

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

DANIEL O. NEWBERRY

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INTERVIEW

Q: My name is Edwin Martin. On behalf of the Foreign Service History Center at George Washington University I'm interviewing Mr. Daniel O. Newberry at his home in Bethesda, Maryland. The date is February 25th, 1987.

Perhaps uniquely in the Foreign Service, Mr. Newberry served in Turkey at some time in each of four decades, beginning in Istanbul as a Vice Consul in the 1950's and ending as Consul General at the same post in the 1980's. In addition to his 11 years of service in Turkey he held various assignments in the Department of State dealing partly or exclusively with Turkey.

Mr. Newberry I'd like to ask you first what prompted you to join the Foreign Service. Did you have some particular family interest or background or what was it?

NEWBERRY: No, I can't claim any special family interest or background. As a matter of fact I'm the only member of my family -- so to speak -- who left the state of Georgia, much less the USA.

I think that it's not entirely frivolous to say that I joined the Foreign Service on a dare. Like many young men who just got out of the military Service after World War II, I was not sure what I wanted to do except a restless feeling that I didn't want to stay in my own home town. I just wanted to do something different; a classmate -- or I should say upper classman who had been a couple of years ahead of me in college Emory University -- had taken the Foreign Service exam and passed it and V was very upstage on how difficult it was, so I said: "I bet I can pass it" He took the bet. The more I read into it the more I got interested, and the more I wanted to pass the exam. But I can't claim that I had any particular vocation or calling for the Foreign Service, it's just that when I did succeed in passing the exam I decided I'd better have a look at it or wonder the rest of my life whether I'd missed something. As it turned out I came in and stayed.

Q: What was your major in college?

NEWBERRY: Chemistry.

Q: So not in Political Science or Economics?

NEWBERRY: No, nothing to do with it, no. But I'm not the only one. I had a colleague in one of my early posts who'd gotten his degree in traffic engineering.

Q: Really?

NEWBERRY: Not all Foreign Service officers major in Political Science or Foreign Affairs.

Q: I noticed that your first post was Jerusalem. Were there any particular stories to that or was it just a happenstance.

NEWBERRY: Well, there is a story -- there are a couple of stories connected with it. I don't know what interest would be to oral history, but I was called in the Foreign Service at the point when they were only hiring, appointing a few Foreign Service officers every year, and since I was on the register of those who had passed, they offered me a job as a Foreign Service staff employee while waiting for my Foreign Service officer appointment. That's how many people came into the Foreign Service.

Q: I did the same thing.

NEWBERRY: On a certain day in the beginning of May of 1949, I reported to the State Department and was just filling out forms, and had been there a couple of days, getting briefings, when I got a call from the Personnel Office asking me to come in. The first question the lady asked me was "How would you like to go to Jerusalem?" My response was "I came in without any pre-conceived ideas. Jerusalem sounds like an interesting place. Sure I'll go to Jerusalem". She said: "Fine, so glad you're willing to go, because we want you to go right away to replace a man who has just been shot."

Q: Well, that was a pretty exciting time, wasn't it in Israel?

NEWBERRY: Yes, it was just the time when the Rhodes Truce talks were completing and the first Arab-Jewish war was formally coming to a close. I went out there practically without any preparation at all and there is a funny story that may be an interesting footnote to the way the Foreign Service used to be managed. The people who were arranging my travel set me only as far as Athens -- bought me an airplane ticket to go as far as Athens, Greece -- and said: "When you get to Athens go to the Mission there and they'll arrange for you to hitchhike on the United Nations plane going from Athens to Jerusalem. I should explain that at that time the United Nations still had their Balkan Commission which was sort of scrutinizing the Greek civil war a method they call "UNSCOB" and so there was also the United Nations mission in Palestine as they call it. They had a shuttle, an airplane shuttle that went once or twice a week from Athens to Jerusalem and so my instructions were to get a free ride as the State Department was hard up in those days, or especially in those days. So, I went into the Mission as it was called and they took my passport and my travel orders and said the plane wouldn't run until say 3 days later. I spent my time sightseeing in Athens without knowing what they were

doing. They sent my passport over to the Israeli legation for a visa, actually they were so far out of it they sent it to the "Palestine legation", of course there was no such thing as a Palestine legation. Well the Israelis (all this without my knowledge) had the note rewritten and addressed to the Israeli consul -- put a visa in my passport, which I knew nothing about. On the appointed day I went to pick up my documents, went out to the airport, got on the plane and thought nothing more about the whole situation, at last getting on to my post.

Q: What year was this?

NEWBERRY: This was 1949. May of 1969. I had picked up a copy of the Paris Herald Tribune at the Hotel as I was leaving, and I was idling reading the paper, the Herald Tribune, on this C-47, I think it was, and I just finished reading an article about the trouble the American travelers were getting into in the Middle East by trying to enter Arab countries with Israeli visas on their passports. It never occurred to me that I had one in my own passport -- I didn't bother to look at it. I thought how stupid for anyone to go traveling around with such a visa. They should know better than that. Since the arrangements were so haphazard I assumed we would be landing at some place like Lydda in Israel, but lo and behold when we started our descent -- I looked out and there were a bunch of guys with tablecloths on their heads -- Arab Legion soldiers and I thought "This is a surprise". By then I had taken the trouble of pulling out my passport and realized I had an Israeli visa in my passport. I was more than a little agitated, but decided to play it cool. When I got off there were all sorts UN related people on this plane, and they all went their way. There was a woman major in the Arab Legion -- highly surprising -- I don't know if they ever had another woman officer in the Arab Legion since then. She was a multilingual lady-- whose name was Ashia Halabi -- who had the job of screening people coming in and out of this air strip north of Jerusalem; Calandria was the name of the place. She took one look at my passport and said: "You can't land here." By that time practically everybody connected with the UN except the airplane crew had left. I talked to the pilot, who said: "well, if she won't let you land here we will take you to Beirut, but we've got to hurry because Beirut has no night landing lights", -- this was 1949 -- "Maybe you better get back on the plane, I can't leave you here if she says you can't land". I turned to this American Colonel who was assigned to the UN -- he was on his way into the town -- and said: "Would you please tell the American Consul what has happened here", and he drove away. By this time it was getting dark and the Colonel in charge of the plane -- the pilot -- said: "You better get back on". We put my luggage back on the plane and were actually taxiing down the runway when the Arab woman major came back, she had to drive about a mile away to get to a telephone. She signaled from her jeep that it was OK for me to land. In retrospect I felt very foolish because I actually hopped out of the plane while it was still moving. They tossed my duffle bag after me. My recollection was of [I had learned how to fall in the army, so I was proud of the fact I managed to do this without breaking any bone] sitting there on the tarmac looking up at this woman, who said: "You can stay but you are a prisoner of war". So I was technically a prisoner of war but not really in duration vile. She had assigned a Arab legion sergeant to keep me under house arrest. As it turned out, I stayed under house arrest for four days because the American Colonel that I had asked to

tell the American Consul went off to a cocktail party -- I learned later -- and had forgotten all about me. So I began my Foreign Service career by spending four days technically as a prisoner of war.

Q: Very interesting,

NEWBERRY: I haven't had any more experiences like that but it was a colorful beginning.

Q: In Jerusalem what were your particular duties?

NEWBERRY: Well, I was what they called in those days a Citizenship officer. I took care of all kinds of services, passports, pensions, documents having to do with citizenship. One of the things in my bailiwick as the Citizenship officer I had to arrange permission for people to cross the Mandelbaum gate which was the dividing point between the Jordan-controlled part of Jerusalem, and the Israeli-controlled part of Jerusalem. That was probably one of the more colorful duties that I performed, but mostly in those days there were an awful lot of American citizens, naturalized American citizens who were in danger of losing their citizenship so I became quite an expert on citizenship law. In those days the Department of State took rather a tougher line than it does now so I filled out lots of certificates of expatriation while I was there because there people ran afoul of the law and there were a lot of young Americans there studying at the Hebrew University under the GI Bill so I was dispensing veterans benefits. There were a whole cluster of things.

Q: Did your tour of duty in Jerusalem have anything to do with your assignment to Istanbul, which was your second post?

NEWBERRY: Not really, except in the nature of things in the Foreign Service, in those days Turkey was a part of NEA -- Near East South Asia Bureau. I assume that it was probably inevitable that my second post would also be in NEA.

Q: It didn't have anything to do with any particular interest that you developed in Turkey? Just happened?

NEWBERRY: No, but fortunately while I was in Jerusalem I took a vacation trip to Istanbul and I had the good sense not to try to avoid the assignment when it came my way.

Q: You went to Turkey in 1952?

NEWBERRY: March of 1952, and I stayed there till August of 1956 which is rather unusual because the pattern even in those days was to move junior officers around frequently.

Q: You had a home leave?

NEWBERRY: Home leave, and went back for a second 2 years.

Q: What were your particular duties in Istanbul?

NEWBERRY: I was assigned there as an Economic and Commercial officer -- it was a combined Economic and Commercial section -- and I was the most junior member of that group and mainly did market reporting and analysis and looking for trade opportunities. Sort of classic work for a combined economic commercial office. When I was into my third year in Istanbul, after I had been on home and come back, the cultural officer at USIS asked for a year of leave of absence, to finish his PhD. The Ambassador in Ankara said: "You can't have your leave of absence unless you find somebody who can speak Turkish to take your place". At that point I was acceptable because I loved being in Istanbul but I was a little tired of doing the same periodic economic reports so I jumped at the chance to spend a year on detail with USIS, still in Istanbul.

Q: During your tour in Istanbul obviously you had studied Turkish; that was entirely on your own?

NEWBERRY: Yes, it was entirely on my own -- do it yourself.

Q: I noticed that you served under three different Consul Generals there during your first tour there.

NEWBERRY: I think there were four. There was quite a turnover for reasons that I can only guess at.

Q: I think Bert Mathews was the first one.

NEWBERRY: Bert Mathews was the first one, then Robert Macatee was the second one, each of them stayed only one year. Then Arthur Richards in my third year and about six months before I left Bob Minor was Consul General. So I actually served under four Consuls General in four and a half years.

Q: Just before you arrived in Istanbul in March of 1952, Turkey officially became a member of NATO and had had for some time a Brigade -- I think it was of troops fighting in Korea. How would you characterize as best you can recall -- it's a long time ago -- but how would you characterize the state of Turkish American relations at that time?

NEWBERRY: I refer to them as the halcyon days of Turkish American relations because of the general popular attitude was all out pro-American. The Turks are very proud of the performance of their Brigade in Korea and in general the Americans could do no wrong, it was pretty much the public atmosphere that I perceived as a young man there and of course as we all know the Turks came to think in late years that we could do a lot of wrong and told us so sometimes.

Q: I suppose that this very cordial atmosphere must have made your economic work and your contacts very pleasant. How did this atmosphere affect your particular work?

NEWBERRY: Well, I found unmixed welcome wherever I went inquiring, trying to get facts and insights and so forth. In retrospect now that I know a lot more about the Turks and their way of doing things, I reflect that I should have thought it was unusual for such a young man to be received by fairly highly placed Turks and that they were willing to spend half an hour, or one hour of their time as often as once a month answering my sometime ingenuous questions about what was going on. I mention this by way of saying that even a low ranking vice consul got very cordial welcome and attention in those days.

Q: You were there four years; did you notice any change towards the end of your tour in this atmosphere? The Menderes government was beginning to encounter a few difficulties then I think. Do you recall anything that that might have affected your work?

NEWBERRY: The general atmosphere was very much affected by the Cyprus riots in Istanbul in September of 1955. Again in retrospect I date the beginning of Menderes's downfall from that episode. I think everybody who was there or who studied the problem has long since agreed that those riots were first of all stimulated by the Turkish Government; then they got out of hand. On the 6th of September of 1955, when these people from the squatters villages, on the outskirts of Istanbul were tracked into the main part of town to stage an anti-Greek riot and it soon became obvious that the rioters were basically the "have nots" against the "haves." The riots did a lot of destruction and the whole episode was such a shock to the people in Istanbul and throughout Turkey. I think, it was at that point they began to wonder about the direction of the Menderes government, where they were taking Turkey.

Q: I think it might be interesting to have a word from you -- since you have a long perspective -- as to just where Istanbul fits into American relations with Turkey. Ankara is the capital of course, but Istanbul is the most important city, in many ways, in Turkey and our Consulate General there is an extremely important office of the United States in Turkey. What part does Istanbul play in Turkey -- in Turkish economic and cultural affairs -- and how does that relate to the work of the Consulate?

NEWBERRY: Istanbul is really the capital of Turkey in every sense except politically. It is the center of the banking industry and business in general, most of it. Business firms in Turkey have their headquarters in Istanbul. It's the cultural capital of the country. By far the greatest number of Universities are in Istanbul. So, you talk to anybody from the remotest region of Turkey they see Istanbul as a sort of lode star. Everybody -- almost any Turk -- would prefer to live in Istanbul than anywhere else in Turkey. So it really is, as I say, the capital of Turkey, except in the political sense, and of course, being the largest city and the main import center, the contacts between Turks and foreigners are the greatest in Istanbul. It's axiomatic now in the Foreign Service that the Consulate General in Istanbul always has a slightly different perspective from what is happening in Turkey from that the Embassy has in Ankara, and since I mentioned the September Cyprus riots in Istanbul, I'll digress to recount an episode during that event that signified and sort of

epitomizes this difference between Ankara and Istanbul. Arthur Richards was the Consul General, as I recall, in September 1955. We tried to do the most exhaustive reporting that we could and told the story of the riots the way we saw that it happened. But the Ambassador in Ankara didn't like our reporting and so he sent a young second secretary from Ankara to do an independent report on what had happened on September 6. That was a great deal of ill feeling between the Embassy and the Consul General over that. It may not have been a coincidence that a few months later Arthur Richards got himself transferred and left after being on the post only just about one year.

Q: Do you recall anything specific about what the Ambassador (who was then Avra Warren), wasn't he objected to? Did he think it wasn't sympathetic enough with the Turks or the Turkish government?

NEWBERRY: That's the way it came across to me. Because I wasn't privy to the exchanges between the Consul General and the Ambassador. When the second secretary arrived from Ankara the Consul General let us all know that we should leave him alone, let him do whatever he wants to, but we are still sticking to our version of what happened.

Q: Sure, well that's very interesting because it shows that the capital, where the Embassy and the Ambassador are on a day-to-day friendly basis with the government officials, and you in Istanbul had different perspectives. I think it's very important for historians who are reading documents from both Istanbul and from Ankara to keep this in mind. A very useful point indeed.

NEWBERRY: Well, another episode comes to mind now that we are talking about this phenomenon. Somewhat earlier -- I think it was a winter before when Robert Macatee was Consul General -- it was during a particular bad period of bad weather in Istanbul, practically in the middle of a blizzard that hit the city, I got an urgent call from a Turkish American who lived on the order side of the Bosphorus. He was the husband of one of the granddaughters of Abdul Hamid and they lived on a rather ramshackle old palace. Right next door to this palace compound there was a Turkish Army installation, and this Turkish American gentleman whose name was Zia, had got to know these young officers there, and had picked up a lot of hints, even explicit indications that some of these officers were involved in a network of military who were figuring out ways to get rid of the Menderes government. I thought of Mr. Zia as an old man who probably was no older than I am now. But old Mr. Zia -- as I thought-- was quite agitated so, I went with some difficulty to make my way through the blizzard over there to see what was on his mind. After hearing from Mr. Zia about what he had picked up from these young military officers next door to where he lived, I made my way back through the blizzard and told the Consul General about it. The Consul General struck me as being very uneasy to be told this thing, this story, and so he said: "well, write it up." So, I wrote it up and he said: "We will have to send this to Ankara."

Well, whether he ever sent it to Ankara, I'm convinced that Ankara never passed the word on to Washington, because as a matter of curiosity in 1958, when I was assigned to

the State Department on the Turkish desk, in an idle moment, I looked up and found absolutely no record of my conversation with Mr. Zia ever having arrived in Washington.

Now, I don't want to impugn anybody's professional judgment, specially when it happened so long ago, but I've never been able to suppress the notion that this simply did not fit in with the Embassy's view of what was going on in Turkey. It's just that if it got as far as Ankara, it didn't go any farther.

Q: So you had to send a message like that to the Embassy? You couldn't send it directly to Washington with a copy to the Embassy?

NEWBERRY: Well, in this case the Consul General apparently thought it should go to the Embassy. But in the other episode I was talking about -- the Cyprus riots -- Arthur Richards was reporting directly to the Department, and it has been generally considered over the years that the Consul General should report directly to the Department. But it depends mainly, I suppose, on the feel of the Consul General about sensibilities in Ankara and in Washington. I know when I was Consul General, when it was a matter of reporting facts, I didn't hesitate to report to Washington. When it came to analysis or judgments I would, as often as not, send them to Ankara and most of the time, as soon as they got my report in Ankara -- if I had not sent it also to Washington -- they'd call me and tell me: "Well, repeat it to Washington too."

Q: Yes, that was a sort of matter of judgment, and that's probably the way it works in relationships between most Consulate Generals and Embassies. I was wondering about the substantial US military and economic aid programs which we were providing Turkey in those days. Did the Consulate General in Istanbul have much of a role in that?

NEWBERRY: Not really. We didn't. As a matter of fact we didn't even have an AID office in Istanbul. AID people would come to Istanbul on business or whatever. We did not have a resident AID staff in Istanbul.

Q: I was wondering about the extent of the American community and institutions in Istanbul in those days. Could you tell me something about that?

NEWBERRY: Well, it was fairly small. As a matter of fact, there is still a surprisingly small American Community in Istanbul. But in the fifties, the main concentration of Americans was at Robert College which is now Bogazici University -- still very much administered along American lines -- a lot of American faculty and so on. There were a few US military in outlying places like Cakmakli the ordnance base -- out about forty miles west of Istanbul -- but we rarely saw them. And so, there were few American business families in Istanbul. At the American Hospital, the medical director, and the chief nurse at the hospital were Americans, and the lady who ran the nursing school was an American, but that was the extent of the American staff, even at the American hospital. It was a fairly small American community.

Q: So as far as local American influence, you would say was it not very great? Except of course Robert College historically had had a fair amount of influence in Turkish education, don't you think?

NEWBERRY: Oh yes, there's no doubt about it. And the Robert College alumni are now scattered all over the government and industry, academia. No, it has played a very big part in Turkey. But individuals at Robert College -- on the faculty and so forth -- I wouldn't say I ever saw any sign they as persons had any great influence, but there was the American education system that had very far reaching influence.

Q: Yes, as I recall there was a girls' college in Uskudar.

NEWBERRY: Yes, I shouldn't neglect the girls' college in Uskudar, but since it was relatively remote, and as a young bachelor, I wasn't particularly encouraged to come out and visit the girls' College, which was really a high school.

Q: Is there anything else that you could say about this particular period of duty in Istanbul that we overlooked or I've overlooked?

NEWBERRY: You asked me about the atmosphere when I first came there, I indicated there was a very good relation which was very welcoming and so forth but during the 50's and 60's with the growing number of American military in Turkey it changed. At one point I remember in 1958 writing a memo to the Assistant Secretary of State when I was on the desk, raising an alarm signal because the total had reached almost 10,000 American military in Turkey with all the attendant problems mainly having to do with traffic accidents and other encounters with the law, and the growing Turkish public resentment against the immunity that our American Servicemen had under the status of forces agreement. It got to be a very emotional issue and of course the US military didn't stop at 10,000. It went on from there, it was a growing thing as was the change in atmosphere.

Q: While you were still there?

NEWBERRY: It was the beginning.

Q: It got worse as it went on. This brings us up to your assignment on the Turkish desk, 1958-59. The Menderes Government was still in power, but things I suppose were beginning to look very shaky by then, and were you Turkish experts in the Department surprised when the government fell? Of course you were off the desk by the time it happened in May 1960.

NEWBERRY: I remember in December '59 when we were preparing the briefing book for President Eisenhower's visit to Turkey, this was very much on our minds, how to characterize the unstable political situation. I'm sorry I cannot remember exactly what was put into that briefing book. but it was very much on our minds that something

dramatic might happen either just before or during President's Eisenhower's visit, I think it was December of '59.

Q: Do you recall from your days if there were any particular policy problems that you dealt with as the desk officer for Turkey?

NEWBERRY: Well, the chief impression I had after so many years and the lapse of time is that, as the junior man on the desk, I spent a great deal if not most of my time on these status-of-forces problems.

Q: Well, they are very touchy of course.

NEWBERRY: Very touchy, and then there was the economic problem, the Menderes Government had far outspent its resources, and the question of bailing out the Turkish Government, rescheduling the debt and persuading the Congress to come up with a special 300 million dollar aid package for Turkey dragged on and on. Three hundred million dollars, even today sounds like a lot of money but it was astronomic in those days.

Q: Do you think the dissatisfaction in Turkey with the extent of American aid and this dragging on in Congress and so forth had anything to do with the growing unpopularity of Menderes?

NEWBERRY: No. I don't think so. I think it was Menderes's own compulsion to ride roughshod over the opposition and not allow the opposition the normal chance to express itself. I think that's what did happen; it wasn't the American angle at all.

Q: I think in 1958 if I'm not mistaken, the Baghdad pact collapsed. How soon was CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) reconstructed? Of course they moved the center of activity to Ankara, as I recall, can you tell me anything about that from your position on the Turkish desk?

NEWBERRY: Our approach was pretty much that of damage limitation with Baghdad, and the whole operation had to be moved somewhere. The Menderes Government was quite willing to have us move to Ankara, for obvious reasons. People were already beginning to question in the Government whether the Baghdad Pact shouldn't be allowed to die a natural death, but the Administration didn't want that to happen, and the Turks and the Iranians didn't want it to happen either. I don't have any sense at this remote distance from the event that the Pakistanis had any particular point of view on it, but they were a part of the whole operation. The concentration seemed to be, as so often in the Department, on Iran, rather than on Turkey. Nobody ever thought of moving the Baghdad Pact to Teheran but how would the Shah react was a constant refrain in those days when trying to shore up the Baghdad Pact or CENTO.

Q: That sounds as though we sort of took the Turks for granted

NEWBERRY: Yes, very much so, we did take the Turks for granted, and certainly as long as Menderes was in charge he encouraged us to take Turkey for granted.

Q: He generally supported us in our policies for example, in 1958 Eisenhower sent troops to Lebanon, and I imagine that we got good support from the Turks on that too.

NEWBERRY: Yes, my recollection is that on international issues and the United Nations, the Turks routinely voted with us on those days.

Q: Do you think this eventually caused a certain amount of resentment among the Turks? That we took them for granted?

NEWBERRY: Yes, there was always a certain resentment -- and still is to this date -- the Turks don't like to be taken for granted but I think the things that happened afterwards that made the Turks sort of regurgitate always the Johnson letter, the arms embargo.

Q: Yes, I was there at the time of the Johnson letter. I have vivid memories of it but I'm not going to insert it in your tape here.

NEWBERRY: Well, it didn't happen on my watch.

Q: No it happened on mine or on Ray Hare's... well that's another story. Anything else noteworthy that happened during this 1958-59 period when you were on the Turkish desk, or shortly after, that you can recall? Who was the NEA assistant secretary then? Do you remember?

NEWBERRY: Bill Rountree was -- he may have gone out to Pakistan by 1960 -- he certainly was the Assistant Secretary when I was on the desk, and my recollection is that he left and went abroad in 1960. I've forgotten the exact sequence. And Pete Hart was the Deputy Assistant Secretary that we at GTI dealt with mostly.

Q: Then you left the Turkish desk and you were in CENTO for awhile, weren't you?

NEWBERRY: That was in 64-66.

Q: Turkey wasn't the major preoccupation I suppose?

NEWBERRY: Since the CENTO headquarters was in Ankara, we were very much Turkey-oriented but by that time CENTO was being held together with mirrors so to speak.

Q: You know I never could understand this very peculiar relationship the United States had with CENTO. We seemed to be a very great supporter, but we weren't really full members.

NEWBERRY: I think, I convinced myself after talking to a lot of people about this, and reading the files, that it just became a sort of fixed idea in the succession of administrations, that we could not become a member because the Israelis didn't want us to. And even after Iraq was out of the organization, the same mentality seemed to prevail that if we joined CENTO as a full member we'll somehow mess up our relations with Israel. It never made much sense to me.

Q: It certainly didn't make much sense to me after my tour in Ankara because we seemed to be really in it up to our necks in every way except nominally and I don't know it was just one of those very peculiar quirks of diplomacy.

NEWBERRY: The sensitivity was strong enough that it wasn't until 1965 -- I think -- that they had the CENTO Council of Ministers meeting in Washington for the first time. The attitude seemed to be that since we were not members we cannot host the Council of Ministers. No, it was just a very curious situation, and nobody was deceived by it.

Q: No, that's the thing. Well your next Turkish incarnation was in Adana and your tour there was during a very rough period, wasn't it?

NEWBERRY: Yes.

Q: And Demirel whom I happened to get pretty well acquainted with when I was in Turkey was the Prime Minister. What was the unrest all about, the growing terrorism and so forth?

NEWBERRY: It was, what we now recognize, the beginning of this left-right polarization in Turkey and most of the terrorist incidents at that period were coming from the left and as you may remember the most dramatic things, which now is the sort of thing that has become commonplace was when the terrorists captured four American Servicemen in Ankara. As it turned out their release was negotiated but the man who had stage managed the thing fled into the hills and there was a huge dramatic manhunt and they finally tracked down Deniz Gezmis. A curious thing that struck me from my relatively isolated position down in Southeastern Turkey was that they were making this man into a sort of Robin Hood even in the way the Embassy was putting out their notices. I complained to the Embassy about it, the answer was "well while we were negotiating....." [end of side one]

NEWBERRY: We were talking about the capture -- the eventual capture -- of this man Deniz Gezmis and the lead up to it. When I complained at the Embassy that our public pronouncements were making this man seem like some kind of a latter-day Robin Hood. The PAO called me up and said: "You don't understand, Dan, in this situation where we are negotiating we have to use television and the public media in order to improve the atmosphere to get our people released." I mention this because now; 16 years later, it seems sort of ironic that we were in our infancy then dealing with terrorists but the notion that somehow or other we had to humor the terrorists in your public posture, still it

shocks me even today. It was already creeping into our own methodology even back in 1971.

Q: Well, Adana is an interesting spot, quite different from Istanbul of course.

NEWBERRY: It's called the biggest village in Turkey and with good reason even though it now has a population I think of a quarter of a million and certainly was a good size town when I was there, now it still has a sort of village atmosphere, village mentality and of course you might wonder why we have an American Consulate there at all.

Q: We still have one there?

NEWBERRY: We have one there...

Q: Because they have been closing so many...

NEWBERRY: Well actually the...when was it? 1979 I think it was, they actually announced they'd be closing the Consulate.

Q: Yes, I seem to remember something like that.

NEWBERRY: As a matter of fact the man who was Consul at that time told me about his efforts to find jobs for the various Turkish staff from the Consulate.

Q: Oh really, Then they decided not to?

NEWBERRY: And then they decided not to and probably for the same reason they put the Consulate there in the first place because of the large American presence at the Incirlik air base just outside of Adana.

Q: Yes, so you think that is the principal reason for it? What about other American interests there? There is not much trade or anything like that. The American Community must be very small.

NEWBERRY: Apart from the military it's practically non-existent. A few American women married to Turks. Once in a while an American expert who's there on some joint venture project but there is no sort of long standing American community outside the air base. Of course they rotate every year or two.

Q: What kind of problems or issues, did you deal with with the air base? Did you have a lot of problems with the Status of Forces Agreement?

NEWBERRY: We had a fair amount of those, and also one of the chief jobs there was to try to set up a public relations climate between the U.S. Air Force and the Turkish community. So when problems did come up they could be handled expeditiously with the least damage to our relations between Turkey and America. I spent a great deal of time

coaching the colonels and the majors at the air force and tried to bring them into contact with the Turks in the city against the day when we would need goodwill to solve these problems that kept coming up.

Q: I recall when I was in Turkey in the mid-60's that one of the interesting functions that the Consul in Adana had was to hand out social security checks to people in fairly remote areas.

NEWBERRY: There was one particular area, that's a curious little episode in the history of that Consulate there -- and I can digress to tell you -- this particular area is out in Elazig province, way out in Eastern Turkey. You had to go back to the time of World War I to understand how this situation ever arose. In those days there was a fairly large American missionary presence out there in that part of Turkey, and because of missionary connection a lot of these people out there found access to jobs in the United States during World War I. Many of them stayed. They went to Detroit or Chicago or elsewhere, and stayed and accumulated social security benefits and, then, when they got old enough to retire they went back to their village out there in Eastern Turkey (actually it's a whole chain of villages) and an enterprising village notable out there decided that he could milk the U.S. Government for all kinds of money by producing fake birth certificates and whatnot. So we found the social security beneficiary roll growing astronomically. This was before my time. The social security administration took such a dim view of it that they set up an extra position in our Consulate just to have somebody spend full time keeping track of this thing because it was a huge scandal in those terms. It still goes on, that once a month somebody goes out from the Consulate in Adana to distribute these checks and check the identity of the people and in case there are some residual benefits for children and grandchildren -- somehow I never understood -- We set up a sort of trust office that the Consulate runs by setting up special bank accounts so these incompetent or minor beneficiaries of our social security system are not cheated out of their money. It still goes, goes on every month. About once a year the social security attaché from the Embassy in Athens comes out to make a personal inspection, goes out there and watches the distribution of the checks. I don't know of any other place in the world that goes on, maybe it does in highly suspicious circumstances.

Q: I recall, having been through some of that territory, its mountainous and very beautiful scenery. During your stay in Adana, the Cyprus question was very hot a lot of the time I suppose?

NEWBERRY: Yes very hot.

Q: Did you ever get into that or was it mainly handled by the Embassy?

NEWBERRY: No. It was mainly handled by the Embassy. Of course the Turkish Military down there were not about to talk to us about it. And if we'd been bold enough to ask them they'd probably tell us to mind our own business. But we were very much aware of constant maneuvers and exercises and we used to say among ourselves that they were rehearsing for the invasion in Cyprus.

Q: Yes, and about three years after you left?

NEWBERRY: The occasion arose for them to carry out their rehearsals.

Q: So you mainly concentrated on consular work, the social security and the relations with the base. Was there any regional political reporting?

NEWBERRY: We did the standard political reporting and as much as one could. Outside the major towns like Adana, Mersin, Iskenderun, Gaziantep, politics at that period in Turkey and maybe even today is very much determined by the sort of local Aga or the Tribal Chief, if I could use those terms. It didn't do much good to go around testing the pulse of the public because people out there in Southeastern Turkey, at least in 1970-71, voted the way the Aga told them. You could ask what the Aga was going to.

Q: You couldn't generalize and say they were mainly JP or ...RPP or whatever?

NEWBERRY: Oh no. In 1969 there were a surprising number of candidates elected as independents out there because apparently a number of Aga's just got tired of bargaining with the Justice Party or the Republicans People's Party, and decided to show their strength by running as independents and won. They succeeded in what they set out to do.

Q: Do people there consider themselves as different from people in the rest of Turkey? Did you have a large Kurdish population, for example, in your Consular district?

NEWBERRY: Oh yes. In the far reaches out there in Eastern part of the Consular district the population is largely Kurdish or Kurdish speaking, you know the sensitivities of the Turkish government.

Q: Yes, I know the "mountain Turks".

NEWBERRY: People whose mother tongue is Kurdish... but since that time there has been a lot of migration, a large migration of Kurds from that part of the country to places like Adana, Izmir and even Istanbul. You have whole Kurdish neighborhoods in the big cities now, so they have become citified to a certain extent.

Q: I suppose a good part of the Arab minority in Turkey lives in that area.

NEWBERRY: Yes. They are mostly in Adana, Antakya, Iskenderun, a few around Urfa.

Q: Well anything else that you can think of that was significant about your tour in Adana?

NEWBERRY: No, in retrospect it seems sort of routine.

Q: In 1980 you went to Turkey again as Counselor of the Embassy in Ankara. Turkish-American relations had been through a difficult time following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the imposition of an arms embargo by the United States Congress, and the Turkish closure of American bases in Turkey. However, after a new U.S.-Turkish defense agreement was negotiated the arms embargo was completely lifted and the U.S. was allowed to reopen four military installations in Turkey. How did you find the atmosphere in Ankara when you took up your assignment there?

NEWBERRY: The atmosphere in Ankara was dominated by the... what the Turks call The Anarchy, what we might call civil strife. This had been building up for a couple of years where there were areas of the major cities that were known as left wing precincts and right wing precincts. There were murders going on. I think by the summer of 1980 there was upwards of 30-35 people a day being killed in terrorist activities and so by the time I got there in June of 1980 the question in everybody's mind was "When?" There was no question that the military would do something. The situation was virtually on the brink of Civil War so the big question was "when" are the military going to move, not whether they were going to move. The Parliament was practically deadlocked, there was a coalition government, a very shaky one, with Demirel as a Prime Minister but the deadlock was so deep that they couldn't even get a quorum in the Parliament to enact legislation. So that was the overall prevailing atmosphere of how to put a stop to all this terrorist activity and when and how the military would act. The big guessing game for the Embassy throughout the summer was what are the military going to do because it was pretty obvious that the civilian government was absolutely deadlocked.

Q: Incapable of handling the situation.

NEWBERRY: But there are many anomalies in all this. In June 1980 for the first time -- I think in about 20 years -- the NATO Council of Ministers decided to have their meeting in Ankara. They had not met in Turkey for a long time for all sorts of reasons which have to do with Cyprus and what not. And so we in fact did witness the NATO Council of Ministers being there and Secretary Muskie and the usual retinue of people came out there but everybody worried more about their safety than anything else, but it went off without incident, and one of the momentary hopeful things that happened during that Council of Ministers Meeting was the dialogue between the Turkish Foreign Minister and the Greek Foreign Minister. It looked as though there might be the beginning of something there, but, of course that came to naught by all sorts of things, change of Government in Turkey, change of government in Greece and so on. But as far as U.S.-Turkish relations were concerned at that time, the huge Turkish external debt was very much on everybody's mind. I recall that when preparing to go to Ankara, I went up to New York from Washington to make the rounds of the business community to see what their views were; what was on their agendas. I make a particular point of mentioning the visit I made to the Manufacturers Hanover Bank headquarters in New York. When it dawned on them that I was going to Turkey they practically threw me out of the office because Turkey owed so much money to the Manny Hanny as they call it. I make a point of mentioning this because that was 1980; in 1983 -- I think it was -- Manufacturers Hanover Bank opened a major branch of their operations in Turkey which is flourishing

to this day. This is by way of pointing out the dramatic change in Turkish economic situation in a space of three or four years. That this bank which didn't even want to hear the subject of Turkey in 1980 decided to make a major investment in Turkey, three years later.

Q: Was this due to the fact that the military had taken over?

NEWBERRY: No, not entirely but that had a lot to do with it.

Q: Well, I was thinking, the quelled the terrorism

NEWBERRY: The one good thing that came out of the Demirel coalition government, they came to office in late 1979. It was in January 1980 they promulgated a dramatic new economic program which allowed a lot more freedom and market economy policy and so forth. And Turkey was able, once the military established some domestic peace, to go on and really dramatically improve its economic situation and its standing in the world community. The program was announced and set in motion before the military took over, but I doubt it would have gone very far with all this civil strife so the combination the two brought Turkey a long way, out of its economic distress.

Q: So, when you went to Istanbul in 1981, was it apparent that Turkey would be turning the corner?

NEWBERRY: Oh very apparent. And I saw right away that one of my big jobs, possibly my biggest job was assisting American business firms who were interested in getting into Turkey and spotting opportunities for them, making contacts for them and so forth. That persisted throughout my four years there.

Q: It did? That was quite different from situation in, say, the 1950's when you were there. There is a lot more American business interested in Turkey?

NEWBERRY: Yes, and it's still growing.

Q: Has Turkey now returned fully to civilian government or had it by the time you left in 1985?

NEWBERRY: Yes. The civilian government which was installed in late 1983 after the parliamentary election... which was not an entirely free election in the sense that certain political figures and certain political parties were not allowed to participate. But the party that did win the election, a very solid victory, the Motherland Party, did so in spite of the declared disfavor of the military government so in that sense it really was a democratic election. And the subsequent municipal elections that took place a few months later did allow these other parties into it so the Motherland Party continued to have a substantial majority. I think that although technically the purists would say "1983 Parliamentary election was not entirely free", the atmosphere certainly is free today and there is no lingering thought the military will try to control the 1988 elections in the next round. And

military government has been lifted in practically all the country except in Southeastern Turkey where they have this problem with the Kurdish dissidents.

Q: Is that something that has come up in recent years?

NEWBERRY: Yes. We don't have too much information about the specifics but it's a major problem for the Turks and there have been armed clashes there. Every once in a while you read about Turkish military who are listed as been killed in these clashes with the "separatists" as the Turks call it and with the cooperation of the Iraqi government the Turkish army has made forays into Iraq in dealing in this situation.

Q: Of course Iraq has historically had problems with the Kurds too.

NEWBERRY: Always has, for generations. But apart from that area of the country martial law has long since been lifted in all the rest of the country.

Q: And, what about CENTO with which you were very familiar and very active in the 60's? After the Iranian revolution it sort of dissolved, didn't it?

NEWBERRY: Yes it had to and I think it disappeared almost without anybody noticing.

Q: No one has really shed many tears about it...

NEWBERRY: It sounded more cynical. I used to say it's dead but not buried. They had a private burial, but nobody noticed...

Q: I wanted to ask you about one problem that Americans have perhaps been too well aware of; maybe it has been exaggerated because we even have movies about it. But that's the problem of narcotics in Turkey and Americans getting involved. Was this a problem during your tour as Consul General in Istanbul? Did you have many cases of Americans getting into trouble?

NEWBERRY: Very few. About the time that I got back to Istanbul in 1981, the situation improved dramatically probably because of the Turkish government performance and the collaboration between our Drug Enforcement Agency people and the Turkish authorities. And you mentioned the movie, I think that after it Turkey ceased to be a sort of attractive place for people into drugs. The fact that that happened is probably due as much as anything else to that movie MIDNIGHT EXPRESS which I have never seen but I've heard a lot about it, I gather it pictures a very lurid conception of what life is like in a Turkish prison and, since I haven't seen it I can't comment on it. But the word got around thanks to that movie, that Turkey was not a good place to go to indulge your drug addiction. As a matter of fact I'm told that the Sixth Fleet regularly shows that movie on board ships before they come into Istanbul. So all of the Turks who have heard about it or seen that movie get apoplectic because they feel that Turkey has been unduly maligned. The fact is that it had a good effect.

Q: Which they would be pleased with ...Then on the broader question of narcotics and Turkey as a source, is it still considered a major source of exports of opium?

NEWBERRY: No not so much. The Turkish government has that pretty much under control. The problem is that Turkey has been used as a transit route for traffickers bringing stuff out of Pakistan and further east and so the major effort of our people, DEA people and the Turkish narcotics squads is tracking down this transit trade.

Q: So the Turks have cooperated with the American, anti-narcotics people very closely over a quite a period of time?

NEWBERRY: Very much. I should mention one reason why, during my time as Consul General in Istanbul, in 1980 or 81, we completed this treaty from the enforcement of penal judgments -- I think it's called -- whereby American citizens sentenced in Turkey can be transferred to American jurisdiction, sometimes called the Prisoners Exchange Treaty. So that during the time that I was in Istanbul I think there were not more than one or two cases of conviction of narcotics trafficking and they were disposed of through this exchange. So this sort of nightmare picture of guileless Americans being sentenced to life imprisonment in Turkish dungeons is no longer applicable, it never was. But now they can now serve their time in the United States and, as it usually happens, probably get parole.

Q: So we won't have those incidents which are damaging to Turkish-American relations, even if we have the arrests. As sort of an overall cap on this interview, for which we are very grateful...

NEWBERRY: I enjoy talking about it.

Q: Looking from a perspective that goes back more than 30 years, could you say a few words contrasting, or comparing, the general state of Turkish-American relations when you were Consul General in the 80's, with when you were Vice Consul in the 50's. What would you say were the main differences as you see them?

NEWBERRY: Well, I think in the 50's one reason we had such an easy time of it in Turkey, is that the Menderes government pretty much let us do whatever we wanted to in Turkey. And as a consequence lots of the privileges that we asked for and got were never a subject of contention. The Embassy or the chief of the military mission simply handed in a memo and somebody in the Turkish government just automatically approved it. So that we didn't have to go into a lot of negotiations with the Turks about these things. It was not a healthy atmosphere and we and the Turks have long since agreed that a lot of the troubles that beset us later on came from this freewheeling atmosphere which we indulged because it was so easy and the Turks indulged because they wanted us there. But that no longer applies for all sorts of reasons that we touched on in this conversation.

Q: A more mature relationship.

NEWBERRY: A more mature relationship but it also requires more care, deliberation, consideration on our part to Turkish, not only public sensitivities, but to bureaucratic sensitivities. So... working in Turkish-American relations is more strenuous now than it used to be but it's worth the trouble.

As a matter of fact, I commented on this when I was talking to Jim Wilkinson who is now the Deputy Assistant Secretary in EUR... he took over that job, and I had just come back from Turkey and I said: "why don't we start out by saying: Maintaining the Turkish-American alliance is a lot of trouble but it's worth the trouble". So, I think that's the note I would leave it on. It's a lot of trouble because it's a very complex relationship and made more difficult because the Turks expect from us a lot more than we can produce. And in some ways it's a sort of case of unrequited love. The Turks want this relationship with the United States, they like Americans, they like their association but at the same time they think that since they are very faithful friends and allies we ought to treat them better than we do. And so, how to keep this in focus? How to keep it in balance? These questions will always be on the agenda of whoever is dealing with Turkish American relations.

Q: I suppose one of the little problems that is still there, one of the sensitivities is on this whole Cyprus business, Cyprus is, de facto, a divided island and the U.S. tries to keep a fairly even hand between Athens and Ankara ... It's not really a fair question to ask you, but using a crystal ball, what do you see as the future of Cyprus?

NEWBERRY: Well, it may just turn out to be like the Kashmir question, it just goes on and on. As far as I know the Kashmir question is still on the agenda of the United Nations after 60 years... and it may turn out that way with Cyprus.

Q: Or Korea, another divided country and Germany still divided. Yes, some of these things you can't really solve, you just hope you can keep them from erupting. Well thanks again, it was a very interesting, enlightening.

NEWBERRY: I enjoyed talking about these things.

End of interview