section and I was Political-Military Counselor.

[Ed note:: According to the Key Officers List when the Bandler arrived in Bonn the Political Counselor was Olaf Grobel. Then Doug Jones is noted as Political Counselor by 1991. Don Bandler is listed as Political Counselor starting with the Fall 1992 Key Officers List. By then Robert Kimmitt is Ambassador]

So we're in Bonn and Walters calls me in and says you know, I want you to go up there, I want you to head towards Berlin; there's a train- he loves to take trains; he loved to take trains and he loved cars too. He instructs me to go up there and see what's happening and tell him what's happening.

We got into our new station wagon after deciding not to take a train. The first main stop is when you come out of German territory into East Germany territory. Our two daughters were with us. At the stop there was about 100 meters with fencing going up about 15 meters high. In order to get into East Germany you have to have a visa. We brought our visas, fortunately. The kids and Jane were in the car and I walked up to deal with the Stasi. They were buzzing around me and asked me who I was, and how many passports I was holding, etc. It worked out fine. I turned around and went back because we were free and able to go into East Germany. This was just before the Wall fell.

Walters was back in his office and we were able to get some communications together. I can see him and feel him even now, he does this with his hands. We can't put it on the tape recorder but he would say this is going to be the real Germany; this is happening. You have to get there now, see what you can do, find out what you can. So we did. And we got to the Wall, and we weren't the first or second or 15th or hundredth, but there were East Germans jumping into the moats, dying.

There were tremendous problems that we needed to discuss and to figure out what was really going to happen. We had an Embassy in East Germany with J.D. Bindenagel as the DCM. That was a pretty good group. I was feeling much better about Embassy Bonn. In discussing the Embassy in Berlin, Harry Geisel was one of the people who said how we were going to make these changes.

Q: Well as you said, these are major relationships and in fact during this time Secretary Baker comes to Germany in mid-December. I assume the political section turned itself inside out to prepare the papers and-

BANDLER: Yes, and that was a big piece of what I was doing there in the Embassy. I remember Secretary Baker walking into the Embassy. He never had a role in the Embassy but he did come by, and I think Walters asked me to go greet him. I did that and that gave me a chance to get information from him. And it was more than just Baker; there was one other person. Do you remember?

But let me talk about the events of February 13, 1991. I was in the embassy at about 6:00 in the evening one day, and unbeknownst to us, across the river members of the Red Army Faction had taken up positions. They had blocked off the waterfront on the other side of the Rhine. On that particular day there were signs and posters and protests.

There were a bunch of protestors because of the presence of the army as the army was perceived as the bad guys. I was up there and I'm looking out the windows on the lower floor. That Embassy was previously a hospital. So I was sitting at my desk and I was looking out onto the Rhine as my desk pointed that way, and all of a sudden I heard pschew, pschew, pschew. I think I can give you the numbers; it was something like 245 rounds with one type of gun and the second one is was 287 rounds. The first thing I did was jump under my desk. I reached up and I pulled the phone off my desk, and I was able to turn on CNN. Within seven or 10 minutes, they were already reporting what was happening here—that there were approximately 500 to 600 rounds shot into our Embassy.

So I called the communicators to find out how many people were there, what we were doing about it, and to get everyone organized. I delegated to each of the different sections to get everybody together and out of harm's way. I walked out into the hall, to get to the communicators so I could send a message directly to Washington. By that time CNN was starting to report and within about 20 minutes there were about 40 or 50 Germans, various kinds of police, and special police and etc. In the econ section there was a relatively small computer and the young lady who was there working there happened to go to the ladies' room. It was a good thing that she went because she would have otherwise been sitting there tapping out her document to send to her boss just as a bullet came in right through that computer. She would have been dead as a doornail. She had gone to the toilet and she missed getting killed. So that was very lucky.

The shooters turned out to be the Baader-Meinhof gang.

I called Ambassador Walters right away, and I did get through to him pretty rapidly. I advised him that it would be much better if he stayed in his home. There was no sense in coming to the Embassy. I think we're getting into good shape here, and we were going to be okay without too much damage.

Q: One of the things that would be interesting to see from the German perspective though is the Middle East impinges with the August 1990 Iraq invasion of Kuwait. I would imagine that the embassy and the German government were in very close contact discussing how to respond to that circumstance. Do you recall any reporting from that time?

BANDLER: Not really. I don't think I have much to say about that. I think we are at a segue regarding the question about Iraq.

Q: Early in 1991 Secretary Baker comes and talks to Chancellor Kohl about how the Germans are going to participate and I was just wondering how the embassy reported and handled those events, you know, what did the Iraq invasion of Kuwait look like from Bonn?

MRS. BANDLER: Just from the family perspective, the German government provided a lot of security protection for the families and there was a huge security initiative where they set up safe houses all the school kids. If there was ever a problem, there was a safe house in the community where they were supposed to go. They had practice drills for these safe houses. The first day of the invasion of the invasion of Kuwait, the German Government had mounted police in front of all the DOD (Department of Defense) schools and a lot of people just kept their kids home. We did. So it was considered a very dangerous, frightening thing in Bonn and they were putting out that kind of protection for us. That was just the family side of it.

BANDLER: You know, we also had a lot of friends in Bonn. For example, Tony Sadeki, who was a Pakistani Asian. We had a lot of fun with the people in and around Bonn. We did a lot of bicycling along the Rhine for 25 miles or so.

People think it was a sleepy little place and it really wasn't. Bonn was basically about insurance. That was true; it did have a lot of insurance companies. Germany was going from what the old Germany was to now, a bigger Germany where things moved pretty

Q: Do you recall the kind of housing you had in Bonn?

BANDLER: Yes. We had a pretty nice spot there close to the Rhine. Harry Geisel had a bigger house.

MRS. BANDLER: They were apartments, housing apartments that were really very nice, like a gated community. But we got lucky and got a free-standing house just a block off of that compound. We had the yellow house right across from the church. Our residence was quite beautiful but it was actually a DCM residence. We were just lucky to get it.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, a big yellow house, yes. We loved it.

BANDLER: And we had a big attic up there where the kids had a ball.

MRS. BANDLER: The DCM and the Ambassador had houses right along the Rhine that were very beautiful.

BANDLER: It was the heart of the most beautiful part of the Rhine, and it was where Walters and Kimmitt lived when they were assigned there. It was called

Bad Godesberg.

BANDLER: That brings us back to Ambassador Walters. Have we already done enough of Walters?

So I remember going to a dinner party with Walters and about 20 Germans and the nomenclature . Walters loved pea soup, but he needed two or three napkins to keep him from getting that pea soup down his shirt. Every time I reminded him, Ambassador really, we would rather you didn't eat pea soup. Anyway, we had a great conversation with the Germans. Walters leads the dinner and he's got all kinds of interesting things to talk about and the Germans really loved him. We get the last person to leave out the front door and then he says come on Don, let's go back and look at the Rhine. It's a big enough Embassy that you've got about 40 meters and a big beautiful porch with a very grand yard and then Rhine River. So he was standing there with me and his hands start to shake. He says you know, can you feel it, Don, can you feel it? This country is going to be unified. Can you feel it? Can you feel it? So I said to him well Ambassador, I know what you mean but I'm not sure I quite feel it as much as you but it will be great if it happens. Lo and behold it did develop and it did happen.

When it was time for Walters, I was in charge of logistics. Walters had a nephew who had a red convertible car. Walters wanted to go across Europe and over to China. So he and his nephew, who was about 18 years old, drove off in this very unusual car. He just continued until he got to, basically, the end of Russia and the beginning of China. Of course there's a body of water there, stops it, a very big one. As it turns out, Walters loved subways—and all of this is stuff that he's telling me later and I'm learning as much as I can about these things that he's doing. So he takes all subways he can and he gets to the farthest way and he finds an apartment; he needs to go to bed because they've been going for a long time. It is one little bedroom in a four or five story place and he's able to get a room there. He went into the room, about three or four feet by two feet, and on that bed was a little card. So Walters opens the card and it says something like this: Dear Mr. Ambassador. We are so pleased that you had this wonderful trip all across our country, all the way to the sea. We want you to know that we've kept very close care on you so that you could be sure that you would be safe and sound and we hope that you have a wonderful rest of your trip. So that was an anecdote that I'll never forget.

Q: How would you characterize the morale of the embassy in Bonn?

BANDLER: I would say about as good as anywhere. Now, there's a lot to do; it's an important country, we're in a country which is becoming something different and you know, that's really, that's a big deal. You know, I think there was a degree of, you know, the East German side where we had American people working and the West German side, that was always a little bit touchy. And what's his name, J.D. Bindenagel, was a big part of that. You know, he's a very good Germanist and I think he, you know, he had a lot, it was a good thing that we would have German, East German reporting as well as West German reporting.

So going back to Embassy Bonn, we had been there for a year or two. We had these tennis courts; did we already tell you about this?

I would say about as good as anywhere. Now, there's a lot to do; it's an important country, we're in a country which is becoming something different and you know, that's really, that's a big deal. You know, I think there was a degree of, you know, the East German side where we had American people working and the West German side, that was always a little bit touchy. J.D. Bindenagel, was a big part of that. He's a very good Germanist with a strong East German background. I remember thinking it was a good thing as we had both East German and West German reporting duties.

So going back to Embassy Bonn, we had been there for a year or two. We had these tennis courts; did we already tell you about this?

Q: No.

BANDLER: Okay. So there was a club and there was a place to eat and it wasn't far from our home.

MRS. BANDLER: We invited some East Germans to the Embassy tennis club.

BANDLER: This was an unprecedented thing. We invited them to come to our tennis facility to play.

MRS. BANDLER: The East Germans.

BANDLER: And these East Germans came down. This is the first time this has ever happened and I don't know how they got out but they did.

MRS. BANDLER: My guess is it was probably right after the Wall came down.

BANDLER: Yes, along with a lot of other considerations. In any case, we played tennis and it was pretty good tennis. We had a coach on our side.

MRS. BANDLER: Well it was tennis diplomacy.

BANDLER: Tennis diplomacy. And it's a beauty. So we had a good time. We put them up and they give us an invitation to come, maybe a month or so later.

MRS. BANDLER: Something like that.

BANDLER: Yes. We crossed over into East Germany after obtaining permission. The Ambassador said it was fine, let's go do that, it would be interesting. We arrived at a little town in Weimar. They had some pretty decent tennis courts, and we arrived in the evening so we can't play any tennis that first day. But we settled in our quarters. Then the East Germans started offering us their whiskeys of various sorts, not just whiskey but all

kinds of booze.

BANDLER: It was a little crazy because they had good beer and people were just drinking their hearts out. I've been told, and it was true, that I drank a little bit too much that evening. So the following morning I was able to pull myself out of my bed at around 11:30. The matches were supposed to start at 9:00 a.m. but there was no way I was getting over there that early. I think that they slipped something into our drink, I really do. And so by around 1:00 or 2:00 in the afternoon, we went over to play.

BANDLER: I was playing relatively feebly compared to what I could have been doing on that tennis court. In any case, we went back and forth with the tennis diplomacy and it was an unprecedented thing.

And I want to segue with I'm traveling with Bill Clinton and he's going to see Kohl. And we go to see Kohl and we have a big event there and Bill Clinton and I, you know, worked up his speech and it was really kind of- I think that this was the moment where you've got Kohl and you've got East Germany; it's a major change in European and Euro-American, you know, all of that coming together surprisingly strong. And Clinton, when Clinton does these things I admire him for it and we, you know, he works very closely with- worked very closely with Kohl and with all the other top people.

So I'm going to jump back to the Weimar part. In that area they had- there was one- there was an automobile production and they produced these, I forget the name of them. Jane, do you remember?

MRS. BANDLER: What?

BANDLER: The name of those little funny cars?

Q: The East German cars.

BANDLER: East German cars. We went in there and they get basically one a day and those cars are really crappy cars, really crappy cars.

So segueing, Clinton, it's about 10 years later and Clinton and I are on a trip in East Germany and that very- Oh, Wartburg is what it was; it's the Wartburg was the name of the car. Now we're putting in Opals a GE Opal version and those things were being, you know, four or five hundred a day getting produced. So that was a really interesting thing and Kohl, I believe Kohl spent some time with us out there in the Weimar area. So there's some Bill Clinton stuff.

Q: You were mentioning earlier that the thought occurred that with German reunification we were going to need an embassy in Berlin.

BANDLER: Yes.

*Q: Do you recall how did the idea of having an embassy in Bonn (sic) mature?
And what were some of the problems.*

BANDLER: Okay. Well I think that they understood that it was going to take quite some time to get that Embassy built. There were some land issues, which is typical, and there were traffic issues. There were all kinds of issues. The plan was to establish the Embassy 15 miles or so outside of the city. But we were hoping to locate the American Embassy near the Adlon Hotel, which was just near the wall.

Q: So obviously the mission that was already there was quite inadequate for this new era.

BANDLER: It was just going to take a lot of time to build a proper mission, to get it going, get the plans and the approvals. The Germans, as you know, are tic toc, tic toc, tic toc.... You have to check all the boxes and that's hard to do. I would go back and forth pretty regularly to Germany and we had a lot of German friends, many of whom we still know. In my view, Germany has emerged as enormously successful. From 20 years ago until now, everything about it has just changed in the right way. And the beer still is great beer.

Senior Seminar

Q: Well your tour in Bonn is from 1989 to 1993 and after Bonn you're assigned to the 36th Senior Seminar (1993-1994).

MRS. BANDLER: One thing when we left Bonn, the day the packers had finished packing everything and they were about to load the boxes, Holbrooke was coming in as the Ambassador. He asked Don on that particular day if he would consider staying on as his DCM. Luckily we didn't do that and Don was able to do the Senior Seminar, which was an amazing experience.

BANDLER: I worked with Dick a lot on all kinds of things and I regret not being able to work with him as well as participate in Senior Seminar.

Q: Well, as you were saying Senior Seminar is a very important honor.

BANDLER: Yes and it give one an exposure to a variety of other agencies. We went over to the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) and to the NSA (National Security Agency). Senior Seminar was really a privileged opportunity and we all really took that seriously. I mean, they were fantastic things. . I have some friends there at the CIA who go back 25, 30 years such as Robert Blackwell.

Q: Can you describe what you did during that year, what the group did?

BANDLER: Yes. The first memory was that I was late getting up to New York. We did a lot of planning and it was done at the FSI (Foreign Service Institute) campus. We really dug deep and each of us tried to get a little group together. For example it would be a

Euro group, an Asia group, the logistics group, etc.

MRS. BANDLER: Well what were some of the- you went on all those great trips.

BANDLER: Yes, so we went up to New York and I had bashed my leg or knee and it caused me to lose some time with the rest of my colleagues, but it was okay. But we mapped out a few trips.

MRS. BANDLER: Across the country. It was all in the United States, including Alaska and New Mexico.

BANDLER: No, it wasn't just in the U.S. I mean yes, the Seminar did go to Alaska as part of a round the world trip. I remember how amazing it was when we witnessed cavitation occurring while traveling on the water. We were very active in Alaska. But first we went to New York and Burt Manning came in to speak with us. Burt Manning was a very smart and successful businessman so we invited him to discuss business issues in New York. During the trip we travelled on a big belly airplane with all the right moves and things needed for such an excursion and Brzezinski joined us on some of the legs. We had the whole trip plotted out. It was quite fascinating.

Q: I understand one of the purposes of the Senior Seminar is to encourage interagency bonding, if you will. Do you recall contributions of some of the people in your class?

BANDLER: Yes, sure. Tim Foster was from Carolina and very smart and attractive guy with a nice family. Jim Gadsden is still right here in the area. I believe and he is at Princeton University now, teaching. Leslie Gerson really knew what she was doing and she was able to pull people together. Lino Gutierrez, who we've talked about before, is a top notch guy-- and he's one of the best Latin Americanists in the country. Pat Hayes. Ken Hunter, African American, played a significant leadership role and is a really nice guy and knows what he's doing. Philip Jones was with an agency, possibly the CIA and kind of steady and somewhat quiet. Mary Gin Kennedy was also active. Mike Lekson has been a close friend ever since the Seminar. He is very active on nuclear affairs and missiles—SLCMs, GLCMs and all of that era. Right now, Marisa, Lino and Mike Lekson and myself frequently collaborate and also get together socially. Pat Nichols, Lee Lohman, and Richard Reppart were a little bit more distant from us.

Bob Callahan; Oh, he's a terrific guy. He's very smart and thoughtful, and he is also a superb Latin Americanist. Carol Tyson was with USAID and is delightful and smart. Larry Machabee was in the Marine Corps with Dan Leighton, and they are moving things forward in their work.

Fred Forster died recently. He was in the U.S. Air Force. He was a wonderful guy and of course since we were in these airplanes, it was good to have an experienced pilot in the group. So Fred was able to give us visibility, sitting in the co-pilot's seat or in the back, and looking out the few windows of the plane.

Harlan Durgen was with the Coast Guard and Tom Myers was with the Environmental Protection Agency. Those two, together with Ed Hanley were quite active. Sadly, Ed's son is now at NIH and he's spending a tremendous amount of time trying to get him rehabilitated because he was wounded pretty badly in Afghanistan.

John Hardy was an NSA person. Gwen Hoyt was rather quiet. And Tom Kimmel, whom we discussed earlier, is from a family that goes back to the Revolutionary War. Maybe that's an exaggeration.

Q: You were saying he was a relative of Admiral Kimmel, Navy commander at Pearl Harbor.

BANDLER: Admiral Kimmel yes. Tom has spent his life trying to increase understanding of the history of the Kimmel family by writing books, talking to people, writing op-ed articles. They really treasure their history. Tom was the only family member who wasn't wearing a naval uniform; he joined the FBI. Every year I watch a movie or two, in order to remind myself of the enormity of Pearl Harbor and how important it is to maintain national security.

Q: Now, in addition to the traveling that this group did together, were there research, writing projects?

BANDLER: Yes. Well it was mostly researching our schedule and plotting out what would be most useful to visit in order to gather information and inform ourselves. For example, we went to visit with an Indian tribe and it was fascinating to be around them in woods with the campfires, and to learn about their traditions. We had come down on a large craft that holds about 35 people. Before we got to the Indians we traveled along a corridor with masses of ice and snow and we witnessed the amazing phenomenon of cavitation. We would hear bursts of sound like an atomic bomb. I mean the cavitation was very loud.

Q: Who would you say were the leaders that turned out, sort of guided the group, oh, this is what we ought to do?

BANDLER: I would say Fred Forester because he was, you know, he was a very good airplane pilot and knows his stuff and is a very decent man and he's no man's fool either and a lovely family. We miss him a lot.

Mark Lennon, in the Navy, was also very sharp.

Foster was kind of low key. Lino was very good. I mean, Lino, this combination of Lino and Lexon and myself and, you know, Marisa and so, that was, loved Carol Tyson, USAID, really sharp. So those would be some of the top people.

MRS. BANDLER: Have you mentioned the project involving the Holocaust Museum?

BANDLER: Well it wasn't a Holocaust project per se. It was a volunteer research projects. They have special activities that they think are important, that could be helpful. It was really early in the Holocaust Museum's birth; I think it might have been the second year. I went and spoke with the museum staff and they said do anything you want and feel free to draw on the museum's resources, including the staff. The museum had was very good leadership. I spent about two and a half months there. There was a lot to learn, a tremendous amount. For example, how do you mount the collections? How do you develop new projects such as with families and their histories of their countries of origin, what happened to them and where they are today? The project was global in its scope. So I haven't been there for a while but I did spend a great deal of time there. I really liked the people and learned much and was starting to act as a docent in effect.

Q: Did a written project come out of that or just your own research?

BANDLER: Yes.

NEA/IAI

BANDLER: So we're in the fall of 1994 and I take up an assignment in NEA/IAI (Office of Israel and Arab-Israel Affairs in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs) as the Office Director.

Q: While the Senior Seminar is a special portal, you're a Europeanist, a Frenchman and a German, how does one get an assignment in a completely different bureau such as NEA?

BANDLER: Right. Well, having been a European affairs expert in effect, those were long years and I wondered if I wanted to continue along these lines all the rest of my life. I didn't think so. I wanted to do more things. I hadn't done enough with Asia but my thirst for Asia developed later in my life. For these reasons, the Middle East was the obvious critical node and I was recruited by Robert Pelletreau who was Assistant Secretary.

I worked with (Deputy Assistant Secretary) Mark Parris, who was exceptionally smart, thoughtful and somewhat tough minded. Dan Kurtzer was also a Deputy Assistant Secretary at the time, and Dan is about as good as you're going to get. He knows everything and everybody, and he was thoughtful with a moderate approach to the Middle East. It's very difficult to maintain a moderate approach to the Middle East. You've got nasties here and there digging in on border issues, public law, etc. But I loved getting into IAI because I led it. You have to be trained; you have to get to know the people and the Bureau. I had a good relationship with Pelletreau. Toni Verstandig, the third Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau, would call 12-16 times a day asking Don, what are you doing? We have to get up there and get to Pelletreau. I would respond okay, we'll get it done, and we did. [Ed: Parris and Kurtzer have recorded oral history interviews with ADST.]

Q: Who was with you on the desk?

BANDLER: Richard Roth was my deputy and we had a good group of five or six others in IAI. Yes. Some of them had some depth and some didn't. We all learned together. I have Jewish roots and I've been to Israel. How many times have we been to Israel, Jane?

MRS. BANDLER: About eight.

BANDLER: I would think something like that. People asked why are you doing that Don? Why are you doing it? I don't know exactly why I did. I wanted to do it and it did have something to do with my Jewish roots. It gave this assignment a very different quality.

Also, in the State Department there are many of us who want to specialize in European Affairs. So in order to compete, you have to really bulk up and make sure that you can do the job. Therefore, it makes a lot of sense to go off and do something different and a little bit harder. So this kind of crossover assignment, I think, is an excellent opportunity. I don't think it makes sense for somebody to only be European Affairs or only be Asian Affairs. It is good to be well-rounded and thus better prepared. That's my feeling.

I was fortunate to work with very strong intellects that we've mentioned here. They're all really pretty impressive. I think the Secretary of State needs to have somebody like that.

Q: Do you recall some of the issues that arose during this period?

MRS. BANDLER: That assignment didn't last very long; you were there for a year.

BANDLER: I was getting recruited around that time for, if I'm not mistaken, for Israel. So the issues I had to get my head wrapped around all aimed at formulating the U.S. position on the broader Mid-East. The issues were a mélange of Hamas, Palestinian and Israeli interests. I remember meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu on the top story of a big building and we talked for 30-45 minutes about common ground between Israel, the Palestinians and the U.S. I worked with other Israeli leaders, including the President, as well as Palestinian leadership.

Recruitment for DCM position in Paris

Q: Well, it turns out you were Director of the Israeli desk for only a year, before the Paris opportunity arose. How did that happen?

MRS. BANDLER: I remember you telling a story, that you're walking down the hall and someone called you in and said, "You're the one I was thinking of!" And they said they're thinking of Pamela Harriman interviewing you for the DCM job and would you be interested.

BANDLER: That's true. I mean I was thrilled to meet Pamela Harriman and there were two, three, four- no, there were about TEN people who wanted to be her deputy. And I

was lucky enough to get the job. It was as good a job as I'll ever get. She was extraordinary in many regards.

It was June of 1993 and Clinton and Christopher were attending the Bosnia peace talks with Holbrooke. But before that there was a big selection process for the DCM position with Pamela and it meant a long wait period. Pamela had been at post since June 1993. Avis Bohlen was her first DCM and was ready to move on. [Ed: Avis Bohlen was named Ambassador to Bulgaria and presented her credentials in September 1996. Her oral history is on file with ADST.]

I loved working with Ambassador Harriman. I didn't know what to think of her because first of all it was politics, a lot of politics. Sandy Berger was very close to Pamela and stayed close. They worked tightly together and effectively. When I got to Paris I already knew France very well. I'd been there for many years. We didn't have our housing ready so we went to the mountains and spent time with our friends, the Viellevignes, traveling and taking river rides and having a wonderful time. It was July.

Pamela was great. One of the big things that she did was hold receptions. Janet Howard was Pamela's personal assistant and she worked with Pamela all of those years. She would invite two or three hundred of the top people, including French women such as Madame la Gard. She wanted to continue what she did in the U.S., which was to bring interesting, talented women together to discuss and network.

Every morning we would gather in her office about the same time. My office is right next door so I would hear when I needed to go in and when I didn't. She and I would have a phone call with Holbrooke, Sandy Berger, Jim Steinberg and that whole group. We had staff meetings regularly. We had an excellent country team. Craig Kelly, for example, was considerably more junior to me and has had a great career. Lino Gutierrez was there, as the regional ARA (Bureau of Inter-American Affairs) officer.

Q: Now, you're career Foreign Service, she's a political appointee. Sometimes that can be a sticky situation, but you're suggesting that she created a very positive environment for the whole mission?

BANDLER: Yes, definitely. In an embassy that big, somebody will say that he or she doesn't like a person. That's normal. But I think in terms of morale, Pamela handled it right. She knew that she didn't have the perspective of a career foreign service officer but she was great, no doubt about that. She wanted to do it the right way with the right people, and she did that kind of choosing well.

MRS. BANDLER: Pamela didn't micro-manage.

BANDLER: Correct. We had a good economic section, which is unusual. I don't know why, but it was exceptionally good in Paris. [Ed: Economic Counselor in fall 1996 was John Medeiros.]

Q: When you were DCM did you find that jobs in France were highly bid?

BANDLER: By and large, yes.

Q: Good morning. It is the 3rd of August, 2011. We're returning to our conversation with Ambassador Bandler. What was it like to work for Ambassador Harriman?

BANDLER: Well, I want to go one step back about the competition for this post. It was very fierce with about 15 people who were trying to get the job. Only four of them were really in it. I think it is the luck of the draw or maybe good chemistry, and Pamela chose me and that was it. As I mentioned, before we had a house in Paris I was staying in the farthest reaches of Meribel in the mountains, so Pamela called me virtually every day. As you and I discussed earlier in this interview, keeping close contact was very important for her and she wanted to have key advisors like Sandy Berger available.

(Deputy Secretary) Strobe Talbott was also an important figure in her entourage as well. I'm not sure what their relationship was but overall Pamela built excellent relationships upon her arrival and it was a very smooth ride.

When we returned to Paris, Pamela arrived and she was ready to go. In general, she was well considered by the diplomatic community. One of the things I might be repeating is that Pamela liked to be with men and to work with them and to be engaged with them. But somewhere around three or four months after, Pamela made a big change. She shifted her focus to building effective relationships in France. Jane, what were you going to say?

MRS. BANDLER: Didn't she start an initiative to invite each minister to a dinner? Along with each minister, she would also invite relevant people in the government and from the Embassy. She'd have maybe five or six tables of 10 at every dinner.

BANDLER: Yes. I think that is standard for what a chief of mission would do. But what I was getting at, just to recall, was that Pamela thought it was very important to get involved with the French professional women. That was what was new and unusual and it was a very successful effort. It changed things for her. She knew the names, she knew what they're doing, and the what, when and where of Paris. It was a very big Embassy with lots to do and Pamela made a significant and important contribution by spearheading women's affair.

Q: How would you describe morale in the embassy? It's a big embassy, pretty spread out.

BANDLER: It is a big embassy, spread out and well-staffed. We had very good people in the embassy over those years. I think morale was very strong and good. For example, we had Craig Kelly who has done very well throughout his career and he's a topnotch guy. He was one of the people who we would try to bring into small meetings try to work together with teams. (Economic Counselor) John Medeiros was an exceptional economics officer. (Political Counselor) William Bellamy was a very good political

officer. (Consular Counselor) Jim Ward was a good consular officer and Charlie Allegron was an excellent administrator. Dan Larned was the Military Attaché and he was one of the best I've worked with.

Q: How did you see the role of the DCM in such a large embassy?

BANDLER: Yes. So to be a DCM, in my experience and watching others, be as positive as you possibly can in working with a group of people. It could be 25 people, it could be 100 people, it could be in a big Embassy, such as the German Embassy. So we have a DCM whose job it is to give the Embassy a sense that we know what we're doing and why we're doing it, we know who's doing what and in the right way. We work closely to mentor staff. Sometimes a DCM will give a little coaching, making it informal and easy. We try to work efficiently and foster a team (the Ambassador, DCM, Political and Economic Counselors, and other staff) so that the timing of the Embassy business comes together. It's a good formula.

Q: Would you list just one of the best DCMs you worked for?

BANDLER: Who did I work for? At one point I worked for Avis Bohlen and that's a good thing to have happen to you.

Q: Did you learn from that?

BANDLER: Well, she was exceptionally intelligent, spoke well and knew how to work. It goes back in her family, the Bohlen family. I think it's a great thing when you have an administrative person who can keep an eye on the Embassy overall, and communicate back and forth with Washington. I've seen a lot of embassies where I've seen a lot of alcoholism. I've seen some really some bad things in embassies but by and large, it seems to work well.

Q: Now as a large embassy like that, how did it run? Did the ambassador hold weekly staff meetings or how did she use you?

BANDLER: Well, I think we already talked about this. When we would meet in Pamela's office, she and I, and maybe one other person, would sit and talk about how the day going was going to unfold, our next projects and all the appropriate kinds of things. Holbrooke and Berger and others would call in and I think it was an exceptionally good thing to do because it was a large Embassy. There were lots of things that had to get done and those key people in the embassy did very well at it. We all had Pamela's leadership and support.

Q: As DCM of such a large embassy, what were some of the unique problems that came up in this tour?

BANDLER: Well one of the most difficult problems was when Pamela and I, one morning, went into the secure area. These secure areas, or the bubble, in other embassies

and in this one as well. I thought we had a better bubble in Cyprus than we did in Paris. On this morning we were briefed that the CIA was infiltrated and the French authorities, who were hanging around a hotel nearby the embassy, were able to sort out what was happening in the Embassy. Some of the sensitive things that should have remained within the Embassy walls were leaking.

Pamela and I got back together immediately to figure out what we were going to do. I'm sure it went to secretary of state level very fast as well as to all the national security people. Basically, the CIA was just wiped out of Paris because of the infiltration. It was important for the Ambassador and for me to know who's doing what and when and to be a step ahead rather than a few steps behind. I think Pamela handled that with aplomb and the embassy recognized that this was a mess and it had to be rectified. And who knows how many other people were out and about in the large city of Paris doing things that neither we nor the intelligence services were aware of. So it was a sticky, very sticky. I never really got the full details but what I did learn, I can't really talk about. Basically, 25 CIA members were asked to leave after a botched surveillance routine. [Ed: France's Interior Minister, Charles Pasqua, in February 1995 announced that five CIA agents had been discovered conducting economic espionage. Station Chief Richard Holm and others were recalled.]

Did we talk about Bill Barraclough? He was the DCM during my first tour in Paris. I thought he was a good role model as a DCM. He was a very decent and smart man, but unfortunately he made a mistake and had to leave the service. But it was too bad. And there were a couple of other things like that in the Embassy. But speaking of Embassy Paris overall, they have some of the best people that I ever encountered in all the embassies I was at.

Q: One of the unique things about Paris is you have all these other separate American missions, such as OECD; what's the embassy's relationship to them?

BANDLER: The OECD, I think, is a self-standing, knows where they are, where their buildings are, what the requirements are, what the reasoning is to do, you know, to spend all the money to do these things, which is, you know, a lot of it were lectures or people coming in and out of town and so it's certainly true; all over Paris and France you're going to see embassies and meet with embassy people. Although, you know, as a DCM or ambassador you don't want to do too much of that. I mean, they have their reason to be-

Q: Now, as DCM you're also responsible for the consulates. What is the nature of that responsibility?

BANDLER: To stay in touch with the consulates and receive their reports, etc. The consulates were mostly small. Marseilles is one exception because of its maritime activities and its interaction with our fleets. There were a lot of aircraft activities in the southern part of France and in effect there was a swath of U.S., Italian, French, and to some extent German forces.

Q: Work in Paris would be pretty consuming but did you get an opportunity to visit the consulates?

BANDLER: Yes. I think it was one of the things that we talked about within the embassy. We decided that we should be active and bring the consulates together for discussions as conference calls don't work very well in diplomacy, especially in Paris.

MRS. BANDLER: Didn't you close the consulate in Lyon? Washington was trying to cut back on consulates and that they closed that one. That's what I remember.

BANDLER: Let's check it out but I think that's probably right. And that's a beautiful area there. And of course laced through all of this is that of course all of your friends are just dying to be in Embassy Paris, and meet people and see what it's like. But it's a very busy job so you can't do too much of that, but you can do some. We went on a weekend trip to a winery with two friends of very good standing in Paris. There were a lot of interesting things going on in and around Lyon. It was at a very big wine Expo where we happened to meet a very nice group of people with the Rothschilds. We met Gianni Zonin of Italy, the biggest winemaker in all of Europe. Moreover, we have great wine and others fly in to get that wine.

BANDLER: Let me just jump on quickly for the one thing about- because of the cinema, when the Fierst father died we went down there and it was a very sad moment. We were down there for the Cannes Film Festival, which was an assignment—poor us.

MRS. BANDLER: It was an official duty.

BANDLER: Official duty. We also went to the northern film festival in Deauville with our friend Anouk Aimee. Pamela went with us as well. The Deauville event had really topnotch, major stars in attendance. So Pamela, Janet, Jane and me and maybe one or two others were hobnobbing with really great actors and it was quite a wonderful event. It was a good way to kind of get things started, to get the team rolling. This is was towards the end of the summer. I remember all of us agreeing that we had had fun but now the work comes.

Q: Being that you're talking about Ambassador Harriman's program of entertaining where she did each minister serially, does the DCM job have that same kind of representational requirements?

BANDLER: The Chief of Mission decides that and in Pamela's case, she ensured her team kept a high profile.

But when I went over to meet people in the embassy a few months ago, thinking that we might have a little meeting with (Charles) Rifkin; that was not the case. That's okay; it's his prerogative. But it was a little bit disappointing for me as someone who'd been six years in France. I think Rifkin was the guy who runs horses in the West Coast. I'm not

sure; he's a very wealthy man. So it was a little disappointing. [Ed: Ambassador Rifkin is a non-career appointee who presented his credentials in October 2009.]

Q: One of the issues that was going on at the time that you were there was the breakup of Yugoslavia and Kosovo. And I presume the embassy was deeply involved in these issues?

BANDLER: Yes, we had a supportive role, but much of the policy direction came from the State Department. Not to say that we didn't have people there because we did. My recollection is that we had about 40 or 50,000 troops on the western side and we were also up in the mountains on tanks and other vehicles, less than tanks. And I was there.

MRS. BANDLER: Didn't Ron Brown come for some kind of meetings and the next day he was flying to Kosovo when his plane crashed? But we saw him the day before the accident happened—at the residence, for the reception.

BANDLER: Yes. Good recollection. That's true. Ron Brown was a Democrat and we did a lot of things together. It was really an incredibly sad, sad event.

But I want to go back to the Kosovo part, because that's a little different. Somehow or other Holbrooke was in a tank, winding up through the trails. When he returned back down, one of those vehicles rolled over and killed several people.

One of the people who was there was a man from Ohio State University and his wife.

MRS. BANDLER: No, I can't think of her name right now.

BANDLER: He was an outstanding guy. He was a Pentagon person. So that was really distressing for everybody. It was unbelievably difficult because it was a tough mission to begin with and you had all kinds of groups bumping up against one another and a lot of troops there. Nobody wanted us to have to use those troops but we did have deployments if and as needed. So that was very difficult. [Ed: While driving along a mountain road on the Igman Mountain near Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina on August 19, 1995, on a mission to negotiate a U.S. proposal to end the conflict in Bosnia, a vehicle carrying Robert Frasure, a deputy assistant Secretary of Defense, Joseph Kruzal, and Col. Sam Nelson Drew went over a cliff.]

Q: As you're saying, these are major important issues in Western Europe and globally which required from time to time the attention of people like Secretary Christopher. So for example, Secretary Christopher came to Paris in September 1996 to talk to President Chirac and Foreign Minister de Charette. What would have been the embassy's responsibility during these kinds of high level visits and talks?

BANDLER: There are various ways to handle it. Sometimes you're looking for leadership one on one. In other instances, you build cadres of strong people in the embassy on political-military, economic, and commerce affairs.

Commerce is sometimes left behind. But when you had Ron Brown as Secretary of Commerce, who was solid and excellent, it helped the commerce agenda. People felt good about him, he walked with a smile and he worked very well. Jill Schuker was very close with Ron Brown and was around those moments.

Q: Here you are, DCM in Paris, and I'm assuming these high level visits are going to put a lot of stress on the mission.

BANDLER: Yes, but we did have really good embassies, by and large.

MRS. BANDLER: Once Hillary came with the president who was just transiting through Paris and going somewhere else, which I don't recall. We met them at the airport and escorted them into town. Hillary decided she was going to stay in Paris incognito and have a little vacation and one of her plans was to go to the Monet Gardens at Giverny.

So incognito the entire highway from Paris to Monet's was removed of all vehicles and we moved in a bus without a single car on the whole road for the day. But she wore sunglasses and casual clothing and we had a really nice time.

We had dinner and Pamela joined us for that.

BANDLER: The President came to Paris quite a few times. He loved to be there; he loved to be there when Pamela was Ambassador, of course.

MRS. BANDLER: Remember when he hurt his foot as President?

Q: Yes. He has a cane there in that picture.

BANDLER: And I'll tell you another vignette is when he didn't like his tie as much as my tie, which I still have. I gave it to him but then he sent it back to me again, and then I gave it to him about three times. So that was good.

BANDLER: As I look at Pamela's picture, I recall that she always meant business. She wanted things to go right. She wanted people to think seriously about what they were doing. She had a great smile and when she entered a room, maybe it's 150 people, maybe it's 500 people, maybe it's 40, but she's zoning it all out -- who's there, where should I be going, how can I help? And she had good help from Janet Howard. Did we cover the struggle between Janet Howard and Linda Wachner?

MRS. BANDLER: This is when she died, after she died.

BANDLER: Sure. So as we talked about earlier I was in our usual morning meeting with Pamela, with Sandy Berger, Jim Steinberg, and Strobe Talbott and others in the State Department on the phone.

MRS. BANDLER: You're talking about the morning, February 4, 1997, that you had a

meeting with her. Pamela said she had a headache.

BANDLER: Right. Following the meeting with the Big Four, I closed the door and suggested to Pamela that she take some time. I said to Pamela, listen, you look a little tired to me. Why don't you just take a little time? Everything else has been taken care of fully. We've got every one of our missions at work. So why don't you go home take a little nap, do some things, read a book, something like that. Pamela agreed and she went to the Ritz Carlton Hotel swimming pool. She plunged into the pool and hit her head.

MRS. BANDLER: She didn't die in the pool, but she had a brain embolism.

BANDLER: Yes. The next thing I knew, we had a phone call telling us Pamela was in trouble. I raced to organize the advance team and I called Winston Junior telling him to immediately get over here. They wanted to have the Churchill family there, the children, the generations there and her son Winston, Jr. himself. Donna Deghban, Pamela's secretary, was excellent in making sure I was getting the calls after the incident. Talking about good staffing, she was very serious minded and she did extremely well on this tragic matter. She helped Winston Churchill Jr. to get on an airplane as soon as possible.

BANDLER: Pamela was taken to the American Hospital in Paris, Neuilly-sur-Seine. It's a good hospital. So my driver shot off as fast as we possibly could on those streets and we arrived first. I was starting to get news that Winston, Jr. was on his way, bringing other people. One of the first things I did when I got to the hospital was to see Pamela immediately and meet her doctors. I saw her there wired up. It was horrible.

BANDLER: Then I had to go on the radio to share information regarding Pamela's status. By the time I did, it was a major media event.

MRS. BANDLER: She was unconscious at this time.

BANDLER: Yes, she was unconscious. I was holding her hand, as much as I could, and there was no real response. There was a plastic oxygen tent and Pamela was on life support systems. She died two or three days later. The doctors did really well, but Pamela died shortly thereafter and I was forced to announce her death, on February 5, 1997.

MRS. BANDLER: Then there was a memorial service at the Embassy. Chirac was there and he awarded Pamela the Legion of Honor posthumously.

And then the President dispatched Air Force One to bring her casket and her family and we went along back to Washington.

BANDLER: But you missed a few details here. I had to go to the airport; I think it was around 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning to meet Air Force One. I did that but it was frenetic because we were making phone calls back and forth and we did not know what time the plane was coming or which runway. I couldn't get the cars positioned with the chauffeurs until we had the details. I didn't have one moment of time when I wasn't on the phone

and giving directions simultaneously. It was nonstop. Everyone was distressed and in tears. That was sad.

MRS. BANDLER: After she died and the casket was still in Paris, before it was taken on Air Force One, there was a service at the Embassy. Chirac and Sandy Berger were there; the Churchill family was there, along with the Embassy staff.

BANDLER: I would say that there were about 200 people there. I had to speak and you can imagine how I felt. But the funny part of it was, I mean it wasn't funny really, but between the airports and the driving, about three or four hours passed. I had started at 3:30 in the morning and there was no way to go to a toilet. So what was I going to do?

MRS. BANDLER: You rushed to the toilet in between one second and another and you forgot to put your fly up and just as you were going out to make your speech you realized what was going on but you couldn't really stand there and zip it up in front of everyone.

BANDLER: Especially with the transparent podium.

MRS. BANDLER: He had to stand with his hands crossed across the front of his pants for the whole speech.

Q: Crossed your arms at the waist.

BANDLER: Oh my God.

MRS. BANDLER: And then you had to shovel dirt onto the- Oh no, that was at the tree planting ceremony with the secretary of state.

BANDLER: With Warren Christopher, right?

MRS. BANDLER: No, no. It was-

Q: No, Albright by then.

BANDLER: Albright. Also Albright came in-

MRS. BANDLER: They came in after, you know, maybe a month after for planting a tree.

BANDLER: Oh yes, that's right. After the service, we boarded the plane with the family and casket and we landed in Dover, Delaware. There were numerous services for Pamela, in Washington, New York and Montana.

BANDLER: I recall that when I was in the airplane with Janet Howard, there was a big fight between Janet and Linda Wachner. Janet and Linda came into conflict; they both wanted to be Pamela's best friends. This was before Pamela died, obviously, so we're

going back a little bit. That was one of the hardest things that I had to steer during the whole period because Janet had worked with Pamela for donkeys' years, and she did exceptionally good work. So I think what happened is that Linda Wachner offered her own private plane to transport Pamela's body to Montana. I didn't think it was appropriate really, but for some reason it made sense at the time. Janet wasn't on those planes, right Jane?

MRS. BANDLER: No.

BANDLER: So how did Janet get out there so fast?

MRS. BANDLER: Janet had already left Paris when Pamela died.

BANDLER: Yes, because she was so upset and there was a scratchiness between those two individuals.

Q: They were, to the embassy they were her staff aides?

BANDLER: Janet would be a staff aide. Linda Wachner was a friend with all kinds of assets, who could pull strings at any time. Pamela liked both of them. It was really sad. But there really wasn't much that could be done.

So I think we did go to Montana. But the husband Harriman was a railroad magnate and ex-Governor of New York.

So we came back, and flew to the Harriman Estate, near West Point, which was quite lovely. We had other ceremonies and bringing other people in and it was very well done.

MRS. BANDLER: The funeral was in Washington at the National Cathedral. But the body was buried at the Harriman estate; it was a multi stop trip. But, Don had had a ski accident and hurt his knee. He hadn't had time to go to the doctor. After we arrived in Washington with the casket and went through the whole ceremony, we then had to go straight to the emergency room at Sibley where they did what was needed to repair his knee. When we went to pay the bill, we realized we didn't have any money. So we had to call friends, Paul and Paula London, who lived nearby and they came with money and food.

MRS. BANDLER: So that was our personal experience. After the plane dropped there was a convoy that went to the funeral home to leave the casket before the funeral. It was complicated and a lot of people involved.

Q: But you were saying there was a memorial service in Paris. Was that just for the embassy or other-? Other diplomat missions attended that?

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, diplomatic missions and friends.

BANDLER: Yes, it was open.

MRS. BANDLER: That was the service where Chirac gave her the Legion of Honor that he had been planning to give her, a month or two after she had died. The ceremony was scheduled for March and she died in February. The whole Churchill family was there.

BANDLER: I think it's important to add that it was well attended on the French side, Quai d'Orsay and the various areas. Jean David Levite was an exceptional person and a very good friend over many years. Pamela was very much a part of that too.

MRS. BANDLER: There was a very active office of protocol staffed with 4 or 5 people. They were involved in all these events and passing the guest lists back and forth between Don, the Ambassador, and Janet. Janet was in charge of that. So that's how all these events ran.

Q: That's the protocol office in Paris?

MRS. BANDLER: Yes.

Q: Coming from my Asian assignments that's, to have four or five people in the protocol office-

MRS. BANDLER: Well it was just in Paris. I don't know about London, but that wasn't the case in Germany. So it was an unusual case in Europe.

BANDLER: You know why they didn't have a big protocol office in Bonn?

MRS. BANDLER: Because Pamela wasn't there.

BANDLER: Because Harry Geisel was there. He watched the budget. We've known Harry for donkeys' years when we were in Africa. In fact, Harry went to the same high school as my wife and was in her older sister's class in Hyde Park, Chicago.

Harry Geisel is a funny guy. His house was across the street from our house in Plittersdorf in Bonn when Bob Kimmitt was our Ambassador. It was a good run.

MRS. BANDLER: He is now the Deputy Inspector General.

BANDLER: I tell you; that title is a misnomer because he runs the Department of State. I'm not saying that Hillary isn't, but I do think that Harry knows more and has been working on it longer. He has got the names and faces.

I would say Harry and Ruth Whiteside. Ruth is another formidable pillar of the State Department. I think she's now head of the Foreign Service Institute. Ruth was another person who was very straightforward. She was a very busy person on the personnel side. Probably on two or three assignments, she and I would discuss the candidates and decide

well, which one is this, who's going to be that. She was always very nice about it.

Back to Ambassador Harriman for a vignette. You know, Pamela grew up British and on this occasion went to Germany. I don't know if it was Munich or some of the surrounding towns. But she had a girlfriend so they would go putter around, and I guess we're talking about maybe 1927 or 1930.

MRS. BANDLER: I think it was closer to the start of the war, if we're talking about the same thing. She was around 18 years old so we could do the math. She died when she was 76. I remember her saying she was 18 and her parents sent her.

The story goes they were having coffee in a coffeehouse and Hitler was having coffee in the same coffeehouse. He loved young, blonde women. He invited her and her friend to have coffee with him. So they accepted and joined him for coffee. She said he was very diplomatic and charming.

But, I'm not sure she quite knew who he was, being 18, and somewhat frivolous, but she might have.

Q: Now, while you were there the Clinton Administration changes, secretaries of state from Christopher to Albright. Did that shift impact on the work of the embassy at all? Did you guys notice anything different?

BANDLER: Yes. I think when you make that kind of a shift when you have a person who is direct, serious minded, wanting things done correctly. Madeline took her job very seriously. Even now, we've got Mark Grossman and Madeleine, with five or six other Foreign Service people, in the private sector.

Q: Let's go back to the old academic question; would you care to compare and contrast Christopher's style and Albright's style?

BANDLER: Christopher was a, I would say, a humble man. He was serious minded. He didn't like to be in huge meetings; he liked to be, you know, small ones and he didn't want five or six people flocking around him. You know, maybe one note taker, maybe not. You know, he had business and legal career, he was not an academic.

Madeleine is more of a demanding and, you know, let's get this now. She was firm.

Q: In the time that you're DCM in Paris, from the summer of 1995 to the summer of 1997, what would you list as some of the major bilateral issues with the French?

BANDLER: You know, we've already talked about what the problem was with the security side. Fortunately I think it ended up with a dénouement, which was appropriate.

Q: What's the French relationship to NATO these days or at the time that you were there?

BANDLER: It's always been a key part of the transatlantic relationship. The way I look at it is that France has major facilities in the air and water. They wanted to be a serious minded player. Now, that's a little bit glossy because NATO was not necessarily what the rest of the Europeans wanted. I think the Germans wanted it to happen and the French if Chirac would play ball. There are the Italians where we have U.S. bases, which is very important. It covers an important swatch, including, North Africa. That was at a stage where, I had been through exercises with German and American forces. We had some major artillery. For example, one of these guns is 35 feet high or 40 feet high and it has thrust somewhere between two and five miles away. Actually I'm reverting a little bit to the nature of the French/British/Germans and NATO itself. How are we doing, why we are doing it, how is it going to get paid for, and a lot of that. I have much memorabilia here on it. It really makes sense to have these summits and I think the Clinton Administration handled it very well.

NSC

Q: Well, as exciting as Paris was your next assignment was to the NSC (National Security Council).

MRS. BANDLER: Pamela had decided that she was going to leave at the end of summer of 1997 and go back to Washington. I don't know what she was going to do exactly, but she asked Don if he would consider going back with her.

I don't know how it came about but he was offered the NSC job, the National Security Council. That was already set up before she passed away.

After she passed away Don would have liked to have stayed and helped the new ambassador for a year or so, but he had already made a commitment and they were expecting him in Washington.

BANDLER: That was Bob Pearson and Felix Rohatyn. We were getting vibrations, if you will, as our July 1997 departure approached.

Felix was in the private sector and very well thought of on Wall Street. He wanted us to have Bob Pearson to come down early and suggested I go and do other things. I said well because that's not what my assignment is. I'm supposed to be here and I've got dates and engagements. We also have to do packing and other kinds of matters like that. So it wasn't a big squabble but there was a little bit of tension. Felix is a very smart man and excellent with numbers and on Wall Street, but not really strong in diplomacy. I'm sure Bob Pearson was very helpful to Felix. I see them occasionally.

Q: So what was the position you came to in the NSC?

BANDLER: I was Senior Director for European Affairs. This was during the start of the second term of the Clinton Administration.

MRS. BANDLER: A major focus was the celebration of NATO's Fiftieth anniversary.

BANDLER: The NATO Fiftieth, yes which would be held in April of 1999. So the fiftieth anniversary was an important thing because Chirac wanted to be right up there where Clinton is. Who else were the heavy players? That's where he had his deputy Jean David Levitte working, and I would be there taking notes and working with our side. A few months later we had a big event in the Embassy under the Clinton Administration. We had about 300 or 400 people. At my table, I was just lucky. I had, on one hand, Pappagallo, the woman who runs the design house, it's her family. And on the other side I had Sophia Loren.

That's my seating. Wow. Did I do a good seating job, or what? It was a glamorous event. Stevie Wonder and Elton John gave performances during the event. I don't know why Jane didn't come.

MRS. BANDLER: Well the events for the NATO were supposed to be low key because it was during the Kosovo war. During the NATO fiftieth anniversary there was some kind of international issue that made it inappropriate for the president to have like a big glitzy event.

Don's title at the time was Special Assistant to President Clinton; Senior Director for Europe and Counselor for the 1999 NATO summit. [Ed: the April 1999 NATO Summit in Washington, D.C. also marked the 50th anniversary of NATO.]

Q: Right. So how many people would be in this office?

BANDLER: About 10, I would say. Phil Gordon was the lead deputy to me. I had Nancy McEldowney, who was exceptional. I think they're both still in the Foreign Service. Then Miriam Sapiro, who was more focused on trade and international trade. But she had a broader dossier. We also had good secretaries. Next to us was the intelligence side. We were in room 368 of the old Executive Office Building and I had a great balcony. Steve Flanagan was next door to me. Steve Flanagan is a terrific guy and he's now one of the top people at CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies).

We would often go to the White House for our meals. We would invite FSO Marc Grossman, a White House Liaison, and a representative from the Pentagon and have working lunches. So it all worked out very nicely.

Q: Now, during this timeframe you received the French Legion of Honor?

BANDLER: Yes. That was Jean David Levitte who had it vetted through the whole French government so that was really good.

Q: When and where was the ceremony?

MRS. BANDLER: It was in Paris, across the street from the Lycée in a nice public building. Later a reception was held in the residence of the French Ambassador here in Washington.

Q: Working in the NSC you must have had access to or worked closely with the President?

BANDLER: Yes. Did we do this anecdote about when President Clinton had the problem with the Monica Lewinsky story?

You'll remember, Jane, that when I went to see Bill Clinton, he was in deep political problems ahead, aka deep kimchee -- notably with the Monica Lewinsky matter. I was called in at something like four or five in the morning.

So, I walked into the President's office, sat down on one of the chairs close to the President's desk and waited to find out how matters would emerge. There were several chairs, and there was a long row of benches. The President was doing some quiet business, and I was sitting next to his dog Buddy.

I

Buddy was quite active; he wanted to do things. I was trying to take notes while dealing with Buddy, and taking the notes whenever they were needed.

MRS. BANDLER: While the President's calling all the Heads of States?

BANDLER: It's somewhat the opposite, i.e. the heads of state were calling in to President Clinton and we had to get those phone calls coming into the White House. Each and every one of them wanted to have their turn to talk with President Clinton -- each and every one of them. This was typical of the way the Europeans and other leaders were insistent that they have a good talk with Bill Clinton. So, I took all the notes I could. It started out with President Chirac, and it went on for about 30 or 40 other leaders around the globe.

Meantime, Buddy the dog needed a pee, for sure.

MRS. BANDLER: He was in charge of the dog, too.

BANDLER: I was in charge of the dog, I was in charge of the notes, I was in charge of Clinton, and we didn't have anybody else in there. They really should have put another person in there; I don't know why that didn't happen.

Anyway, it worked out. I mean, I took all the notes and in the end everything worked out.

Q: Now these are Europeans calling in on the basis of this, what is it you're going to do or-?

BANDLER: No, they were giving encouragement. They would say Bill please, you have

to understand, Bill, the way things have been handled, it's just not right. You're a great president; keep going. These things happen. The Europeans think like that.

Q: Different perspective.

BANDLER: A different perspective. That's what we have. But in its own way, this solidified into considerable support for President Clinton. There were a lot of key leaders calling in to talk with President Clinton. On the European side it translated into support. I can't speak for Asia and its leaders – or Africa, as those were not my regions of responsibility. But in Europe, they would say it's a tough situation, we're all for you, these things happen, that's just the way it is in the world. You've done a fine job and we're going to support you. Some months later at an event in Germany, I remember President Clinton spoke to a packed hall. There was no discussion of Monica Lewinsky, those events were behind him. [Ed: Amb. Bandler may be referring to the May 12-14, 1998, Presidential trip to Germany for the 50th anniversary of the Berlin airlift.]

By the way, during that trip we went into Weimar in East Germany. Clinton and I visited an automobile production center, which later became Opel. The East Germans produced the Trabi, but only one a day. So if you could get a car, it was a Trabi-- a funny little looking thing.

Q: Citroen?

BANDLER: It's not really a Citroen, but it's a tiny little car. And they only are able to produce one of them per day. So Clinton and I were heading to Berlin and I suggested that we should stop by and see how production of one car a day compared to the production of 450 Opels per day. It was interesting.

NICOSIA

Q: Your reward for organizing the NATO summit of April 1999 was an assignment as ambassador to Cyprus. How did that come forth?

MRS. BANDLER: Well, there were just a few ambassadorships open, but the offer came to you through State Department channels.

The Department seemed to be going through the B's from Bethesda. Because previous ambassadors were Richard Boucher, then Ken Brill, and now Bandler.

BANDLER: Well, what about Michael Klosson who succeeded me?

MRS. BANDLER: Well, then it changed.

BANDLER: We have pictures together of all of us, the four of us, who held that assignment as ambassador. And I think it's fair to say that it was really a lot of fun. We had a lot of visitors coming. In particular, we had relationships with Israelis who really

wanted to be engaged with Cyprus. It was in the process of building some good things.

MRS. BANDLER: Well they were working to become members of the European Union. That was the Cypriots' principal ambition.

BANDLER: That was a huge thing, yes, that's right. They wanted that and they got that.

Q: I'd like to have our audience understand the process of getting prepared to go up to the Hill for your Senate confirmation. First, how extensive were the financial forms you had to submit?

BANDLER: There were a lot of forms, yes indeed, but it wasn't too onerous. It was pretty straightforward. You know, you have to see other family members and all kinds of things that you have to look at carefully. But I didn't find it particularly onerous. In a way it was a positive because although not required, it led to me saying well, okay, here are the things that I've been doing while preparing for my appointment as an Ambassador.

I had Senator Sarbanes as one of my key supporters, and I think the other key supporter was Joe Biden, and there may be one or two more who spoke up. Many of them did. Nobody said anything negative. We had a number of family members and friends attend, and we wanted everybody to enjoy it. We did! And it went very smoothly.

Q: I believe your hearings were in July 1999 and you arrived in Nicosia in August. An interesting experience for a new ambassador is his presentation of credentials (August 23, 1999). How did you find that protocol?

BANDLER: I believe that I went to the President's office, and that was President Clerides. He was served by a right hand man and was very nice and welcoming.

MRS. BANDLER: But they were only allowed very few people to come along with Don. I think there were maybe three or four people from the Embassy and it was difficult to get me to be allowed to come. They really had to push for that but then they did allow me to so. That was interesting.

Q: How did you find living and working on this divided island

BANDLER: Well first of all, we had a very nice residence and very good help. You know, you get to hire a chef and we had a first rate chef there; the guy was in California and he was a terrific guy.

I guess the biggest thing is that our whole family was there. Maybe there were times when Jane and I were all together in the Embassy, and at other times, our kids were out and about all around the island of Cyprus. Our daughter Jillian had a rather serious medical problem at the beautiful pool and beach. She was evacuated by helicopter and given excellent care back in Nicosia. Fortunately, it only took about a week until she was getting up and running again. Jillian is a very dedicated runner and athlete, and it took

only three or four weeks to get back in the saddle.

Jillian and I were determined to get the Cypriot officials to allow us to get into the buffer zone in Cyprus. As you may know, Cyprus is about one-third Turkish Cypriot and approximately two-thirds Greek Cypriot. While we weren't allowed to go into the buffer zone, Jillian and I kept pushing to allow the unification, which was a dead man's land. That is, the Greek Cypriots' coffee klatches were no longer there. Indeed, I photographed a deserted café in the buffer zone. It was clear that the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot sides were both intent upon keeping their turf.

By the way, I had a friend in Cyprus who had two special matters of interest; first, he was a photographer, and he gave me an exceptional Swiss camera and lenses. The photos that emerged from those photos ended up in being published in a book – *A Roving Eye on Cyprus*, by yours truly. This book sold in book stores. Cypriots purchased well over 15,000 copies by Cypriots.

Quietly but surely, Jill and I found a formula that had the prospect of an opening before long. The times had changed somewhat, and Jillian's and my desire to explore granted Jill and I the opportunity to see the two sides of the virtually empty Buffer Zone. We still have 25 or so of those books. Well, I started lobbying with one friend and then with another friend in the Cyprus government, and Jillian and I got permission from the United Nations troops to walk through and see the two sides -- the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots in a no man's land. It was indeed a no man's land for both the Greek and Turkish sides. There was considerable rubble throughout the buffer zone. We asked the troops in the buffer to allow the Greek and Turkish sides to see this with our and their own eyes, and get a sliver of the reality of the buffer zone.

Very few individuals, if any, were allowed to cross the Turkish/Turkish-Cypriot side at that time. So a couple of things occurred; Jillian and I got permission to walk through those areas, to chat with Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriot. This was a spectacular, eye-opening visit, notably with my camera and lenses. This led me to continue to do a great deal of photography, which ended up in that book. So, I think the Bandler family and friends discovered that this was indeed is a very positive development.

The Fulbright Center: So, we still had a buffer zone in effect, but the Fulbright Commission, the Turks, and the Cypriots were beginning to pull people together. One fine day in Cyprus, a gentleman and a highly qualified person came to visit with me -- Professor Max Nikias, who is now the President of the University of Southern California. Max asked to have a meeting with me in the Embassy, and we talked about the prospects. He noted that his family in the northeast was up in Famagusta, and some Cypriots emigrated to the USA and elsewhere. That is where many people lost their lives when there was strafing originating from Turkey. So that was a no man's land. It was at your peril to head north.

In the politics of Cyprus you had one gentleman who was not very much of a gentleman, I should say; his name was Papadopoulos. He was high in the hierarchy and very tough.

He was anti-American, making it extremely difficult to work with him. Indeed, I let it be known to our Embassy that I did not intend to engage with this very difficult individual. For example when we would have a big event Papadopoulos would not be invited. We thought it important to make it clear that our Embassy was not going to tolerate his intolerance.

MRS. BANDLER: Right. He was never invited while we were there because of his politics. He was anti-American and he had done something very insulting to the American government, I believe with Ken Brill. But I don't remember the details.

He became President after we left and passed away.

BANDLER: Yes. But during my assignment, for all conversations and dialogues, I would go to President Clerides. We had and still have a terrific relationship. [Ed: Glafcos Ioannou Clerides was a Greek-Cypriot politician of the Democratic Rally party who served as the fourth President of Cyprus from 1993 to 2003.]

As I noted, the Greek Cypriots and Israel have a close connection. They go back and forth, new buildings, new homes; it was sort of a boom town but- except for the Turkish Cypriot side.

On the Turkish Cypriot side there are some beautiful homes that were taken over by British people and some of them are still there and we tried to, and succeeded, in getting up to the far north and having dinners and so on and meeting people on the Turkish Cypriot side. And I would say that Jane was exceptionally helpful in doing that with the- you know, the- because she was also working with a women's group, and I think that was in the Fulbright. Wasn't it? When you guys were getting together with your book groups?

MRS. BANDLER: It was a private thing with the Turkish Cypriot women. We had a book club and we met every month and we read books in English and discussed them and that was the most serious book club I've ever been in. They actually wanted to talk about the books. But it was a big excitement for the Turkish Cypriots every month to have that opportunity. The British Ambassador's wife was also in the book club as well as a couple of people from the Embassy. Actually, it was in place when we arrived. I don't know who started it but at least one ambassador before us, if not two. So the club was just a continuation.

Oh, one other thing that I was proud of that resulted from the book club: I was able to organize getting the ladies in the book club, about 15 or 20 of them, to come across to the Greek Cypriot side and a lot of them hadn't been across in 20 years so it was really something they were excited to do and weren't able to. So we organized that and that was really nice; it was a big event.

Q: Now, how does one go from the Greek side to the Turkish side? Are there specified crossover points??

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, there are entrance points. There's one right in the middle of town and there are patrols there.

You have to present your credentials in order to go through and American diplomats were supposed to have permission to cross over. But you still had to show your papers and if you had guests with you, you would have to obtain permission for them to come. That's how it worked.

Q: Rules applied to other diplomatic missions, same rules?

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, yes.

Q: Now, you've got the Greek side and the Turkish side; I mean, is it all considered one country or-?

MRS. BANDLER: No. It is called the Republic of Cyprus, which is the Greek side, and then the Turkish side is only recognized as a country by Turkey.

BANDLER: The Greek Cypriots kept a rocket on the highest mountain in Cyprus and it was positioned towards the Turkish side.

Q: Let's talk about the embassy itself.

BANDLER: We had some nice advantages. We had very good staff. We developed very good relationships with Israel, in part because of Israel's medical facilities. It was also because there was tremendous off-shore potential in Cyprus, including in the area of hydrocarbons. Now, it hasn't fully gone to fruition. George Bush, Sr. was very interested in it. He had been in Greece and came over to Cyprus and showed a considerable amount of interest in it. I don't think it's changed yet; they're being, oddly enough, very cautious about what the exact lines are for Law of the Sea purposes. So that was very interesting. Then, when we were able to get into the north, we would have lunch and we'd have our kids there, along with some friends. There was a nice racecourse track for go carts. They could go maybe about 30, 35 miles an hour. The racetrack wasn't large, but you could really have a ball. Also, as you head north, the food improves and is actually better than the Greek Cypriot food. They had some of the best cheeses in the world.

Q: So you had an opportunity to travel around the island quite extensively?

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, as much as we wanted.

BANDLER: Oh yes. I mean, it is a small island but we were out and about very regularly. We bought ourselves a van, which proved to be an excellent choice, and we'd go down to the southern side to the big hotel. At that time there were three big hotels on the southern side of Cyprus. The scenery was beautiful with wild grasses and we could go off-road in the sands.

We had a lot of fun with it. We gathered a lot of friends and some of them were intellectuals, some of them were political, some of them were photographers like me. That was another thing; there was a guy there on the island with a spectacular camera. He was also a musician. He goes back and forth between Cyprus and Europe. There were lots of fascinating things, e.g. “the turtle man,” Joan Connelly’s archeology, the Buffer Zone. My daughter Jillian and I asked the United Nations officers to come with us. I had a very good camera and lenses which were superb, and I used that almost every day. Cyprus was an interesting place to be.

Q: How big was the Embassy? Who were some of the senior officers?

BANDLER: Well Danny Russell was the number two, the DCM, and he was exceptionally good. He was smart; he was basically a Japanese language and- language person.

Q: Now, did you pick your DCM or was he already there when you arrived?

BANDLER: Good question; don’t know the answer but I think I wanted him, Danny Russell. And we had Walter Douglas, who was the PAO (Public Affairs Officer) and he was really a very, very good PAO, in my opinion.

I’m going to generalize a little bit, but one of our tasks was to redeveloped the Fulbright Center and create one which was bilateral; you bring in all kinds of people. I got Harriet Fulbright, whose husband had died subsequently, so she was coming in there and we were working together with her.

Now a couple of years into our tour, you know Joanne starting with being able to get in the buffer zone, which was an amazing breakthrough, to be honest.

Q: How was that organized?

BANDLER: I remonstrated to the variety of people on the island, of UN people, and the government in Nicosia and the Turkish Cypriot side doesn’t really have a play on that, so we went through there and you know, that was unexpected and remarkable because that was really the first, as I understand it it was the first time we were in there. There were water issues; had to get water to go up and there’s not very much pressure there and it’s a very hot island and all that so those things we looked at a lot.

Q: Any special visitors?

BANDLER: Yes. So here’s another anecdote; I don’t know how to peg it in the dating but when Henry Kissinger- You know, Henry Kissinger did not really have any interest in Cyprus. Somewhere along the way too many bad articles in Cyprus press and too many bad things being said about Henry Kissinger, so Kissinger wanted to just boycott it and he was stationed at this point- when I say at this point I think it was pretty close to when I arrived- and the Cypriots were being quite insistent that they should come there, that

Henry should come. Well, it didn't quite work out that way. There's a presidential, there's an old home, an old home, and that's where the president's offices are. It's a relatively small place. And so Kissinger did not want to go in there but he was pushed so hard it was going to become a real major scandal that was getting clear. So Kissinger, let's see, how did the denouement occur? Yes. The Cypriots said all they wanted was just a quick little chat and you can go on and do what you need to do. (The Cypriots did not like Henry Kissinger very much and Henry, I don't believe he liked the Greek Cypriots so this was not a love story.)

Anyway, they make a compromise decision whereby Dr. Kissinger will go and spend a very short session and then depart because he's got to leave for Turkey and it's very important. Okay? So the drama is about to begin, it's opening up, he's supposed to have this office meeting where there are two people meeting with him and another wall, which can be fixed and which was fixed, opened up and there were something like 250 Cypriot leaders instead of the one Henry Kissinger. So he took it pretty reasonably. I mean, I talked to him about it pretty regularly and we laugh about it sometimes but that's exactly what happened and he couldn't get out of the place so he had to stay there at least for 45 minutes and it was just filled with people. And the Cypriots don't like Cyprus anymore- the Cypriots don't like Henry as well as Henry not liking the Cypriots so it's not a good- It's much better for him to stay off there in Turkey and maybe a little bit of Greece.

Q: What would list as some of the accomplishments of the embassy during your assignment from August 1999 to July 2002?

BANDLER: Well, we did a lot of outreach. You know, we've talked about it in some different ways, the buffer zone, having a really pretty darn good group of people in the embassy. Danny Russell is an outstanding young guy. I think he was basically a Japanese hand but he could handle everything and he was good. We had Don Shemanski and he was in political affairs. We also had econ-commerce and one of the things we did was to make a lot of speeches wherever we could, both in Cyprus and the US. Shemanski would often come along and we'd have the speeches up and ready. We had some pretty good writers. We had a two wonderful women, one of them is still there.

MRS. BANDLER: Christina Hadjiparaskeva and Tina.

BANDLER: Yes, and her husband.

MRS. BANDLER: Hadji Barskeva.

BANDLER: Harskeva, yes. She's a delightful person and she does the USIA side of it under Walter Douglas's mentoring.

There was also Anna Maria, She was the other person working in the Embassy and they were both terrific. I would say about the best I've ever seen working in that area.

Tom Gray, the RSO, had very nice family and did a very good job, don't you think, Jane?

MRS. BANDLER: Yes.

BANDLER: Phil Rouselelli was also assigned to the Embassy. He was a colonel and he had a lot of different ideas. It was good to have an attaché like and I appreciated it. We had the IRS and DEA, and USSS -- and that covers it.

Q: DEA was there? Was there much of a narcotics problem?

BANDLER: No, I think there are more money problems rather than narcotics. I don't think there's a lot of pot smoking or heroin.

MRS. BANDLER: Money laundering.

BANDLER: There's a flow of Cypriots to Russia, to St. Petersburg, and to Moscow. There were a number of wealthy men in Cyprus. They flew up to Russia with a group of 15 or 20 friends, drinking a lot of champagne and eating caviar. They enjoyed themselves immensely, shall we say.

Q: You were at post when the World Trade Center was attacked in September 2001.

BANDLER: That's what I want to finish telling you about. There were six or seven small aircraft. They took off, and I got intelligence via a friend in Cyprus that those airplanes were flying somewhere -- and that the U.S. Government should be notified that something is going with these aircraft. They were relatively small planes, which have to be fueled before flying. Anyway, it made people wonder, and I was trying to follow up on that. I was doing a lot of reporting back to Washington about what appeared to be happening. During this time period, I had to fly to Washington for a few days.

MRS. BANDLER: Well you had gone to Washington a couple of days before 9/11.

BANDLER: Right. We didn't know it was going to be 9/11, and we should have known it. I was on the fifth or sixth floor in one of the offices allowing us to look outside. I had a suitcase because we were going to New York City for the UN, for UN activities.

MRS. BANDLER: You were scheduled to have a breakfast in one of the towers with the restaurant on the top floor.

BANDLER: Right. So this part of it is really pretty interesting to me. I got my suitcases for the UN and bells were ringing an alarms going off. I was told to forget those suitcases and just get out of the building. So I bumped into my friend Jim Gadsden. He's a very good guy and his house was on 16th Street, Jane, if that helps.

There was the State Department hotel right across from State and we see all these people flooding out of that hotel. Jim and I didn't know what to do other than to watch people coming out of the hotel. So we decided to go into one of those hotels and the first thing

we did was turn on the TV. Well, first I tried to call Jane. Do you remember that, Jane?

MRS. BANDLER: Well the phone didn't go through so you weren't able to call me, but finally Ruth Whiteside was able to get through. It was quite late by the time we got through to each other.

BANDLER: Gadsden and I were watching on the TV and I saw my brother-in-law, Seth Goldwin, along with this throng of people fleeing in the midst of 9/11.

MRS. BANDLER: He was in the building next door to the Twin Towers, my brother, and he had to run as the Towers were falling and all the dust was everywhere. He was running for safety along with everybody else.

My father told me that he was going to be okay and then we didn't hear from him for eight hours. We finally learned he was okay, but there was a lot of worry about that. And I was in Cyprus with our son.

Q: Well how did the Cypriots react to 9/11?

MRS. BANDLER: I didn't get to speak to Don for a while but to say that his were safe. I was in Cyprus when it happened. I was in the car driving our son to his guitar lesson because it was 3:00 in the afternoon there, something like that, and the BBC was saying there had been a terrible accident and an airplane had crashed into the World Trade Center. That was the first reporting of it.

A few minutes later my phone rang again and one of our best friends, a very active Cypriot woman, called. Her first reaction was to say come to my house, I'll keep you safe, it's a terrible thing, I'm so sorry, don't worry, we'll take care of you. She ended by saying but what do the Americans expect with all of this hegemony action and other things so they're just getting what they deserve. It shocked me but I think there was an undercurrent of that in their reactions. But of course those that worked in the embassy, they were scared, worried, and upset but very respectful. They were trying to cover everything in Don's absence and they were very uncomfortable that he wasn't there. The DCM asked me to come with him and have a meeting with all the Embassy employees to reassure them. I'm a psychological counselor so I set up a program for talking to all the children and getting them to understand what was going on.

BANDLER: Later President Clerides and I held a memorial service. (Is this revised language accurate?)

Q: I thought I saw a State Department list of 60 some countries that had citizens killed in 9/11. Not all the casualties were Americans.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, I'm sure.

BANDLER: Yes. On other occasions we would see the markers and remember them

digging in a lot in that neighborhood and worry about Seth Goldwin.

MRS. BANDLER: And our daughter, who lived in New York City. So yes, we were pretty concerned personally.

BANDLER: It was a terrible affair and so many books have been written about it now. Things happen and this was a big one.

Q: Well it's interesting too because you get an event like that and it unmasks deeply held feelings, like what do you expect? I assume the Embassy is reporting Cypriot reactions, what the papers are saying, here's the kind of feedback we're getting. On the other hand a welcome memorial ceremony creates a bonding opportunity I would assume.

BANDLER: Yes.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, very much so.

BANDLER: It was. So it was a very good era in Cyprus for us, I think.

Q: You were saying one of the Cypriot policy objectives was to get into the EU.

BANDLER: I think that the Greek Cypriots were very anxious to join the European Union. They certainly didn't want Turkey to get into the EU. By and large, it worked out well.

Q: The US was supportive of their position?

BANDLER: There were factions and considerable debate over joining the EU. I'd like to see the papers that I wrote at the time, but I don't have them with me.

MRS. BANDLER: I think we were supportive, but we had to be careful. The United States Government had to be sensitive because of the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey's bid for the EU. We were definitely supportive of Turkey being in the EU too. The Cypriots were contentious and complicated. But the Greek Cypriots are amazingly well organized and goal oriented. They were going forward about EU membership and it was handled in a very methodical and successful way. This involves thousands of pages, right, Don, and there were lots of details to discuss.

BANDLER: Right. The requirements and regulations were some of the most important parts of normalization. Then I started following views and working together with Sir David Hannay, who was well thought of, and a serious minded British player in this regard. I don't mean actor on the stage, but rather an actor in the stage of the international politics. Sir David Hannay, Tom Weston and I were going back and forth to the United Nations for meetings. We met with the highest levels in the UN. I wouldn't call it lobbying, but it was looking closely at the issues on hand. We found time to work together and meet other players in this arena. For example, I would catch up with

President Clerides and we'd go have a coffee to discuss the issues. There was a lot that was happening, and I think it worked rather well, both with respect to American interests and what the Greek Cypriots wanted.

Sir David Hannay was tough minded and smart. [Ed: Sir David had been a minister at the British Embassy in Washington, DC, in 1984–1985, and was UK Special Representative for Cyprus between 1996 and 2003.] (Ambassador) Tom Weston [Ed: Department of State Special Coordinator for Cyprus] had good thoughts about how to do these things, and the three of us spent a lot of time in New York City at the UN.

Q: The UN is deeply involved in mediating the Cyprus issue; it's an annual item in the General Assembly, so it even required you to go back to New York to participate in those UN discussions?

BANDLER: Well yes, we deliberately wanted to go to the United Nations to meet the key players there. We had things to do in the UN, the US and the UK. It's all too easy to dismiss as Cyprus was low profile, so we were wanted to be on the scene, developing some relationships which we hadn't had, and getting to the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan. We had a very short meeting with him, but we did have one. He had quite a few deputies -- just like the way we were organized in Washington. It was a pretty impressive move by the Cypriots. For them, this was an enormous move forward with players and eventually to the European Union.

Q: Now you parted post in July 2002; what would you say is your take away from that assignment?

BANDLER: I'm tempted to say all of the above, because we covered a lot of it. It was a very interesting time to be around. From 2002 until today, I have a flock of papers that I've written on Cyprus articles; some of them are 35 to 40 pages. One of them was a pamphlet, and later put into book form.

I forgot something I think is important, notably the "wise man's" sessions, with a mixture of Americans, Greeks, and Greek Cypriots. There were about seven or eight people, a sort of a mini think tank held off the island. If you are on the island of Cyprus, you are highly visible. It gets people talking and speculating-- Oh, what is he doing there? Ah, I didn't know he was...-- So we decided to stay off the island and come up with ideas in a more low profile setting.

I probably spent way too much time on the Cyprus question, but those dossiers would be the thickest. I think we developed a very good relationship, Jane and our family in the area. It was a shame to have lost Tom Weston because he was a very good FSO. And our British friend, Hannay was very smart and thoughtful.

On the cultural side, the Turkish Cypriots, unfortunately, have dug up a lot of important archeological materials on the northern side, many of which were stolen. There's an aircraft, and important antiquities, which should be in museums. By the way, we did an

excellent job. When I say “we,” the Embassy and I, were particularly serious about this. We got some of the best things placed the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. You will remember, in Cyprus history – in the 15th and 16th centuries, there were two big ships. We decided to send those articles and go over to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Jane and I agreed that we should vet the materials. That was a very positive thing, and we were on radio.

Q: What was the UN Peacekeeping force like?

BANDLER: There were UN Guards in and around the Buffer zone. The United Nations forces were very helpful.

Q: The question is what was it like working with the Cypriot government?

BANDLER: For me, this was a very good dialogue. President Clerides was a great human being. He was crafty and thoughtful. We thought that this was just the right way to move ahead. The Cypriots understood that they are a small island state, not the United States of America. They want to have a good relationship, by and large.

On the Turkish Cypriot side it’s hard to say. Probably a lot of Turkish Cypriots would like to cross into the Buffer Zone. And what they do now, they go down, they go out of the buffer zone, they do some work for the day, they get paid and then they go back to their homes. That worked well. The water issue was a big problem. We’re seeing it currently right now.

MRS. BANDLER: I was just going to brag on Don a little bit because he- the Cypriots loved him. They took any chance that they could to get together. They wanted to talk to him, and he made a really big effort to be available for them. So it was a very friendly and positive time for America, while Don was there, and it continues. Every time they see Don, they say you were the best ambassador we’ve ever had. So that was nice.

BANDLER: Flattery will get you everywhere. And thank you, Jane.

Q: Now Cyprus faces the Lebanese coast. Is there spill over from Lebanese issues that the Embassy might have reported on?

BANDLER: Yes. There were three invasions coming up from the Israeli side, with enormous resources of petroleum, and other such things on the edges of the sea. There are some great doctors in Israel that could go over to Cyprus, and fix up whatever one needed. These factors developed into a very positive Cyprus/Israel relationship.

Nicos Anastasiadis is one of the better leaders – and other Ambassadors who wondered about the Cypriot relationships. We were working on Cyprus issues, and they were working to get these precious articles in the Smithsonian Institute in the USA. It was a big exhibition for weeks or maybe a month or more. The Cypriots were very excited about this. There was always an issue of who, where, and when Cyprus was bringing into

Washington embassies. This led to a variety of Cyprus materials, and there was a considerable amount of Cyprus radio and television activities - from Washington, D.C. to California.

Those are positive things. We have right down the street Andy Manatos and Mike Manatos. They are the father/son group where, we had dinners of 400 or 500 people at the table. We continue to spend time with the family.

RETIREMENT

Q: Your Foreign Service career certainly ended on a high note with Cyprus but there is life after the Foreign Service and let's spend a couple of minutes on that. You retired in 2002 and fairly shortly thereafter got a job with Monsanto?

BANDLER: Yes, Vice President for Government Affairs and International Relations was the title.

Q: This must have required considerable international travel.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, you basically went around the world.

BANDLER: Yes. We were with a guy in Chicago, who I liked a lot. He knew the lay of the land so that was good and we met with high level muckety mucks everywhere we went. At Monsanto a number of people resigned and I was one of them. I didn't particularly like it after Mickey Kantor left. I replaced Mickey, and then went forward. So the CEO I liked very much was undermined, but a final straw was they wanted me to be full-time in St. Louis.

Neither Jane nor I wanted to move to St. Louis. So that was a key issue. And otherwise you'd have to fly every week so, which would not have been a good lifestyle for me or Jane. So I left. We made a lot of money and that was that.

Q: And fairly shortly after that, in 2004, you accepted a Senior Director position with Kissinger Associates?

Mrs. BANDLER: Yes, within three months.

BANDLER: Yes.

Q: How did that opportunity come up? You already knew Kissinger.

BANDLER: I already knew Kissinger from my travels with him in Germany. I definitely wanted to have a good relationship with him. He is a larger than life personality and we had a good, nice relationship. I still have an alarm clock as a memento of our German travels together.

Q: I'd like to delve into your participation in the Tony Blair headed Middle East Quartet. Why were you tapped and what was the purpose of this diplomatic effort? [Ed: Tony Blair announced that he had accepted the position of the official envoy of the Middle East Quartet, the same day he resigned as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and as a Member of Parliament on 27 June 2007.]

MRS. BANDLER: You had to leave Kissinger McLarty Associates to go to Tony Blair for that job.

BANDLER: Yes.

BANDLER: Yes. The State Department wanted me to return to be Tony Blair's deputy. Jane and I got our suitcases and we went to Jerusalem and stayed in the American Colony Hotel. It was a really nice place.

The project was helping to build the Palestinian economy is the way I would put it.

MRS. BANDLER: The offices for the Quartet were on the top floor of the American Colony Hotel, and Don and I lived in a hotel room for more than three months. That's how much we love our country.

Q: And I'm sorry, what's the timeframe here?

MRS. BANDLER: It was August of 2007 to January 2008. It was six months.

Tony Blair's initiative was, as Don said, to build the Palestinian economy, thinking that if they could build it up and bring more equity in, then there would be a chance that they could talk and come to terms more easily being on financial equality. So he was building businesses and trying to improve the schools and just all the different facets of living situations.

BANDLER: By the way, that wasn't the first time that I was in Israel or Gaza. When I was the Director of the Office of Israeli and Arab/Israeli Affairs at the State Department I traveled to Israel.

This exposure was enjoyable, although difficult at times. And Gaza, of course, was a hurdle, as was Egypt, because they could come across lines and infiltrate. And you have got various factions, in particular Dahlan, who's a kind of a strange renegade but smart with his own way of doing things.

During our stay at the hotel, I think the thing that was perhaps unfortunate was that it was an all EU group with the exception of myself and one secretary. One reason is that it was a mistake to have all EU people and one American; it just didn't make sense. So there was a little bit of poison going around. My assistant was an EU person and she wanted to get my job. I don't even remember her name now. Do you remember, Jane?

MRS. BANDLER: Anna is all I remember. She was Spanish. She was the Deputy in the Quartet.

BANDLER: I did not like this deputy.

Q: So the Quartet itself had internal problems?

BANDLER: Right from the get go.

MRS. BANDLER: And Tony Blair didn't come very often; he came three days a month.

BANDLER: One or two days per month.

Q: So you're operating out of Jerusalem. The big name is not always there so you're liaising with the Palestinians on one side and the Israelis on the other?

BANDLER: Yes, working with the Palestinians and trying to get this guy released from jail. We tried to work that problem.

If Tony Blair had been there regularly some of those things could have been changed but it just wasn't his way of doing things.

Q: Well, it's a tough issue because, of course, the Israelis hold all the cards.

BANDLER: Well let's see. They have plenty of cards, yes they do. Gaza is a headache. Water is a headache. Economics is a real big piece of it and a lot of it is farming and it can be cross farming sometimes. The water supplies are difficult and Jordan at that era had a very good ruler. But I don't think they wanted to get engaged that way.

MRS. BANDLER: Also, it was very difficult for Don to really work the mission because the embassy didn't quite know what to do with him. He was an embassy employee and so they wanted him to follow the post 9/11 embassy security routine, which included having this huge convoy of cars every time he crossed into Palestine, whereas the rest of the people in the Quartet were not Americans and didn't have those security requirements. They could go back and forth as they pleased. But Don had his hands were tied when it came to building relationships with the Palestinians because it was so expensive every time he went. The Embassy didn't want to pay for all that and it became a huge deal.

All that security was a distraction. So it wasn't carefully thought out before we got there. They were trying to figure it out afterwards.

BANDLER: You're not kidding. At one point I think I had three badges; one on the east side, one on the western side and one on my own, and I think there were probably one or two more.

However, there was an upside and a downside in these matters. We had relatives there

and cousins, so there were good days as well.

I guess I was number one and then Richard was number two in the Middle East Bureau. Subsequently, we met Richard in Portugal. Then I think Richard went back to the US , and I think he went to one of the affiliated USG organizations.

MRS. BANDLER: Not when you were in Israel.

BANDLER: No, at State I'm talking about now. Right? That was Richard Roth, who was my deputy.

MRS. BANDLER: Not Richard.

BANDLER: I was the office chief.

Q: Of the Israeli desk you're talking about?

BANDLER: That was the Office of Israel and Arab-Israeli affairs.

Q: But by the time you're with the Quartet what is he that you're saying? He could travel better than you could?

BANDLER: Well I didn't know anything about the Quartet until I was there on the ground.

Q: Okay.

BANDLER: I should have been more careful. Our office should have worked together in a smooth combination of capabilities and capacities to focus on the key issues involved in the Middle East arena -- notably on Israel, Gaza, Netanyahu, Hamas, prisoner releases, housing matters, and lines of demarcation in and around the area. We should have taken a clearer set of plans and activities. That would improve the landscape so that we really understand what we were going into.

Q: But you were also saying this was the time in which you ran into a medical problem that's also- you've spent a lot of time working on.

BANDLER: You're alluding to my diagnosis on on-set Alzheimer's, yes?

Jane, in the middle of this kind of uncertainty was not very happy about what was going on there. One day, Jane said that we should go to a doctor and see what's going on in the medical arena. So, we got an appointment to see what the doctor would have to say. He was supposed to be a top-notch neurologist. We went to the hospital, he did a brain scan and he asked a batch of questions. This neurologist was supposed to be the best of all of the neurologists in Israel and the Middle East.

MRS. BANDLER: We had a few appointments, yes.

BANDLER: And so at that point I think that it was pretty clear that we needed to do something about it. So we decided to leave. We stopped in Switzerland and spent about a week or so with Jane's side of the family in Switzerland. We had a nice time, and flew back to the U.S. We got our home opened up again.

MRS. BANDLER: Don was offered a six month stint at the University of Southern California

BANDLER: I was named the Distinguished Visitor at the University of Southern California.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, we were in residence there for six months. We drove across the country, saw lots of towns and cities – Los Angeles, Oklahoma, Nevada (gambling) in a nice hotel, the mountains (great vistas and great guides), Middle West-sized cities, the Mississippi River, Tennessee (a very long State in its own right), and back to our home in Bethesda, Maryland.

So that's where we went. But we delayed because the doctor in Israel said there was too much tension and anxiety from this job; here's some Xanax and you are fine.

BANDLER: We went straight to a six month assignment at the University of Southern California, USC. The Provost and President of USC, Max Nikias, provided all of the amenities including housing, lectures, bringing in friends from the East Coast. There was a gala dinner for approximately 200 people, including Jane, my daughter Lara, my cousins in LA, friends in southern California –from both the campus and members of the community in Los Angeles. That inaugurated the new museum that was opened at USC.

After we left USC, we drove back across the country. We had a wonderful time driving back from LA to our home in Bethesda, MD. From California, to Las Vegas, down to Oklahoma, up through the mountains – Bryce Canyon National Park which was beautiful, and we trekked back in August of that year. Our house had been rented out for a year so we had to stay in a Marriot hotel until we could get back into our home.

Q: This is typical Foreign Service.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes. So as soon as we got back in August we started making appointments and unfortunately the diagnosis was early onset Alzheimer's.

Q: But you were saying since that you've become quite an advocate for Alzheimer's and I think you told me you have been- you've given testimony on the Hill to bring attention to this medical issue and I think that's putting all your Foreign Service skills to good use.

MRS. BANDLER: Yes, for sure.

BANDLER: In any case, I'm back here now and what I'm doing is, on a given day, I'm at the desktop and I do some writing and some articles. I'm working with a small group on a project for Somalia. This effort is a very interesting, and we continue to spend a lot of time and effort on that. Jeremy Schulman, Abdi Amalo and I spent a good deal of time meeting with the Somali community in the United States.

We spent a considerable amount of money, approximately a million, and we have continued to work with them, their leadership, and a small leadership team.

I have a very close friend from college, my former roommate Michael J. Brown, and he's a pretty amazing guy. He had a fascinating life -- rough and tough, strong as he could possibly be, an effective businessman who had a fascinating life.

Those things keep me going. I'm on the board of the Atlantic Council, I work closely with Richard Haas at the Council on Foreign Relations, and with CSIS here in town on K Street in Washington, DC. I think that is probably the best of the think tanks, what with John Hamre and Steve Flanagan.

So then we have our children and relatives, and that's a big deal. Lara is moving again, this time to Southern California, and she's a great businesswoman. My daughter Jillian is a pediatrician, and she teaches medical school. We now have a baby in the family, Jasper Adi Bandler Parekh, our son-in-law. Neel, her husband, is a very successful businessman who also has done a great deal of humanitarian thinking and doing. For example, he built water facilities in Asia -- and that made a big difference in setting up those wells in India and other surrounding countries. This is a very good example of good governance. My son Jeffrey just finished a Fellowship in Malaysia and is now in southern California.

Along with my parents, my wife Jane's parents, my attachment to the 28 years at State Department, and then the Senior Seminar, my parents and relatives, our close friends over the decades, my wonderful times and work with Pamela and lots of other colleagues and friends -- in and out of the State Department, the NSC, international travel -- including our friends in France, Germany, Central Europe, Cyprus, Greece and Turkey -- onward to Israel, and on it goes. That's what keeps us going, reading, writing, creating friendships and bonds, staying healthy -- all of that makes a big difference.

Q: I appreciate you spending the time with us.

BANDLER: Good. And you too, thank you for being so patient and diligent.

Additional material:

Christina Hadjiparaskeva's work over 30 years with the American Embassy in Cyprus has been a remarkably important contribution to the Cyprus-American relationship. We are honored to share some memories of our friend Christina. I can speak to her exceptional professional work as Cultural Specialist at the American Embassy in Nicosia during my tenure as Ambassador from July, 1999- July, 2002. I can also speak personally

of Tina's and Leo's friendship, not only with me but with my entire family during our 3 years in Cyprus.

Tina was the first Cypriot we met. She arrived at the residence on our second day in Cyprus to take me, my wife Jane and our son Jeff, who was 12 years old at the time, on a cultural tour of Nicosia. She understood how to engage each of us in learning the story of her enchanted island and was able to figure out how to keep my interest, Jane's and our son's too. Her warmth, kindness and enthusiasm for sharing her country and culture was a key ingredient in making our stay in Cyprus so exciting and welcoming. But her hospitality didn't end there. In fact, it never ended! Tina and Leo invited all 5 of the Bandler family for Christmas day lunch, taught us Greek songs and dances, and cooked all sorts of wonderful delicacies for us. Throughout our stay, Tina was always available for advice, for ideas, for teaching and showing us the ways of Cyprus; she even shared with us the secrets of how to swim in and enjoy the peace of the sea that surrounds the island. I know Jane, Lara, Jillian, her husband Neel and Jeff all join me in saying that the Hadjiparaskeva family will always be exceptionally special to us.

Tina's professional work as Cultural Specialist in the Embassy was extremely well thought through. To be frank, from every angle I could be sure that she would coordinate with me, the DCM, public diplomacy, writing speeches, dealing with the press and keeping our Embassy on an even keel. To be sure, I could not have done without her –she was there to help invite the right people and groups, setting up bi-communal events and exchanges, finding ways to avoid and explain sensitivities across cultural lines, visiting churches on both sides of the island and providing wise counsel to me, our mission and our family. Christina had a sensitive and extraordinarily important goal in opening up the buffer zone. Her thoughtful input and wise advice in during the planning stages of events helped me and our embassy's goals – notably in the public diplomacy arena. I cannot imagine a more thoughtful, active and engaged member of our embassy – building relationships, working with key Cypriot leaders, setting up and expanding the breadth of cultural exchanges, building a strong Art in Embassy program, working closely with the Fulbright Center, using photography to expand cultural relationships on both sides of the divided island, building relationships with the University of Southern California, and focusing on bi-communal events in and around the buffer zone.

Christina's positive attitude – always a can do, never a no, cultivates ways to expand our outreach on both sides of Cyprus. She was, and no doubt still is, a true role model for Embassy Nicosia. Jane joins me in wishing Tina and Leo every success and happiness in the next phase of their life. We also hope they will consider a visit to Washington, DC.

End of interview